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Qualification Specification

Highfield Level 3 Award in Effective Auditing and Inspection (RQF)

Qualification Number: 603/2606/2

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Highfield Level 3 Award in Effective Auditing and Inspection (RQF)

Introduction

This specification is designed to outline all you need to know to offer this qualification at your centre. If you have any further questions, please contact your account manager.

Qualification regulation and support

The Highfield Level 3 Award in Effective Auditing and Inspection has been developed and is awarded by Highfield Qualifications and sits on the Regulated Qualifications Framework. The RQF is an English qualification framework regulated by Ofqual. It is also suitable for delivery in Wales and is regulated by Qualification Wales.

Key facts

Qualification number:	603/2606/2
Learning aim reference:	60326062
Credit value:	1
Assessment method:	Multiple-choice question papers
Assessment grading:	Pass/distinction/fail
Guided learning hours (GLH):	7
Total qualification time (TQT):	9
Qualification structure:	1 mandatory unit

Qualification overview and objective

The objective of the qualification is to support a role in the workplace. This qualification is aimed at supervisors, team leaders, chefs, QA staff and managers working in a variety of industries where verification, auditing (including internal auditing and supplier auditing) or inspection is undertaken. Industries may include all sectors of the food industry, consumer products, hospitals, laboratories, pharmaceuticals, warehousing and retail. The qualification is also suitable for student environmental health officers.

This qualification will provide learners with theoretical knowledge on how to effectively carry out audits/inspections, including: the purpose of audits/inspections and the role of the auditor/inspector, how to methodically approach the planning of audits/inspections, how to collect and analyse data and the purpose and content of an audit/inspection report.

Entry requirements

There are no prerequisites for this qualification. However, it is recommended that candidates have suitable technical knowledge of the relevant practices and procedures which will be subject to audit/inspection.

It is advised that learners have a minimum of Level 2 in literacy and numeracy or equivalents.

This qualification is approved for delivery to those aged 16 and over.

Guidance on delivery

The total qualification time for this qualification is 9 hours, and of this, 7 are recommended as guided learning hours.

TQT is an estimate of the total number of hours it would take an average learner to achieve and demonstrate the necessary level of attainment to be awarded with a qualification, both under direct supervision (forming guided learning hours) and without supervision (all other time). TQT and GLH values are advisory and assigned to a qualification as guidance.

Guidance on assessment

This qualification is assessed through a 30-question multiple-choice question examination. The duration of the examination is 1 hour.

To achieve a pass grade, learners must score at least 18 out of 30 on the examination. Learners will achieve a distinction grade if they score at least 24 out of 30. Following the assessment, a list of results will be provided to the centre contacts stating whether learners have passed or failed. Certificates for successful learners will be dispatched for distribution by the centre contacts.

Centres must take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment of a learner (including any internal quality assurance and invigilation) being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment.

Guidance on quality assurance

Highfield Qualifications requires centres to have in place a robust mechanism for the quality assurance of training delivery, and invigilated assessment arrangements. For more information on quality assurance, please refer to Highfield Qualifications' Core Manual.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Centres may apply to use recognition of prior learning or prior achievement to reduce the amount of time spent in preparing the learner for assessment.

For further information on how centres can apply to use RPL as described above, please refer to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy in the members' area of the Highfield Qualifications website. This policy should be read in conjunction with this specification and all other relevant Highfield Qualifications documentation.

Tutor requirements

Highfield Qualifications recommends nominated tutors for this qualification meet the following:

- hold a relevant qualification or have relevant experience in auditing and inspection, which could include any of the following:
 - Highfield Level 3 Award in Effective Auditing and Inspection (RQF) **and** practical experience of carrying out audits/inspections
 - Lead Auditor and practical experience of carrying out audits/inspections
 - Environmental Health Officer qualification
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- or any other qualification and/or experience in the subject area that is at least equivalent to the qualifications outlined above
- hold a recognised teaching qualification, or have relevant teaching/training experience, which could include any of the following:
 - Highfield Level 3 International Award in Delivering Training or equivalent
 - Level 3 PTTLS or above
 - Highfield Level 3 Award in Education and Training (RQF) or above
 - diploma or certificate in education
 - bachelor's or master's degree in education
 - Teacher's Certificate or equivalent
 - level 3 or 4 NVQ in training and/or development
 - proof of at least 30 hours of formal training in any subject

It is also recommended that nominated tutors are able to demonstrate relevant experience and knowledge in a work context and provide evidence of engagement with the subject field and continuing professional development

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations

Highfield Qualifications has measures in place for learners who require additional support. Please refer to Highfield Qualifications' Reasonable Adjustments Policy for further information/guidance.

ID requirements

It is the responsibility of the centre to have systems in place to ensure that the person taking an assessment is indeed the person they are claiming to be. All centres are therefore required to ensure that each learner's identification is checked before they undertake the assessment. Highfield Qualifications recommends the following as proof of a learner's identity:

- a valid passport (any nationality)
- a signed UK photocard driving licence
- a valid warrant card issued by HM forces or the police
- another photographic ID card, e.g. employee ID card, student ID card, travel card etc.

If a learner is unable to produce any of the forms of photographic identification listed above, a centre may accept another form of identification containing a signature, for example, a credit card. Identification by a third-party representative, such as a line manager, human resources manager or invigilator, will also be accepted.

For more information on learner ID requirements, please refer to Highfield Qualifications' Core Manual.

Progression opportunities

On successful completion of this qualification, learners (depending on the industry they work within) may wish to continue their development by undertaking one of the following qualifications:

- Lead Auditor

- Highfield Level 4 Award in Managing Food Safety in Catering (RQF)
 - Highfield Level 4 Award in Food Safety Management for Manufacturing (RQF)
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Useful websites

International Organization for Standardization - <https://www.iso.org/>

British Retail Consortium - <https://brc.org.uk>

SALSA - www.salsafood.co.uk

Careers in Audit - <https://www.careersinaudit.com>

Recommended training materials

The following resources have been reviewed by Highfield Qualifications and are recommended as possible training materials for users of this qualification within the food industry. These materials are due to be updated in line with the new qualification in early-mid 2018.

- Griffith, Chris. Effective Auditing & Inspection Skills Course Book. Highfield International Ltd.
 - Sprenger, Richard A. Level 3 Award in Effective Auditing and Inspection Skills PowerPoint. Highfield International Ltd.
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Appendix 1: Qualification content

Unit 1: Principles of Effective Auditing and Inspection

Unit number: A/616/6790

Credit: 1

GLH: 7

Level: 3

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<i>The learner will</i>	<i>The learner can</i>
1. Understand the importance of undertaking effective auditing/inspection	1.1 Explain the purpose of an audit/inspection 1.2 Outline the benefits and limitations of audits/inspections 1.3 Explain the implications of undertaking an inadequate audit/inspection
2. Understand the competencies and characteristics of an effective auditor/inspector	2.1 Recognise the competencies required by an auditor/inspector 2.2 Recognise how the conduct and characteristics of an auditor/inspector impacts on an audit/inspection
3. Understand the importance of a planned approach to conducting effective audits/inspections	3.1 Explain the stages involved in the auditing/inspection process 3.2 Explain the factors that influence the frequency and duration of audits/inspections 3.3 Describe the basis for audits/inspections 3.4 Outline methods of collecting accurate and comprehensive data
4. Understand how to analyse and use evidence collected to inform the audit/inspection process	4.1 Explain the importance of converting raw data into coherent facts 4.2 Explain the importance of determining the sources of problems 4.3 Explain the purpose of an audit/inspection report

Amplification / Indicative content

Learning Outcome 1

1.1 Purpose of an audit/inspection to include:

- Knowledge of the following terms and the difference between them: audit, auditor, auditee; inspection; internal (1st party), 2nd party and 3rd party audits; desk-top audits; full, superficial, partial, vertical and horizontal inspections/audits
- Confirmation that standards have been achieved and customer's requirements met with an appropriate level of due diligence.
- Assessing current level of compliance and identifying areas of non-compliance
- Ensuring that the business is operating safely/within expected boundaries
- Identification of training needs
- Contribution to continuous improvement and culture

1.2 Benefits and limitations of audits/inspections.

Benefits to include:

- Identification of good areas and those needing improvement
- May identify deficiencies before they occur
- Contribution to strategic planning
- Aids due diligence
- Maintains certifications
- Reduces risk of harm, complaints and potential fines and prosecutions
- Supporting a positive culture for compliance
- Can be used for marketing

Limitations to include:

- Can disrupt business and staff may be taken away from other duties
- May be seen as negative by staff
- Staff may act differently when audited, so gives false impression
- Too few or too many audits/inspections leading to inadequate timeframes or fatigue
- May only produce a snapshot
- Difficulty in ensuring consistency leading to poor perception of value

1.3 The implications of undertaking an inadequate audit/inspection, to include:

- A superficial audit/inspection could lead to non-detection of serious non-conformances - customers may be given false sense of security, it could result in serious criticism of company and auditor and there is the potential for legal action, allegations of incompetency and job losses

Learning Outcome 2

2.1 Competencies of auditor/inspector to include:

- Characteristics – personal and professional
- Knowledge and experience of operation
- People skills

2.2 Ways the conduct and characteristics of an auditor/inspector impact on an audit/inspection to include:

- Preparation
- Opening meeting and observing common courtesies
- Questioning techniques
- Thoroughness
- Flexibility considering new evidence
- Avoidance of ritualistic defects and solutions (for example, only looking for obvious non-compliances; not assessing application of systems, accepting compliance at face value; instigating simple corrections such as disposing of food past its best before date as opposed to identifying the reason this has occurred and root cause etc.).
- Ability to use a risk based approach
- Look, listen, ask, check model
- Role of internal auditor to advise and educate, change attitudes and overcome barriers to change, handling problems and difficult auditees
- Time management
- Overcoming language and cultural differences
- Body language and setting a suitable standard

Learning Outcome 3

3.1 The stages involved in the auditing/inspection process, to include:

- Audit process: agree scope, develop schedule based on risk, identify suitable auditor, identify requirements and prepare checklists, aide memoir etc., establish timings, conduct audit, agree non-conformances, verify documentation, communicate findings
- Importance of planning and preparation to ensure an effective audit/inspection
- Audit cycle (planning and preparation, opening meeting, on-site inspection, analysis, closing meeting, written report and verifying effective completion).
- Understand the difference between audit scope and depth and identify factors which may influence this, such as production times, seasonal production, time available etc.
- Importance and examples of auditor having suitable and correct equipment to conduct the audit and verify controls and claims
- The importance of considering the timing of the inspection/audit (time of day/year)
- Purpose of opening and closing meetings

- Information required for a closing meeting
- Importance of a re-visit or follow up inspection

3.2 Factors that influence the frequency and duration of audits/inspections:

- Product safety risk
- Published standards
- Historical compliance
- Complaints
- Introduction of new equipment/processes/products
- Compliance with legal/certification body requirements

3.3 Basis for audits/inspection, to include:

- Different types of standards used for auditing (e.g. company standards, customer standards, legislative standards etc.)
- Importance of constructing a 'model' (standards that may be expected in accordance with bench-marking similar industries) against which to inspect/audit
- Order and logical flow of audit to include all required aspects
- Differences found between the model and the premises inspected/audited will identify corrective actions
- Use of checklists and aide memoires as a basis and the appropriateness of their usage in different situations
- Relevant legislation
- Complaints

3.4 Explain how to collect accurate and comprehensive data:

- Importance of accurate and comprehensive data collection
- Understanding the difference between objective and subjective evidence
- Methods of data collection including simulation, reconstruction, checking records, observation, and asking questions
- Effective questioning and listening techniques - understanding of the types of questions available and why they should be used and types of questions which shouldn't be used
- Equipment commonly used when auditing/inspecting
- Importance of gaining objective evidence to confirm or refute claims and use of more than one form of evidence (triangulation of information derived from observation, questioning and examining records)

Learning Outcome 4

4.1 Importance of converting raw data to coherent facts, to include:

- The importance of using evidence to support claims
- The use of indicators in assessing the potential for future non-conformance

4.2 Importance of determining the sources of problems, to include:

- Identifying the root cause of problems
- Differentiation between immediate and permanent solutions
- Importance of taking context into account when determining action

4.3 The purpose of a report, to include:

- Business can use to make improvements, and/or as evidence of compliance and due diligence
- Communication tool
- Tool to achieve change, the report is not an end, it encourages continuous improvement
- Recognising different types of non-conformances

Appendix 2: Sample assessment material

Which of the following is **true**?

- a) An audit report should state which areas were audited
- b) Auditors must always provide guidance on effective solutions
- c) In light of new evidence an auditor should keep to their original decision
- d) Consistency of documentation is more important than consistency of actions

Which of the following is **false**?

- a) Risks at premises may vary throughout the year
- b) Reports are intended to promote change
- c) Simulations can reduce the time needed to undertake an inspection
- d) An examination of all documentation is essential on every inspection

Which of the following is **most** likely to contribute to a successful audit?

- a) Spending the most time examining documentation/records
- b) A generic checklist
- c) A risk-based approach
- d) Ignoring previous audits

When inspecting a new premises and process, it is likely that **most** time will be spent on:

- a) document controls
- b) inspection
- c) reporting
- d) the closing meeting