

POULTRY PASSPORT



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



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 qualifications is currently mandated for those farming conventionally reared 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.

This document aims to provide the context to the standard, 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.

Legislation for keepers of conventionally reared meat chickens

Stockmanship and staff are recognised as being so key to the wellbeing of birds that formal training was introduced into EU legislation for broiler 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) and retained post Brexit. 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.
- + **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. 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). The British Poultry Training working group established the training requirements for each role within the industry. In the UK these training requirements are known as **The Poultry Passport training scheme**. The scheme is administered by Poultec Training who also provide a formal record of the training for all participants.

British Poultry Training set the requirements to meet the broiler regulations; later the group adopted these criteria as best practice for the entire poultry industry. 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) Now, they are implemented via the Red Tractor poultry schemes.

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
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

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*)

HOW TO COMPLY WITH THE STANDARDS

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 attain will be determined by Poultec, as the administrators of the Poultry Passport scheme, and will be based on your job role and responsibilities.

Who does the standard 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.

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 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

PL.3.1 – Poultry Passport – Chicken, Duck & Turkey Schemes

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 to provide 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.

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

Assessment of maths and English is not part of the Red Tractor standard. Maths and English, as of 2024, is a requirement for anyone 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 their own diploma.**

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.

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 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.

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.

I already have a different qualification, how do I know if it is an equivalent of the diploma?

The Diploma in Work-based Agriculture (poultry) replaced the NVQ in Livestock Production (poultry) and the NVQ in Poultry Production. If you hold one of these qualifications, this means that you do not have to complete the Diploma. Likewise, if you hold a higher qualification, such as an HNC/HND in poultry science, this supersedes the requirement to complete the Diploma. The Poultry Passport scheme administrators will be able to advise you further on this.

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 training, what is available to me?

The purpose of the Initial Assessment is to identify if additional support is required to complete the qualification. Tailored support measures are discussed and implemented if required.

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.

Additional resources

+ <https://www.poultrypassport.org/>