

Slaughter licensing

How to get the required licensing to slaughter animals in a meat establishment.

Certificate of Competence

As the UK has left the EU, a Certificate of Competence (CoC) issued anywhere other than in the UK is no longer valid and cannot be accepted to carry out duties in approved slaughterhouses.

Citizens from the Republic of Ireland (ROI) can apply for a UK CoC upon application to WATOK@food.gov.uk with details of their current ROI CoC, and the appropriate fee. A UK CoC will be issued on an equivalence basis for the same species and operations

Why you need one

You need a Certificate of Competence (CoC) from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to do any of the following in an FSA-approved slaughterhouse:

- handle animals before they're restrained
- restrain animals for stunning or killing
- stun animals
- check stunning has worked
- shackle or hoisting live animals
- bleed live animals
- religious slaughter
- pithing of a stunned animal
- check pithing has worked

What it will cover

Your CoC must cover each type of animal you work with and each operation that you carry out.

If you stun animals, your CoC must cover the different types of equipment you use.

If you need to add more operations or types of animal to your CoC, you must get a temporary CoC and complete training and assessment for the additional operation or animal.

You need a full or temporary CoC if you do any of the following:

- handle animals before restraining them
- kill an animal with a free bullet for human consumption
- shackle poultry

Temporary Certificate of Competence

A temporary Certificate of Competence (CoC) will allow you to work under the direct supervision of a full CoC holder for the species and operations you are carrying out.

Evidence of registration must be provided to the OV to allow the temporary CoC to be issued.

This certificate is valid for three months from date of issue. You must undertake and successfully pass an assessment from an accredited provider to be awarded a qualification certificate.

This qualification certificate is required for a CoC to be issued.

You can apply for a re-issue of the temporary certificate for three months after the previous one has run out if you are unable to complete the assessment due to circumstances outside of your control. You can do this through the OV in the slaughterhouse.

England and Wales

Re-issuing of a temporary certificate is only for exceptional cases and each case will be considered on its own merits.

If you have any questions related to our issuing of TCoC and CoC please contact animalwelfare@food.gov.uk

Anyone carrying out certain slaughter operations involving live animals up to the point of death (not unconsciousness) must hold a Certificate of Competence, under the Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (WATOK) regulations

England

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015 SI 1782

Wales

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014 SSI 951

How to apply

You can [apply for a certificate of competence or licence to slaughter or kill animals](#).

This webpage provides information on the licence or certificate you need to slaughter or kill animals, the operations covered, and the application process.

When your CoC or licence can be revoked or suspended

The FSA can cancel or temporarily suspend your CoC or Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (WATOK) licence if you do not follow WATOK regulations.

Appeals in England and Wales

A decision made by the FSA in England and Wales to refuse, suspend or revoke a CoC can be appealed.

The appeal system entitles you to make written representations to and be heard by the General Regulatory Chamber First Tier Tribunal.

To do this you need to use the Ministry of Justice form T98 and send it within 28 days of the decision.

You will need to send the appeals form to:

General Regulatory Chamber

HM Courts and Tribunals Service

PO Box 9300

Leicester LE1 6ZX