

POULTRY PASSPORT



Guidance on how to meet the standards for adopting and progressing through Poultry Passport training scheme

This document aims to provide the context to the Red Tractor standards on the Poultry Passport, as well as answering frequently asked questions about how to comply. It also contains useful resources for those embarking on the poultry passport training scheme.



The Poultry Passport scheme is a UK-wide training framework developed to ensure consistent, high-quality training across the poultry industry. It supports compliance with Red Tractor assurance standards and legal requirements, particularly those introduced in 2007 for meat chicken producers. The scheme reflects the scale and responsibility of an industry that rears over a billion birds annually in the UK.

Governed by British Poultry Training – a collaboration of industry bodies including the British Poultry Council, Poultec Training, NFU, Lantra, and major producers. The scheme is administered by Poultec Training. Poultec maintains the central training record system and verifies qualifications, while training can be delivered by any approved provider.

The scheme consists of two core elements:

- ★ **Short Courses:** Mandatory for all roles, covering key topics in poultry production. Depending on the role, 5–7 courses are required. These must be refreshed every five years (three for First Aid) to ensure ongoing professional development.
- ★ **Diploma in Work-based Agriculture (Poultry Production):** Required for roles at Level 2 and above. This qualification typically takes 8–18 months to complete and is valid for life. Progress is measured by completing at least two units per year.

All new personnel must be enrolled on the Poultry Passport scheme within six months of starting their role. Ongoing progress is required, and training must be delivered by British Poultry Training-approved tutors or providers. The scheme is flexible, allowing for in-house training where these standards are met.

Apprenticeships offer one funding route for the diploma, with government support available for eligible employees. While English and maths are no longer mandatory for apprentices over 19, they remain a requirement for younger learners accessing funding. Additional support is available for those with language or learning needs.

Red Tractor integrates Poultry Passport standards into its certification process and may grant extensions for training completion in justified cases. However, it is not a regulator and cannot exempt individuals from legal training requirements.

The Poultry Passport scheme is a cornerstone of professional development in the poultry sector, promoting welfare, safety, and traceability through structured, lifelong learning.

This document covers

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|--|-----|------------------------------|-----|
| – Legislation | p.2 | – Funding & Learning Support | p.7 |
| – What is the Poultry Passport scheme? | p.3 | – Frequently Asked Questions | p.8 |
| – How to comply with the standards | p.4 | – Contacts | p.8 |
| – The diploma | p.5 | – Glossary of terms | p.9 |

LEGISLATION

Red Tractor standards ensure that members of the scheme are compliant with key elements of legislation. They also help ensure that best practice from one scheme can be reflected and harmonised across all poultry memberships. Whilst legislation on formal training and qualifications is currently mandated for those farming meat chickens, **training and qualifications for all keepers across all schemes is recognised as a key requirement by government, industry and customers.** This is a reflection on both the scale of the industry, which rears in excess of a billion birds in the UK each year alone, and the responsibility that comes with meeting their health and welfare needs.

Stockmanship and staff are recognised as being so key to the wellbeing of birds that formal training was introduced into EU legislation for broilers in 2007 (article 4 of Council Directive 2007/43/EC) This was written in UK law in 2007 (Paragraph 2 of Part 2, Schedule 5A to the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2007) for keepers of conventionally reared meat chickens and Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 for all keepers including parent stock and hatchery workers. This legislation has been retained post Brexit, and keeps the UK legislatively equivalent with poultry farmers in EU countries.

Legislation for keepers of meat chickens – including breeding birds and those at hatcheries

Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 states: Animals must be cared for by a sufficient number of staff who possess the appropriate ability, knowledge and professional competence.

Legislation for keepers of conventionally reared meat chickens

Paragraph 2 of Part 2, Schedule 5A to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 states: A keeper must hold a certificate recognised by the Secretary of State for the purposes of Article 4 (3) or 4 of Council Directive 007/43/EC (certificates of completion of training courses or equivalent experience)

The Defra *Code of Practice for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Meat Breeding Chickens* (2018) expands on how this legislation is to be applied across the UK:

- + All keepers who are given responsibility ... at any point in time, including holiday cover, part time and temporary staff, must have a certificate attesting to completion of a recognised training course.
- + All flock keepers, regardless of system of production, should receive training. **The minimum qualification sufficient to comply with the [regulations] is the Level 2 diploma in Work-based Agriculture (Poultry Production), ensuring that the mandatory units have been completed.** Qualifications approved in other administrations within the UK and in other countries may also be recognised by Defra.
- + Owners and keepers of chickens under all husbandry systems ... are encouraged to take formal training regularly to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.
- + Training should continue throughout the duration of employment of all keepers, and suitable refresher courses should be undertaken regularly. Wherever possible, the training should be of a type which leads to formal recognition of competence. As welfare risks may vary according to the rearing system, such training should be specific to the system used.

WHAT IS THE POULTRY PASSPORT TRAINING SCHEME?

Developed to provide a consistent level of training across the whole industry, an industry working group called 'British Poultry Training' was established to govern industry training requirements are known as **The Poultry Passport training scheme**. It is made up of representatives from:

- The **large national poultry processors and growers**,
- the **British Poultry Council**,
- the **National Farmers Union**,
- **Lantra** (the sector skills council for the land based sector)
- and **Poultec Training** (an independent poultry training specialist)
- **British Poultry Training** set the requirements to meet the broiler regulations and adopted these criteria as best practice for the entire poultry industry.
- **British Poultry Training** established the training requirements for each role within the industry and continue to the govern **The Poultry Passport training scheme**.
- The scheme is administered by **Poultec Training** who provide a formal record of the training for all participants.

What does the Poultry Passport scheme consist of?

There are two elements to the Poultry Passport scheme:

1. **Work-based Diploma in Agriculture (Poultry Production) or equivalent**
 - This element is for multi-skill positions only
 - The level of the diploma required is dependent on the role
 - Once completed the diploma is a lifetime qualification belonging to the person certified
 - Previously gained qualifications may remove the need to complete the diploma
2. **A programme of short courses on topics relevant to the production of poultry.**
 - These courses are required for all roles at all levels
 - There are 5 – 7 short courses required, at differing levels, dependent on the role
 - The short courses expire after five years, except for First Aid which expires after three years
 - Expiration of short courses allows for refresher training to ensure that participants continue professional development throughout their employment, allowing them to stay updated on changes to best practice and legislation

When were these requirements introduced?

The UK chicken industry incorporated these into the Assured Chicken Production standards to demonstrate compliance with the 2007 legislation. Later, the same standards were included in the Duck Assurance Scheme (from 2012) and the Quality British Turkey scheme (from 2016) The standards were then incorporated and implemented via the Red Tractor poultry schemes when ACP, DAS and QBT were bought under the Red Tractor umbrella.

What is Red Tractor's role in the Poultry Passport scheme?

Red Tractor facilitates compliance with the Poultry Passport scheme on behalf of British Poultry Training. In Nov 2021, following stakeholder and public consultation, Red Tractor implemented v.5 of the poultry standards. These included the most recent updates, which introduced timelines for registration onto the scheme for new joiners to the industry, as well as timelines for progression through the training program.

What is Poultec Training's role in the Poultry Passport scheme?

A designated team, separate from Poultec Training's training arm are the scheme administrators of Poultry Passport. They are responsible for the creation and maintaining of training records for registered members, on behalf of and under the direction of the British Poultry Training group. In addition to this, Poultec Training is an approved training provider for the Poultry Passport scheme, however this operates separately to the administration of the scheme and no data is shared between the scheme and the training provider.

HOW TO COMPLY WITH THE STANDARDS

What is the standard?

As of November 2021, the harmonised standard across all Red Tractor Poultry schemes requires:

- + PL.3.1 - Producers must adopt British Poultry Training – Poultry Passport or Poultry Training Record – as the formal route for industry training and training recognition
 - PL.3.1.a The mandatory training requirement specified on the Poultry Passport is delivered by providers or in-house tutors that have been approved by British Poultry Training
 - PL.3.1.b New personnel without a Poultry Passport are enrolled within six months of starting their position
 - PL.3.1.c Personnel demonstrate progression in Poultry Passport Training by completing at least two modules every 12 months until complete. (*courses are in date and not expired*)*

* one module is the equivalent of one short course, or one unit of the diploma

Which bits of the Poultry Passport do I have to complete?

All the information you need about the levels of the passport can be found on www.poultrypassport.org/passport-levels/. The level you need to attain will be determined by Poultec, as the administrators of the Poultry Passport scheme, and will be based on your job role and responsibilities. All your training requirements will be listed on your dashboard once you are enrolled in the scheme.

Who does the standard apply to?

The short courses apply to all personnel (including but not limited to employees, self-employed, relief cover and family members) must be trained and competent to carry out the required activities on farm/sites relating to primary production. The standard applies to all poultry enterprises across all poultry schemes, including growers, free range, breeder layers, breeder replacements, hatcheries, enhanced welfare, poussin and catching & transport members. The diploma is only relevant to those who sit at a Level 2 or above on the Poultry Passport scheme.

When do the standards apply to me?

All new personnel must be enrolled onto the Poultry Passport scheme within six months of their first day of engagement with the business. Personnel with over six months in the business must be able to demonstrate progression through the poultry passport requirements.

How do I register for the Poultry Passport scheme and how long will it take?

Via <https://www.poultrypassport.org/poultry-passport-registration> Registration can take up to seven days to complete, providing you have all the necessary information to hand it should not take more than ten days to complete.

How do I demonstrate progress within the first 12 months of enrollment?

The standards ask for a minimum of two modules to be completed every 12 months until complete. In this context, one module is equal to either:

- One of the short courses
- One unit of the diploma

If you are audited within the first 12 months from your initial enrollment, you should be able to provide details of courses or assessments you have completed, or booked in. These details will be noted within your audit report by your assessor, and you may be asked to demonstrate completion of these post audit. Twelve months from enrollment you should be able evidence what units of the Diploma have been completed, or what units have been worked towards (i.e., those which have been completed but have not yet been finally certified), and/or any short courses which have been completed.

How do I demonstrate ongoing progress?

You will need to complete two modules (i.e., one short course equals one module, and one unit of the diploma, if required, equals one module) every twelve months from the date of enrollment until all short courses and the diploma, if required, are completed. Once you have completed a short course you must keep it in date. Expired short courses will result in a nonconformance being raised at audit; refresher training of short courses will not count towards demonstration of progress through the Poultry Passport training scheme.

What do I need to demonstrate compliance at a Red Tractor assessment?

You can log on to your Poultry Passport record via the online portal which you are registered to when you enrol in the training scheme. This will contain a record of all your completed short courses, and the diploma. If you have completed units of your diploma, but these have not yet been finally certified, you can provide evidence that these have been worked towards by providing the assessor with unit completions from your portfolio of evidence which you have been building during the time on your diploma.

Additionally, you can record all and any additional training you undertake in your role on your poultry passport and use it as your training record. The record belongs to the individual who undertakes the training and can be a helpful way to record and maintain continuing professional development throughout your career, even if you move on from your current business.

I have a nonconformance (NC) against the standards for the Poultry Passport (PL.3.1.) – what do I do?

We understand that it can be stressful to have a NC raised for PL.3.1. There are primarily three reasons this occur.

1. Expiration of short courses

Once you have completed a short course you must keep it in date. You cannot use a refresher of a short course you have already completed to demonstrate progress through the Poultry Passport scheme (PL.3.1.c) You can close out this NC within 28 days by booking on to any expired and not yet completed short courses. Certification Bodies will accept booking emails, but may also request evidence of certificates being completed after the date of the course.

2. Staff in role for over six months and not yet enrolled on the Poultry Passport scheme

Staff can enrol for the Poultry Passport scheme here: <https://www.poultrypassport.org/poultry-passport-registration/>

Once registration has been successfully completed, you will receive an email from Poultec confirming that you are now registered as a learner. You can use this email as evidence for your Certification Body to close out any NCs

3. Lack of progress through the diploma

We are aware that although 70% of eligible members of the Poultry Passport scheme have completed the work-based diploma, that for a number of members, closing out the NC for demonstrating progress will take more than the 28 day period granted by Certification Bodies. If you are aware that you will encounter delays for any reason please contact your Certification Body and in consultation with Red Tractor and your training provider we can agree a reasonable extension to ensure that any NCs does not result in a suspension for the Red Tractor scheme.

THE DIPLOMA

Do I have to do the diploma?

Only those at [Level 2](#) or above will need to complete the diploma in Work-based Agriculture (Poultry Production). It will be listed on your dashboard if you have a role with the responsibilities that require the diploma to be completed.

How long do I have to complete the diploma?

The diploma in Work-based Agriculture (Poultry Production) can typically take anywhere from eight to 18 months to complete, depending on the route taken by the trainee. There is no limit on how long the diploma takes to complete, and members will be compliant if they complete a minimum of two units a year, until the diploma is awarded. Depending on the level of diploma required, there are approximately ten units within the diploma.

I already have a qualification; do I still have to do the diploma?

The training requirement specified within Poultry Passport for farm managers includes the 'City & Guilds Level 3 Diploma in Work-based Agriculture (poultry)'. The former 'Level 3 NVQ in Livestock Production (poultry)' and 'Level 3 NVQ in Poultry Production' would be considered as equivalent qualifications as these are previous versions of the current qualification.

The Poultry Passport team do also review and consider higher qualifications where it can be demonstrated that these include livestock production, specifically poultry. This is achieved by submission of the certificate, including supplementary certificates (which detail units/section) of the qualification. These are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and a decision made based on the information submitted. They actively encourage the submission of certificates for consideration to the Poultry Passport team via enquiries@poultrypassport.org

Are there any grandfather rights I can apply for so that I don't have to do the diploma?

Grandfather rights are a means by which regulators can entitle individuals to operate to previous rules, even if those rules have now been changed. In this instance it would be permission to be exempted from the diploma on the basis of lifetime experience. When the regulations requiring the diploma were introduced it was possible to apply for grandfather rights, however this has now long been expired. The Defra Codes of Practice explicitly state that applications for grandfather rights are closed.

Can I apply for a derogation from Red Tractor if I don't want to do the diploma?

Red Tractor are not a regulator and cannot derogate on legislative requirements; we do not have the authority to permit exemptions for meeting regulation. Additionally, Red Tractor facilitate the implementation of the Poultry Passport scheme on behalf of British Poultry Training who determined the minimum training criteria for members of their farm assurance schemes before these schemes transferred to Red Tractor.

Can I apply for an extension to complete my diploma from Red Tractor?

We are aware that a number of members may not be able to demonstrate progress through the diploma at the required rate. Wherever there is a legitimate rationale for a delay, Red Tractor can help provide a reasonable extension to facilitate the progression through the diploma. If you think you need more time to meet the standards, please contact your Certification Body to facilitate any extensions via Red Tractor. Red Tractor may liaise directly with British Poultry Training on your behalf to understand the nature of any delays you may have encountered. Extensions will always be subject to conditions – such as demonstrating progress at the newly agreed timelines and will be managed by your Certification Body.

What's the difference between the diploma and the apprenticeship?

The diploma is a regulated qualification that is certificated by City & Guilds; it is delivered by approved City & Guilds Centres to the standard set by City & Guilds. The diploma, as a standalone qualification, does not normally attract funding and therefore it requires the employer to pay the training provider to deliver it. The apprenticeship is also a qualification in its own right which is used to develop skills, knowledge and behaviours of the apprentice. The diploma can be delivered as part of the apprenticeship, as a method of assessing the learning. Apprenticeships are funded, subject to the employee meeting funding eligibility rules.

I've heard I will be assessed for maths and English as part of the apprenticeship, why is this?

Apprenticeship funding rules changed during February 2025, key changes were Functional Skills requirements. Apprentices aged 19 and over are no longer required to study towards and achieve English and maths qualifications as part of their apprenticeship. However, they may choose to include English and/or maths in their training plan, following a discussion with their employer.

Apprentices aged 16-18 are still required to achieve English and maths qualifications if they have not already attained a grade A-C (or equivalent) While Functional Skills are no longer mandatory for all apprentices, completing qualifications in English and maths can greatly support long-term career progression. These skills are highly valued by employers and can improve

an apprentice's performance in their role, as well as open doors to further education and training. It's important that employers and training providers discuss this option with their apprentices to help them make an informed decision.

Assessment of maths and English is not part of the Red Tractor standard. Maths and English, as of 2024, is a requirement for any 16-18 year olds wishing to fund their diploma via the government's apprenticeship scheme. In order to access funds from the government, the government currently require all apprentices to demonstrate a level of maths and English, as well as complete training in specific elements, such as British values. [No demonstration of maths or English proficiency is required for anyone wishing to fund the diploma as a standalone qualification.](#)

How can I demonstrate my maths and English proficiency?

The Department for Education sets the level and content for maths and English within apprenticeships. If you already possess grade A-C GCSE in maths and English or equivalent and can provide evidence of this, maths and English can be removed from the Apprenticeship.

If you do not have formal maths or English qualifications and you choose to access government funding to complete the diploma, as part of an apprenticeship, it will include training to provide you with the necessary level of maths and English for the Apprenticeship. This includes an assessment, which is not a test, at the start of the Apprenticeship to assess the level of teaching and support you need to reach the required level. All training in maths and English is made contextual to the poultry industry, so that it is relevant to you and your role. If you want to understand more about the maths and English qualifications you can access free Functional Skills tests online to understand the level of what is required.

FUNDING AND LEARNING SUPPORT

I will struggle to afford the diploma for myself and all people within my business, what options are available to me?

Training providers will always have the most current funding options for the diploma and apprenticeship, and you are strongly encouraged to contact them directly and see what financial provisions might be available to you. Apprenticeships can be funded by an organisations Apprenticeship levy, Apprenticeship co-investment or levy transfer, subject to eligibility. Alternatively, the diploma can be purchased as a stand-alone qualification. [For the latest information on funding opportunities,](#) speak to your training provider who will be able to advise you further, as funding streams can change from time to time.

There are lots of people within my business who are required to complete the short courses and diploma, is there anything I can do to make the process more efficient or more cost effective?

Training does not have to be provided by external partners; it is possible to have your own training courses approved by the scheme, where they meet the scheme standards and are delivered in by an approved tutor. Some organisations choose to deliver all their own short courses, some outsource the delivery and others do a hybrid.

English isn't my first language, how can the short courses and diploma be made accessible to me?

Providers of the short courses utilise technology and in some cases translators to facilitate the delivery of courses in the languages other than English. Providers of the diploma and apprenticeship will be able to provide advice on delivery of training, on a case by case basis which may include the completion of an initial assessment.

I need learning support to access apprenticeship training, what is available to me?

As part of the enrolment process, all learners complete an initial assessment. This helps identify any additional learning support needs you may have, such as support with literacy, numeracy, or specific learning difficulties. Training providers have fully trained staff and a range of dedicated resources to ensure you receive the help you need to successfully complete your apprenticeship. Whether it be tailored learning materials, one-to-one support, or assistive technology, they are there to support you every step of the way.

OTHER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I've been farming for years, why do I need to do this training?

Staff competency and professionalism is paramount to ensuring that poultry is farmed with care, is safe for consumers and traceable. The Poultry Passport is industry leading in terms of enabling these objectives to be met on farm, within hatcheries, and at catch. It demonstrates the commitment of the industry in investing in training for all and offering lifelong professional accreditation for personnel. Short courses enable all staff, irrespective of the length of their tenure, to remain up to date with current best practice and legislation.

I have seasonal staff who work for less than six months a year, do they need to complete the poultry passport training scheme?

Currently the Red Tractor standards do not address returning staff who are in the business for less than six months of the year. This is an ongoing conversation with the British Poultry Training working group to ensure that everyone with responsibilities for bird health and welfare has the appropriate training in place.

Why do I have to use Poultec Training, can't I go via another provider?

You can use any approved training provider and are under no obligation to use Poultec. There is a degree of confusion between the different roles of Poultec and British Poultry Training. This is likely because Poultec – as one of the largest private providers of poultry training in the UK – are one of the founders of British Poultry Training (BPT). BPT is a collaboration of industry partners that developed the Poultry Passport scheme. An independent team within Poultec administrate the Poultry Passport scheme which verifies and records all formal training and qualification requirements. You can choose to go through any recognised training provider and via their independent British Poultry Training domain: <https://www.poultrypassport.org/approved-training/> Poultec will record all and any certificates, training and qualifications against your Poultry Passport to keep a permanent record for your professional training.

Governance of the Poultry Passport Scheme

If you have ideas, questions or concerns about the Poultry Passport scheme, it's operations or any training providers, you can contact the administrators, Poultec Training directly. You can also contact your trade body, NFU or BPC, as they have representatives on the Board of British Poultry Training – the working group who govern the Poultry Passport scheme.

Contact details

- + Poultec Training: (the administrators of the Poultry Passport scheme)
 - Email: enquiries@poultrypassport.org
 - Phone: 01362 857 197

Additional resources

- + <https://www.poultrypassport.org/>
- + Approved training providers: <https://www.poultrypassport.org/approved-training/>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Apprenticeship

An apprenticeship is a qualification which develops skills, knowledge and behaviours to a defined standard. Two apprenticeships standards exist for poultry – Poultry Worker and Poultry Technician. Apprenticeships are delivered by apprenticeship training providers and attract funding. Those completing an apprenticeship have to meet eligibility and funding rules. Apprenticeships can include the Diploma, short courses and wider curriculum topics. Apprenticeship delivery is regulated by Ofsted.

British Poultry Passport (Poultry Passport)

An industry-wide training scheme designed to ensure consistent, high-quality training across the poultry sector. It includes short courses and, for some roles, a diploma. The scheme tracks training progress and qualifications through an online portal.

British Poultry Training

An industry-led working group that governs the Poultry Passport scheme. It includes representatives from major poultry processors, the British Poultry Council, NFU, Lantra, and Poultec Training. It sets training standards and approves providers.

Diploma

A formal qualification in Work-Based Agriculture (Poultry Production), typically required for roles at Level 2 or above in the Poultry Passport scheme. It consists of multiple units and can take 8–18 months to complete. Once awarded, it is a lifetime qualification.

NVQ

A former qualification in poultry production, such as the Level 3 NVQ in Livestock Production (Poultry), which is considered equivalent to the current diploma and may be accepted as prior learning within the Poultry Passport scheme. NVQs have been superseded by the diploma.

Poultec Training

An independent poultry training provider and the administrator of the Poultry Passport scheme. Poultec manages the system that records and verifies training and qualifications, and also delivers training as one of several approved providers.

Red Tractor

A farm assurance scheme that incorporates Poultry Passport training standards into its certification. It ensures compliance with training requirements.

Regulator

An authority, such as APHA, responsible for enforcing legislation. In the context of poultry training, regulators ensure compliance with legal training requirements but do not manage or exempt individuals from industry schemes like Poultry Passport.