

# Appendix D: Mystery Shopper Food Outlet Audit shopper brief

## What's The Assignment All About?

The objective of the audit is to assess covertly whether outlets are displaying their Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) stickers. The aim is to determine the rating, display and location of the stickers. We are particularly interested in knowing if the sticker is visible from outside the outlet/at entrances when the business is open. Clearly visible stickers are for consumers before they enter the outlet to be able to make an informed choice about where they eat.

### Important:

The assignment must be done covertly, without being openly acknowledged by others. You should not disclose what you are trying to do and you should act like a customer. Your behaviour should not make others suspicious of you. Do not under any circumstances refer to the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme or the sticker - you need to locate stickers covertly yourself and these should be easy to locate in a visible place. If the photo cannot be taken without raising suspicion, please do not take one.

## What do I have to do?

### Before your assignment:

- Check the opening times (on the outlet's website where possible) for each food outlet you will be auditing. Please take into account the opening hours of the establishments and make sure you only visit when they are open. If you know that the outlet is not accessible to the public (e.g. home caterer at a private address and staff canteen), please let us know and we will remove this from your account and we can swap for another outlet. If you're unsure whether the outlet is still trading please call them and ask if they are open etc.
- Check the outlet's website or Facebook Business Page for the FHRS rating, take screenshots of the FHRS rating shown for the outlet and include the website address clearly. If you cannot locate a website or Facebook Business Page for the outlet you will need to Google it and take a screenshot of the search result where you've googled the outlet's name and postcode.
- Read the assessment form carefully.
- Download the MSL app before your visits, details can be found under our Helpful Links and Information at the bottom of this brief. You will then be able to complete the audits at the time and submit through the app.
- Please remember the assignment must be conducted discretely, without anyone knowing what you are doing. When taking a photo of the sticker, please take the photo discretely and in context (e.g., if the sticker is next to the till, step back and take a photo that captures the surrounding environment including the sticker). **If the photo cannot be taken without raising suspicion, please do not take one.**

### During your assignment:

1. Take a photo of the outside of the whole store clearly including what is to the left and right. (Please remember to date & time stamp your photos). All photos must be taken discretely, meaning that no one should be aware of what you are doing or feel suspicious about your presence.
2. Some outlets will have more than one entrance so you will need to check all entrances, please note which entrances have stickers on and take discrete pictures of these. Please take the photo of the sticker in context, capturing the surrounding environment instead of taking the picture too close to the sticker (e.g., if the sticker is on the door, take a photo of the whole door. If it is not possible to take a photo discretely, do not take a photo and provide a reason why the photo could not be taken discretely). Unlike last year you **do not need** to take pictures of the back of the sticker.
3. You will need to find a reason to covertly gain access to the outlet and look around. This could mean making up a scenario to gain access. For example, if you're trying to obtain access to a hotel or restaurant you could say that you would like to have a look round with the prospect of making a booking. Try not to lead on the business in these instances. If the outlet is not easily accessible and it will not appear natural to enter without suspicion, please contact MSL whilst on site for an alternative outlet.
4. If you find at any time that the outlet is a corporate venue and you're unable to gain access, please contact us whilst on site so that we can let you know how to proceed.
5. You need to check the below areas for stickers at each outlet:
  - On the inside of doors/windows
  - In the area just inside the entrance
  - On the walls
  - At the counter or till
  - On the entrance to non-public areas, such as the kitchen
  - Anywhere else that a sticker may be visibly displayed
  - 
  - 6. If you see more than 5 stickers at one outlet you will only need to record the first 5.
  - 7. If you're not able to audit an outlet as it's closed, but have visited within the opening hours, please contact MSL whilst on site. You will still need to complete an assessment form and detail why you were not able to enter. Please ensure you take a picture of the outside of the outlet and upload this to your assessment form.
  - 8. Please note that you are required to try as best as you can to gain access (make up a scenario if need be). If you are unable to gain access to the outlet for any other reason than it's closed, please contact us whilst you are still on site so that we can provide you with a replacement outlet.

## After

Following your assignment, please:

- Please complete each assessment straight after each audit to avoid confusion between audits.
- Upload a photo of the outside of the outlet clearly showing the whole building and what is to the left and right.
- Upload your photos of each FHRS sticker that you can see and note where it was.

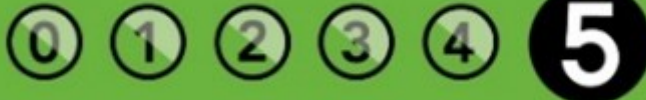
Examples of stickers:



Food Standards Agency  
food.gov.uk/ratings

This scheme is operated in partnership with your local authority

## FOOD HYGIENE RATING



VERY GOOD



Food Standards Agency  
food.gov.uk/ratings

This scheme is operated in partnership with your local authority

## FOOD HYGIENE RATING

# AWAITING INSPECTION



Asiantaeth Safonau Bwyd  
food.gov.uk/ratings

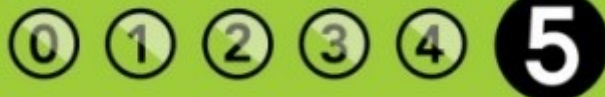
Food Standards Agency



Asiantaeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Gweithredir y cynllun hwn mewn partneriaeth â'ch awdurdod lleol  
This scheme is operated in partnership with your local authority

## SGÔR HYLENDID BWYD FOOD HYGIENE RATING



DA IAWN  
VERY GOOD



### **When does my Assessment Form have to be Completed by?**

Please ensure that the online assessment is completed the same day as your audit. If you have an issue which might delay this, you must contact us to let us know, or your assignment will be marked as late and you may not be paid.

### **Any Concerns or Questions?**

We are here to help, and we would rather you contact us with any concerns or questions before they become a problem. [CONTACT DETAILS REDACTED]