

## **RSPH Level 3 Award in Understanding how to Develop a HACCP Plan**

### **Guidance on Delivery:**

***It should be noted the following is recommended added value learning and recommendations which will NOT be assessed during the examination.***

This guidance is designed to support tutors with providing their learners with an optimal learning experience. It is not mandatory to follow this guidance but RSPH would expect that the delivery of the course is planned appropriately with sufficient content to ensure that learners not only have an opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes but gain a clear overview of their role in food safety management. Indicative content has been specified but tutors are also encouraged to include additional information, where relevant, that would offer added value to their learners.

The information covered by this qualification may be new to some learners; however, other learners, in the same cohort, may be generally familiar with the content. Therefore, the course programme needs to be planned to meet the needs of both inexperienced and more experienced learners.

The qualification is designed to provide understanding of the logical sequence of stages, including the seven Codex Alimentarius principles, of HACCP and to enable learners to develop a HACCP plan. It is expected that the majority of learners will aim to become HACCP team members or are already undertaking this role. Learners may also include those who audit or assess HACCP based systems and who need a thorough understanding of the Codex approach.

Understanding the different stages of the Codex logic sequence and how to apply the principles of HACCP is central to this qualification. It is important that learners are able to define the key terms used in HACCP and be able to apply them in the process of developing a HACCP plan. The

overarching requirement is that learners will apply their knowledge and understanding in their work place.

It is recommended that “discovery” learning is used as a strategy, so that learners are drawing on their own experience and prior knowledge, wherever possible. Learner participation is vital and the tutor should use techniques that require the learner to make contributions. The use of focussed exercises can help learners to apply theory previously discussed. In particular, learners should work in small groups on a HACCP case study. This will give the learners the opportunity to experience many of the activities of a HACCP team. The case study and exercises can be based on a process familiar to the learners or one pre-devised by the tutor. A variety of training techniques should be used so that various learning styles are accommodated and to enable formative learning checks. Open questions and team feedback are examples that could be utilised by the tutor. It is advised that the learners are prepared for the multiple-choice question assessment at the end of the course, this can be achieved by using material available from the RSPH website or that has been developed by the tutor.

It is suggested that the tutor stresses the importance of pre-requisite programmes as a foundation for HACCP. Typical examples should be discussed, for example training, personal hygiene, cleaning and disinfection procedures, building and equipment design and maintenance, pest management, waste management, labelling, traceability and recall procedures. The tutor may have the opportunity to focus discussions on the learners’ own operation.

For learners from the UK, in particular, the tutor should explain “due diligence” and how HACCP can help in such a defence. When explaining the need for HACCP based food safety management systems the tutor could make learners aware of current food poisoning trends and statistics. It is suggested that discussions also include the growth in size and diversity of the food industry, together with consumer’s perception of safe and acceptable food. The tutor should make mention of the application of the HACCP approach to certain types of food operations, for example the use of “model” systems such as Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) and Safe Catering.

It is recommended that definitions for key HACCP terms are obtained from the Codex Alimentarius Food Hygiene Basic Texts. The tutor should pay particular attention to areas of common confusion, e.g. hazard and risk, control and monitoring, validation and verification. The Codex logic sequence for the application of HACCP provides the tutor with a logical running order when explaining the process of developing a HACCP: starting with assemble the HACCP

team; moving onto describe the product and identify the intended use; construct the flow diagram and its on-site confirmation; list all potential hazards, conduct a hazard analysis, consider control measures; determine the critical control points (CCPs); establish critical limits for each CCP; establish a monitoring system for each CCP; establish corrective actions; establish verification procedures and lastly establish documentation and record-keeping. It is suggested that the tutor also explains the importance of the full commitment of management and the workforce to the successful application of HACCP. The tutor should also explain the need for the scope of the HACCP to be identified although this is not included in the Codex logic sequence.

The tutor should explain the type of information that needs to be covered on the product description and intended use. This could include the use of preservatives. Discussions about the HACCP team should include the potential make up of the team, the need for appropriately experienced staff, responsibilities and levels of authority of the team members and the potential use of ad hoc team members together with external experts and consultants.

The tutor should lead discussions about potential hazards, this might include hazards associated with a specific products or processes. It is suggested that the tutor shows the learners some of the tools available to help HACCP teams to determine the significant hazards, e.g. scoring systems and logic table. Particular focus should be given to the definition of the hazard, i.e. the manifestation (presence, contamination, multiplication and survival) and the correct identification of the cause/source.

For the determination of critical control points the Codex decision tree should be shown and guidance given in its use. It is suggested that this is included in the case study. In addition, the tutor should show how modified trees have been developed to overcome potential issues with the Codex tree. The tutor should give examples of critical limits for a range of processes and different critical control points.

The tutor should ensure that the term HACCP plan is explained and typical contents discussed. Examples of HACCP documents should be given, these should include HACCP team meeting records, procedures for monitoring and corrective actions, records of monitoring and corrective actions, records of validation and verification activities. Requirements for the retention of records should be included.