



# RABQSA International

## Criteria for HACCP Practitioner Certification

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## OVERVIEW OF HACCP PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION

### RABQSA's VISION IS

'...a virtual, e based organization demonstrating a culture that is entrepreneurial, innovative, industry focused and achieves a time to market performance that exceeds world's best practice and, through continual improvement, remains the organization of first choice for persons seeking international recognition...'

### RABQSA's MISSION IS

'...to improve the performance of industry by providing recognition to individuals who, having demonstrated competence to RABQSA International personnel certification schemes, can improve and offer a positive contribution to the performance of organizations...'

### RABQSA's VALUE GUARANTEE TO CUSTOMERS

- we will satisfy our customers and stakeholders expectations
- our services will remain of value and relevance to our customers and stakeholders
- our ideals and practices will remain consistent with the wider quality movement
- we will replace process with service outcomes
- we will communicate with our customers and stakeholders
- we will remain abreast of technology and new information systems

### WHY APPLY TO RABQSA FOR HACCP PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION?

Certification with RABQSA International (RABQSA) provides certified persons with an internationally recognized qualification.

Practitioners certified under this scheme can demonstrate that they have been independently examined and evaluated as meeting the stringent competency standards established by RABQSA in consultation with Industry and other key stakeholders. This provides confidence and assurance for industry in the developed HACCP plans.

## SUMMARY OF HACCP PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

This table provides a summary of certification requirements only. Details of these requirements are available in this document and must be referenced when applying for practitioner certification.

<b>GRADES</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Knowledge competencies</b> (clause 4)	<b>HACCP Plan Experience</b> (clause 6)	<b>Qualifications (education, work experience)</b> (clauses 3, 5)	<b>Verification of personal attributes</b> (clause 6.2)
Associate HACCP Practitioner	RABQSA-HP	N/A	Tertiary qualifications plus 2 years food sector work experience	Employer
HACCP Practitioner	RABQSA-HP	10 HACCP Plans developed	Tertiary qualifications plus 2 years food sector work experience	Client, employer
Principal HACCP Practitioner	RABQSA-HP RABQSA-TL	10 HACCP Plans developed	Tertiary qualifications plus 2 years food sector work experience	Client, employer
Lead HACCP Practitioner	RABQSA-HP RABQSA-TL	10 HACCP Plans developed	Tertiary qualifications plus 2 years food sector work experience	Client, employer, witnessing practitioner
Business Improvement HACCP Practitioner	RABQSA-HP RABQSA-TL RABQSA-OI	10 HACCP Plans developed	Tertiary qualifications plus 2 years food sector work experience	Client, employer, witnessing practitioner

**SCOPES**

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Definition</b>
1. Live Animal and Animal Feeds	Includes feed-lotting, intensive husbandry (e.g., piggeries, dairy farming and chicken raising), game animals, as well as the feed source industries (e.g., hay, compounded feeds and medicated foods)
2. Slaughtering and Boning Operations	Includes all animal species and game animals and extends to all cuts of meat including minced meat
3. Smallgoods Manufacturing	Includes all value-adding operations (e.g., cook-chill, crumbing, curing, smoking, cooking, drying and fermenting) but not canning of meat products
4. Seafoods and Seafood Processing	Includes marine and freshwater species and extends to fishing and all value-adding operations (e.g., shucking, crumbing, smoking, cooking, freezing, farming of) but not canning of fish products
5. Dairy Food Processing	Includes all species used for milk collection and extends to all value-adding operations (e.g., pasteurisation, clarification, cheese-making, culturing, drying and ice cream)
6. Bakery Operations and Cereal Food Processing	Includes breakfast cereals, extruded snack foods as well as baked items (e.g., bread, cakes and cake mixes)
7. Intensive Horticulture Operations	Includes fresh and pre-packed fruit and vegetables, hydroponic production and silviculture/nursery operations
8. Extensive Broadacre Agriculture Operations	Includes free range operations, cereal and other grain cropping and processing
9. Drink and Beverage Processing	Includes alcoholic and non-alcoholic production as well as still and carbonated waters
10. Confectionery Manufacturing	Includes all chocolate and imitation chocolate based processing
11. Fruit and Vegetable Processing	Includes freezing operations but not canning of fruit and vegetables
12. Catering and Food Service Operations	Includes restaurants, fast food outlets, canteens, hospital and institution meal service operations, mobile food service operations and home delivery operations
13. Canning, UHT and Aseptic Operations	Low acid canned foods, and pasteurised products not covered elsewhere – Applicant must have a Canning certificate.
14. Preserved Foods and Sauces	Includes dressings, mayonnaise, 'cook-in' sauces, soups, jams and fillings
15. Fermented Products	Includes starter cultures, vinegar and yeast
16. Food Ingredient Manufacturing	Includes blending and repacking operations
17. Food Retailing	Includes retail food processing such as seafood, meat and bakery operations and general food retailing

## REQUIREMENTS FOR HACCP PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This certification program has been developed by RABQSA International (RABQSA) to provide professional recognition for suitably qualified HACCP Practitioners and to enhance the implementation and integrity of quality systems by providing the food industry with a register of certified practitioners who have appropriate qualifications, work experience and experience with HACCP plans.

RABQSA is accredited by the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) as meeting the requirements of the international standard for personnel certification bodies, ISO/IEC 17024:2003 'General Requirements for bodies operating the certification of persons'.

This scheme is not included under the scope of RABQSA's accreditation. For details on the accredited certification scheme, please refer to [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com) and select the accredited criteria.

#### 1.1 Grades of Certification

The criteria described in this document are for the grades:

- a) Associate HACCP Practitioner
- b) HACCP Practitioner
- c) Principal HACCP Practitioner
- d) Lead HACCP Practitioner
- e) Business Improvement HACCP Practitioner

#### **Note:**

All HACCP Practitioners are certified according to their professional and/or technical experience. In establishing teams for any purpose, consideration of these skills in the overall make up and management of the team should be taken into account.

#### 1.2 Definitions

For the purpose of the criteria, definitions as below apply:

**Competence:** demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills.

**HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point):** A system that identifies, evaluates and controls

hazards that are significant for Food Safety (Reference CODEX Alimentarius Commission Guidelines)

**HACCP Plan:** A document prepared in accordance with the principles of HACCP to ensure controls of hazards which are significant for food safety in the segment of the food chain under consideration.

**HACCP practitioner:** A person qualified to develop, validate and verify HACCP plans.

**Expansion:** Movement from one certification grade to another and/or addition of certification scopes via demonstration of the competencies required for that grade and/or scope.

**Qualification:** demonstration of education, training and/or work experience.

**Tertiary Education:** post secondary education that may include trade school, associate, bachelor and/or higher college degree.

**TPECS:** Training Provider and Examiner Certification Scheme, offered by RABQSA.

#### 1.3 Requirements for Certification Applications

Applicants must ensure that the information they provide is accurate and addresses all the requirements set out in the criteria document for the type, grade and scope of certification being sought.

All application information must be provided in English. Where translations of documents are provided, these must be independently verified for accuracy.

Applications must be submitted on the RABQSA HACCP Practitioner Certification Application Form together with payment of the Application Fee. The Application Fee must be received by RABQSA before processing of an application can commence. Please refer to the Fee Schedule for your region (available at [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com)) for details of fees.

Applicants who have any special needs related to language and/or disabilities should contact RABQSA for advice.

To enable effective evaluation of applications, RABQSA requires all Applicants to provide verifiable documentary evidence that demonstrates compliance with the criteria of personnel certification being sought.

The evidence required for certification applications is detailed in the following sections.

## **2 KEY REQUIREMENTS**

The key competencies for all HACCP Practitioners are:

- a) The ability to identify and assess potential hazards to the production of safe, quality food at all links in the supply chain, including:
  - Biological hazards
  - Chemical hazards
  - Physical hazards and
  - Quality hazards.
- b) The ability to assess the effectiveness of methodologies for controlling hazards identified in Clause 2a above.
- c) An understanding of the principles and practices of HACCP to current Codex Alimentarius Commission Guidelines.
- d) Experience and a sound technical knowledge of the product or commodity and the process under HACCP study.
- e) Knowledge of relevant HACCP pre-requisite programs, relevant industry codes of practice, legal requirements, industry guidelines and standards.
- f) The ability to demonstrate the personal attributes necessary for the effective implementation of management systems incorporating HACCP.
- g) The ability to identify food safety and quality objectives in the context of quality assurance programs.

**Note:** During the certification process an applicant's education, training and work experience are evaluated to assess the demonstrated level of knowledge and skills in the above areas.

The following educational, training and work experience requirements apply to all applicants unless otherwise specified.

## **3 EDUCATION**

Applicants are required to have completed secondary education and, in addition, hold a relevant nationally recognized qualification such as a degree, diploma or advanced certificate in Food Safety or a related discipline.

Applicants without appropriate tertiary qualifications may be considered for certification if they can clearly demonstrate that, through their work experience and/or other means, they have achieved an educational standard that enables the effective preparation of HACCP plans.

## **4 KNOWLEDGE**

Knowledge requirements are demonstrated through the successful completion of an examination by an RABQSA Certified Training Provider.

Applicants must submit the certificate/s from RABQSA Certified Training Provider/s that confirms the required examination has been successfully completed within three years prior to application.

RABQSA maintains a Register of RABQSA Certified Training Providers on the RABQSA website [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com).

Where an applicant has been examined by an RABQSA TPECS-certified Training Provider, the following competency units are required to be demonstrated.

### **ALL GRADES**

#### *Developing HACCP Plans (RABQSA-HP)*

- Define Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)
- Describe the legal and ethical aspects of HACCP
- Apply HACCP implementation steps 1 – 12 based on Codex or NACMCF guidelines
- Develop a HACCP plan
- Write a procedure for reviewing a HACCP plan

### **LEAD HACCP PRACTITIONER AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT HACCP PRACTITIONER**

#### *Leading Management System Audit Teams (RABQSA-TL)*

- Establish, plan and task the activities of an audit team
- Communicate effectively with the auditee and audit client
- Organize and direct audit team members
- Prevent and resolve conflict with the auditee and/or within the audit team
- Prepare and complete the audit report

### **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT HACCP PRACTITIONER**

#### *Advising on Organizational Improvement and Risk Management (RABQSA-OI)*

- Write a organizational business plan
- Interpret financial statements

- Write a risk management plan
- Determine HR best practice
- Determine appropriate organizational improvement tools
- Communicate with senior management

**Note:**

1. Applicants should note that the HACCP Practitioner training required for certification does not address the needs for any specific training that may be required to demonstrate competence in particular industry standards and/or scopes described in this document. (Refer to clause 4)

## 5 WORK EXPERIENCE

Applicants for all grades are required to demonstrate work experience in a technical or managerial position involving the exercise of judgment, problem-solving and communication with other managerial personnel, peers, customers and/or other interested parties.

For all applicants, work experience shall include at least two years operational experience with food hygiene and safety quality programs involving HACCP or Food Safety Plan development.

Equivalent practices that are deemed to provide experience relevant to the competencies described in Section 2 are also acceptable.

**Note:** Applicants who are not able to meet the formal education requirements detailed in Section 3 are required to demonstrate at least one additional year of food sector work experience.

## 6 HACCP EXPERIENCE

All Practitioners are required to maintain a HACCP Plan log in order to demonstrate that their HACCP experience was gained under the prescribed conditions. HACCP experience should be verified (on the log) by either the witnessing practitioner, the applicant's employer or a management representative of the organization the HACCP Plan was developed for.

The information on the log must be legible, verifiable, and include contact details of client organizations.

The RABQSA Log is available on the RABQSA website at [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com). Alternative logs may be accepted if they provide all information as required on the RABQSA log.

HACCP experience is required to be within the three years prior to application for certification.

### 6.1 Levels of Experience

**Associate HACCP Practitioner** applicants are not required to demonstrate HACCP experience. However, awareness of experience requirements is recommended for future expansion to higher grades.

**HACCP Practitioner** applicants are required to have developed a minimum of ten HACCP plans in a satisfactory manner.

**Principal HACCP Practitioner** applicants are required to have developed a minimum of ten HACCP plans in a satisfactory manner as a solo practitioner or as a team leader.

**Lead HACCP Practitioner** applicants are required to have developed a minimum of ten HACCP plans in a satisfactory manner. At least three of these plans must be in the role of team leader.

All plans claimed as team leader plans must involve at least one other practitioner working on the team.

**Business Improvement HACCP Practitioner** applicants are required to have developed a minimum of ten HACCP plans in a satisfactory manner. A minimum of three of these plans must incorporate the use of business improvement tools or related methodologies.

**Note:**

1. All applicants (except for Associate grade) are required to submit a copy of at least one HACCP plan for each of the scopes being requested. If required, confidential details may be deleted from the plan, however, confidentiality of information is assured and all plans will be returned if requested.
2. HACCP experience should be appropriate to the Scope/s (categories) claimed by applicants. (Refer Section 7)
3. Applicants for Business Improvement Practitioner are required to provide at least one plan which verifies the use of business improvement tools or methodologies.
4. Plans should include experience of different processes, facilities and/or management systems.

### 6.2 Verification of Competence

For Lead Practitioner and Business Improvement Practitioner grades, it is **preferred** that at least one complete HACCP plan as team leader is witnessed by

a certified Lead or Business Improvement HACCP Practitioner who can verify that the applicant possesses the skills required to develop a HACCP plan, including coordinating the work of other team members. When satisfied with the practitioner's performance, the witnessing Lead or Business Improvement HACCP Practitioner should complete and sign the relevant section on the HACCP plan development log.

Lead or Business Improvement HACCP Practitioners certified by RABQSA or other certifying organizations recognized by RABQSA, who have held that qualification for at least one year, are acceptable to verify an applicant's HACCP competence. In certain circumstances, other competent persons may be accepted by RABQSA in this role.

Applicants who are unable to arrange witnessing of development of HACCP plans will be required to demonstrate an adequate level of competence in developing HACCP plans and leading planning teams by alternative means. These may include employer, peer and/or customer references and samples of HACCP plans (in addition to those defined in Section 6.1 Note 1).

## 7 SCOPES

Practitioners applying for certification in the Practitioner, Principal Practitioner, Lead Practitioner and Business Improvement Practitioner grades will have details of their specialized experience in developing HACCP plans included in the RABQSA Register. The decision on which categories are appropriate will be dependent on an applicant's demonstrated work and HACCP experience. It is possible for an applicant to be certified in more than one scope.

**Objective evidence for each category nominated is required.** This may include specific training, work experience, HACCP protocols, HACCP plans or scope of plans. Confidentiality is assured and all information will be returned if requested.

Applicants requesting a category that includes high risk processes will be required to demonstrate specific training and/or work experience in those processes.

### 1. Live Animal and Animal Feeds

Includes feed-lotting, intensive husbandry (e.g., piggeries, dairy farming and chicken raising), game animals, as well as the feed source industries (e.g., hay, compounded feeds and medicated foods)

### 2. Slaughtering and Boning Operations:

Includes all animal species and game animals and extends to all cuts of meat including minced meat.

### 3. Smallgoods Manufacturing:

Includes all value-adding operations (e.g., cook-chill, crumbing, curing, smoking, cooking, drying and fermenting) but not canning of meat products.

### 4. Seafoods and Seafood Processing:

Includes marine and freshwater species and extends to fishing and all value-adding operations (e.g., shucking, crumbing, smoking, cooking, freezing, farming of) but not canning of fish products.

### 5. Dairy Food Processing:

Includes all species used for milk collection and extends to all value-adding operations (e.g., pasteurisation, clarification, cheese-making, culturing, drying and ice cream)

### 6. Bakery Operations and Cereal Food Processing:

Includes breakfast cereals, extruded snack foods as well as baked items (e.g., bread, cakes and cake mixes)

### 7. Intensive Horticulture Operations:

Includes fresh and pre-packed fruit and vegetables, hydroponic production and silviculture/nursery operations

### 8. Extensive Broadacre Agriculture Operations:

Includes free range operations, cereal and other grain cropping and processing

### 9. Drink and Beverage Processing:

Includes alcoholic and non-alcoholic production as well as still and carbonated waters

### 10. Confectionery Manufacturing:

Includes all chocolate and imitation chocolate based processing

### 11. Fruit and Vegetable Processing:

Includes freezing operations but not canning of fruit and vegetables

### 12. Catering and Food Service Operations:

Includes restaurants, fast food outlets, canteens, hospital and institution meal service operations, mobile food service operations and home delivery operations

### 13. Canning, UHT and Aseptic Operations:

Low acid canned foods, and pasteurised products not covered elsewhere

(Please note that successful completion of recognized canning training is required.)

#### 14. Preserved Foods and Sauces:

Includes dressings, mayonnaise, 'cook-in' sauces, soups, jams and fillings

#### 15. Fermented Products:

Includes starter cultures, vinegar and yeast

#### 16. Food Ingredient Manufacturing:

Includes blending and repacking operations

#### 17. Food Retailing:

Includes retail food processing such as seafood, meat and bakery operations and general food retailing

## 8 PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

All applicants shall possess the following personal attributes, based on ISO 19011:2002.

A practitioner should be:

- ethical
- open-minded
- diplomatic
- observant
- perceptive
- versatile
- tenacious
- decisive
- self reliant

These personal attributes will be verified by RABQSA Scheme Examiners with contacts provided on an applicant's HACCP Plan Development log, employers and witnessing practitioners, where applicable.

## 9 CODE OF CONDUCT

All certified personnel have an obligation to improve the standing of their profession by observing the RABQSA Code of Conduct. Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a condition of certification and all certified personnel are required to sign their compliance to the Code at time of initial application for certification and at each period of re-certification.

#### RABQSA Code of Conduct

- I will act professionally, accurately and in an unbiased manner.
- I will strive to increase the competence and prestige of my profession.

- I will assist those in my employ or under my supervision in developing their professional competencies.
- I will not undertake any assignments that I am not competent to perform.
- I will not represent conflicting or competing interests and will disclose to any client or employer any relationships that may influence my judgment.
- I will not discuss or disclose any information relating to any assignment unless required by law or authorized in writing by the client and/or my employing organization.
- I will not accept any inducement, commission, gift or any other benefit from client organizations, their employees or any interested party or knowingly allow colleagues to do so.
- I will not intentionally communicate false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of any assignment or the personnel certification process.
- I will not act in any way that would prejudice the reputation of RABQSA or the personnel certification process and will cooperate fully with an enquiry in the event of any alleged breach of this code.

## 10 SURVEILLANCE

While there is a requirement for annual payment, there is no specific requirement for surveillance in this HACCP Practitioner Certification Scheme. However, it is strongly recommended that HACCP Plan Development logs and CPD forms be submitted on an annual basis to facilitate timely verification of the information provided.

## 11 RE-CERTIFICATION

To maintain certification, all certified personnel are required to demonstrate continuing competence against the current certification criteria for the type and grade of certification awarded.

RABQSA will provide reminders with the annual invoice to all certified practitioners when the date for re-certification is due and the information required to be submitted to RABQSA.

Every three years from the date of initial certification and subsequent re-certification, certified practitioners must demonstrate continuing compliance with the current certification criteria by providing:

- Evidence of continuing involvement in the development and implementation of HACCP Plans (not required for Associate Practitioners)
- Evidence of 45 hours of Professional Development activities. Continual Professional Development logs and guidance are available on the RABQSA website at [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com)
- Confirmation that the Code of Conduct has been adhered to and any complaints against performance have been resolved.

Note: For complete details of re-certification requirements, please refer to the RABQSA Requirements for HACCP Practitioner Re-Certification, available on the RABQSA website [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com).

## **12 EXPANSION OF CERTIFICATION**

Certified practitioners can apply to expand their grade and/or scope of certification by submitting an Expansion Application Form to RABQSA, together with the Expansion Fee.

Please refer to the Fee Schedule for your region for details of the Expansion Fee. Expansion Application Forms are available on the RABQSA web site [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com).

The additional requirements, as defined in this document, for the grade or scope sought must be demonstrated and evidence provided with the application.

## **13 REDUCTION OF CERTIFICATION**

Certified practitioners can reduce their certification at any time by notification in writing to the RABQSA Scheme Examiner.

A reduction in certification may also be advised to a certified practitioner by the RABQSA Scheme Examiner after evaluation of relevant information. RABQSA will request confirmation in writing of acceptance by a certified practitioner of a reduction of certification.

RABQSA does not refund fees to any certified practitioners when reducing certification.

## **14 SUSPENSION**

RABQSA reserves the right to suspend certification as a result of investigations into the conduct or performance of certified practitioners. Refer to the Complaints Process in Section 16 for further details.

RABQSA remains the sole owner of any certificates and ID cards issued to certified practitioners. In the event of suspension of certification, the certificate and ID card issued must be returned to RABQSA.

RABQSA does not refund fees to any certified practitioners when suspending certification.

## **15 WITHDRAWAL**

RABQSA reserves the right to withdraw certification as a result of investigations into the conduct or performance of certified practitioners. Refer to the Complaints Process in Section 16 for further details.

Certified practitioners can withdraw their certification at any time by notification in writing to the RABQSA Scheme Examiner.

RABQSA remains the sole owner of any certificates and ID cards issued to certified practitioners. In the event of withdrawal of certification, the certificate and ID card issued must be returned to RABQSA.

RABQSA does not refund fees to any certified practitioners when withdrawing certification.

## **16 COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

All complaints shall be submitted in writing to the Manager, Certification Services, RABQSA International. For contact details, please refer to the Contacts section of the RABQSA website [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com).

### **16.1 Complaints Against Practitioner**

Complaints against the actions or conduct of a certified practitioner will be reviewed and investigated by RABQSA using documented procedures. A valid substantiated complaint may result in suspension or withdrawal of certification.

### **16.2 Complaints Against RABQSA**

Complaints against RABQSA may be submitted in writing to RABQSA. Each complaint will be reviewed, investigated, and resolved in a timely manner through a formal documented process.

In appropriate circumstances, the RABQSA Scheme Committee will investigate complaints against RABQSA.

## 17 APPEALS PROCESS

All appeals shall be submitted in writing to the Manager, Certification Services, RABQSA International. For contact details, please refer to the Contacts section of the RABQSA website [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com).

An appeal against adverse certification decisions, suspension or withdrawal of certification must be submitted in writing. The written appeal will be reviewed, investigated, and resolved in a timely manner through a formal documented process.

Appeals may be made on the following decisions:

- refusal to grant initial certification,
- refusal to grant continuation of certification,
- refusal to grant an expansion of grade of certification,
- reduction in certification grade,
- suspension of certification, or
- withdrawal of certification.

The applicant shall submit his or her appeal to RABQSA no later than 30 days after notification of the decision. The appeal shall include appropriate substantiation for the appellant's position and it shall contain any additional or updated information.

## 18 CERTIFICATION PROCESS

For further information on RABQSA's:

- certification processes
- applicants' rights and responsibilities
- complaints and appeals process
- conditions of use for certificates, ID cards and RABQSA logo and
- privacy

please contact RABQSA via the website [www.rabqsa.com](http://www.rabqsa.com) or email [info@rabqsa.com](mailto:info@rabqsa.com).

**End of Certification Criteria**