Certified SQF Practitioner Self-Assessment

Pre-Requisite Knowledge

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
HACCP training that meets the definition of HACCP training in the current version of the SQF Code.	High Medium Low
Understanding of sanitation practices, cleaning procedures, and personal hygiene requirements to maintain food safety.	High Medium Low
Basic knowledge of microbiological, chemical, and physical hazards in food products and how to control them.	High Medium Low
Basic understanding of: - Time-temperature relationship for food safety - Microbial growth - Pathogens' growth and toxin formation - Common allergens in food products - Food safety labeling requirements in country of production and sale - Food safety regulations in country of production and sale	High Medium Low
Proficiency in maintaining accurate and complete records related to food safety and quality.	High Medium Low
Familiarity with software and tools commonly used in food safety management, document control, and data analysis.	High Medium Low
Proficiency in technical writing skills relative to position as an entry-level SQF Practitioner.	High Medium Low

Implement and Maintain Food Safety Plans

Knowledge/Skill	Rating		
Demonstrate knowledge of the Codex HACCP plan development process.	High	Medium	Low
Demonstrate ability to identify reputable sources of scientific data for use in risk assessment activities.	High	Medium	Low
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:			
– Complete a hazard analysis	High	Medium	Low
– Identify and categorize the hazards/risks at all stages of the food safety plan process flows	High	Medium	Low
– Decide appropriate corrective actions for CCP deviations	High	Medium	Low
– Decide the correct monitoring methods to identify CCP failures, monitoring failures and changes in risk levels	High	Medium	Low
– Assess when expert assistance is required	High	Medium	Low
– Research, review, and interpret regulatory and legal documentation applicable to the food safety plan	High	Medium	Low
Analyze data to predict the impact of food safety risk trends on the food safety management system, including:			
– Choose the data needed for analysis	High	Medium	Low
– Evaluate lagging and leading indicators	High	Medium	Low
– Analyze the data	High	Medium	Low
– Predict risk and evaluate the level of risk	High	Medium	Low
– Explain the impact to stakeholders	High	Medium	Low
Appraise data from multiple sources across the food safety system to formulate a holistic view of food safety risks.	High	Medium	Low

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

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:			
– Identify the obligations for the SQF Practitioner	High	Medium	Low
– Identify the obligations for a site that is operating a certified SQF Food Safety Management system	High	Medium	Low
– Recognize and identify the inter-relationships and dependencies between different clauses and requirements within the SQF Code	High	Medium	Low
– Identify the programs, policies, and procedures required to fill identified gaps, including training requirements	High	Medium	Low
– Oversee the implementation of programs, policies, and procedures to fill the identified gaps	High	Medium	Low
– Identify and oversee monitoring activities to assess ongoing conformance to SQF Code(s) system elements	High	Medium	Low
– Evaluate the effectiveness of the food safety management system and identify how it could be improved	High	Medium	Low
Establish and manage an internal audit program for the food safety system, including:			
– Scheduling & resource assignment(s)	High	Medium	Low
– Evaluation of audit findings	High	Medium	Low
– Action follow-up and audit close-out	High	Medium	Low
– Communication of audit findings (written / verbal)	High	Medium	Low
Describe strategies for staying up to date with current SQF Codes, and industry information relevant to the food safety management system, including identifying:			
– Key industry sources	High	Medium	Low

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

Identify the pre-requisite and GMP programs that are required by the SQF Code(s).	High Medium Low

Describe strategies for identifying pre-requisite and GMP programs applicable to a site food safety management system, for example:
   – Relevant industry requirements
   – Relevant legal and regulatory requirements
   – Relevant customer requirements
	High Medium Low

Describe strategies for identifying when expert advice is required, including:	
– Identifying suitable criteria for the selection of those experts	High Medium Low
– Understanding the advice as it applies to the food safety management system	High Medium Low

Effective Communication

Knowledge/Skill	Rating		
Illustrate and explain food safety management system concepts in a manner that facilitates understanding for the audience, including: - Trends - Audit findings - Performance metrics - Role contributions	High	Medium	Low
Present information about the food safety management system accurately and objectively.	High	Medium	Low
Explain the potential dynamics of cross-functional teams and describe strategies for managing these.	High	Medium	Low
Explain why a shared understanding about common food safety goals and objectives is critical to success.	High	Medium	Low
Explain the principles of collaboration.	High	Medium	Low
Identify methods for tracking the completion of corrective and preventive actions.	High	Medium	Low
Present the food safety management system to relevant stakeholder auditors, such as GFSI, regulators, and customers, including:			
– Explain how the food safety management system operates	High	Medium	Low
– Support decisions made within the food safety management system, using references relied upon for decision-making (for example scientific knowledge, industry practice, risk assessment)	High	Medium	Low
– Coordinate activities to support an efficient audit of food safety management system assessment.	High	Medium	Low
Explain strategies and rationale for integrating various external and customer requirements into a single food safety management system.	High	Medium	Low

Risk Assessment – Preventive

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Explain the principles of food safety risk, as they relate to: – Relative risk based on consequence and likelihood.	High Medium Low
– Supply chain risk	High Medium Low
– Food fraud	High Medium Low
– Food defense	High Medium Low
– Food safety culture	High Medium Low
Describe the difference between immediate, corrective, and preventive measures.	High Medium Low
Describe a general approach for assessing food safety culture components and developing an improvement plan.	High Medium Low

Risk Assessment – Post Incident

Knowledge/Skill	Rating
Explain the concept of "root cause" as it relates to problem-solving.	High Medium Low
Explain the principles and suitable application for the following tools: – 5 Whys – Brainstorming – Root cause analysis – Fishbone diagrams – Pareto analysis	High Medium Low
Conduct a root cause analysis using a structured methodology.	High Medium Low
Identify appropriate corrective and preventive measures for an identified root cause.	High Medium Low
Construct records that accurately reflect the process, findings, and actions arising from a risk assessment – post incident.	High Medium Low

Manage and Plan for Change Control

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

Personal Attributes

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

Dealing with ambiguity	High Medium Low
Adaptability	High Medium Low
Listening	High Medium Low
Problem-solving	High Medium Low
Solutions-focused	High Medium Low