



# Certified SQF Practitioner Self-Assessment

A skills self-assessment can be used to identify areas for professional growth. Under each heading below are skills and knowledge areas relevant to the Certified SQF Practitioner. For each knowledge or skill statement, choose a rating from the drop-down list that best reflects your current level of confidence or competence. Once completed, review your results to identify strengths and opportunities for development. Use these insights to set targeted learning goals and build a Professional Development Plan that supports your continued growth as a Certified SQF Practitioner.

Refer to the *Certified SQF Practitioner Professional Development Handbook* for more information on creating a Professional Development Plan.

## Pre-Requisite Knowledge

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
HACCP training that meets the definition of HACCP training in the current version of the SQF Code.	Choose an item.
Understanding of sanitation practices, cleaning procedures, and personal hygiene requirements to maintain food safety.	Choose an item.
Basic knowledge of microbiological, chemical, and physical hazards in food products and how to control them.	Choose an item.
Basic understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Time-temperature relationship for food safety</li><li>- Microbial growth</li><li>- Pathogens' growth and toxin formation</li><li>- Common allergens in food products</li><li>- Food safety labeling requirements in country of production and sale</li><li>- Food safety regulations in country of production and sale</li></ul>	Choose an item.
Proficiency in maintaining accurate and complete records related to food safety and quality.	Choose an item.
Familiarity with software and tools commonly used in food safety management, document control, and data analysis.	Choose an item.
Proficiency in technical writing skills relative to position as an entry-level SQF Practitioner.	Choose an item.

## Implement and Maintain Food Safety Plans

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Demonstrate knowledge of the Codex HACCP plan development process.	Choose an item.
Demonstrate ability to identify reputable sources of scientific data for use in risk assessment activities.	Choose an item.
Apply the knowledge of HACCP principles and risk assessment for the development, maintenance, and review of a food safety plan, which includes working with a food safety team to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete a hazard analysis</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify and categorize the hazards/risks at all stages of the food safety plan process flows</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decide appropriate corrective actions for CCP deviations</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decide the correct monitoring methods to identify CCP failures, monitoring failures and changes in risk levels</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assess when expert assistance is required</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research, review, and interpret regulatory and legal documentation applicable to the food safety plan</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Analyze data to predict the impact of food safety risk trends on the food safety management system, including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choose the data needed for analysis</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluate lagging and leading indicators</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analyze the data</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Predict risk and evaluate the level of risk</li> </ul>	Choose an item.

- Explain the impact to stakeholders	Choose an item.
Appraise data from multiple sources across the food safety system to formulate a holistic view of food safety risks.	Choose an item.
Differentiate relative risk and where controls are needed or not needed.	
- Assess risk to predict likelihood and consequence	Choose an item.
- Judge where controls are needed or not needed	Choose an item.
Identify leading and lagging indicators and explain how these are relevant to the food safety system.	Choose an item.
Identify action required to undertake validation, verification and evaluation of effectiveness, including:	
- Identification of information required	Choose an item.
- Research, review, and interpret scientific data for validation tasks	Choose an item.
- Determine the credibility, relevance, and applicability of data	Choose an item.
- Identification of actions required	Choose an item.
Apply product identification and lot control principles to traceability processes.	Choose an item.
Explain the differences among: - Verification - Validation - Monitoring	Choose an item.
Describe the principles of: - Validation - Effectiveness - Verification	Choose an item.
Describe principles for: - traceability - lot and product identification	Choose an item.
Describe the action required to verify the effectiveness of controls after a change to the food safety plan.	Choose an item.

## Oversee System Elements

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Apply internal auditing principles to undertake a gap assessment of a site food safety management system against the requirements of the SQF Code(s), and:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the obligations for the SQF Practitioner</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the obligations for a site that is operating a certified SQF Food Safety Management system</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognize and identify the inter-relationships and dependencies between different clauses and requirements within the SQF Code</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the programs, policies, and procedures required to fill identified gaps, including training requirements</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oversee the implementation of programs, policies, and procedures to fill the identified gaps</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify and oversee monitoring activities to assess ongoing conformance to SQF Code(s) system elements</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluate the effectiveness of the food safety management system and identify how it could be improved</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Establish and manage an internal audit program for the food safety system, including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheduling &amp; resource assignment(s)</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluation of audit findings</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action follow-up and audit close-out</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication of audit findings (written / verbal)</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Describe strategies for staying up to date with current SQF Codes, and industry information relevant to the food safety management system, including identifying:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key industry sources</li> </ul>	Choose an item.

- Emerging industry trends, changes	Choose an item.
- Potential implications for the food safety management system	Choose an item.
- Suitable responses, including pro-active recommendations, for the food safety management system	Choose an item.
Demonstrate understanding of key tasks required for effective implementation of the Food Safety Management System, including:	
- Scope definition	Choose an item.
- Planning for tasks, timelines, resource requirements, and dependencies	Choose an item.
- Time management	Choose an item.
- Monitoring & control	Choose an item.
Define and recognize the difference between auditing and inspection.	Choose an item.
Summarize internal auditing principles.	Choose an item.
Evaluate the adequacy and comprehensiveness of audit documentation.	Choose an item.
Analyze audit results to suggest necessary actions (which may include taking no action).	Choose an item.
Identify the pre-requisite and GMP programs that are required under the site's food safety management system.	Choose an item.

Apply internal auditing principles to schedule a gap assessment of a site food safety management system against the requirements of the identified pre-requisite and GMP programs. Identify the programs, policies, and procedures required to fill identified gaps, including training requirements.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oversee the implementation of programs, policies, and procedures to fill identified gaps</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluate the effectiveness of the pre-requisite and GMP programs and identify how they could be improved</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Identify the pre-requisite and GMP programs that are required by the SQF Code(s).	Choose an item.
Describe strategies for identifying pre-requisite and GMP programs applicable to a site food safety management system, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relevant industry requirements</li> <li>- Relevant legal and regulatory requirements</li> <li>- Relevant customer requirements</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Describe strategies for identifying when expert advice is required, including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifying suitable criteria for the selection of those experts</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding the advice as it applies to the food safety management system</li> </ul>	Choose an item.

## Effective Communication

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Illustrate and explain food safety management system concepts in a manner that facilitates understanding for the audience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trends</li> <li>- Audit findings</li> <li>- Performance metrics</li> <li>- Role contributions</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Present information about the food safety management system accurately and objectively.	Choose an item.
Explain the potential dynamics of cross-functional teams and describe strategies for managing these.	Choose an item.
Explain why a shared understanding about common food safety goals and objectives is critical to success.	Choose an item.
Explain the principles of collaboration.	Choose an item.
Identify methods for tracking the completion of corrective and preventive actions.	Choose an item.
Present the food safety management system to relevant stakeholder auditors, such as GFSI, regulators, and customers, including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain how the food safety management system operates</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support decisions made within the food safety management system, using references relied upon for decision-making (for example scientific knowledge, industry practice, risk assessment)</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinate activities to support an efficient audit of food safety management system assessment.</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Explain strategies and rationale for integrating various external and customer requirements into a single food safety management system.	Choose an item.

## Risk Assessment – Preventive

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Explain the principles of food safety risk, as they relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relative risk based on consequence and likelihood.</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supply chain risk</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food fraud</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food defense</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food safety culture</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Describe the difference between immediate, corrective, and preventive measures.	Choose an item.
Describe a general approach for assessing food safety culture components and developing an improvement plan.	Choose an item.

## Risk Assessment – Post Incident

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Explain the concept of “root cause” as it relates to problem-solving.	Choose an item.
Explain the principles and suitable application for the following tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 Whys</li> <li>- Brainstorming</li> <li>- Root cause analysis</li> <li>- Fishbone diagrams</li> <li>- Pareto analysis</li> </ul>	Choose an item.
Conduct a root cause analysis using a structured methodology.	Choose an item.
Identify appropriate corrective and preventive measures for an identified root cause.	Choose an item.
Construct records that accurately reflect the process, findings, and actions arising from a risk assessment – post incident.	Choose an item.

## Manage and Plan for Change Control

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Describe fundamental change control principles and change management principles.	Choose an item.
Recognize types of changes that may impact a food safety plan and/or conformance with SQF Code requirements.	Choose an item.
Illustrate the application of change control principles for a change that may impact a food safety plan.	Choose an item.
Review the food safety plan to predict changes in risk arising from the change, and identify controls needed for prevention and monitoring.	Choose an item.

## Personal Attributes

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Time management	Choose an item.
Communication	Choose an item.
Setting goals	Choose an item.
Delegation	Choose an item.
Working under pressure	Choose an item.
Team collaboration	Choose an item.
Leadership	Choose an item.
Self-motivation	Choose an item.
Analytical thinking	Choose an item.
Attention to detail	Choose an item.
Decision-making	Choose an item.
Strategic planning	Choose an item.
Planning	Choose an item.
Organizing	Choose an item.
Action-oriented	Choose an item.
Business acumen	Choose an item.
Integrity	Choose an item.
Empathy	Choose an item.

Self-awareness	Choose an item.
Dealing with ambiguity	Choose an item.
Adaptability	Choose an item.
Listening	Choose an item.
Problem-solving	Choose an item.
Solutions-focused	Choose an item.