Continuing Professional Development (CPD) — Requirements for Food Safety Professionals
Foreword

This document has been prepared by the Food and Drink Federation (FDF) Food Hygiene Committee, with significant input from the Institute of Food Science & Technology’s (IFST) Accreditation Committee, as a tool to help Food Safety Professionals (FSPs) recognise their responsibility to maintain and enhance their individual professional competence. The document has subsequently been endorsed by the following organizations: Society of Food Hygiene and Technology (SOFHT), Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH).

FSPs should strive to continually update and improve their knowledge of issues and developments within the arena of food safety, and apply that knowledge to help maintain the safety, and maintain the professional reputation, of the food manufacturing industry.

It is not intended that compliance with the requirements of this document would represent an authoritative statement of competence. Whilst there is no legal requirement for FSPs to attend formal training courses or obtain a formal qualification, it is the legal requirement of the operator of the food business to ensure that employees are instructed and/or trained to an appropriate level. It is up to the food business operator to ensure that the training or instruction is appropriate. Individuals or organisations with specific queries about qualifications and competencies should seek further advice from ‘Improve’ the Sector Skills Council for the Food and Drink Manufacturing Industry in the UK, People 1st the Sector Skills Council for the Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism industries or Skillsmart Retail, the independent authority for retail skills development and promotion.

For general information regarding Food Safety related legislation, FSPs should contact either the Food Standards Agency (FSA) or their home Food Authority.

First Published October 2006
Revised October 2009
Contents

1. Introduction......................................................................................................................... 4
2. What is Continuing Professional Development?......................................................... 4
3. Annual Requirements for CPD....................................................................................... 5
4. Recognition of Compliance ......................................................................................... 5
5. Record Keeping.................................................................................................................. 6
6. Qualifying Activities......................................................................................................... 8
7. Qualifications for Food Safety ..................................................................................... 9
8. Suggested Template for Maintaining CPD Records...................................................... 12
9. Worked Example of Template for Maintaining CPD Records....................................... 13
1. Introduction

This document outlines basic CPD requirements for professionals involved in food safety management. CPD, by definition, implies that an individual is already qualified, and that they are, through CPD, maintaining and enhancing their skills. In reality there is no minimum education or qualification requirement for an individual to hold a position as a food safety professional. The specialised knowledge and skills, and experience required by an individual to be proficient in the field of food safety, and the nature of the services they provide, can make it difficult for those who depend on them to assess the quality and standards of the professional services they receive. It is therefore in the interests of the food industry, and the professionals themselves, that standards for CPD are clearly set and understood by all concerned.

As an aid for FSPs to develop formal qualifications, this document provides a non-exhaustive list of organisations that provide training (see section 7) which can be included as part of an ongoing CPD plan. This document also covers the fundamental principles to be observed by individuals in order to achieve common standards and professional objectives across the food manufacturing industry.

A food safety professional in the context of this document is defined as a professional involved in the development, operation, auditing and/or associated activities (e.g. training) of food safety, those activities being substantial responsibilities.

2. What is Continuing Professional Development?

CPD is a systematic and planned approach to the maintenance and development of knowledge, skills, and expertise that continues throughout a professional’s career, and is to the mutual benefit of the individual, the employer, and their professional industry.

The objective of CPD is to maintain high standards of professionalism within a specific industry and to ensure that knowledge is translated into best practice. CPD contributes to three basic areas:

- Maintenance of professional competence.
- Enhancement of existing knowledge and skills.
- Development of new knowledge and skills.

The emphasis of a CPD scheme is on ensuring that professional development is carefully tailored to assure relevance to the individual’s career, now and in the future.

The use of this document is intended to support FSPs and help them identify and maintain the skills and knowledge required to keep pace with a rapidly changing professional environment. The CPD framework will act as a development tool against which FSPs can identify their strengths and development needs.

Most individuals will obtain the necessary CPD as a normal part of their work activities and ideally no formal programme should be needed. In practice, however, any
profession, which does not have formal qualifications or a formal programme, can be perceived to lack credibility.

**CPD Standards**

**Participants must:**

1. maintain a continuous, up-to-date and accurate record of their CPD activities;
2. demonstrate that their CPD activities are a mixture of learning activities relevant to current or future practice (see learning activities below);
3. seek to ensure that their CPD has benefited the quality of their practice;
4. seek to ensure that their CPD has benefited the users of their work (employee, customer, student etc);
5. present a written profile containing evidence of their CPD on request.

**Learning Activities:**

A key element of the IFST CPD standards is that CPD is wide-ranging and that the activities undertaken should reflect a balance of learning activities. A participant's CPD should include activities in at least three (exceptionally two) of the following categories:

1. Work based learning (e.g. supervising staff / students, reflective practice)
2. Professional activity (e.g. involvement in a professional body, mentoring)
3. Formal / Educational (e.g. writing articles / papers, further/ higher education)
4. Self-directed learning (e.g. reading journals, reviewing books / articles)
5. Other (e.g. voluntary work, public service)

Examples in brackets are not intended to be comprehensive, and more examples are given in Section 6 below.

3. **Annual Requirements for CPD**

This document introduces the concept of a minimum 35 hours CPD per annum for all FSPs; this is easily attainable and is consistent with CPD schemes run by other professional bodies.

The annual CPD requirement is seen as a minimum and must not be taken as a guarantee of competence. Some individuals may need to devote more time to their own CPD than the levels suggested within this document. Individuals are encouraged to exceed the goals identified in their CPD plan.

4. **Recognition of Compliance**

---

1 Note: IFST is responsible for maintaining advanced standards of qualifications and professional practice amongst food scientists and technologists. It is able to provide a third party external accreditation service to employers, subject to sufficient numbers requesting such validation. Similar validation services are offered by a number of professional bodies and organisations.
The existence of a recognition system is not material to the acceptability and the success of a CPD programme. The important thing is that the development experience impacts positively on the individual’s professional practices.

However, individuals may wish to have their CPD records validated by a third party e.g. their employer, a peer within the industry, or a registered professional body / trade organisation¹. It is up to the individual to decide the most appropriate form for recognition of compliance. Where external validation has been arranged by an employer, individuals should be informed of the validation arrangement, including the name (and contact details) of the validating body.

IFST is licensed to award Chartered Scientist (CSci) to appropriately qualified members. CPD is an integral component of the Chartered Scientist qualification. Provided an individual's qualifications and experience meet the required CSci standards, the scheme outlined in this document would meet the CPD requirements for CSci.

5. Record Keeping

The key element of the CPD process is record keeping. All FSPs should maintain a CPD portfolio. This portfolio should ideally comprise of the following elements:

i) A Curriculum Vitae

It is important that an FSP is able to identify their current competencies before attempting to develop a CPD plan. To help an FSP to identify existing skills, and areas for growth and improvement, a full and detailed CV should be drafted and included within their CPD portfolio. This should list relevant qualifications and responsibilities and should be updated, as a minimum, on an annual basis.

¹ Note: IFST is responsible for maintaining advanced standards of qualifications and professional practice amongst food scientists and technologists. It is able to provide a third party external accreditation service to employers, subject to sufficient numbers requesting such validation. Similar validation services are offered by a number of professional bodies and organisations.
ii) References

FSPs should maintain at least two references from individuals working at an equivalent or senior level, which confirm their level of competency and understanding of specific areas of food safety. References may include assessments undertaken as part of an employee’s annual appraisal/review of objectives. FSPs should, where possible, maintain records/references which demonstrate when and how competency in specific areas of food safety has been achieved.

iii) A CPD plan, indicating development objectives and proposed development activities for the next year

FSPs should develop a personal CPD plan, and review this on a yearly basis. Individuals may decide that it is appropriate for their plan to be discussed with, and validated by, a third party.

A yearly review provides a structured opportunity for an individual to identify their CPD needs. A CPD plan should cover all areas of Food Safety e.g. legislation, microbiology, contamination, food contact materials. A CPD plan should also cover areas, which, while not directly relevant to Food Safety, may impact upon an individual's ability to carry out their job as an FSP e.g. related legislation on food labelling.

A formal CPD plan may also help employers, and organisations that the individual works with, recognise the benefits of providing sufficient resources for FSPs to carry out CPD activities.

As part of the CPD plan an FSP may recognise the need to undertake additional formal qualifications. Section 7 provides a non-exhaustive list of organisations that provide formal training and qualifications relating to food safety.

iv) A CPD record, detailing the professional development activities undertaken

FSPs should develop a personal CPD record and review this on a yearly basis, to determine whether the required competencies have been achieved. Records may be kept in any format which meets the individual's needs.

A suggested template for an individual's record can be found on the IFST website. www.ifst.org an alternative template is included as section 8. These templates serve as a guide for the type of information to be retained. A worked example of a partially completed template is included as section 9.

It is recommended that records, such as certificates issued by sponsors of formal activities, documentation in the form of written notes and formal course materials, be kept as part of the CPD record.

As with the CPD plan there is no requirement for annual recognition of compliance. However, detailed CPD records are essential for any review of a CPD plan by a third party. Individuals should aim to retain CPD records for as long as relevant to their career. While the question of professional competence is unlikely to be raised with regard to the vast majority of FSPs, should an individual’s professional competence be
questioned, the CPD plan and the CPD records should be able to demonstrate that the individual has met the requirements of this document and has considered and planned their CPD requirements on a regular basis.

6. Qualifying Activities

It is not possible to develop guidelines to cover every conceivable situation which would qualify as CPD. As a general rule qualifying CPD should raise awareness and understanding of statutory regulations, technological or scientific advancements, or good practice relating to food safety. In the vast majority of situations, the base for a good CPD requirement should include activities which provide opportunities to interact with other professionals.

The way in which an individual FSP takes part in CPD will also depend on their speciality, the opportunities available, their priorities, and their personal learning styles and preferences. This diversity of activity is encouraged, as without it CPD activities would be less effective.

The relevancy of an activity shall be determined by the FSP on an individual basis and with reference to the recommendations in this document. If there is doubt, it is recommended that the member exceed the minimum number of CPD hours.

Activities which do not directly relate to the issue of food safety or to the job of the FSP should not be recorded as CPD e.g. a word processing course.

Examples of CPD activities are listed below. It is emphasised that this is not an exhaustive list. Activities include participation and attendance at meetings, seminars or other programs with relevant food safety content. Examples include:

- Participation in lectures, seminars, courses, workshops and special meetings organised by IFST, FDF, FSA, DEFRA, HPA, SGM, Campden BRI, Leatherhead Food Research, SfAM or other relevant professional bodies, trade associations or government departments.
- External training courses directly related to issues of food safety.
- Employer sponsored in-house training courses.
- Participation on committees where the subject of discussion is directly relevant to issues of food safety.
- Delivering lectures or training. Hours spent in preparation of lectures or training should be included in CPD records.
- Participating in university courses relevant to Food Safety and Food Safety Management.
- Publishing academic papers.

It is recognised that the majority of FSPs will, through their work, undertake a considerable amount of activities that would constitute CPD. As it may be onerous to record every piece of information, CPD records should only be maintained for more significant activities.
Less formal activities that may contribute to CPD include:

- Shadowing the work of other Food Safety Professionals.
- Mentoring and professional supervision.
- Private reading of relevant journals and books.
- Undertaking research for seminars, lectures or articles.
- Participation in lectures, seminars, courses, and special meetings organised by IFST, FDF, FSA, DEFRA or other relevant professional bodies, trade associations or government departments which are not directly related to food safety, but which relate to the job of the food safety professional e.g. food labelling.

7. Qualifications for Food Safety

The following list of organisations is provided as aid for FSPs to develop formal qualifications as part of their ongoing CPD plan. In addition, most of the organisations listed run less formal seminars and events which, while not contributing to a formal qualification, can be included as part of general CPD. It is emphasised that this is not an exhaustive list and that many other organisations provide similar or alternatives services. FDF and IFST are not responsible for the content of external websites. The inclusion of a reference within this list is for information purposes only and does not mean that FDF or IFST in any way endorses the services provided by these organisations. Other organisations exist which may provide similar services. Organisations are listed alphabetically.

Campden BRI
http://www.campden.co.uk/

Campden BRI is the UK's largest independent membership-based organisation carrying out research and development for the food and drink industry. Campden BRI manages a substantial training programme, including in-house training tailored to specific company requirements.

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
http://www.cieh.org/

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) is a registered charity and the professional voice for environmental health. It sets standards, accredits courses and qualifications for the education of members and other environmental health practitioners.

The Directory of Food Safety Trainers
http://www.foodsafetytrainers.co.uk/

This website contains a database of Food Safety Training Providers/Trainers in the UK, sorted by county. The information compiled includes contact and training course details. The database covers courses accredited and managed by the, the Royal Society of Public Health, the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland, the Society for Food Hygiene and Technology and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.
The Institute of Food Science & Technology
http://www.ifst.org/

A registered charity, IFST is the leading independent professional qualifying body for food professionals in Europe and the only professional body in the UK concerned with all aspects of food science and technology. It is responsible for maintaining advanced standards of qualifications and professional practice amongst food scientists and technologists.

The Institute of Food Research, Norwich
http://www.ifr.ac.uk/

IFR is a not-for-profit company with charitable status. It is sponsored by the Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC). IFR run regular conferences and events related to its role as UK’s only integrated basic science provider focused on food

Improve Ltd
http://www.improveltd.co.uk/

Improve is the Sector Skills Council for Food and Drink Manufacturing. Its mission is to Drive up Skills for profit. In 2006 Improve set up a Skills Academy for the food and drink manufacturing sector consisting of a virtual hub (web based training) and physical Centres of Excellence (employer colleges, FE colleges or private trainer colleges).

Leatherhead Food Research
http://www.leatherheadfood.com/

Leatherhead Food Research is an independent provider of food information, market intelligence, technical and food research services. LFR supports a wide range of food expertise, and operates extensive training programmes.

People 1st
http://www.people1st.co.uk/

The Sector Skills Council for the Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism industries. People 1st cover: contract food service providers, events, gambling, holiday parks, hospitality services, hostels, hotels, membership clubs, pubs, bars and nightclubs, restaurants, self catering accommodation, tourist services, travel services and visitor attractions.

Reading Scientific Services Ltd
http://www.rssl.com/

Reading Scientific Services Limited provides science and technology outsourcing to the global food, drink and consumer goods industries and their suppliers in the agriculture, ingredients and chemicals sectors. RSSL run regular training courses and seminars throughout the year.
The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland  
http://www.rehis.org/

REHIS is an independent, self-financing Recognised Scottish Charity whose main objectives are for the benefit of the community to promote the advancement of Environmental Health.

Skillsmart Retail  
http://www.skillsmartretail.com

The independent authority for retail skills development and promotion, contributing to improved productivity.

The Royal Society of Public Health  
http://www.rsph.org.uk

RSPH is a leading independent body with a reputation dedicated to the promotion, practice and protection of public health.

The Society of Food Hygiene and Technology  
http://www.sofht.co.uk/

SOFHT covers the interests and views of everyone involved in food hygiene in its widest application throughout the food chain. The philosophy of the Society is to help all disciplines involved in the food industry by providing a forum for discussion and an opportunity for people with similar ideas, concerns and viewpoints to meet, either in person or through Society communications.
8. Suggested Template for Maintaining CPD Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of CPD</th>
<th>Description of CPD</th>
<th>Number of hours Claimed</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
<th>Verified by Third party?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation, value obtained, competences / skills gained, learning outcomes, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of CPD</th>
<th>Description of CPD</th>
<th>Number of hours Claimed</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
<th>Verified by Third party?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation, value obtained, competences / skills gained, learning outcomes, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Worked Example of Template for Maintaining CPD Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of CPD</th>
<th>Description of CPD</th>
<th>Number of hours Claimed</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
<th>Verified by Third party?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27/10/2005</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Salmonella Food Poisoning Outbreaks: What to Do, How to Cope. (Course Provider: Royal Institute of Public Health).</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Type of Activity</td>
<td>Presentations followed by questions and answers sessions. Detailed examples of incidents and lessons that were learnt in their handling by the EHOs concerned.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation, value obtained, competences / skills gained, learning outcomes, etc.</td>
<td>This focus of this years’ RIPH symposium was major outbreaks of salmonella, mainly associated with catering and restaurant establishments. The symposium provided useful background to the thought processes and management of local enforcement agencies when dealing with food incidents of this nature. The focus of the presentations was on catering and restaurants, rather than on manufacturing, however the overall standard of the presentations was high and the presentations given on ‘Controls on imports’, ‘Salmonella enteriditis associated with shell Spanish eggs’ and ‘Prosecution pitfalls’ were enlightening and were directly relevant to my role. As an overview of the work and the problems that EHOs face the symposium was instructive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Further Needs</td>
<td>No specific recommendations or training outside my area of work as a result of attending this symposium.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>