Criteria for SQF Trainers

Requirements and Registration for SQF Trainers

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SQF Institute is a division of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI).

Contents

1   INTRODUCTION

The SQF Code is a process and product certification standard. It is a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP)-based food safety and quality management system that utilizes the HACCP principles and guidelines defined by the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Food (NACMCF) or the CODEX Alimentarius Commission, and is intended to support industry or company branded product and to offer benefits to suppliers and their customers. Products produced and manufactured under the SQF Code certification retain a high degree of acceptance in global markets.

First developed in Australia in 1994, the SQF program has been owned and managed by the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) since 2003, and was recognized (at level 2) in 2004 by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) as a standard that meets its benchmark requirements.

This document outlines the criteria for registration as an SQF trainer or contract SQF trainer for SQFI training courses.

SQF trainer registration is conducted by a designated entity of SQFI. It is intended to enhance the integrity of the SQF Program by providing the food industry with competent and qualified trainers who will work with SQF licensed training centers to provide a consistent delivery of SQFI training courses.

1.1   Scope
The criteria described in this document are for:
- SQF trainer
- Contract SQF trainer

1.2   Overview of the Requirements for SQF Trainer Registration

All applicants:

- Shall attend and successfully complete one of the following courses: "Implementing SQF Systems" course, "Auditing SQF Systems" or "SQF Lead Auditor Training" course.
- Shall successfully complete either the "Implementing SQF Systems" or the "SQF Auditor" examination.
- Shall participate in a "Train the Trainer" course of at least eight (8) hours or one (1) full day in length.
- Shall have completed two (2) SQF courses witnessed by registered SQF trainer delivered on the SQF Code, ed. 7.
- Shall have successfully completed HACCP training with certificate issued, as defined in the SQF Code, ed. 7.
- Shall have at least three (3) years' experience training technical food safety / quality adult training courses (20 training days).
- Shall possess 2-4 years' experience developing, managing and maintaining of a food safety system.
- Shall possess the qualifications of an SQF consultant in at least one (1) food sector category or be an SQF registered consultant/auditor.
- Shall be sponsored by at least one (1) person who has a food industry business relationship with the applicant.
- Shall agree to, sign and submit the "SQF Trainer Code of Conduct."

1.3   Definitions
For the purpose of these criteria the relevant definitions provided in the SQF Code, ed. 7 Appendix 2: Glossary together with the following definitions apply:

Applicant(s) means a person in the process of applying to become an SQF trainer or a contract SQF trainer.

Contract SQF Trainer means an individual who is contracted to a SQF licensed training center to perform SQF training courses, but is not an employee of the training center.

HACCP Training means training that meets the CODEX guidelines or NACMCF HACCP principles, and this training is:

1. HACCP training course used extensively in a country.

2. Administered and delivered by an institution recognized as a food safety training center of excellence and issues a certificate of attendance to attendees.

3. Shall be a minimum of two days in duration.

4. Shall be examinable.

SQF Trainer means a person who is registered by SQFI to conduct SQF training courses under the coordination of a SQF licensed training center. This training can be public or private for individual clients. The person may be an employee of the training center or a contracted individual (contract SQF trainer).

SQF Training Course means the official SQF training courses covered under the license of the SQF training center as described within the "Criteria for SQF Training Centers." This would be a course in which SQFI training materials are utilized.   Examples of such courses include "Implementing SQF Systems" and "Advanced SQF Practitioner."

Sponsor is a person who has a food industry business relationship with the applicant. Sponsors must have evidence and/or personal knowledge of the relevant information contained within the application, which they have verified.

Train the Trainer Training Course means training that has been completed by the candidate on the guidelines of best practices for adult learning. The course should cover any or all of the following topics: communication skills, participant exercises and involvement, facilitation of break-out groups, and presentation skills. The course does not have to be specific to food safety. Minimum course length is eight (8) hours or one (1) full day.

2   KEY COMPETENCIES FOR APPLICANTS

2.1 Skills:

    a. Describes the key aspects of the SQF Code, ed. 7 and associated supporting documents.
        i.   Shares current knowledge of the SQF Code
    b. Identifies and assesses potential food safety hazards and quality defects at all links in the food supply chain including:

- Biological hazards
- Chemical hazards (including allergens)
- Physical hazards

and aids course attendees in understanding the application of this knowledge to their own operations, products and processes.

    c. Adapts presentation of course content to suit the needs of participants.
    d. Appraises participant knowledge to determine learning needs.
    e. Facilitates participant learning using a variety of adult teaching methods.
    f. Demonstrates appropriate and effective communication with course attendees.
    g. Applies effective presentation skills to communicate course content and facilitate participant learning.

2.2 Knowledge:

a. Illustrates how the SQF Code, ed. 7 and associated documents are applied in the implementation of an SQF System.

b. Applies the current principles and practices of HACCP as described in either the current edition of the Food and Agriculture Organization's Codex Alimentarius Commission Guidelines or the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Principles and application guidelines adopted August 14, 1997.

c. Relates relevant pre-requisite programs, industry codes of practice, legal requirements, regulatory requirements, industry guidelines and standards to the implementation of an SQF System.

d. Demonstrates a risk-based approach to defining and controlling food safety hazards and food quality threats.

e. Relates food industry knowledge, particularly the segments leading up to food processing and manufacturing to demonstrate the application of the Code within a participant's operation.

f. For those SQF trainers and contract SQF trainers seeking approval to teach the Advanced SQF Practitioner course, demonstrate how to:

  i. use the internal audit program to manage, maintain and enhance the site's SQF System;

  ii. harness the corrective action/preventive action process to identify trends and build continuous improvement;

  iii. communicate return on investment with senior management to more fully define the site's commitment to food safety; and

  iv. develop and prioritize key performance indicators to assure continuous improvement of the SQF System.

2.3 Personal Attributes:

a. Personal attributes and professional integrity necessary for the effective training of the SQF Code and the implementation of SQF Systems.

b. Adheres to the Trainer Code of Conduct.

3   REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION

In order to effectively communicate and facilitate the education of food industry professionals on the SQF Code and the implementation of an SQF System, applicants for SQF trainer and contract SQF trainer must demonstrate competency in training adult learners and knowledge of the SQF Code. In addition, applicants must demonstrate experience comparable to that required for the SQF consultant registration.

The following educational, training, and work experience requirements apply to all applicants unless otherwise specified or exempted by SQFI.

Applicants must demonstrate through their qualifications and/or work experience that they possess a satisfactory level of knowledge and experience in a particular food industry sector. This knowledge and experience shall be described in writing and shall cover the food safety hazards and quality defects and their control within a food industry sector or shall be substantiated by being registered as an SQF consultant or auditor.

3.1   Education

Prior to applying for registration as an SQF trainer, applicants shall have successfully completed the following training courses:
   a. HACCP training as defined in this document and the SQF Code, ed. 7.
   b. Trainer the Trainer Training of eight (8) hour duration or one (1) full day with certificate issued, as described above.
   c. All applicants must have successfully completed "Implementing SQF Systems" training, "Auditing of SQF Systems," or "SQF Lead Auditor Training."
   d. Also required is the successful completion of either the "Implementing SQF Systems" or "SQF Auditor" examination.

For those SQF trainers and contract SQF trainers seeking approval to teach the "Advanced SQF Practitioner" course, successful completion of the "Advanced SQF Practitioner" course and "Advanced SQF Practitioner" examination is also required.

A list of licensed SQF training centers who offer the "Implementing SQF Systems" course and a list of instructors approved to teach the "Advanced SQF Practitioner" course are found under the Training Centers tab on the SQFI web site (sqfi.com).

3.2   Training Experience

All applicants are required to have sufficient experience with training adult food industry employees and shall:
   a. have attended a "Train the Trainer" course of at least eight (8) hours or one (1) full day in length.
   b. possess at least 3 years (20 training days) of food safety and quality management training for the food industry.

3.3   Food Industry Work Experience

Applicants shall have work experience in a technical, professional or supervisory position involving accountability and the exercise of judgment.

In addition, all applicants are required to demonstrate operational experience with food hygiene and food safety based programs involving HACCP or other appropriate risk management systems. Alternatively, demonstrated experience involving equivalent practices that are deemed to provide experience relevant to the training being delivered and the competencies described in this document for SQF trainers may be considered.

The applicant shall possess 2-4 years of experience in the developing, managing and maintaining food safety and quality systems.

3.4   Relationship with a Licensed Training Center

SQF trainers and contract SQF trainers shall work on behalf of a licensed SQF training center.

4   APPLICATION PROCESS

The competency of applicants for SQF trainer or contract SQF trainer registration is evaluated against the requirements specified in these criteria. The electronic application form is accessible via the SQF Professional tab on the SQF website (sqfi.com).

Applicants should ensure that their application includes evidence of all competencies detailed in the criteria, evidence of required training and other relevant educational qualifications, name of SQF licensed training center to which they are contracted and that all other information requested has been provided. Applications will only be accepted in the format provided, available via the SQF Professional tab on the SQF website (sqfi.com).

The application and registration fees must be paid before the application will be reviewed and approved. Applications which are declined will have an application processing fee withheld from the registration fee.

Applications will not be processed until all required documentation and fees are received.

Approval of registered SQF trainers to conduct the "Advanced SQF Practitioner" course is carried out by the Senior Technical Manager, SQFI.

4.1   Sponsor

Each application for initial registration shall be sponsored by at least one person who has a food industry business relationship with the applicant. Sponsors must have evidence and/or personal knowledge of the relevant information contained within the applicant's application. For applicants who are employees of a licensed training center, the sponsor form can be completed by a representative of the licensed training center.

4.2   Experience Training Implementing SQF Systems Courses

Each application must have a record of two (2) "Implementing SQF Systems" courses that were co-taught by the applicant and witnessed by a registered SQF trainer. The registered SQF trainer must have been present during the entire delivery by the applicant trainer, however the applicant cannot present more than 8 hours of the 16 hour course. The two (2) courses presented must have been delivered on the SQF Code, ed. 7 only. Witnessed applicants will be asked to submit evidence and appraisal of the events in the form of evaluation available by contacting SQFI.

4.3   Personal Declaration

Each applicant for initial registration is required to sign a declaration personally attesting they shall comply with the SQF Trainer Code of Conduct and that any complaints regarding their performance shall be fully dealt with in a manner to prevent recurrence.

5   EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

On receipt of an application, all information is reviewed by an SQFI designee for accuracy, including documentary evidence of training and formal qualifications, and verifies on a sample basis the experience claimed by the applicant to establish the validity of such claims.

Applications are evaluated by the SQFI designee who evaluates the applicant's qualifications, any courses undertaken and the applicant's food industry work and technical training experience. The feedback received on the performance of the applicant is also reviewed.

Additional supporting information may be required from the applicant or from other industry representatives. If satisfactory verification of information and experience from competent referees is not obtained, an interview may be required.

The independent body will decide whether to grant registration. The SQFI designee maintains a confidential file on each applicant which includes the original application documentation, check sheets, records of investigations, appeals and complaints, technical training logs and re-registration documents.

5.1   Certificate of Registration

Each successful applicant receives a Certificate of Registration issued by the SQFI. Certificates have an expiry date, which is the date that re-registration falls due. The terminology to be used by the SQF trainer and contract SQF trainer in describing their registration on business cards, letterhead etc. is: "Registered SQF Trainer."

5.2   Publication of Registration

A database of registered SQF trainers and contract SQF trainers is displayed under the SQF Professional tab on the SQFI website (sqfi.com).

6 APPEALS

Written appeals against the outcome of an application for registration will be investigated by the Senior Technical Manager, SQFI and if necessary, impartially reviewed by a designated SQFI independent body. Decisions made by the Senior Technical Manager relating to any appeal are final.

7 COMPLAINTS AGAINST REGISTERED SQF TRAINERS

Complaints regarding the conduct of an SQF trainer or contract SQF trainer will be acknowledged and investigated by the SQFI and, if necessary, forwarded to members of a SQFI Review Panel for consideration and a ruling. Substantiated evidence of misconduct may result in withdrawal of registration.

8 MAINTAINING REGISTRATION

Re-registration is required every year from the anniversary date of initial registration. Requirements for re-registration include submission of the following with the annual fee:
1. Evidence of presenting at least two (2) SQF training courses,
2. Evidence of professional development, as detailed below, and
3. Participation in a four (4) hour SQFI professional update (or as required by SQF).

In addition, the SQF trainer or contract SQF trainer must uphold the Code of Conduct by having no outstanding or uninvestigated complaints at the time of re-registration.

8.1 Delivery of SQF Training Courses
Registered SQF trainers are required to provide evidence of presenting at least two (2) "Implementing SQF Systems," or "Advanced SQF Practitioner" (as an approved Advanced SQF Practitioner trainer) or combination of such, training courses within the last 12 months of their re-registration date. For a training course to count as being delivered by the SQF trainer or contract SQF trainer, the SQF trainer or contract SQF trainer must have presented at least half the duration of the course. Each registered SQF trainer or contract SQF trainer must maintain a SQF training log and submit it as supporting documentation for re-registration.

8.2 Professional Development
SQF trainers and contract SQF trainers shall undertake at least fifteen (15) hours of continuing professional development annually, that is relevant to their food safety work and their personal needs for skills and knowledge. Professional development information shall be provided on the Professional Development Record. The following activities are examples of professional development, if related to the food industry, which can be included:
- Formal short course participation;
- In-house course / workshop participation;
- Conference / seminar attendance;
- Professional body / association meeting attendance;
- Relevant committee and working group meeting attendance;
- Preparation and public presentation of papers; or
- Preparation and publication of articles.

In the selection of appropriate professional development, SQF trainers need to consider their personal strengths and weaknesses and identify areas for personal improvement. These activities should target new or the improving of existing food safety and quality management methodologies.

Note: Consulting, training, development of programs, or other activities completed in the execution of work product are not considered professional development and should not be included.

8.3 SQFI 4 Hour Professional Update

All SQF credentialed professionals, including registered SQF trainers and registered contract SQF trainers, are required to participate in an annual four (4) hour Professional Update delivered by SQFI. This update will be delivered via webinar for general participation or delivered directly to organizations upon request.   The update will consist of SQFI updates, programs updates, standards updates and additional relevant SQFI-related information. The length of the annual update may be extended at the discretion of SQFI.

9   CODE OF CONDUCT

All registered SQF trainers and contract SQF trainers have an obligation to maintain the integrity of the SQF program by observing the following Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of their registration. The Code of Conduct is detailed in the application form for SQF trainers and must be suitably authorized by the SQF applicant.

9.1   Fundamental Principles

The SQF trainer or contract SQF trainer shall:

9.1.1   Act professionally, accurately, honestly and impartially and in an unbiased manner.
9.1.2   Not act in any way that would prejudice the reputation of the SQF Program and SQFI and to cooperate fully with an inquiry in the event of any alleged breach of the SQF Program.
9.1.3   Only conduct SQF courses with current official SQF materials provided in accordance with SQF Training Center license agreement.
9.1.4   Only conduct SQF training courses through a SQF registered training center as a registered SQF trainer or registered SQF contract trainer.

9.2   Relations with the Public

The SQF trainer and contract SQF trainer shall:

9.2.1   Use their best endeavors to promote the worth of SQFI and the SQF Program.
9.2.2   Act with professionalism and integrity when promoting their services.
9.2.3   Make it clear when dealing with the public, the capacity in which they are acting and on whose behalf (if any) they are acting.

9.3   Relations with their Employer Colleagues/Clients

The SQF trainer and contract SQF trainer shall:

9.3.1   Act in professional matters as a faithful operator to each employee/client.
9.3.2   Inform employees and clients of any business connections, interest or affiliations, which might influence judgment or impair the equitable character of its services.
9.3.3   Indicate to their employer or clients the adverse consequences to be expected if their professional judgment is overruled.
9.3.4   Not disclose information concerning the business affairs or technical process of any present or former client without the client's consent.
9.3.5   Not accept compensation from more than one party for the same service without the consent of all parties.

9.4   Relations with Peers

9.4.1   The SQF trainer and contract SQF trainer shall develop the professional skills of those under their supervision.