

Examiners report

Trading Standards Qualification Framework

DCATS: Food standards Written Examiners' Report November 2017

General

24 candidates sat the food standards written exam this year, and the breakdown of marks were:

| 0-40% | 40-50% | 50-60% | 60-70% | 70+% |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| 4 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 6 |

It was pleasing to note that 18 candidates (i.e. 75%) got half marks (50%) or more.

It also became apparent that some candidates had been given access to operational food enforcement duties, including advice and investigation by their employing Services. It was these candidates that gained the higher marks perhaps reflecting the support that they had received from their respective Service`s.

It is worth repeating that this paper isn`t a purely law based paper but an enforcement and regulatory based paper. Those candidates who had actual practical experience will have found some aspects of this exam fairly straightforward.

Section A

The question on sampling was answered correctly by the majority of candidates as was the question on Nutritional & Health claims.

However the questions requiring the knowledge of food incidents and of Food Crime were, on the whole, poorly answered.

With few exceptions the questions on Gluten Free were also poorly answered. Somewhat disappointing as this is an increasingly growing market in food manufacture and retail.

Section B

Q6. Question 6 was avoided by many candidates and, of those who answered it, the majority limited themselves by a lack of knowledge of case law and limited discussion of the effectiveness of the Sections mentioned in the question.

Q7. Question 7 was generally answered competently however some candidates appeared unaware the Regulating Our Future model proposed by the FSA

Section C

- Q8.** Question 8 was answered by the majority of candidates. Interestingly a number of candidates stated that a “Use By” date should be given, before immediately given details on frozen storage. As ever candidates should read the question to avoid losing marks.

It was good to note that candidates picked up on the marketing terms and advised accordingly.

The question did state that the FBO had approached you as a food officer and hence the reply should be given to reflect that scenario. Consideration is needed when writing your answer. These are professional exams and it is expected that your answer should reflect that.

- Q9.** Question 9 was, somewhat surprisingly, answered by a minority of candidates, but most that answered it gained good marks.

- Q10.** Question 10 was again another “lifesaver” question and the majority of candidates answered it competently, perhaps aided by the structure of the sub-questions. Those that gained poor marks appeared to lack experience of investigatory work.