This fact sheet provides general information on the process for obtaining approval as an auditor under the Food Act 2006 (the Act).

**What is an auditor and what is their role?**

An auditor is a person approved under the Act who has specified functions and obligations. The role of an auditor is to provide advice to local governments about accreditation of food safety programs, to conduct audits of accredited food safety programs, prepare audit reports and to provide a copy of the report to the local government and the holder of the accredited food safety program.

Only auditors approved by the Queensland Department of Health (DoH) can conduct audits of an accredited food safety program for the purposes of the Act. It should be noted that auditing for the purposes of the Act is different from auditing for the purposes of HACCP or other industry certification requirements.

**What qualifications are required to be an auditor?**

The evaluation criteria used by the DoH when considering applications for approval align with those in the National Regulatory Food Safety Auditor Guideline, which Queensland has implemented under the National Food Regulation Agreement. This ensures consistent regulation and implementation across Australia.

When approving a person under the Act, the DoH must ensure that the person has the necessary expertise to perform the functions of an auditor under the Act. A minimum of a Certificate IV containing sufficient content to ensure that the person understands the principles of food safety and hygiene, combined with knowledge of food microbiology and auditing, is required.

Specifically, in order to be granted approval as an auditor, applicants must provide evidence of the successful completion of:

1. Certificate IV or higher in food science or a related field
2. Recognised training of 40 hours of food microbiology (as part of an existing qualification or completed as an independent unit)
3. The national competency units:
   - FDFAU4002A (or FDFFSCOMA) - Communicate and negotiate to conduct food safety audits
   - FDFAU4003A (or FDFFSCFSAA) - Conduct food safety audits
   - FDFAU4004A (or FDFFSCHZA) - Identify, evaluate and control food safety hazards.

**Specialised scopes of approval**

Approval can be obtained for specialised scopes relating to cook chill processes or heat treatment processes (including canning and pasteurisation).
To obtain approval to undertake audits of cook chill processes or heat treatment processes, evidence of successful completion of the following related national competencies must be provided, in addition to those noted above:

- FDFAU4006A (or FDFFSCC4A) - Audit a cook chill process
- FDFAU4007B (or FDFAU4007A or FDFFSHT4A) - Audit a heat treatment process.

**Competency codes and titles are set by the National Quality Council and may change from time to time.**

*Training.gov.au is the official National Register on Vocational Education and Training in Australia and is the authoritative source of information on training packages, qualifications, accredited courses, units of competency, skill sets and Registered Training Organisations.*

### Recognised qualifications and training

A person with a tertiary qualification that included food safety and hygiene subjects could be considered to meet the food science qualification requirement to be an auditor. Evidence of the subjects completed i.e. an academic transcript, must be submitted with the application. The content of the subjects may also be necessary e.g. a course outline or syllabus.

Examples of tertiary qualifications that may include subjects that provide appropriate food safety and hygiene knowledge for a person to be an approved auditor include:

- Certificate IV or higher (e.g. Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Bachelor Degree) from an RTO in:
  - food technology or equivalent
  - food microbiology or equivalent
  - nutrition or equivalent.
- Environmental Health Australia (EHA) accredited environmental health degree or equivalent.
- Another qualification considered appropriate by the DoH.

### Where can I undertake the required training?

The Australian Government My Skills website [www.myskills.gov.au](http://www.myskills.gov.au) is Australia’s directory of training. You can undertake a search for a course by occupation, industry or course name and the search can be restricted by location.

### Recognition of prior learning

If you consider that your qualifications, training or experience e.g. food processing qualification, chef experience, auditing experience, etc., are comparable to, or combine to meet, the required qualifications, you may undergo a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment.

RTOs that are nationally approved to deliver a Certificate IV in food science can conduct an RPL assessment. RPL is the recognition of skills and competencies of an individual regardless of how, when or where the learning occurred.

An RTO will assess any previous formal or informal training or education, along with any relevant work or general life experience, to determine if a person meets the required outcomes of the qualification. The RTO may issue a statement of attainment or certificate for qualification, or provide a partial credit advising of any gap training required to obtain the qualification.
How do I apply to be an auditor?

The prescribed application form for approval as an auditor under the Act must be completed and submitted to the DoH with the prescribed fee and any documentation that is required to support the application.

New applications

New applicants and auditors with an expired approval must complete the *Application to Chief Executive for approval as an auditor*.

Renewal applications

Existing auditors who wish to apply for renewal of approval as an auditor (prior to expiry of their current approval) must complete the *Application to Chief Executive for renewal of approval as an auditor*.

When an auditor applies for renewal of their approval, their approval is taken to continue in force until the date a decision is made on the renewal application.

What happens in the assessment process?

The Department of Health has 30 days to decide an application for approval or to request further information. However, there is no timeframe specified for a decision to be made on an application for renewal of approval.

When considering an application for approval or renewal of approval, consideration is given to whether the applicant:

- has the necessary expertise or experience to perform the functions of an auditor; and
- is a suitable person to be an auditor.

To determine whether an applicant has the necessary expertise or experience, the Department of Health must be satisfied that the applicant has the qualifications specified in the section above, ‘What qualifications are required to be an auditor?’ and that the applicant’s work experience demonstrates practical application of this knowledge.

In considering whether the applicant is a suitable person, the Department of Health has a national criminal history check undertaken by the Queensland Police Service to identify any previous criminal convictions that may affect the applicant’s suitability to be an auditor under the Act. Applicants who do not provide consent for the Department of Health to conduct a criminal history check will be deemed as not fulfilling the requirements of the assessment process and their application will be considered to be incomplete.

What happens after the application is decided?

1. The applicant will be provided with an information notice advising of the decision. If an applicant is approved as an auditor, they will receive a certificate of approval detailing the conditions and term of their approval.

2. The approved auditor’s details will be included on a register of auditors. The register contains the name and contact details of the auditor, the scope of the auditor’s approval, the expiry date of the approval and the local government areas of service. The register includes every auditor approved under the Act and it is publicly available at [www.health.qld.gov.au/foodsafety](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/foodsafety).
Can an auditor change the conditions of their approval?

An approved auditor can apply for amendment of the conditions of approval. For example, if an auditor would like to add the specialised scope of cook chill processes to their approval and has successfully completed the additional competency required to conduct cook chill processes.

Auditors who wish to apply for an amendment to the conditions of their approval as an auditor must complete the Application to Chief Executive for amendment of conditions of approval as an auditor.

What happens if an auditor’s approval certificate is lost, damaged or stolen?

An approved auditor can apply for a replacement of their approval certificate if the approval is destroyed, lost or stolen. Information must be included in the application about the circumstances in which the approval was destroyed, lost or stolen and be accompanied by the prescribed fee.

Auditors who wish to apply for replacement of their approval as an auditor must complete the Application to Chief Executive for replacement of approval as an auditor.

For further information

All application forms and other documents referenced in this fact sheet are available at www.health.qld.gov.au/foodsafety.

If you have any questions on how to become an approved auditor, contact Food Safety Standards and Regulation on phone (07) 3328 9310, or email foodsafety@health.qld.gov.au.