

CIEH | Competency Development Portfolio Guidance for candidates



This is the guidance to help you complete the CIEH Competency Development Portfolio (CDP). Please also see the CDP and Professional Discussion (PD) Overview and CDP Guidance for employers.

Work-based practice provides practitioners with the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their academic studies.

Practitioners are expected to:

- Gain experience of carrying out food hygiene and food standards inspections at retail establishments, including those handling both raw and ready to eat open products, catering businesses and food manufacturers, including those approved under Regulation (EC) 853/2004.
- Develop their confidence and competence in carrying out complaint investigations, and
- Apply their knowledge and, on the basis of their observations and evidence gained during inspections and/or investigations, develop their skills in drafting a range of legal notices in respect of food law contraventions.

Please note that this work can only commence when you have enrolled and received your Competency Development Portfolio.

Format

Your CDP will consist of:

- Three case studies (no more than 4,000 words each)
- Two investigation reports (no more than 2,000 words each)
- Two narratives (no more than 1,000 words each)

Practitioners should emphasise and evidence the activities which demonstrate the competencies. A premium is placed on practitioners' reflection on the activity that highlights learning and the embedding of skills. Extraneous information, such as autobiographical accounts or quoting external documents which do not support the demonstration of competence is strongly discouraged. Appendices do not count towards the word count.

Practitioners must cite material from established sources presented in the case study using the Harvard style referencing format.

Range of evidence

1. Case studies

Prepare three detailed case studies, evidencing inspection activity at three different types of food premises:

- A retail operation handling both raw and ready to eat open products
- A catering business
- An approved food manufacturer

One of the case studies should include an audit of a documented food safety management system based on HACCP. The scope of the audit should be clearly defined and can be of part of the system in relation to a particular product or of certain organisational arrangements e.g. temperature controls.

At least one case study should be a higher-risk establishment i.e. category A or B for food hygiene, category A for food standards.

The scope of the inspections should include both food hygiene and food standards. Where food hygiene and food standards are not considered concurrently, additional case studies should be submitted as necessary.

Practitioners should be proactive, seeking opportunities to demonstrate all the required competencies. This may necessitate seeking assistance from other organisations e.g. in two tier authorities where food hygiene and food standards official controls are not delivered by the same authority.

It is advised that cases are only selected where they allow practitioners to demonstrate the competencies in Table A of the Competency Development Portfolio.

The competencies must be met at least once and can be demonstrated in any of the case studies.

Evidence requirements

Each case study should include:

- Background to the case (could include a description of the business, its products and processes, size, history of compliance, previous risk rating, reason for the visit, etc)
- Preparation for the visit (could include steps taken to prepare, research, guidance materials, equipment, precautions, etc)
- A narrative detailing the inspection (could include how the inspection was undertaken, the order including what was observed and why, the documents reviewed, etc)
- Relevant interaction with personnel in the food establishment or food business operator (could include who was interviewed and any details that might influence the case)
- Presentation and discussion of findings (could include commentary on operational practices and the interrogation of the Food Safety Management System identified)
- Conclusions drawn from the findings (could include severity of contraventions observed, confidence in management, examples of good or poor practice, assessment of efficacy of HACCP system including an assessment of documentation, applying the Food Law Code of Practice risk rating for hygiene and standards, and issuing a food hygiene rating (if appropriate)
- Course/s of action with justification (could include regulatory intervention citing relevant legislation, non-regulatory intervention including mode of

delivery, giving justification for most appropriate course of action, suggested recommendations for improvement)

- Follow up information e.g. developments since action taken, compliance secured or further action required
- Supporting evidence e.g. inspection forms, notes, photos, schedules of work, letters of advice, etc. Please adhere to your employer's data protection policies when providing evidence
- Reflection is essential. Practitioners should demonstrate an understanding of the impact of their actions and discuss possible consequences of inaction. Reflection often involves revealing anxieties, errors and weaknesses, as well as strengths and successes. It is often useful to reflect forward to the future – when you might do something differently as a result of reflecting – as well as reflecting back on the past

2. Investigation reports

Provide two investigation reports. The reports should demonstrate the skills and competencies required to carry out effective investigations into:

- a food safety complaint (about a food product not a food establishment)
- a food standards complaint

Reports should address how the need to conduct the investigation was determined, the priority afforded to the complaint, information sources used to inform the investigation and how the investigation was carried out. The report should also include details of engagement with relevant stakeholders, including complainants and how stakeholder expectations were managed.

It is advised that cases are only selected where they allow the competencies in Table B of the CDP to be demonstrated.

Evidence requirements

- Details of the case (could include a description of the food product, the nature of the complaint, any legislative standards that apply to the product, details of potential contraventions)
- A narrative outlining the approach to the investigation
- Involvement of other stakeholders e.g. food business, complainant, laboratory personnel, the Food Standards Agency (or equivalent) and their role
- Presentation of findings of investigation
- Conclusions drawn from the findings
- Course/s of action with justification
- Follow up information e.g. developments since action taken, compliance secured, or further action required
- Supporting evidence e.g. notes, photos, laboratory reports, letters of advice, etc, (please adhere to your employer's data protection policies when providing evidence)
- Reflection is important. Practitioners should demonstrate an understanding of the impact of their actions and discuss possible consequences of inaction. Reflection often involves revealing anxieties, errors and weaknesses, as well as strengths and successes. It is often useful to reflect forward to the future – when you might do something differently as a result of reflecting – as well as reflecting back on the past

3. Narratives – use of enforcement sanctions

Provide two short narratives based on legal notices produced. One of the notices should be a Hygiene Improvement Notice and the other should relate to a food standards contravention.

The narratives should explain why the notice was the appropriate course of action, set out the factors considered in deciding the course of action and the potential risks of taking no action. An explanation of how to ensure the notice is properly served should also be included.

It is acceptable to provide notices that will not be served, providing that the requirements of the learning outcome are met. The notices may relate to contraventions identified during inspections or complaint investigations.

It is advised that cases are only selected when they allow the practitioner to demonstrate the competencies in Table C of the CDP.

Evidence requirements

- Completed notice (as appendix)
- Narrative should include reference to the hierarchy of enforcement, enforcement policies, primary authority, an explanation of action that should be taken following service of the notice to verify compliance and consequences of non-compliance.

Duration of work-based practice

The minimum period of work-based practice required to complete the CDP is six months. CDPs cannot be submitted within six months of enrolment with CIEH and should be submitted no later than 18 months after enrolment.

Practitioners should apply for the Professional Discussion within 12 months of submitting their CDP.

Submission of CDP for assessment

The application form can be found on the CIEH website.

When we receive this form, we will send you a link for you to upload your portfolio. We do not accept zipped files. Your files should be titled clearly, using no more than the 256 character standard.

Notify the CIEH Education unit of the submission via email education@cieh.org

Data protection

Evidence containing personal/sensitive data on individuals or businesses can be redacted to comply with the data protection requirements. If the matter within the case study is subject to ongoing legal action, i.e. prosecution or appeal, the case should not be used for the CDP until the matter has been completely resolved and the details can be publicised.

CIEH operates a secure environment for submissions and adhere to data protection guidelines, but this does not remove the practitioner's responsibility to comply. Please ensure you are familiar with your organisation's data protection policy and that you adhere to it when submitting your CDP.

Where to find more information

- CDP and Professional Discussion Overview
- CDP Guidance for employers

Practitioners should contact their workplace supervisor in the first instance if they require guidance on completing the CDP.

They can also contact the Professional Development team at education@cieh.org with any further queries.