

FSA publishes revised Food Law Code of Practice, Practice Guidance and introduces a Competency Framework in Wales

The Code provides statutory guidance to local authorities (LAs) and port health authorities (PHAs) on the approach they should take to regulate food businesses.

The FSA has reviewed and revised the Code, taking into account the responses to the recent consultation, and ensuring that the Code reflects current priorities, policy, and legislative requirements so that delivery of official food control activities by LAs and PHAs remains effective, consistent, and proportionate.

The key changes in this revision to the Code include:

- modernisation of the qualification requirements by extending the list of 'suitable' qualifications to enable LAs and PHAs to fully recognise the potential of a wider cohort of environmental health and trading standards professionals to undertake official food control activities providing they can demonstrate they are competent
- replacing the existing competency requirements with the Competency Framework that defines competency by activity rather than by role
- the necessary editorial revisions brought about by the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625, which came into effect in December 2019, and EU exit implications
- a revised structure and format to improve readability and promote consistency in the interpretation and implementation

Nathan Barnhouse, Director of the Food Standards Agency in Wales said:

“We recognise that local authorities and port health authorities need to target their skilled people where they are most needed, and we are committed to broad regulatory reform that assists in achieving this.

The revised Code, Practice Guidance and introduction of the Competency Framework will provide local authorities and port health authorities more flexibility to deploy key professionals and will enable them to recruit suitably qualified individuals to undertake specified activities, should they choose.

This will help alleviate the challenges local authorities face in recruiting people to deliver their food service, whilst ensuring that consumers can continue to rely on food controls being carried out by suitably qualified people.

Over the next few years there will be further reviews of the Code to implement the FSA's modernisation programme for reforming the regulatory delivery model. This will ensure a fit-for-purpose and sustainable regime that will protect consumers".

For more information on the Codes of Practice, Practice Guidance and the Competency Framework, visit the FSA [Food Law Code of Practice webpage](#). To read the summary of the consultation responses visit the [consultation page](#).

The FSA published revised Food Law Codes of Practice, Practice Guidance and introduced a Competency Framework for England and Northern Ireland in March 2021.