



Background to our assessors

Red Tractor contracts four Certification Body (CB) to undertake assessments on our behalf. As part of their contract, they must recruit sufficient competent personnel to carry out the required work. CBs either directly employ people or use individual subcontractors.

Red Tractor Assurance Code of Conduct

The Red Tractor Code of Conduct outlines the principles expected of CBs and the steps they must take to ensure that all employees and persons involved in assessments and certification against Red Tractor standards adhere to the Code.

The Code of Conduct requires CBs to:

- Ensure that actions or activities do not bring the Red Tractor name into disrepute.
- Operate in a professional way to ensure public confidence in Red Tractor and the entire assurance chain is upheld.
- Publicly embrace and promote the concept of the whole assurance food chain and of Red Tractor's involvement in it.
- Ensure that activities and public statements do not bring the name of Assured Food Standards, trading as Red Tractor, its licensees, scheme members or their contracted CBs (if applicable) into disrepute
- Ensure that employees and contractors do not use assessments to promote other business opportunities or consultancy work.
- Ensure that employees and contractors do not have any conflict of interest that could affect their judgement during an assessment. Any conflicts of interest must be recorded and be made available to Red Tractor if requested.

A breach of the Code of Conduct is considered grounds for termination of a CB's contract to undertake Red Tractor assessments.

Assessor Training and Performance Monitoring

The CB must ensure that all aspects of Red Tractor's requirements for assessor training and sign-off are met, and that systems are in place to check the quality and consistency of assessments.

Qualifications, Experience & Competency Requirements

The following qualifications, experience and competencies are required of all assessors being recruited:

Qualifications & Experience Requirements			
	Qualifications		Experience
Livestock (Beef and Lamb, Dairy, Dairy Goats, Pigs, Chicken, Duck, Turkey, Poultry Catching & Transport)	NVQ Level 3 or higher in an Agricultural related subject	AND / OR	On farm experience at a level including farm management, or stockperson experience with responsibility for the health & welfare of livestock. Experience must be appropriate to the species being recruited for.
Livestock Markets & Collection Centres			
Livestock Transport			
Combinable Crops & Sugar Beet			On farm experience preferably having crop management experience, managing the safety and legality of the product grown and harvested.
Fresh Produce			
Safe Haven			
Meat & Poultry Processing	Animal Welfare training Desirable: HACCP Level 3 Lead Auditor or equivalent WATOK BRC approved for species to be assessed	AND	Experience must be appropriate to the sector being recruited for, ideally at Processor Technical Manager level

Competency Requirements

- The ability to communicate with and engage with both the farming community and colleagues in a confident and patient manner.
- Enthusiastic with a keen eye for detail.
- Ability to manage conflict / difficult situations.
- Able to manage own time, plan in work and organise themselves to meet deadlines.
- IT skills and a willingness to learn new systems.

Training Required Prior to Sign Off to Assess

The CB is responsible for registering the trainee with Red Tractor to allow an academy profile to be created. Red Tractor then provide the trainee assessor with links to Red Tractor standards and resources.

The following training requirements are those that must be completed prior to undertaking any Red Tractor assessments:

- Red Tractor academy including any tests.
- BASIS Reducing Ammonia emissions.

Dairy

All trainee assessors for Dairy must have undertaken the Assurewel “Welfare Outcome Assessment for Dairy Cows Training”. Refresher courses must be undertaken every 5 years.

All Dairy assessors must be current members of the Register of Mobility Scorers (RoMS). This must be maintained.

Any training linked to Red Tractor managed additional requirements.

Pigs

All trainee assessors for Pigs must undertake the UK Pig Industry Welfare Training Module 1: Moving and Handling of Pigs. Alongside any further training modules, the industry adds to the training platform.

Livestock Transport

All trainee assessors for Livestock Transport must undertake the UK Pig Industry Welfare Training Module 1: Moving and Handling of Pigs.

Fresh Produce – Potato Only

All potato only trainee assessors must have first undertaken the crops learning pathway.

Meat and Poultry Processing

All assessors must undertake Animal Welfare training at least once every three years. Suitable courses are as per detailed in Version 4 of the Red Tractor Meat and Poultry Processing scheme.

Shadowing and Witnessing

All trainee assessors must go through a comprehensive shadow and witness process before they are signed off to assess Red Tractor standards.

Shadowing

Trainee assessors must shadow Red Tractor assessments for the sectors they are to operate in. They must observe at least two different qualified assessors conducting assessments on a cross section of businesses to ensure the trainee assessor is fully equipped to deal with different scenarios. This means different production systems within a sector.

Witnessing

Following completion of the shadowing requirements, trainee assessors must lead assessments for the sectors in which they are to operate in. These should be on a cross section of businesses in accordance with the same criteria as outlined above in “Shadowing”. These assessments must be witnessed by senior assessors nominated by the CB to have that responsibility. This person must take detailed notes on the trainee assessor’s performance. This must include core skills such as:

- pre-assessment preparation
- opening meeting
- closing meeting
- thoroughness of site inspection
- observational skills
- thoroughness of documentation review
- clarity of non-conformances
- questioning techniques
- knowledge of RTA standards
- observational evidence gathering
- managing difficult discussions

These notes must be used for feedback to the trainee assessor and kept as part of their training records.

Ongoing Performance Monitoring

A process must in place to monitor the on-going performance of assessors.

The process must ensure that the standards are being correctly applied, and each assessment completed is fair and accurate.

A formal review must be undertaken at least every two years by a competent person who has oversight of the scheme(s) the person is assessing to ascertain any refresher training needs.

All assessors must be witnessed by the CB.

The table below indicates the minimum frequency of witnessed assessments Red Tractor Assurance requires:

Assessor Scope (i.e. the number of RTA scheme(s) assessed)	Minimum number of witnessed assessments	Notes/exceptions
1	1 every 2 years	
2	2 every 2 years	Each scheme must be witnessed at least once every 2 years. A combination of stand-alone and combined witnessed assessments should be done wherever possible
3	3 every 2 years	
4+	4(+) every 2 years	

Where issues may arise with how assessors are assessing the standards, Red Tractor must be informed, and corrective action must be taken which may include refresher and/or further training, more frequent witnessed assessments or ceasing to use the assessor.

Where Red Tractor finds or is informed about issues around how an assessor is assessing the standards through its own internal review, these findings and required actions will be communicated to the CBs.

When Red Tractor standards are updated/amended, assessors must undertake the required training within the required time frames. If timeframes are not met, allocations will be removed from assessors.

Red Tractor does, from time to time, develop further courses on the Red Tractor Academy or recognise other external courses. This may be driven by:

- New standards that may be introduced
- New legislation
- Assessor skill and knowledge gaps identified

Any new courses which are developed are communicated to the Certification Bodies and assessors.

A timeframe is agreed upon by which all are to complete the courses and any associated tests.

Documented Records of Assessor Training and Performance

Records of assessor training and performance include:

- Past relevant qualifications and experience achieved prior to starting Red Tractor assessments
- All training provided to the assessor including by the CB, Red Tractor academy courses and other external training if relevant
- Individual on-going performance monitoring including detailed notes on witness assessments
- Any feedback relating to an assessor's performance whether from a Scheme Member, a third party or Red Tractor and any subsequent actions and corrective plans.

Record of Assessors

Red Tractor maintains a record of all assessors carrying out assessments.

Red Tractor collects and holds the following information on the assessor:

- The CB(s) the assessor works for
- The Red Tractor scheme(s) assessed
- If they are also responsible for certification decisions for RTA standards
- The regions the assessor covers
- The Red Tractor Academy training courses, results, and CPD attendance
- Third party memberships and expiry, as required.