

How to become qualified and appointed as a Food Safety Officer?

The following two sections provide you with the steps you need to take in order to become appointed as a Food Safety Officer.

Section 1: sets out the steps you need to take in order to gain sufficient experience and qualifications before you can apply to become appointed as a Food Safety Officer

Section 2: provides you with the skills and knowledge (competencies) that you need in order to be able to become appointed by MPI as a Food Safety Officer

Section 1:

STEP	WHAT YOU NEED TO DO	WHAT YOU NEED TO HAVE	REFER TO SECTION 2 FOR COMPETENCIES	DO YOU HAVE? YES/NO	WHAT YOU MAY WANT TO DO
1	Gain a formal food related qualification related to food or scientific principles that can translate to the food sector	A relevant tertiary or post graduate qualification at NZQA Level 4 or higher	General Food Sector Skills		This can be done by completing a course, for example in a science, food or environmental health discipline, or providing evidence of equivalent training.
2	Gain a formal qualification relevant to hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP)	NZQA unit standard 19514 or similar	General Food Sector Skills		Identify and complete appropriate course relevant to HACCP. This may be through an education provider or through an agency's in-house training program.
3	Gain training in compliance fundamental skills	Evidence of completion of training in regulatory compliance skills	Compliance Fundamental Skills		Identify and complete appropriate course(s) in regulatory compliance. This may be through an education provider or through an agency's in-house training program.
4	Gain work experience in a regulatory compliance and/or relevant food industry role	Evidence of work experience in a regulatory compliance and/or relevant food industry role	General Food Sector Skills		Work in a regulatory compliance and/or in a relevant food industry role.

STEP	WHAT YOU NEED TO DO	WHAT YOU NEED TO HAVE	REFER TO SECTION 2 FOR COMPETENCIES	DO YOU HAVE? YES/NO	WHAT YOU MAY WANT TO DO
5	Learn about Food Act 2014 and associated legislation	Knowledge of the Food Act 2014, Food Regulations 2015, Food Notices 2015, The Food Standards Code 2002	Food Legislation Skills		Complete the Food Safety Officer Food Act 2014 Training Program relevant to your role. For access to the training program register for Food Safety Officer Training Modules .
6	Learn skills specific to food investigations under the Food Act 2014 and associated legislation	Knowledge of Exhibits, Sampling and Equipment, Food Complaint Investigations, Foodborne Illness Investigations and Food Recalls	Food Investigation Skills		
7	Apply to be appointed as a Food Safety Officer	Evidence confirming that you have the General Food Sector and Compliance Fundamental Skills. A record of learning from Tiritiri to show completion of one of the following training programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial Authority FSO Food Act 2014 Training Program • Food Compliance FSO Food Act 2014 Training Program • Investigator and Systems Audit FSO Food Act 2014 Training Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verification Services FSO Food Act 2014 training program 	n/a		Apply to be appointed as a Food Safety Officer. For guidance and an application form go to: Working as a Food Safety Officer . See section “Appy to become a Food Safety Officer”.

Section 2:

Skills required by Food Safety Officers operating under the Food Act 2014

Common Technical Skills

These are the mandatory skills that are common to all Food Safety Officer Roles and to regulatory compliance roles across government. They are the compliance foundation skills that any person involved in enforcing regulatory requirements must have and from which sector technical skills are built upon.

Compliance Fundamental Skills

SKILL	KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED
Note booking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Can list and explain the reasons for entering information into your notebook. Explains the uses of the notebook.Demonstrates the correct use of the notebook.Completes a notebook entry correctly and accurately according to notebook rules.Knows what factors can affect observational recall.
Interviews & Statements (Includes Notebook Interviewing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Can identify the six basic questions of an interview.Can list the basic details we should obtain from people we interview.Knows the theory and procedure for conducting offender interviews and witness statements.Can conduct an interview of a witness/suspect using a notebook.Knows and demonstrates how to correctly and legally caution someone.Knows the relevant sections of the Bill of Rights Act 1990 as it relates to detaining and questioning individuals.

SKILL	KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED
Interview Planning	<p>Can prepare an effective interview plan.</p> <p>Follows correct procedures, protocols and technical requirements. Builds rapport and sets the scene appropriately.</p> <p>Can complete an accurate record of an interview that achieves the plan's objectives. Ensures that the record is taken in a proper and legal manner, and in the correct format. Ensures the interview is closed according to best practice.</p> <p>Demonstrates an effective evaluation of both the interview and the material gained.</p>
Investigation (Case) File Management includes Job Sheeting	<p>Know the uses, format and content of a job sheet.</p> <p>Can create a job sheet from information recorded in a notebook.</p> <p>Ensures that the investigation (case) file contains all the key documentation.</p> <p>Knows how to enter the investigation file into the investigation management system as the investigation progresses.</p> <p>Knows the content and form of a summary of facts.</p> <p>Knows the requirements related to disclosure.</p> <p>Knows the documentation trail for exhibits. Understands the court processes.</p> <p>Understands the key points behind giving evidence in court.</p>
Communication	<p>Ability to clearly convey key messaging in both written & oral form.</p> <p>Knows the value of good communication skills as a Compliance Officer.</p>

Sector Technical Skills

These are the sector skills that Food Safety officers require, in addition to their common skills, to achieve within their specific role. All skills are mandatory for appointment unless indicated.

General Food Sector Skills

SKILL	KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED
NZQA Level 4 (or equivalent qualification and/or experience)	Provide evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• completion of at least an NZQA Level 4 qualification in science, food or public or environment health discipline ; and/or• sufficient experience in a regulatory compliance and/or relevant food industry role.
NZQA unit standard 19514 (or equivalent qualification and/or experience)	Has: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• satisfactorily completed a HACCP course (NZQA unit standard 19514 or equivalent); or• provided evidence of a combination of another relevant qualification and sufficient practical HACCP experience to demonstrate knowledge of food processing, types and sources of hazards and effectiveness of control measures.

Food Legislation Skills

SKILL	KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED
Food Act 2014	<p>Explain the purposes of the Food Act 2014.</p> <p>Explain the VADE operating model.</p> <p>Describe how the compliance approach applies to the Food Act 2014.</p> <p>Describe MPIs, Territorial Authorities and third party organisations roles and responsibilities within the VADE model and the relationships between them.</p>
Food Act 2014 – Risk Based Measures (what food businesses must do)	<p>Find the requirements and legislation relating to food control plans and national programmes.</p> <p>Identify the risk based measure that a food business must operate under.</p> <p>Explain when to use a custom or a template food control plan and what a food control plan needs to contain.</p>
Food Act 2014 – Verification 1	<p>Explain the verification process for risk based measures and the role of the verifier.</p> <p>Describe performance based verification and why we use it.</p> <p>Explain the steps for verification of food control plans and national programmes.</p> <p>Describe the reasons for an unacceptable verification outcome.</p> <p>Recognise the escalation points for non-compliance.</p>
Food Act 2014 – Verification 2	<p>Explain how to prepare for a verification including; checking registration details and compliance history, setting the scope and scheduling the verification.</p> <p>Describe how to assess your competency to complete the verification and identify what expert help you may need.</p> <p>Explain what to do during a verification including; conducting entry and exit meetings, making judgements on verification topic outcomes and the overall verification outcome</p> <p>Describe what to report to the business, registration authority and MPI after the verification.</p>

SKILL	KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED
Food Act 2014 – Imported Food	<p>Describe the responsibilities of food safety officers with regard to imported food.</p> <p>State the duties of food importers.</p> <p>Explain the process a food must go through to be imported for sale into New Zealand.</p> <p>Describe the ways to deal with a food that has failed to be given clearance.</p> <p><i>Apply your knowledge in a imported food clearance scenario.</i></p>
Food Act 2014 - Powers and Authorities	<p>Name the general obligations and duties of a food safety officer.</p> <p>Know the places you can enter without a search warrant.</p> <p>Know how the VADE approach is used in determining the investigation outcome</p>
Food Standards Code 2002 - General Labelling Requirements	<p>Know where to find the Code and associated guidance material.</p> <p>Be able to state the Code requirements for labelling of food for retail sale, food for catering purposes and food other than for retail sale.</p> <p>Know where to find further information about the exemptions from labelling, health claims, what substances can be added to food, contaminants and residues and prohibited substances.</p> <p><i>Apply your knowledge in a food labelling investigation scenario.</i></p>
Search and Surveillance	<p>Knows the powers of inspection and search that are applicable to the Food Act contained in the Search and Surveillance Act and know how they are applied in practice.</p> <p>Knows the obligations related to search and inspection that are contained in the Search and Surveillance Act and pertaining to the Food Act.</p> <p>Know the application and use of Production Orders.</p>

Food Investigation Skills

SKILL	KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED
Exhibits, Sampling and Equipment	<p>Identify exhibits and samples and describe how to receive or take exhibits. Describe how to maintain the integrity of food samples including chain of evidence. Identify the contents of a sampling kit and where to find it.</p> <p>Explain the process for procuring an exhibit.</p> <p>Explain aseptic sampling.</p> <p>Explain best practice for sampling packaged food.</p> <p>Describe the process for sending exhibits to a laboratory.</p>
Food Complaint Investigation	<p>Explain how to receive and assess a food complaint</p> <p>Explain how to create an investigation plan for a food complaint</p> <p>Describe what needs to be considered when planning a site visit to a food business</p> <p>Explain actions that would be taken and how to communicate investigation outcomes</p> <p>Explain how the VADE approach is used in determining the investigation outcome</p> <p><i>Apply your knowledge in a food complaint investigation scenario.</i></p>
Foodborne Illness Investigation*	<p>Explain the process for investigation of food or food businesses associated with reports of foodborne illness.</p> <p>Explain the factors that influence the occurrence, prevention and control of pathogens linked to foodborne illness.</p> <p>Describe concepts and application of epidemiology in relation to infectious and non-infectious agents.</p> <p>Explain the roles and responsibilities of the agencies involved in the investigation of foodborne illness.</p> <p><i>Apply your knowledge in a foodborne illness investigation scenario.</i></p>
Food Recalls**	<p>Explain the food recall process.</p> <p>Describe the roles and responsibilities of a Food Safety Officer in recalls. Describe the recall audit process.</p>

* Not mandatory for the Verification Services Food Safety Officer role

** Not mandatory for the Territorial Authority, Verification Services, and Investigation & Systems Audit Food Safety Officer roles