

Fundamentals of Food Hygiene for the Food Industry

August 2004

Revised February 2007

9 Guided Learning Hours

Description:

The *Fundamentals of Food Hygiene for the Food Industry* is a qualification covering the basic principles of food hygiene. It is valuable as a free-standing qualification or as an addition for people following other training programmes. It is directed principally at those working in all sectors of the food processing and manufacturing industries. The qualification provides the basic knowledge for candidates to be safe food operatives and to be able to play an effective role in a food business operator's food safety management system. Personal responsibilities for maintaining hygienic practices and working to company rules should be emphasised in courses leading to this qualification.

The qualification is equivalent to the Royal Society for Public Health's *Level 2 Award in Food Safety for Manufacturing*, and covers material required by the qualification template developed by the Royal Society for Public Health and other awarding bodies under the guidance of Improve, the sector skills council for the food industry.

Summary of Outcomes:

To achieve this qualification a candidate must:

1. **Describe the importance of food hygiene**
2. **Outline the nature of food hazards.**
3. **Describe good hygiene controls**

Content:

1. **Importance of food hygiene**

How food hygiene contributes to food safety: Contribution to food safety by reducing the risk of contamination and cross contamination; Definitions of food hygiene and food poisoning; causes of food poisoning; effects of food borne illness on consumers and businesses; the incidence of food poisoning; trends in food related illness; 'At risk' groups; common symptoms of food poisoning; loss of custom for food businesses and threat of legal action.

Legal responsibilities placed on food businesses: Outline of the *Food Safety Act 1990* and the *Food Hygiene Regulations 2006* or any superseding legislation; standards for structural requirements of food premises and equipment; requirement for food safety management systems based on HACCP and food hygiene training; legal responsibilities of food handlers; statutory and non-statutory reportable diseases; outline of legal sanctions; role of enforcement officers.

2. **The nature of food hazards**

Role of microorganisms in food borne illness and spoilage: The nature of food poisoning bacteria and their effects on food; growth requirements of bacteria; importance of toxins and spores; range of "The Temperature Danger Zone" and its importance to bacterial growth; high risk foods; food spoilage and food spoilage organisms.

Contamination sources, vehicles and routes: Sources of food poisoning bacteria; contamination and cross-contamination; contamination vehicles such as pests, hands, cloths and equipment; contamination routes; methods for preventing/reducing contamination.

Physical chemical and allergenic contamination: Examples of chemical, physical and allergenic hazards; how such hazards can enter food; prevention of chemical, physical and allergenic contamination.

3. **Good hygiene controls**

Cleaning, disinfection and waste control: Definitions and examples of “clean-as-you-go”, “scheduled cleaning”, “cleaning in place” and “cleaning out of place”; use of cleaning and disinfection chemicals; cleaning procedures for premises, equipment and utensils; steam cleaning; importance, methods and frequency of waste disposal and effluent treatment; safe storage of tools and chemicals.

Introduction to HACCP based food safety management systems: Purpose of HACCP; definition of hazard; biological, chemical and physical hazards; hazard analysis; definition and examples of critical control points; good manufacturing practice (GMP); importance of monitoring, recording and reporting.

Personal hygiene, infection control and good food handling practices: Need for appropriate hygiene standards; importance of protective clothing, good personal hygiene practices, hand washing, wound dressings, jewellery and illness reporting; methods of preventing food contamination; barrier hygiene; hygiene control in factories.

Pest control: Control of pests such as rats, mice, cockroaches, flies, birds; conditions favourable to attracting pests; signs of pest infestation; contamination of food and surfaces by pests; preventing access to pests; removal of pests.

Monitoring, Recording and Reporting: Frequency of recording and monitoring (to include cleaning schedules, food deliveries and the temperatures of freezers, refrigerators, store rooms and processing equipment); importance of reporting possible food safety hazards such as illness, presence of cuts or sores, evidence of pests, spoiled food, spillages, faulty equipment, equipment at incorrect temperature, receipt of goods of poor quality or incorrect temperature; monitoring of critical control points and reporting if critical limits exceeded.

Temperature controls: Rules for temperature control of high risk foods; the ‘Temperature Danger Zone’; destruction of bacterial toxins and spores; maintaining hot or cold temperatures; reheating, cooling and thawing food; refrigerating and freezing, cook-chill and cook-freeze.

Storage controls: Storage of canned and dry food; separation of raw and cooked food; use of refrigerators and freezers for storage of food. Correct temperatures for the storage of different foods; date marking of food (*use by* and *best before* dates); stock rotation.

Spoiled food: Causes of food spoilage; recognising spoiled food; prevention of spoilage; disposal of spoiled food.

Assessment:

Attainment of the Learning Outcomes will be assessed by a multiple-choice examination of 40 minutes consisting of 30 questions. The examination is provided by the RSPH. A candidate who is able to satisfy the learning outcomes will be awarded a score of at least 20/30 in the examination.

Guidance:

Recommended prior learning:

There are no recommended prior learning requirements for this qualification. The RSPH does, however, recommend that candidates have a level of literacy and numeracy equivalent to *Entry Level 2* (but see notes on Special Assessment Needs below)

Special Needs:

Centres that have candidates with special needs should consult the RSPH's *Regulations and Guidance for Candidates with Special Assessment Needs*; this is available from the RSPH and the RSPH's website www.rsph.org.uk

Recommended Qualifications and Experience of Tutors:

The Society would expect that tutors have teaching experience and a qualification in a relevant subject area, but recognises that experienced teachers can often compensate for a lack of initial subject knowledge, or experienced practitioners for a lack of teaching experience.

Suitable qualifications for the *Fundamentals of Food Hygiene for the Food Industry* include:

- a) Degree or Dip. HE in: Food Science; Environmental Health; Environmental Science; Home Economics; Microbiology; or one that contains elements of these subjects.
- b) HNC/D in one of the above
- c) Level 4 qualification in Food Hygiene such as: *RSPH Level 4 Award in Food Safety Management for Manufacturing*.
- d) Level 3 qualification in Food Hygiene such as: *RSPH Level 3 Award in Food Safety Supervision for Manufacturing*
- e) Graduate Diploma in Food Science and Technology of The Institute of Food Science and Technology.
- f) Membership of the Hotel and Catering International Management Association (HCIMA).

National Qualifications Framework

Centres should note that the *Fundamentals of Food Hygiene for the Food Industry* is not accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and is not part of the National Qualifications Framework. Centres are advised to check the availability of government funding for this qualification if this is required.

The RSPH does offer accredited qualifications in food hygiene. If such a qualification is required centres should apply for permission to offer the RSPH's *Level 2 Award in Food Safety for Manufacturing*. Copies of the syllabus for this qualification can be obtained from the address below or from the RSPH's website.

Centres should be registered with the RSPH
Any enquiries about this qualification should be made to:

The Qualifications Department,
Royal Society for Public Health
3rd Floor
Market Towers
1 Nine Elms Lane
SW8 5NQ