

# Criteria for SQF Food Safety Auditors, Quality Auditors and Technical Reviewers

Competency and Registration

**Edition 9.1**

**June 2019**

© 2019 Safe Quality Food Institute  
2345 Crystal Drive, Suite 800  
Arlington, VA 22202 USA  
202-220-0635  
[www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)

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



---

## **INTRODUCTION**

The SQF Code is a process and product certification standard. It is a third party accredited food safety and quality management standard built on the HACCP principles and guidelines defined by the CODEX Alimentarius Commission, and is intended to support industry or company branded product and to offer benefits to sites 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 in 2004 by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) as a standard that meets its benchmark requirements.

This document describes the qualifications, registration and reregistration requirements for auditors auditing the SQF Food Safety Codes and SQF Quality Code, edition 8, or subsequent versions, and is applicable for all SQF auditors applying for registration and reregistration beginning November 1st 2017.

This document also describes the qualifications, registration and reregistration requirements for technical reviewers employed, or contracted by a licensed SQF certification body with the responsibility of reviewing the SQF audit reports. As of January 2, 2018, all SQF certification bodies are to use only registered technical reviewers. A one year transition period has been granted to existing technical reviewers allowing until January 2, 2019 to be registered.

This latest edition of the "Criteria for SQF Auditors" has been reviewed and updated to align with the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) requirements document v7 or subsequent versions.

SQF auditor registration is conducted by SQFI. It is designed to enhance the integrity of the SQF Program by providing the food industry with a register of auditors who have the appropriate competencies to audit SQF food safety and quality systems.

© 2017 Food Marketing Institute. All rights reserved.

No portion of this document may be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the Food Marketing Institute.

**Disclaimer**

While every effort is made to ensure that the process for evaluating applicants for registration is effective, FMI does not accept liability for services provided by registered SQF Auditors that fail to meet the requirements of all clients of the services.

---

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>1</b>	<b>GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CATEGORIES .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	REGISTRATION CATEGORY .....	3
1.2	DEFINITIONS.....	3
1.3	SPONSORS .....	4
1.4	PERSONAL DECLARATION.....	4
1.5	APPEALS .....	4
1.6	COMPLAINTS AGAINST REGISTERED SQF AUDITORS/TECHNICAL REVIEWERS.....	4
<b>2</b>	<b>REQUIREMENTS FOR SQF FOOD SAFETY AUDITOR REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	OVERVIEW .....	5
2.2	REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION AS SQF FOOD SAFETY AUDITORS .....	5
2.3	SQF FOOD SAFETY AUDITOR APPLICATION PROCESS .....	8
2.4	ADVANCEMENT TO ANOTHER CATEGORY.....	9
2.5	REQUIREMENTS FOR ANNUAL FOOD SAFETY AUDITOR RE-REGISTRATION .....	9
<b>3</b>	<b>REQUIREMENTS FOR SQF QUALITY AUDITOR .....</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1	OVERVIEW.....	11
3.2	REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION AS AUDITOR PE-REQUISITE .....	11
3.3	SQF QUALITY AUDITOR APPLICATION PROCESS .....	12
3.4	ADVANCEMENT TO ANOTHER CATEGORY .....	13
3.5	REQUIREMENTS FOR ANNUAL QUALITY AUDITOR RE-REGISTRATION .....	13
<b>4</b>	<b>REQUIREMENTS FOR SQF TECHNICAL REVIEWER .....</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1	OVERVIEW.....	15
4.2	REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION AS SQF TECHNICAL REVIEWER.....	15
4.3	SQF TECHNICAL REVIEWER APPLICATION PROCESS .....	17
4.4	ADVANCEMENT TO ANOTHER CATEGORY .....	18
4.5	REQUIREMENTS FOR ANNUAL TECHNICAL REVIEWER RE-REGISTRATION .....	18
	<b>ATTACHMENT 1 KEY COMPETENCIES FOR SQF FOOD SAFETY AUDITORS .....</b>	<b>19</b>
	<b>ATTACHMENT 2 KEY ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES FOR SQF QUALITY AUDITORS ..</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>ATTACHMENT 3 SQF PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT .....</b>	<b>21</b>

## 1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CATEGORIES

### 1.1 Registration Category

The criteria described in this document are for the purpose of SQF classification and registration as an SQF food safety auditor, SQF quality auditor, or SQF technical reviewer.

Food Sector Categories (FSCs) are defined in the current version of the SQF Food Safety Codes and the SQF Quality Code.

### 1.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this document, the relevant definitions given in Appendix 2: Glossary in the SQF Food Safety Codes and the SQF Quality Code, together with the following definitions apply:

<b>Applicant</b>	An individual applying to become a registered SQF food safety auditor, SQF technical reviewer, or SQF quality auditor
<b>Food Safety Auditor</b>	An individual who is registered by SQFI as an SQF food safety auditor according to the requirements contained in these criteria for SQF food safety auditors
<b>HACCP Training</b>	Training that meets the guidelines outlined in the Food and Agriculture Organization’s CODEX Alimentarius Commission. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application – Annex to CAC/RCP 1 – 1969, Rev. 4-2003), – “A system, which identifies, evaluates and controls hazards which are significant for food safety.” This training shall: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognize a HACCP training course used extensively in a country.</li> <li>2. Be administered and delivered by an institution recognized as a food safety training center of excellence.</li> <li>3. Extend a minimum of two days (16 hours) in duration, or equivalent.</li> <li>4. Assess the acquired knowledge of the candidate as part of the training program.</li> </ol>
<b>Quality Auditor</b>	An individual who is registered by SQFI as an SQF quality auditor according to the requirements contained in these criteria for SQF quality auditors
<b>Technical Reviewer</b>	An individual who is employed by an SQF licensed certification body and whose duties include the technical review of SQF audit reports. SQF technical reviewers shall be registered by SQFI as an SQF technical reviewer according to the requirements contained in these criteria.

### **1.3 Sponsors**

Each applicant for initial registration as an SQF food safety auditor, quality auditor or technical reviewer shall be sponsored by a certification body and one other person in the food industry with whom they have a business relationship. Sponsors must have evidence and / or personal knowledge of the relevant information contained within the application that they have verified.

### **1.4 Personal Declaration**

Each applicant for registration is required to attest they will comply with the SQFI Professional Code of Conduct (refer attachment 3) and that any complaints regarding their performance will be dealt with in a manner to prevent recurrence.

### **1.5 Appeals**

Written appeals against the outcome of an application for registration or re-registration will be referred to the SQFI Compliance Manager or designee. Decisions made by SQFI relating to any appeal are final.

### **1.6 Complaints Against Registered SQF Auditors/Technical Reviewers**

Complaints regarding the conduct of a currently registered SQF food safety auditor, quality auditor or technical reviewer will be acknowledged and investigated by SQFI. Substantiated evidence of misconduct may result in withdrawal of registration.



## 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR SQF FOOD SAFETY AUDITOR REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION

### 2.1 Overview

All applicants:

- Applicants shall successfully complete the “SQF Auditing SQF Systems” training course (4 days). Alternatively, applicants may meet this requirement if they attended a registered “Management System Lead Auditor” training course of forty (40) hours duration (e.g., Exemplar Global, IRCA), and the “Auditing SQF Systems” course or attended the five (5) day “Lead SQF Auditor” training course if attended after January, 2012;
- Shall attend a HACCP training course that meets the definition described above (refer 1.2).
- Shall have successfully completed the SQF Auditor online examination.
- Shall have successfully completed the GFSI Auditor Knowledge examination.
- Shall have completed at least one hundred-sixty (160 hours of food safety auditing in the food industry (twenty (20) audit days).
- For each food sector category that is requested for registration, the applicant shall demonstrate a minimum of two (2) years work experience in food safety and/or quality management within the requested FSC, or one hundred-sixty (160) audit hours within the requested FSC, or a combination of work experience and audit experience for each FSC requested.
- Shall be employed by one designated SQF licensed Certification Body (if contracted, then the applicant must be sponsored by at least one SQF licensed certification body).
- Shall attest to the SQFI Professional Code of Conduct (refer attachment 3).

### 2.2 Requirements for Registration as SQF Food Safety Auditors

The following educational, training, food industry work and food safety auditing experience requirements apply to all applicants unless otherwise specified.

#### 2.2.1 Education

2.2.1.1 The applicant shall have attained a university degree in a discipline related to the food sector category(ies) (FSCs) being applied for (e.g. food science, food technology, dairy technology) or equivalent as outlined in GFSI Requirements Document, version 7, or subsequent versions, Part II, Annex 3.

2.2.1.2 Appropriate qualification is required for the following food sector categories:

- i. An approved scheduled processing course is required to gain FSC 15 (canning process) qualification.
- ii. A degree or higher certificate in packaging technology and a relevant certificate recognized by the SQF in food technology, food hygiene or related science subject OR a primary qualification in food technology,

food safety/ hygiene or related science subject and a certificate in packaging technology that is recognized by SQF is required to gain FSC 27 (packaging) qualification.

2.2.1.3 SQF may add additional requirements as needed to demonstrate competence in a particular food sector category.

### **2.2.2 Training**

Food safety applicants shall have successfully completed the following training courses:

2.2.2.1 Successful completion of the SQF Auditing SQF Systems (4 day duration) course

Note: The Auditing SQF Systems training course completed after January 1, 2012 and a registered management system lead auditor training course of forty (40) hours duration (i.e. SQF Lead Auditor, Exemplar Global, IRCA) would meet the requirements after 2.2.2.1

2.2.2.3 HACCP training (defined in 1.2)

2.2.2.4 Successful completion of the SQF Auditor examination administered by SQFI and available through the SQFI web site ([www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)).

2.2.2.5 After July 1, 2019 all new auditors are required to successfully complete the GFSI Knowledge Auditor Exam and submit a certificate of completion from any GFSI Certification Program Owner.

### **2.2.3 Food Industry Work Experience**

Applicants shall have at least five (5) years' work experience in a food-related technical, professional or supervisory position involving food safety accountability and the exercise of judgment.

2.2.3.1 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, such as consulting or regulatory experience, that are deemed to provide experience relevant to the system being developed and the competencies described in this document for SQF auditors may be considered.

2.2.3.2 All applicants must submit an industry work experience log that meets the following criteria:

- i. Date of work history
- ii. Name and location of company where experience was gained
- iii. Position
- iv. Designated food sector category
- v. Detailed description of the position to justify knowledge in food safety and the relevant food sector category

---

vi. Contact information for verification purposes

#### **2.2.4 Food Safety Auditing Experience**

All applicants must complete, at a minimum, one hundred-sixty (160) hours of food safety audits. To demonstrate auditing experience, all auditor applicants shall submit an audit log as a record of their food safety audit experience.

Product cuttings, pest control assessments, training and sample retrieval are examples of activities that should not be included on an audit log. The audit log shall contain the audit experience of the applicant and meet the following criteria:

- i. All referenced audits shall be third party or second party audits, or first party audits conducted by an independent auditor from a corporate head office.
- ii. Internal audits of a facility as an employee of that facility will not be considered and should not be included on the audit log.
- iii. Shadow or witness audits where the auditor takes no responsibility in the audit process or the audit outcome will not be considered and should not be included on the audit log.
- iv. Qualifying audits that are included on the audit log must reference a recognized standard, checklist or audit tool. Examples of acceptable audit standards include HACCP audits, GFSI recognized certification program audits, GMP or GAP audits. Audit checklists used by the applicant may be requested by SQFI in order to determine the scope of the audit.
- v. Only audits that have been acquired up to ten (10) years prior to application will be accepted as audit experience.
- vi. Each audit referenced shall include the date of the audit, audit duration, company audited, one food sector category reference, relevant contact information and certification body (if applicable). Audit experience shall be with management systems within the SQF food sector category that have used HACCP, ISO/FSSC 22000, Pre-Requisite Programs, GMP, GAP, principles or a combination of these systems.

#### **2.2.5 Food Sector Category Designation**

2.2.5.1 Applicants are to determine the food sector categories that support their education, training, work experience and audit history. For each food sector category that is applied for, the applicant must demonstrate:

- i. A minimum of two (2) year work experience, which may include consulting activities, in food safety management within the food industry sector; or
- ii. One hundred-sixty (160) audit hours auditing within the requested FSC, or
- iii. A combination of work experience and audit experience for each FSC requested;

- 
- iv. An industry recognized qualification in a technical discipline within the requested FSC may be required.

## **2.3 SQF Food Safety Auditor Application Process**

### **2.3.1 The initial application**

The SQFI or its designee assesses the competencies of applicants for SQF food safety auditor registration by evaluating education, training, work experience and auditing experience against the requirements specified in section 2 of these criteria.

Completed applications are submitted online via the SQFI website ([www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)). Food safety auditor applicants will be required to upload evidence supporting their application in a secured format (such as pdf) as part of the online registration process. It is suggested that applicants have the following documentation available prior to starting the application process:

- HACCP training certificate
- Lead auditor training certificate
- Auditing SQF Systems training certificate
- Work experience log
- Audit log
- Education records
- Professional development training records
- Sponsor verification form

A non-refundable application fee must be paid before the application review can begin. Once an application is approved, applicants shall pay the registration fee before their SQFI professional credentials can be issued. Applicable fees can be found at [www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com).

Applications will not be processed unless all required information is provided.

On receipt of an application, all information is reviewed by SQFI or its designee for accuracy, including documentary evidence of training and formal qualifications. In considering registration level and scope, the applicant's qualifications are evaluated, including any food sector-related training courses undertaken and the applicant's food sector work and auditing experience. The review may also evaluate the feedback received about the performance of the applicant cited by the contacts on the application.

SQFI or its designee may request additional supporting information from the applicant as required. If the SQFI or its designee is unable to obtain satisfactory verification of information and experience from competent referees, an interview may be required.

Based on the information provided by the applicant, SQFI or its designee will determine whether to grant registration for the appropriate registration level and scope. The SQFI or its designee maintains a file on each applicant, which will remain confidential. The file will include the original application documentation;

---

check sheets, records of investigations, appeals and complaints, auditing logs and re-registration documents.

### **2.3.2 Certificate of Registration and Identification Card**

Each successful applicant will receive an identification card issued by the SQFI. Certificates and ID cards have an expiry date, which is the date re-registration falls due. The terminology to be used by registered SQF auditors in describing their registration on business cards, letterhead etc. is: "Registered SQF Food Safety Auditor."

### **2.3.3 Publication of Registration**

A register of SQF food safety auditors is displayed on the SQF Institute website([www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)).

## **2.4 Advancement to Another Category**

Advancement to another Food Sector Category can be achieved at any time, provided suitable qualifications and / or experience for that category has been gained through training, auditing, industry experience or consulting experience. To obtain registration for an additional food sector category, applicants will need to submit:

- i. Supporting documentation demonstrating qualifications and audit experience as outlined in 2.2.5 in the relevant food sector.
- ii. The appropriate advancement fee as listed on the SQFI website ([www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)).

## **2.5 Requirements for Annual Food Safety Auditor Re-registration**

Re-registration is required annually based on the anniversary date of initial registration. Requirements for re-registration include submission of the following, along with the annual fee:

- Evidence of auditing experience, as detailed below in 2.5.1
- Evidence of professional development, as detailed below in 2.5.2
- Evidence of participation in SQF Professional Update course (2.5.3)
- Declaration of one sponsor from a licensed SQF certification body (2.5.4)
- Reaffirm the SQFI Professional Code of Conduct (2.5.5)

### **2.5.1 Auditing Experience**

For re-registration, all currently registered SQF auditors shall submit an audit log demonstrating a minimum of six (6) complete SQF System audits. All audits shall be certification, re-certification or surveillance audits.

Auditors must conduct a minimum of one (1) audit or demonstrate competence through education, training, consulting, etc. in their designated food sector category (ies) within five (5) years. Auditors that do not conduct audits within their designated food sector category (ies) within five (5) years, will be de-registered from the FSC (s) in which they do not have the minimum required auditing experience. The audit can be in any GFSI scheme.

An auditor that has been removed from the FSC can reapply for that FSC by submitting evidence for demonstration of competence through auditing, training, education, or industry experience.

### **2.5.2 Professional Development**

Currently registered SQF food safety auditors shall undertake at least fifteen (15) hours of continuing professional development within their registration year relevant to their registered food sector categories and their personal needs for skills and knowledge. Professional development information shall be provided on the Professional Development log. The following activities are examples of professional development:

- 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;
- Preparation and publication of articles.

**Note:** In the selection of annual professional development activities, SQF food safety auditors need to consider their personal strengths and weaknesses to identify areas for personal improvement. These activities should target new or the improvement of existing food safety and quality management skills and knowledge. Consulting, training, development of programs, or other activities completed in the execution of one's daily work are not considered professional development and should not be included.

### **2.5.3 SQFI Professional Update**

SQF food safety auditors shall participate in one-(1) SQF Food Safety Professional Update course delivered by SQFI within their registration year. This update may be delivered via webinar for general participation or delivered directly to certification bodies upon request.

### **2.5.4 Declaration of Sponsor Certification Body**

Currently registered SQF auditors must declare in their re-registration application an SQF licensed Certification Body that will sponsor their re-registration application.

### **2.5.5 Reaffirmation of the SQFI Code of Conduct**

Each applicant for re-registration will be asked to attest that they will comply with the SQFI Code of Conduct and that any complaints regarding their performance will be dealt with in a manner to prevent recurrence.

### 3. REQUIREMENTS FOR SQF QUALITY AUDITOR REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION

#### 3.1 Overview

All applicants:

- Shall have met the requirements for registration as SQF food safety auditors as outlined in section 2 of these criteria, and shall be registered as an SQF food safety auditor, or be concurrently applying for registration as an SQF food safety auditor.
- Shall demonstrate any of the following training, auditing experience or professional designations:
  - Shall have attended the SQF Quality Auditor training course, or Quality Systems course;  
OR
  - Shall have attended a quality training course deemed equivalent by SQFI (eg ASQ-CQA, CQE, CQI, CQIA, , Six Sigma – all levels, etc);  
OR
  - Achieve a credential in one of the following ASQ-CQA, CQE, CQI, CQIA, CMQ-QE, Six Sigma, etc.;;  
OR
  - Have completed a quality management post-graduate degree or diploma through a recognized tertiary institution;  
OR
  - Have a minimum of sixty (60) hours experience auditing against the SQF Code, Level 3, ISO 9001 or other equivalent quality management standard (may be included in 160 hours required for food safety auditor registration).
  - Shall have completed the SQF quality auditor online examination.
  - Shall be employed by one designated SQF licensed Certification Body (if contracted, then the applicant must be sponsored by at least one SQF licensed certification body).
  - Shall attest to the SQFI Professional Code of Conduct (refer attachment 3).

#### 3.2 Requirements for Registration as SQF Quality Auditors

##### **3.2.1 SQF Food Safety Auditor Pre-requisite**

Applicants seeking SQF quality auditor registration shall have met the requirements for registration as SQF food safety auditors as outlined in section 2 of these criteria, and shall be registered as an SQF food safety auditor, or be concurrently applying for registration as an SQF food safety auditor.

##### **3.2.2 Education & Training**

3.2.2.1. The same education requirements that apply to SQF food safety auditors (refer 2.2.1.1) apply to SQF quality auditors. There are no additional educational requirements.

3.2.2.2 SQF food safety auditors seeking registration as SQF quality auditors shall demonstrate successful completion of one of the following:

- The 'Auditing the SQF Quality Code' training course conducted by SQFI, or 'Quality Systems for Food Manufacturing' training course conducted by an SQF Training Center licensed to conduct this course;
- A quality training course deemed equivalent by SQFI such as ASQ-CQA, CQE, CQI, CQIA, Six Sigma – all levels, etc);
- A professional credential in a recognized professional Quality organization such as ASQ-CQA, CQE, CQI, CQIA, CQM, Six Sigma, etc.;
- A quality management post-graduate degree or diploma through a recognized tertiary institution;
- Sixty (60) hours experience auditing ISO 9001 or equivalent (refer 3.2.4).

3.2.2.3 Notwithstanding the training requirements described in 3.2.2.2, applicants shall successfully complete the on-line quality auditor examination available on-line at sqfi.com.

### **3.2.3 Work experience**

The food industry work experience requirements described in 2.2.3 apply. There are no additional work experience requirements for SQF quality auditors.

### **3.2.4 Quality Auditing Experience**

Applicants may demonstrate a minimum of sixty hours (60) experience auditing against the SQF Code, Level 3, ISO 9001 or other equivalent quality management standard instead of the training requirements described in 3.2.2.2. The sixty hours may be included in 160 hrs required for food safety auditor registration. Only audits that have been acquired up to ten (10) years prior to application will be accepted as audit experience.

Quality management system audits shall be referenced on the applicant's audit log. Each audit shall include the date of the audit, audit duration, company audited, one food sector category reference, relevant contact information and certification body (if applicable).

## **3.3 SQF Quality Auditor Application Process**

### **3.3.1 The initial application**

Applications for registration as SQF quality auditors may be submitted concurrently with an application for SQF food safety auditor (refer 2.3.1), or an extension of scope (refer 2.4).

Completed applications are submitted online via the SQFI website ([www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)). Quality auditor applicants will be required to upload evidence supporting their application in a secured format (such as pdf) as part of the online registration process. It is suggested that applicants have the following documentation available prior to starting the application process:

- Existing food safety auditor registration number (if applicable), or food safety auditor application requirements (refer 2.3.1);
- Quality auditor training certificates (refer 3.2.2.2);
- Audit log with identified quality management audit hours (refer 3.2.4);
- Sponsor verification form

A non-refundable application fee must be paid before the application review can begin. Once an application is approved, applicants shall pay the registration fee before their SQFI professional credentials can be issued. Applicable fees can be found at [www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com).

Applications will not be processed unless all required information is provided.

On receipt of an application, all information is reviewed by SQFI or its designee for accuracy, including documentary evidence of training and formal qualifications. In considering registration level and scope, the applicant's qualifications are evaluated. The review may also evaluate the feedback received on the performance of the applicant cited by the contacts on the application.

SQFI or its designee may request additional supporting information from the applicant as required. If the SQFI or its designee is unable to obtain satisfactory verification of information and experience from competent referees, an interview may be required.

Based on the information provided by the applicant, SQFI or its designee will determine whether to grant registration. The SQFI or its designee maintains a file on each applicant, which will remain confidential. The file will include the original application documentation; check sheets, records of investigations, appeals and complaints, auditing logs and re-registration documents.

### **3.3.2 Certificate of Registration and Identification Card**

Each successful quality auditor applicant will receive a new identification card issued by the SQFI, indicating "Registered SQF Food Safety and Quality Auditor." The terminology to be used by registered SQF auditors in describing their registration on business cards, letterhead etc. is: "Registered SQF Food Safety and Quality Auditor."

### **3.3.3 Publication of Registration**

A register of SQF food safety and quality auditors is displayed on the SQF Institute website ([www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)).

## **3.4 Advancement to Another Category**

The food sector category (ies) assigned to an SQF quality auditor are the same as those assigned as an SQF food safety auditor. Any change to food sector category designation as a food safety auditor shall also apply to the quality auditor registration.

## **3.5 Requirements for Annual Quality Auditor Re-registration**

Re-registration for SQF quality auditors is annual. Requirements are the same as for SQF food safety auditors as outlined in 2.5, but with one exception. Three (3) of the six (6) SQF system audits required for re-registration must include an audit of the SQF Quality Code (ie a combined food safety and quality audit.)

Re-registration requirements for re-registration include submission of the following, along with the annual fee:

- Evidence of auditing experience, including three SQF Food System audits that include the Quality Code
- Evidence of professional development (refer 2.5.2)
- Evidence of participation in SQF Professional Update course (refer 2.5.3)
- Declaration of one sponsor from a licensed SQF certification body (refer 2.5.4)
- Reaffirm the SQFI Professional Code of Conduct (refer 2.5.5)

## 4. REQUIREMENTS FOR SQF TECHNICAL REVIEWER REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION

### 4.1 Overview

As of January 1, 2019, all SQF certification bodies are to use only registered technical reviewers.

All applicants:

- Applicants shall successfully complete the “SQF Auditing SQF Systems” training course (4 days). Alternatively, applicants may meet this requirement if they attended a registered “Management System Lead Auditor” training course of forty (40) hours duration (e.g., Exemplar Global, IRCA), and the “Auditing SQF Systems” course or attended the five (5) day “Lead SQF Auditor” training course if attended after January, 2012;
- Shall attend a HACCP training course as defined in the SQF Code, edition 8, appendix 2;
- Shall have completed the SQF Auditor online examination;
- Shall demonstrate two (2) years’ work experience in food safety and/or quality management;
- Shall have a minimum of eighty (80) hours audit experience auditing management systems;
- Shall be employed by one designated SQF licensed Certification Body (if contracted, then the applicant must be sponsored by at least one SQF licensed certification body); and
- Shall attest to the SQFI Professional Code of Conduct (refer attachment 3).

### 4.2 Requirements for Registration as SQF Technical Reviewer

All SQF licensed certification bodies are required to use only registered technical reviewers or a food safety auditor responsible for review of, or oversight of the review of, all SQF audit reports created by that certification body.

Technical reviewers who also conduct SQF audits must be registered as SQF food safety auditors (refer section 2), and are not required to also register as technical reviewers. Technical reviewers are not registered against food sector categories.

The following educational, training, food industry work and food safety auditing experience requirements apply to all applicants unless otherwise specified.

#### 4.2.1 Education

The applicant shall have attained a university degree in food science, food technology or related discipline.

#### 4.2.2 Training

Technical reviewer applicants shall have successfully completed the following training courses:

4.2.2.1 Registered management system lead auditor training course of forty (40) hours duration (i.e. SQF Lead Auditor, Exemplar Global, IRCA); and

4.2.2.2 SQF Systems Training – Auditing SQF Systems training course completed after January 1, 2012.

Note that successful completion of the SQF Lead Auditor course would meet the requirement of SQF Systems Training as required in 4.2.2.

4.2.2.3 HACCP training (defined in 1.2)

4.2.2.4 Successful completion of the SQF Auditor examination administered by SQFI and available through the SQFI web site ([www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)).

### **4.2.3 Food Industry Work Experience**

Applicants shall have at least five (5) years' work experience in a food-related technical, professional or supervisory position involving food safety accountability and the exercise of judgment.

4.2.3.1 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, such as consulting or regulatory experience, that are deemed to provide experience relevant to the system being developed and the competencies described in this document for SQF auditors may be considered.

4.2.3.2 All applicants must submit an industry work experience log that meets the following criteria:

- i. Date of work history
- ii. Name and location of company where experience was gained
- iii. Position
- iv. Detailed description of the position to justify knowledge in food safety contact information for verification purposes

### **4.2.4 Food Safety Auditing Experience**

All applicants must complete, at a minimum, eighty (80) hours of food safety audits. To demonstrate auditing experience, all technical reviewer applicants shall submit an audit log as a record of their food safety audit experience.

Product cuttings, pest control assessments, training and sample retrieval are examples of activities that should not be included on an audit log. The audit log shall contain the audit experience of the applicant and meet the following criteria:

- i. All referenced audits shall be third party or second party audits, or first party audits conducted by an independent auditor from a corporate head office.

- 
- ii. Internal audits of a facility as an employee of that facility will not be considered and should not be included on the audit log.
  - iii. Shadow or witness audits where the shadow auditor takes no responsibility for the audit outcome may be included in the application for registration as a technical reviewer.
  - iv. Qualifying audits that are included on the audit log must reference a recognized standard, checklist or audit tool. Examples of acceptable audit standards include HACCP audits, GFSI recognized certification program audits, GMP or GAP audits.
  - v. Only audits that have been acquired up to ten (10) years prior to application will be accepted as audit experience.
  - vi. Each audit referenced shall include the date of the audit, audit duration, company audited, one food sector category reference, relevant contact information and certification body (if applicable).

### **4.3 SQF Technical Reviewer Application Process**

#### **4.3.1 The initial application**

Completed applications are submitted online via the SQFI website ([www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)). Technical Reviewer applicants will be required to upload evidence supporting their application in a secured format (such as pdf) as part of the online registration process. It is suggested that applicants have the following documentation available prior to starting the application process:

- HACCP training certificate
- Lead auditor training certificate
- Auditing SQF Systems training certificate
- SQF Auditor Online Exam Certificate of Attainment
- Work experience log
- Audit log
- Education records
- Professional development training records
- Sponsor verification form

A non-refundable application fee must be paid application review can begin. Once an application is approved, applicants shall pay the registration fee before their SQFI professional credentials can be issued. Applicable fees can be found at [www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com).

Applications will not be processed unless all required information is provided.

On receipt of an application, all information is reviewed by SQFI or its designee for accuracy, including documentary evidence of training and formal qualifications. In considering registration level and scope, the applicant's

qualifications are evaluated. The review may also evaluate the feedback received on the performance of the applicant cited by the contacts on the application.

SQFI or its designee may request additional supporting information from the applicant as required. If the SQFI or its designee is unable to obtain satisfactory verification of information and experience from competent referees, an interview may be required.

Based on the information provided by the applicant, SQFI or its designee will determine whether to grant registration for the appropriate registration level and scope. The SQFI or its designee maintains a file on each applicant, which will remain confidential. The file will include the original application documentation; check sheets, records of investigations, appeals and complaints, auditing logs and re-registration documents.

#### ***4.3.2 Certificate of Registration and Identification Card***

Each successful applicant will receive certificate that includes an expiry date, which is the date re-registration falls due.

#### ***4.3.3 Publication of Registration***

A register of SQF technical reviewers linked to their licensed certification bodies shall be retained by SQFI, but shall not be made public.

### **4.4 Advancement to Another Category**

Registration as a technical reviewer is not sector specific.

### **4.5 Requirements for Annual Technical Reviewer Re-registration**

Re-registration for SQF technical reviewers is annual. Technical reviewers are required to meet the same re-registration criteria as SQF food safety auditors with the exception of the six (6) SQF system audits. There is no requirement for technical reviewers to conduct site audits throughout the year.

Requirements for re-registration include submission of the following, along with the annual fee:

- Evidence of professional development, as detailed in 2.5.2
- Evidence of participation in SQF Professional Update course (refer 2.5.3)
- Declaration of one sponsor from a licensed SQF certification body (refer 2.5.4)
- Reaffirm the SQFI Professional Code of Conduct (refer 2.5.5)

## **ATTACHMENT 1: KEY COMPETENCIES FOR SQF FOOD SAFETY AUDITORS**

### **1. General Competencies**

Applicants must demonstrate through their qualifications and/or work experience they have achieved a satisfactory level of knowledge and experience in a particular food industry sector. All applicants must demonstrate:

- Proficiency in auditing, management and effective communication techniques.
- The ability to demonstrate the personal attributes and professional integrity necessary for the effective performance of audits.
- Knowledge and experience of auditing in the food industry.
- The ability to identify and assess potential quality defects at all links in the food supply chain.
- The ability to plan, lead and organize the audit.

### **2. Food Safety Competencies**

- The ability to identify and assess potential food safety hazards at all links in the supply chain including:
  - Biological hazards
  - Chemical hazards (including allergens)
  - Physical hazards
- The ability to assess the effectiveness of methodologies for controlling food safety hazards.
- An understanding of the current principles and practices of HACCP to the current edition of the Codex Alimentarius Commission Guidelines.
- Auditors applying for FSC27 shall demonstrate the knowledge of packaging materials manufacture.
- Auditors applying for FSC 15 shall demonstrate competency in thermal-processing through an industry recognized qualification.
- Experience and a sound technical knowledge of the product and the process.
- Knowledge of relevant pre-requisite programs, industry codes of practice, legal requirements, and industry guidelines and standards.

---

## ATTACHMENT 2: KEY ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES FOR SQF QUALITY AUDITORS

### **1. General Competencies**

Applicants must demonstrate the general and food safety competencies described in Attachment 1: Key competencies for SQF food safety auditors.

### **2. Quality Management Competencies**

- The ability to identify and assess potential quality threats at all links in the supply chain including:
- The ability to assess the effectiveness of methodologies for controlling quality hazards.
- An understanding of the current principles and practices of HACCP to the current edition of the Codex Alimentarius Commission Guidelines and the ability to apply them to the identification and control of quality threats.
- Experience and a sound technical knowledge of statistical process control and other quality tools used to measure and improve process capability.
- Knowledge of relevant pre-requisite programs, industry codes of practice, legal requirements, and industry guidelines and standards.

---

## ATTACHMENT 3: SQF PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

All registered SQF food safety auditors, quality auditors and technical reviewers have an obligation to maintain the integrity of the SQF Program by observing the SQFI Professional Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of their registration. The SQFI Professional Code of Conduct must be carefully reviewed and acknowledged as part of the applicant's registration or re-registration.

### **1.1 Fundamental Principles**

- 1.1.1 Act professionally, accurately, honestly and impartially and in an unbiased manner.
- 1.1.2 Not to act in any way that would prejudice the reputation of the SQF Food Safety and Quality Codes and co-operate fully with an inquiry in the event of any alleged breach of the SQF Program.

### **1.2 Relations with the Public**

- 1.2.1 Use their best endeavors to promote the worth of the SQF Food Safety and Quality Codes.
- 1.2.2 Act with professionalism and integrity when promoting their services.
- 1.2.3 Make it clear when dealing with the public, the capacity in which they are acting and on whose behalf (if any) they are acting.

### **1.3 Relations with their Employer Colleagues/Clients**

- 1.3.1 Act with integrity. Maintain a professional, honest and trustworthy manner with each employee/client.
- 1.3.2 Inform employees and clients of any business connections, interest or affiliations, which might influence judgment or impair the equitable character of its services.
- 1.3.3 Indicate to their clients the adverse consequences that result from non-compliance with the requirements of the SQF Food Safety and Quality Codes.
- 1.3.4 Ensure their clients are fully aware of their rights to appeal a decision and the process by which they can do so.
- 1.3.5 Not disclose information concerning the business affairs or technical process of any present or former client without the client's consent.
- 1.3.6 Not accept compensation from more than one party for the same service without the consent of all parties.

### **1.4 Relations with Peers**

- 1.4.1 The SQF auditor or technical reviewer will assist those under their supervision to develop their professional and technical skills.