

Examiner's report

CTSI Professional Competency Framework

Stage 2: Unit 4 Product Safety Examiner's Report September 2021

The number of candidates taking this examination are still relatively low, with only five candidates taking the paper, three of achieved a pass grade, but there were no merits or distinctions awarded.

As with previous papers, there were a wide selection of questions available covering a significant portion of the syllabus, which allowed candidates to focus on areas of strength.

Again, it was clear that many candidates had restricted themselves to the face-to-face materials more than the distance learning modules, which missed opportunities to gain marks.

Given that this paper was taken ten months after the end of the EU Exit transition period, the paper had to be answered in accordance with the UK legal framework following exit from the European Union, and candidates invariably answered in accordance with retained UK law rather than the single market provisions previously in place.

SECTION A

Candidates were required to answer four out of six short answer questions which were written to reflect the large range of knowledge necessary to carry out product safety work. Questions carried ten marks each. Students generally addressed the question as it was phrased although occasionally the point was missed. Bullet points were used by a number of candidates, and this is perfectly acceptable if the points made were clearly referenced.

There were easy marks available for outlining the process of conformity assessment and some candidates got many of these, but many of these were missed due to an incomplete understanding of this. There was also a surprising lack of understanding of the law relating to pyrotechnics with one candidate answering this question in accordance with legal provisions which have not been in place for some years.

The most worrying trend in this section related to the question asking candidates to outline the difference between hazard and risk and relation to product safety, which is fundamental underpinning knowledge for an understanding of product safety legislation, but also for the Regulating Markets Professional interview.

SECTION B

Candidates were required to choose two out of four longer questions in this section, each carrying thirty marks.

Some questions were more popular than others, and although some candidates produced solid answers there still there was a surprising lack of awareness of vertical product regulation, in particular the regulatory framework relating to machinery. A knowledge of the Machinery Regulations would have provided a lot of easy marks for question 7.

Question 8 and 9 were answered to a varying degree of success and both of these can be considered to be simple discussions of toys, electrical products and general product safety. Question 10 did present a

challenge to those who attempted it, but in the main those that did were rewarded as some of the marks were very low hanging fruit.

Most candidates did, however, obtain a pass mark for the questions they answered in this section, but many easy to obtain marks were missed because of a misreading of the question or gaps in knowledge. It is clear that candidates are still relying on a less than thorough treatment of the syllabus and would benefit from increased private study of the legislation but also practical experience of market surveillance activities in relation to product safety. Given that the framework requires the submission of a portfolio of product safety-based skills, it is surprising that the knowledge level was not deeper.