



QUALITY COUNCIL OF INDIA (QCI)

2nd Floor, Institution of Engineers Building, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi – 110002
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Procedure for Hygiene Rating Auditor Training Programs

(Standard Operating Procedure)



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S. No	Table of Content	Page No
	Background	01
1.	Scope	01
2.	Introduction	01
3.	Nomination and Registration Process	01
4.	Fee Structure	03
5.	Process of the Training Program	03
6.	Responsibilities of QCI Secretariat	05
7.	Virtual Training and examination	07
8.	Certificate Issuance	08
9.	Complaint/Grievance/Appeal	09



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Background

QCI has been approved by FSSAI in Dec 2020 to recognise Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies (HRAAs) to perform FSSAI's Hygiene Rating Audits. As per the approved HRAA scheme document, clause 6 of requirements of recognition of HRAAs, the auditors shall undergo and qualify the Hygiene Rating Auditor Training Program conducted by FSSAI. On 02 Jan 2023, FSSAI has given the responsibility to QCI for conducting the Hygiene Rating (HR) Auditor Training Program followed by the examination for the auditors as per the requirement of the HRAA scheme.

1. Scope

This document governs the modalities of the training cum examination process in the form of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

2. Introduction

Hygiene Rating (HR) Auditor Training Program shall be conducted by QCI in physical mode. In exceptional circumstances, such as in the unfortunate cases of increasing of Covid cases, QCI may conduct the training cum examination process in virtual mode.

3. Nomination and Registration Process

3.1 QCI shall invite the HRAAs (applicants/provisionally recognised/recognised) to nominate and register the participants for the training program 3 weeks in advance of the training program. The HRAAs shall be given the last date of nomination and registration which shall be abided by the HRAAs. The nomination / registration received after the last date shall be accepted by QCI.

3.2 The HRAAs shall nominate the participants fulfilling the criteria mentioned in clause to QCI in email on or before the last date of nomination. Any nomination received after the last date shall not be accepted.

3.3 The HRAAs shall nominate the participants by submitting the following documents of the participants to QCI-PADD in email (hraa@qcin.org)

- i Documents: Training program for qualifying as HR auditor
 - a) Degree certificate
 - b) Audit log
 - c) Letter of engagement (appointment letter/contractual agreement) for full time and part time employees
 - d) Any other relevant document requested by QCI
- ii Documents: Refresher training program for HR auditor
 - e) Certificate of Completion of the previous training program
 - f) Letter of engagement (appointment letter/contractual agreement) for full time and part time employees
 - g) Any other relevant document requested by QCI



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3.4 The HRAAs shall register the nominated participants in the google form/other platform formally to QCI by furnishing the following information:

- a) Name of the HRAA
- b) Name of the respondent
- c) Email ID
- d) Mobile number
- e) Total number of participants nominated
- f) Name of the participants
- g) Transaction details
- h) Declaration

3.5 QCI shall not accept the registration received after the last date of registration and any fee paid by the HRAAs shall not be refunded.

3.6 Criteria for participants for qualifying as HR auditor

- i Education:** Bachelor's degree in food or Dairy or Fisheries or Oil Technology or Biotechnology or Agricultural or Veterinary Sciences or Bio-chemistry or Microbiology or Chemistry or Catering Technology or Hotel Management from a recognized university.
- ii Experience:** The participant must have at least 30 man-days audit experience in food sector, audit experience in Schedule IV of FSS (Licensing & Registration of Food Business), Regulations, 2011

3.7 The HRAA shall seek an undertaking from all the nominated participants not to approach QCI with individual queries and grievances which shall be only forwarded by the respective HRAAs to QCI.

3.8 In case a HRAA takes any adverse action based on disqualification of an auditor in the exam conducted by QCI, QCI shall not be liable for the consequences. It is the responsibility of the HRAA to put in place a system for the capacity building of their staff in such a manner that their competencies are in accordance with Scheme requirements.

3.9 The HRAA shall ensure that above qualification and experience requirements are met for proposed applicants and all documents provided for the applicants must be thoroughly verified for their authenticity and shall be fully responsible in case any ambiguity or malpractice is found at any stage of this process

3.10. In case any deviation from qualification and experience is found QCI may take appropriate action including but not limited to cancellation of recognition or HRAA or/and cancellation of certificate issued for HRAA auditors (refer clause 6 QCI/PADD/HRAA_ Requirements and clause 8, 9 of QCI/PADD/HRAA_ Procedure)



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4. Fee structure

4.1 Registration fee for the training program are as tabulated below:

S. No	Header	INR*
1	Registration fee for HR auditor training program (onsite)	Rs. 5000/-
2	Registration fee for HR auditor training program (online)*	Rs. 3000/-
3	Fee for re-check (totaling of marks)	Rs. 500/-
4	Fee for re-examination (onsite evaluation of candidate)	Rs. 2500/-
5	Fee for re-examination (online evaluation of candidate)*	Rs. 1000/-
6	Change in certificate content (as per clause 9)/ duplicate or additional copy of certificate.	Rs. 1000/-
7.	Certificate re- issued due to change of HRAA	Rs 1500/-

****Applicable as per clause 7 of this document.***

4.2 The above fee structure is excluding the taxes.

4.3 QCI Secretariat shall issue the invoice and receipt voucher to the respective HRAAs within 15 days from the last date of registration.

5. Process of the Training Program

5.1 Training program shall be conducted for a minimum of 8 hours duration; trainer shall assign activities to the participants during the sessions for 20 marks. The modalities of the activities will be assigned by the trainer during the introductory session.

5.2 Examination shall be conducted for participants at the end of the training program for 80 marks for the duration of 40 minutes.

5.3 QCI shall invite trainer and examiner for the training program fulfilling the below mentioned criteria. The number trainer and examiner shall commensurate to the batch size.

5.3.1 Normally the batch size should be the maximum 40 participants, in case any exemption same can be give by HoD only.

5.4 Empanelment Criteria for Trainer/Examiner

The trainer/examiner shall not be associated with any of the HRAAs/HR auditors for any activities which results in potential Conflict of Interest (CoI) such as financial, business, personal relationship, services offered previously such as implementation of systems, process, etc., They shall declare their impartiality status in the prescribed format.



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Competence Criteria for Trainer/Examiner

- i **Education:** Bachelor's degree in Food or Dairy or Fisheries or Oil Technology or Biotechnology or Agricultural or Veterinary Sciences or Bio-chemistry or Microbiology or Chemistry or Catering Technology or Hotel Management or other equivalent degree from a recognized university.

- ii **Experience:** Minimum 10 years of experience in the professional field.

Note: Trainer/examiner shall have 30 man-days audit experience in food sector.

5.5 QCI shall get acceptance from the trainer and the examiner for fulfilling the following responsibilities for which appropriate man-day shall be paid by QCI.

Responsibilities of the Trainer

- i Training modules shall be prepared by the trainer as per the approved proposal covering the following:
- a) HR Scheme - scope based audit requirements
 - Food Service Establishments (hotels, restaurants, cafeteria, dhabhas, etc.,)
 - Bakeries
 - Meat Retail
 - Sweet Shops
 - b) Schedule IV of FSS (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses), 2011.
- ii The trainer shall submit the modules to QCI 7 days before the scheduled training program.
- iii Training modules shall be revised/updated/modified based on the FSSAI/QCI on time-time notification/orders/circulars/requirements available in FSSAI/QCI website.
- iv Training modules may be revised/updated/modified for each program based on the feedback shared to the trainer by QCI on reviewing the participant's feedback forms submitted in the previous batches.
- v Trainer shall submit the marks allotted to the participants for the training activities marks to QCI within 3 days from the date of conduct of the training program.

Responsibilities of the Examiner

- i Shortlisting of the participants based on the scrutiny of the pre - requisite documents submitted by the HRAAs during nomination (to identify the eligibility of participants verifying the highest degree certificate, CV, audit log, engagement letter with agency, etc.,).



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- ii To share the list of participants shortlisted for the training program within 3 days from the date of receipt of information shared with the examiner.
- iii Preparation of 2 sets of question papers for per examination; QCI shall select the final question paper for the examination.
- iv Submission of question papers and the answer key with appropriate markings within 7 days from the date of receipt of acceptance to be an examiner for the scheduled training program.
- v Examiner shall submit the results to QCI within 3 days from the date of examination conducted.
- vi Monitor the participants throughout the training program and during the examination and shall report the feedback to the QCI Secretariat.
- vii Examiner shall monitor the participants being involved in malpractice/misconduct/misbehaviour as mentioned below and report to QCI in writing with the signature of the witness within 1 day from the date of examination conducted.
 - a) Malpractice such as use of electronic devices/reference materials/receiving assistance from other source/any other means of practices.,
 - b) Misconduct/Misbehaviour such as failing to comply with the instruction of the examiner/other unethical behaviours.,
 - c) Any other responsibilities as and when assigned by QCI before or on the training program.

6. Responsibilities of QCI Secretariat

- 6.1 QCI Secretariat shall announce the training program before 3 weeks from the scheduled date of the training program.
- 6.2 QCI Secretariat shall coordinate the following for the conduct of the training program:
 - i Boarding and lodging arrangements for trainer/examiner/QCI representative/QCI Secretariat.
 - ii Hall arrangement and to verify the facilities for the conduct of training program and the examination.
 - iii Refreshment/lunch arrangements for all the participants/trainer/examiner/other resource involved in the program.
- 6.3 The training program may be conducted on rotational zone wise/location may be altered based on the requirement. The identification of the training program location will be the sole discretion of QCI.
- 6.4 QCI Secretariat shall inform FSSAI on the scheduled training program and also may invite FSSAI to be an observer for the training program atleast before 5 days the training program.



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- 6.5 QCI Secretariat shall inform the technical resource of PADD for HR portal demonstration session/may also invite FSSAI, if required.
- 6.6 QCI Secretariat shall share the list of participants shortlisted for training program in email atleast 5 days before the scheduled training program to all the HRAAs and to upload the list of participants shortlisted in QCI-PADD website.
- 6.7 QCI Secretariat shall prepare the agenda and share the same to the HRAAs in email atleast 3 days before the scheduled training program.
- 6.8 QCI Secretariat shall coordinate the following
- i To register the participants by verifying the Govt. ID proof and a copy of Govt. ID proof with participants self-attestation, shall be collected from the all the participants.
 - ii Maintenance of attendance for morning and afternoon session
 - iii Distribution and collection of activities sheets
 - iv Distribution of question paper and collection of answer sheets
 - v Distribution and collection of feedback forms
- 6.9 QCI Secretariat shall coordinate with the examiner for the list of participants involved in malpractice/misconduct/misbehaved during the training program and during the examination and submit the list to Joint-Director, PADD for necessary actions, appropriate actions shall be taken by the Joint-Director, PADD based on the reasonable grounds.
- 6.10 QCI Secretariat shall upload the answer keys in QCI-PADD website within 24 hours from the date of examination conducted.
- 6.11 QCI Secretariat shall prepare the consolidated mark list of the participants and submit the list of qualified participants to the Joint-Director, PADD for approval within 2 days from the receipt of mail received from the trainer and the examiner and the same shall be uploaded on QCI-PADD website on the same day of receipt of approval received from the Joint-Director, PADD.
- 6.12 QCI Secretariat shall share in confidence to the respective HRAAs in emails, the marks obtained by the participants (qualified/unqualified) on the same day of releasing the result.
- 6.13 QCI Secretariat shall inform the HRAAs on the options available for the unqualified participants such as re-evaluation & re-examination on the same day of releasing the list of qualified participants.
- 6.14 QCI Secretariat shall invite the HRAAs in email to register in the google form/other platform to apply for the re-evaluation/re-examination with the complete details on the same date of announcing the list of qualified participants (the unqualified participants may appear for the re-examination, if desired).



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- 6.15 QCI Secretariat shall forward the request received from the HRAAs for re-evaluation to the examiner within 3 days from the last date of registration (re-evaluation).
- 6.16 QCI Secretariat shall initiate the same process for re-examination as followed for the conduct of initial examination within 3 days from the last date of registration (re-examination) and the location of re-examination will be discretion of QCI.
- 6.17 QCI may reserve the rights to cancel the training program/postpone the dates of the training program/re-examination before 2 days from the date of schedule.

7. Virtual Training and Examination

- 7.1 Virtual training and examination shall be applicable on the reasonable ground based on the approval of the Joint-Director, PADD.
- 7.2 The process of physical training and the examination with the TAT to announce and conduct the training program shall be applicable (excluding the clauses 6.2 & 6.3).
- 7.3 QCI secretariat shall record the complete training program and the examination using the appropriate tools and to maintain the records for future reference.
- 7.4 Examination shall be conducted in google forms/other platforms which shall be proctored by the examiner. The adequate features will be activated for ensuring the no breach of integrity.
- 7.5 QCI Secretariat shall inform the participants the options to print/make a pdf of the copy of response submitted for the examination for the future reference.
- 7.6 Only the examiner shall have the access to the extent of assigning marks and QCI secretariat shall have only viewing rights of the answer sheets.

8. Assessment - Assessment of candidate shall be through evaluation both during the training as internal assessment and after the training through written examination.

a. Internal Assessment –

- 8.1 The internal assessment shall be carried out by the trainer of the candidate during the course of the training.
- 8.2 The candidate will be assessed for their overall performance during the training in terms of interaction, question and explanations sought by the trainer.
- 8.3 The total number assigned for the internal assessment is 20 marks.
- 8.4 The passing marks for the internal assessment is 14 marks.
- 8.5 Trainer shall declare the results of the internal assessment on the same day.



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b. External Assessment (Examination) –

- 8.6 The external assessment shall be carried out by the examiner.
- 8.7 The candidate will be assessed for their overall understanding of the subject.
- 8.8 The total number assigned for the internal assessment is 80 marks.
- 8.9 The pattern of mark allocation is: question 1- 25 to carry 2 marks each and question 26-27 - 15 marks each totaling to 80 marks.
- 8.10 The question paper and answer key shall be uploaded in the website within 24 hours of the exam.
- 8.11 The candidates are required to score a minimum of 70% individually in internal and external assessments. They are also required to score a minimum of 70% cumulatively in both the assessments.
(This supersedes earlier circular issued on examination dated 03 Mar 2023)
- 8.12 There is provision for re-checking and re-evaluation should the candidate desires so.
- 8.13 All such request shall be routed through the HRAAs only.

9. Certificate Issuance

- 9.1 As per the format approved by FSSAI, QCI Secretariat shall issue the digital certificate of completion within 3 days from the receipt of results release. The certificate of completion shall be issued with two years' validity to the participants who has successfully qualified the examination to the respective HRAAs in email.
- 9.2 The following details to be mentioned in the certificates:
 - i Name of the participants
 - ii Name of the HRAA
 - iii Batch Number
 - iv Certificate Number
 - v Date of Issue
 - vi Validity Date
 - vii Signature of Issuing Authority
 - viii Disclaimer (terms of usage)
- 9.3 QCI Secretariat shall submit the list of qualified participants with the certificate number after each training program to FSSAI within 2 days from the date of issuance of certificates.
- 9.4 Any change in the content of the certificate shall be routed via HRAA only, to QCI. Such request need to be submitted by HRAA along with supporting documents i.e Certificate of Incorporation in case there is any change in the name of HRAA.



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9.5 In case, there is change of HRAA on certificate issued by QCI, following shall be ensured-
Submission of such applications is permitted through new HRAA only

- i. Applicant need to submit NoC from previous HRAA (If applicable)
- ii. Following documents will be required to process the applications
- iii. Copy of existing valid certificate,
- iv. NoC from previous HRAA (if applicable),
- v. FSSAI registration details i.e, screen short from FSSAI portal
- vi. Qualification and experience documents

9.6 New HRAA need to verify auditor credentials prior to submit the application to QCI for change of HRAA.

9.7 Any queries/ grievances related to training/ examination/ certificate need to be submitted to QCI within 15 days of examination. Post 15 day's timeline QCI take the cognizance as deemed fit.

10. Complaint/grievance/appeal

10.1 QCI Secretariat shall inform the HRAAs that the complaint/grievance/appeal received only from the HRAAs shall be acknowledged and the complaints/grievance/appeal received from the individual participants shall not be acknowledged by QCI.

10.2 QCI Secretariat shall inform the HRAAs that the participants nominated and registered by them, if found not following the code of conduct, QCI shall communicate to the respective HRAA to take appropriate action, QCI reverses its rights to take appropriate action on HRAAs, as deemed fit.

10.3 QCI Secretariat shall forward the complaints/grievance/appeal to the Joint Director, PADD, QCI (responsible for grievance handling) within 1 day from the date of receipt of communication received from the HRAA.

10.4 Secretariat- PADD, QCI shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint/grievance/appeal received within 2 days from the date of the communication received from the QCI Secretariat.

10.5 Joint Director, PADD, QCI shall investigate the complaint/grievance/appeal within 7 days from the date of acknowledgment and respond to the respective HRAA.

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