Chartered Trading Standards Institute qualifications

CPCF Portfolio candidate guidance

Please ensure you read through this portfolio guidance prior to starting your portfolio work for the CTSI Professional Competency Framework (CPCF), Trading Standards Practitioners Diploma (TSPD) also known as Stage 2.

Portfolios are used within Stage 2 of the CPCF, as a method of showing a person's skills and the demonstration of their performance. These will be based against tasks and their criteria for each of the portfolios. These skills are recognised as a need for an officer's daily work life. The portfolios also allow employers to see that their staff have the appropriate skills, to go out and carry out their duties within the appointed work area.

Portfolios must also be submitted prior to sitting any Practical, Oral or Professional interview examinations. The deadline for portfolio submissions under each main exam cycle is April 1.

IMPORTANT: All evidence provided within a portfolio must be redacted. To redact, a copy should be made and information crossed through using a marker pen. Scan the redacted document in preparation for providing to your Verifier.

DO <u>NOT</u> REDACT ANY EVIDENCE ELECTRONICALLY as the information remains within the document and can be made visible.

What portfolios will I have to do?

The Generic Skills portfolio must be completed, alongside your first subject specific portfolio (unless you completed the Core Skills portfolio under the TSQF and have had it ratified by the QAB), and submitted within your first examination cycle in the framework. You will see that some portfolios are marked as **Mandatory** – these must be completed unless you have the equivalent approved portfolio to use as an exemption.

Generic Skills portfolio (mandatory)
This portfolio concentrates on the essential skills which are fundamental to all those working within a Trading Standards environment and cover the following areas:

- Communication skills
- Information skills
- Organisational skills
- Cognitive skills

In addition to the above portfolio, there are a further three portfolios that are mandatory portfolios that must be completed alongside the generic skills portfolio.

Legal Metrology Technical Skills portfolio (mandatory)
This portfolio is designed to allow a candidate to demonstrate specific skills relating to an Inspector of Weights and Measures. On completion of the portfolio, you will be able to:

- Define the context and use of a product, equipment and components;
- Interpretation of legislative framework applying to the keeping, sale or supply of products etc;
- Test and assess equipment/goods and the demonstration of risk analysis etc;
- Demonstration of practical skills providing solutions to practical problems

Investigations Skills portfolio (mandatory)

This portfolio is designed to allow a candidate to demonstrate specific skills relating to the area of Investigations, an essential skills area for officers. On completion of this portfolio, you will be able to show:

- Planning skills
- Partnership skills
- Investigative skills
- Reporting skills

Regulating Markets Skills portfolio (mandatory)

This portfolio is designed to allow a candidate to demonstrate that they understand this area and how it affects a number of different TS areas. On completion of this portfolio, you will be able to:

- Interpret technical information
- Concept of 'hazard', 'risk' and 'safety' relating to a product
- Corrective action through the supply chain
- Examining a product to ascertain compliance
- Sampling and screen testing

You will be required to pick one further portfolio and complete it as part of the CPCF Stage 2 portfolio requirements as your unit 4 option.

Depending on the areas you intend to work in, will determine which portfolio you are required to complete.

Food Skills portfolio

This portfolio is designed to allow a candidate demonstrate that they understand this specific subject area. On completion of this portfolio, you will be able to:

- Undertake samples with UK statutory framework.
- Methods of sampling.
- Secure evidence of malpractice or illegal activity.
- Work in partnership to achieve required outcomes.

Feed Skills portfolio

This portfolio is designed to allow a candidate demonstrate that they understand this specific subject area. On completion of this portfolio, you will be able to:

- Undertake samples with UK statutory framework.
- Methods of sampling.
- Secure evidence of malpractice or illegal activity.
- Undertake practical enforcement.
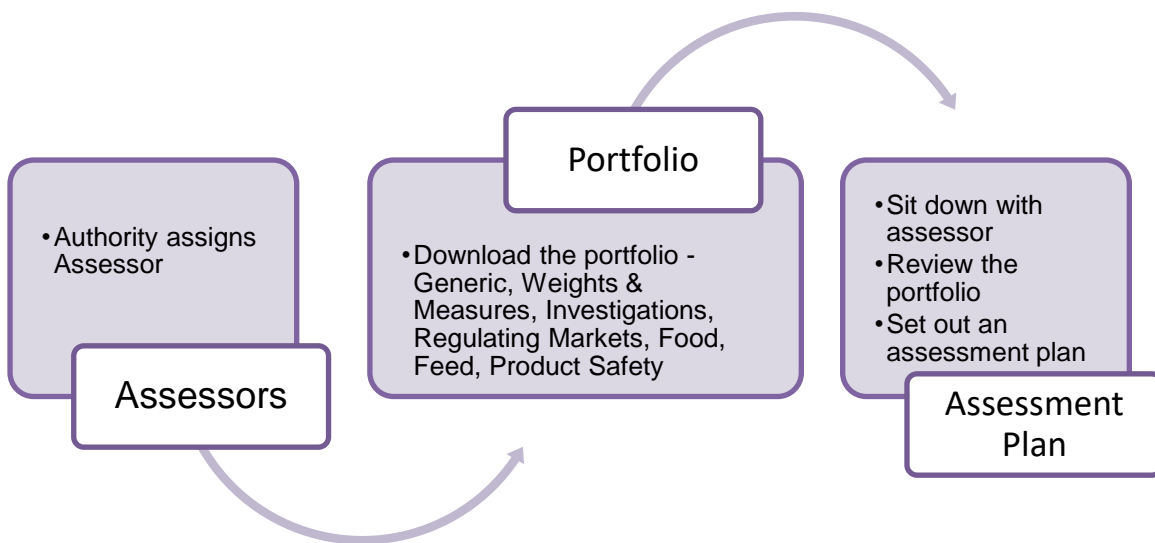- Work in partnership to achieve required outcomes.

Product Safety Skills portfolio

This portfolio is designed to allow a candidate demonstrate that they understand this specific subject area. On completion of this portfolio, you will be able to:

- Market Surveillance relating to product safety.
- Product conformity / risk within the scope of regulatory requirements.
- Conduct product-based risk assessment.
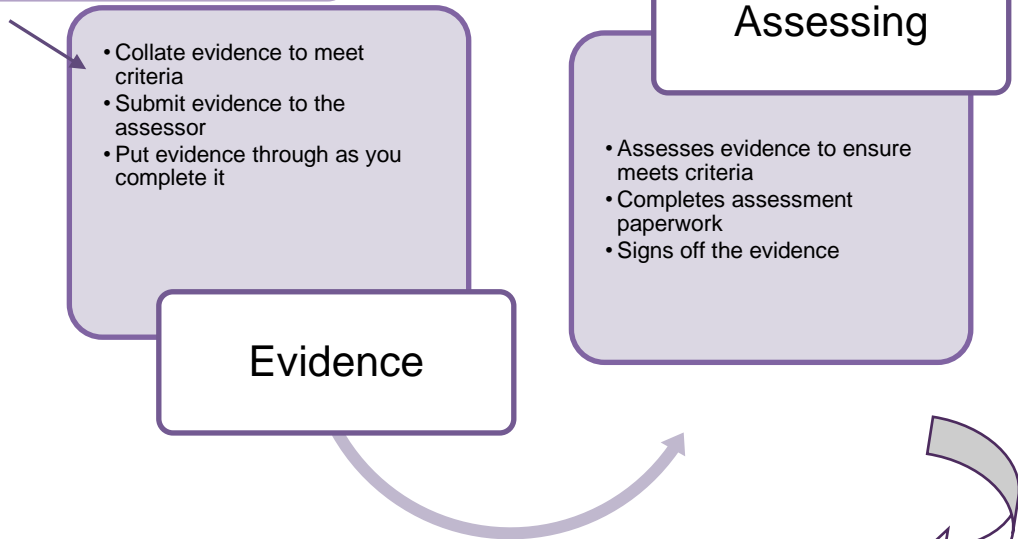- Determining appropriate circumstances for statutory safety notices.

What do I need to do?

The following outlines the process you will need to do in relation to completing a portfolio:
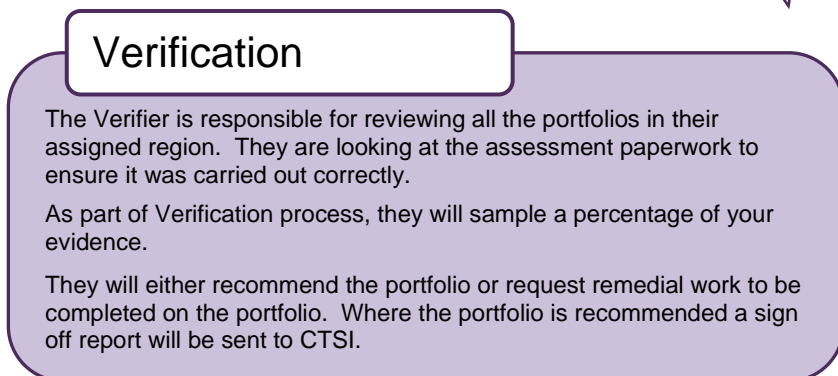
Assessors
- Authority assigns Assessor

Portfolio
- Download the portfolio - Generic, Weights & Measures, Investigations, Regulating Markets, Food, Feed, Product Safety

Assessment Plan
- Sit down with assessor
- Review the portfolio
- Set out an assessment plan

Followed by

Keep in mind what the tasks are asking for as you complete your daily work, make a copy!

Evidence
- Collate evidence to meet criteria
- Submit evidence to the assessor
- Put evidence through as you complete it

Assessing
- Assesses evidence to ensure meets criteria
- Completes assessment paperwork
- Signs off the evidence

Final stage

Verification

The Verifier is responsible for reviewing all the portfolios in their assigned region. They are looking at the assessment paperwork to ensure it was carried out correctly.

As part of Verification process, they will sample a percentage of your evidence.

They will either recommend the portfolio or request remedial work to be completed on the portfolio. Where the portfolio is recommended a sign off report will be sent to CTSI.

Assessor duties in detail

The Assessor plays an important part of a person's qualification as you provide the guiding influence throughout the development of the candidate's portfolio(s). Without this role, an individual can't move forward in their career.

Assessors and Verifiers will be qualified and have the experience to support those going through the process of qualifying. Their experience will help students to work through their portfolios.

Assessor

The primary role is to assess the candidates' performance against a range of tasks using the evidence they have submitted. As the Assessor, you will sign off on their evidence and confirm they have met the assessment criteria.

Assessors will be occupationally competent in the subject areas they will be assessing in. For example, if you are assessing a Metrology portfolio, you must be Metrology qualified and have completed the on-line assessor training course (a fee is applicable when completing for the first time) thereafter, the on-line CPPD course must be completed each year.

Responsibilities
- Make sure your candidate is aware of their responsibilities in the collection and presentation of evidence.
- Agreeing an assessment plan with the candidate
- Follow assessment guidelines
- Observe candidate's performance in the workplace and other forms of assessment
- Judging evidence and making assessment decisions
- Confirming candidates have demonstrated competence
- Completing required paperwork/documentation
- Ensure assessment is carried out within equality of opportunity best practice

If you're not sure about a piece of evidence, speak with the Verifier.

Verifier duties in detail

Verifiers have the responsibility at a national level and report directly to CTSI. Each Verifier has their own areas/region(s) to look after and are available to all assessors and candidates to resolve or answer any queries.

Responsibilities
- Hold regional meetings annually for assessor and verifiers to help with standardisation and update training.
- Verify the quality of the verification decisions made and take any corrective action where necessary.
- Review a sample of each assessor and verifiers work to ensure they are using performance standards appropriate and consistently.
- Facilitates standardisation processes to ensure candidates, assessors and verifiers are working, assessing and verifying to consistent standards.
- Actively resolve any issues as they arise.
- Completes a collective standardisation with all Verifiers each year.
- Reports any issues to the Lead Verifier and CTSI and provides details to enable them to be take the matter forward.

What paperwork is used during the assessment process

As part of the assessment process the Assessor and Verifier will need to use specific paperwork that helps to standardise this process.

The list below details the paperwork used for each area:

Assessor paperwork

- Assessment plan (Assess1)
- Observation report (Assess3)
- Assessment feedback (Assess4)

When the portfolio is ready for submission to the Verifier, the following paperwork must be submitted.

Verification paperwork

- Sampling report from (V01)
- Monitoring assessor via observation (V02)
- Monitoring via candidate interview (IV02a)
- Monitoring via assessor interview (IV02b)

This paperwork needs to be completed (as appropriate) and submitted to the Verifier!

Paperwork to be sent to the Verifier

- Copy of the portfolio submission form (copy also sent to CTSI)
- All assessment plans (form assess 1)
- Observation report (Assess 3)
- Assessment feedback forms (Assess 4)
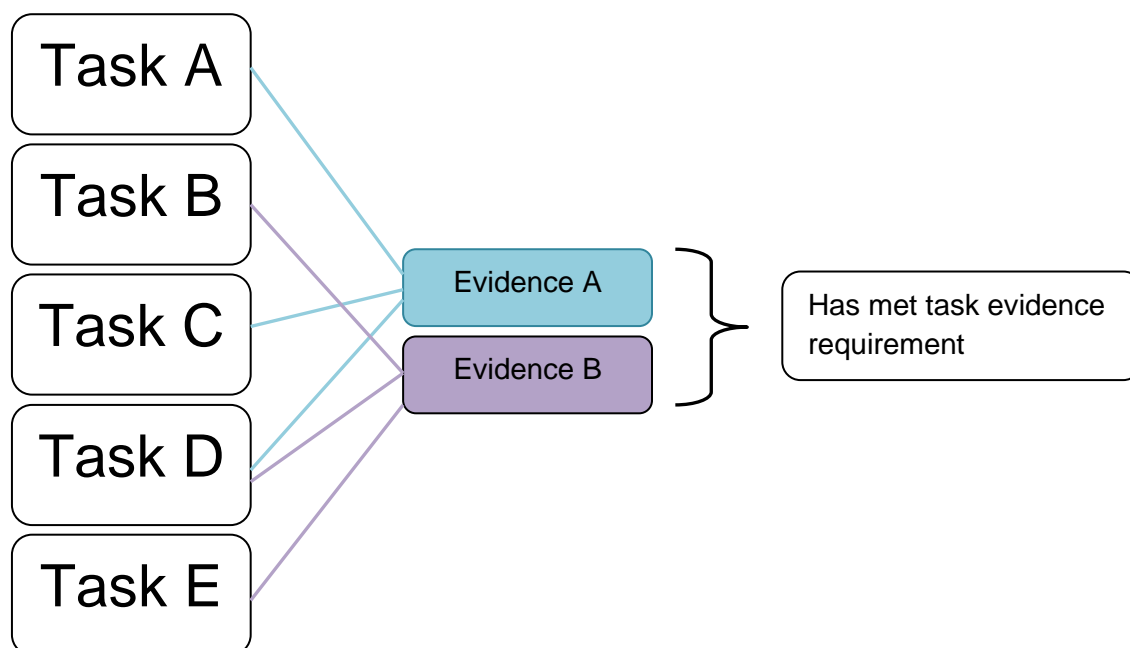
What types of evidence can I use?

The types of evidence used can be varied and examples are given below (please note this is not an exhaustive list):

- Reports
- Computer printouts
- Observation reports
- Emails

- Letters
- Photographs
- Case files

All evidence should be two years old or less, however, your assessor can allow slightly older evidence but will need to prove that you are up to date on any latest changes to policy, procedure etc and they can do this by completing a question and answers session with you.

It is important to note that any document/piece of work can be used if it meets the criteria set out in the portfolio.

The criteria may ask that you produce more than one piece of evidence to meet a task, but this evidence may meet more than one task. In these cases, cross reference rather than providing a brand-new piece of evidence each time but ensuring you have provided the correct number of pieces of evidence per task.

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Task A
Task B
Task C          Evidence A      }  Has met task evidence
Task D          Evidence B      }  requirement
Task E
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The assessor is there to review and agree that you have met the criteria within each task and sign off the piece of evidence.

How is my portfolio assessed?

There are two levels of assessment that your portfolio will go through, Assessment and Verification.

The assessment that occurs within your department will look at the following:

- The assessor will make a decision against each one of the assessment criteria and the evidence you have provided whether it is your performance completing something or evidence (for example an investigation and the documentation included with that process).
- If the assessor decides you have provided enough evidence demonstrating your skills for set criteria, you won't need to provide anything further.
- If after reviewing your evidence, your assessor may ask you to provide further evidence; they will help you understand what it is they are looking for to assist you in putting this further evidence together.

Why do I need to have Witness Observations?

Performance

As part of the evidence that your portfolio will ask you to provide there is also the need to have documented evidence on your performance as well. This is evidenced by the Observation assessment document.

For the Verifier

It isn't necessary for an observation report to be provided for each element within your portfolio as this is not practical. This allows for the Verifier to determine that there is sufficient evidence regarding your performance to allow them to sign off your portfolio.

If you're going to observe – some

- Obtain a copy of the assessment criteria to help you with your testimony;
- Remember you're not being asked to make an assessment decision, merely give a record of what happens.
- Do not assume anything about the candidate's performance.
- Only record or endorse what you actually see.
- If after observing you endorse a candidate's record of events, please sign and date and put your name on every sheet.
- If the candidate wants you to make an observation of their performance and record of what you see them complete, they will supply you with the necessary form.
- You will need to supply your contact details in case they need to speak with you.
- If you have any questions regarding the process speak with the candidate or assessor.

What is Standardisation?

Standardisation forms an important part of the portfolio structure and the assessment processes.

"For every candidate completing a portfolio there will be an allocated assessor and verifier. Certain measures are needed to ensure that any assessment decision made on a portfolio is balanced against all other portfolios going through the assessment process.

Below we have set out how we can be confident that this is happening."

Lead Verifier

Baseline learning

Individuals will complete the Assessor on-line course. This course will go through the assessment process from start to finish.

Portfolio tasks and

Each piece of evidence must meet what the task and the criteria within each portfolio is asking. The evidence may differ from person to person but the requirements remain the same and must be met.

Communication

It is encouraged by the regional verifier for assessors to utilise each other's expertise and experience, as well as their own, to discuss assessment criteria to remove any ambiguity over how it can be met.

Numbers seen

Collectively between all the verifiers, they will see a number of portfolios as each will see more than one portfolio.

Lead verifier

Copies of the Verifier sign off reports are sent to the Lead Verifier to review. These are used to build a picture of the assessment decisions being taken at each level and then used to ensure consistency.

Each of the above points are used to ensure portfolios are being assessed at the same level nationwide.

Submission of portfolios

The following is important information regarding the submission of portfolios.

- Portfolios can be submitted to the Verifier at any time during the year but no later than the published date.

- When you have registered to complete Stage 2, you will have a specific timeframe to complete your portfolio in dependent on which Unit/subject you are completing within the 2 year completion period.

Important information

If you are intending to sit practical, oral or professional interview exams– you must have submitted to your Verifier **all** the required portfolios by the published date.

If this does not occur you will be required to be deferred from the exams entered.

Portfolios and forms

After reading through this guidance, you are now ready to start your portfolio.

All the portfolios can be found in the Qualifications resource area of the website.

The following link will take you to the 'STAGE 2 INFO' tab where the portfolio matrixes including all portfolio checklists, along with further portfolio support documentation can be found.

Appeals (Portfolios)

It is acknowledged that there may be occasions where disagreements occur regarding assessment methods that have been made and verified.

If you do not agree with any evidence requirements or assessment decisions against evidence, the following procedure should be followed. At all times ensure you document what you are doing, this responsibility falls to both the candidate and assessor to ensure they document this process.

Step One

Contact the Assessor within 10 days of the assessment taking place and arrange to discuss the decision made and the disagreement and attempt to resolve the matter. Both the candidate and assessor should try to progress this stage to find a resolution. If this less formal route doesn't produce a solution then Step 2 should be proceeded to.

Step Two

The candidate should contact the Verifier who will be reviewing their portfolio and give them details of the disagreement. Both the candidate and assessor will supply the relevant evidence to the verifier. The Verifier will convene a meeting between you all to find a solution using their expertise that both parties are happy with.

Appealing against a Verifier decision

If you are appealing against the decision of the Verifier, then the matter will be referred to an appeals board consisting of:

> an independent assessor
> an independent verifier
> a member of the CTSI examinations assessments board
> chaired by the lead verifier or nominee

The appeal board may choose to conduct its business electronically or in person. The board will attempt to reach a determination on any appeal made to it within one calendar month of receipt and its decision shall be final and binding in all cases.

SharePoint

Please note that from 2019 onwards we introduced the use of SharePoint when a candidate is submitting portfolios. For further information please check the [SharePoint guide](#) which will guide you through the full process.