

**EQAS-FOOD CERTIFICATE**

**EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**FOR SHORT COURSES IN FOOD**

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Procedures and Criteria**



Adopted by the Accreditation Commission of IFA

on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016

ISEKI-Food Association

<https://www.iseki-food.net/>

IFA Contact:

ISEKI-Food Association Secretariat

c/o Department of Food Sciences and Technology

Muthgasse 18

1190 Vienna

Austria

Email: [egas@iseki-food.net](mailto:egas@iseki-food.net)

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EQAS-FOOD CERTIFICATE is a quality label awarded by the ISEKI Food Association (IFA) as a means of identifying high quality short courses in food science and technology in Europe or Internationally.

The specific aims of EQAS-FOOD CERTIFICATE are:

- To provide a knowledge base to inform short course qualifications in food science and technology in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA);
- To drive the certification of the field of food science and technology and of each individual programme, by defining the goals and challenges related to the capacity to deliver science and technology education and advance the standing of this field;
- To contribute to the increasing efficiency of programmes in the achievement of national and regional demands in education in food science and technology by assuring the judicious opinion of an appraisal panel on the strengths, weaknesses and overall performance of such programmes;
- To facilitate recognition of short course awards in food science and technology within Europe and Internationally;
- To facilitate the career progressions and mobility of professionals in the field of food science and technology.

With the attribution of the certificate by IFA, the Association intends to contribute to the recognition of the quality of food science and technology short courses from a body of food science and technology experts and to continue developing the path for continuous professional development and certification in the area of food studies.

The basis of the certification is the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning<sup>1</sup>.

These criteria are an instrument for the dissemination of good practice and for the promotion of continuous improvement.

The EQAS-FOOD CERTIFICATE can be attributed to any short course that applies for this certificate and that is recognized as achieving the criteria described herein.

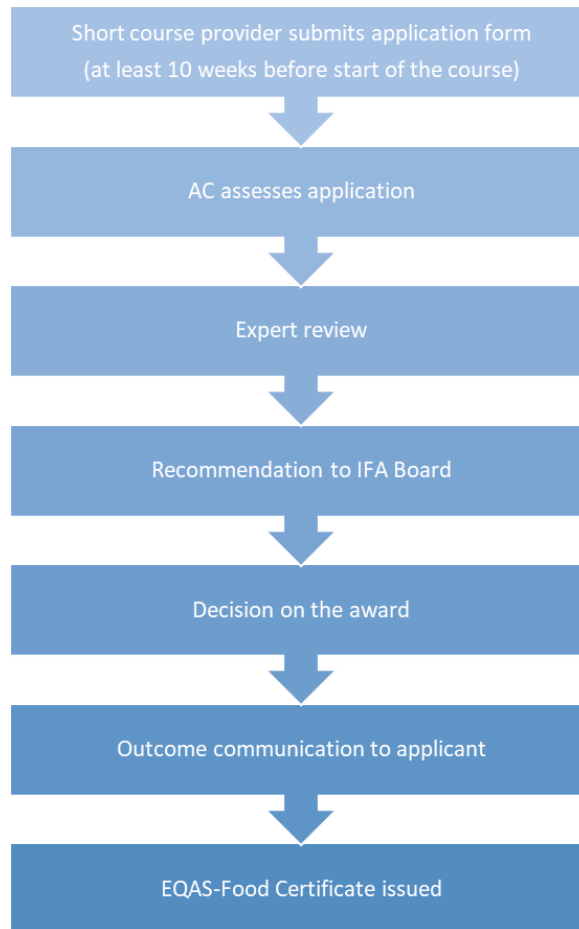
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<sup>1</sup> European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. Available from: [http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/home\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/home_en.htm) (in EU languages).

## Summary

This document describes the procedures of the EQAS-FOOD Certificate. Section 1 describes the procedures, i.e., steps starting from the submission of the application until publication of the decision on the award. Section 2 is the application form that the course provider completes and submits to the Accreditation Commission.

### Flow diagram of application and award process



## **1. Procedures for Applying for an EQAS-FOOD Certificate and Criteria**

### **1.1 Standard certification**

The procedures of application to obtain the EQAS-FOOD certificate are schematized below. The short course provider starts the application with the submission of the form describing the course(s) to be considered for the EQAS-FOOD Certificate. Application should be made at least 10 weeks before the course is due to be run. However, a fast track route will be available on payment of an additional fee. The form must provide the AC with all the information detailed in the criteria column of the form and demonstrate how the course conforms the selected level of the European Qualification Framework (Annex 1) and the coherence between criteria. There follows an assessment of the information contained in the form. Verification of this information may be carried by a qualified assessor appointed by the Accreditation Commission (AC) who may visit the course provider either before the course runs or during the running of the course. The decision to attend before or during the course sessions will be made on the basis of the standing of the course provider, whether the course has been run on previous occasions or is a brand new course. Finally, with the assessor's report and the application form, the AC of IFA will submit a recommendation to the IFA board, which will then provide a decision if the EQAS-FOOD Certificate is given. This decision may be subjected to appeal, that will be evaluated by an independent panel. A period of 1 month will be assigned to this process to provide timely feedback.

The application can be submitted for a single short course or a group of such courses. The courses can be at any level defined by the European Qualification Framework. When several short courses are submitted in the same application, the common contents may be submitted in one section, with the content specific to the individual courses submitted in separate sections.

### **1.2 Fast-track certification**

A short course provider may apply to have their course certificated by a fast track procedure if they apply less than 10 weeks but a minimum of 4 weeks before the course is due to run on payment of the standard fee plus 50%. They should contact the AC to get agreement that the course can be certificated within the time. If agreed, the completed application form with application fee must be submitted within one week of getting that agreement.

### **1.3 Decision on the assessment**

The final decision on assessment will be pronounced by the AC of IFA.

The short course will be judged as:

- EQAS-Food Certificate awarded without any conditions or recommendations
- EQAS-Food Certificate deferred until conditions or recommendations defined by the panel have been met

The judgment “awarded” should be pronounced when requirements are fulfilled. The judgment “awarded with conditions” should be pronounced when some requirements have not been completely fulfilled but some correction can be done in a short time before the course is delivered. In such a case, a nominated representative of the AC will check that the condition(s) has/have been met.

The certification decision is then communicated to the course provider.

The award is valid for one calendar year for new courses and three calendar years for existing courses. After expiration of the validity, the programme can be resubmitted for assessment.

#### **1.4 Re-certification**

At approximately six months before the expiration of a three year certification, the course provider will be invited to submit for re-certification. The course provider should submit a revised application form that shows how the course has operated since the previous certification and how it has complied with the EQAS-FOOD framework. Course providers should provide additional information on changes made to the course(s) during the previous period, such as changes in the content, teaching staff and facilities made in response to the certification report and other developments and enhancements. A *pro forma* will be provided for this purpose. This will form the basis of the decision to re-certificate, or not. The AC will determine whether an audit visit is required to verify details. If no visit is needed, the fees for re-certification will be at a lower level compared with the initial certification.

#### **1.5 Response and Appeal Mechanism**

A certification decision may be appealed if it is felt that there are grounds to believe that the assessment process was not carried out fairly and properly in accordance with the framework outlined in this document.

The procedure of appeal will be made by the submission of a response to the decision of the accreditation decision addressed to the “Appeal Board (Secretary of the AC)” within one month of the decision being communicated to the course provider.

The Secretary of the AC will pass the appeal to the Board of the IFA which will nominate an independent appeal panel composed of:

- A member of the Iseki Food Association Board.
- A member of the AC
- A nominated member of IFA designated as an expert in the area who has not participated in the certification process

The decision of the appeal shall be issued within 1 month of the submission.

### **1.6 Publication**

The list of EQAS-FOOD certificated short courses will be made available on the IFA website.

### **1.7 Use of EQAS-FOOD Certificate label**

Short course providers who have had their course(s) successfully certificated should use the label in publicity about the course and may also use it in general publicity about their organisation. Copyright of the label remains with the ISEKI Food Association and when the course ceases to be provided or further certification is unsuccessful, the provider may no longer use the label in any way whatsoever.

## **2. Application for Certification of Short Course(s) in Food Science and Technology**

Please complete **SHORT-COURSE-CERTIFICATION-APPLICATION-FORM** ([https://www.iseki-food.net/accreditation/eqas\\_food\\_certificate](https://www.iseki-food.net/accreditation/eqas_food_certificate)) and submit it to [eqas@iseki-food.net](mailto:eqas@iseki-food.net), **10 weeks before the planned date of conduction.**

## Annex 1. Educational Levels as Defined by the European Qualification Framework for Lifelong-learning

<p><i>Each of the 8 levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications.</i></p>	<p><b>KNOWLEDGE</b> In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.</p>	<p><b>SKILLS</b> In the context of EQF, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).</p>	<p><b>COMPETENCE</b> In the context of EQF, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.</p>
Level 1	Basic general knowledge	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	Work or study under direct supervision in a structure context
Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy
Level 3 (Equivalent to school leaving qualifications, eg UK A-levels)	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study Adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems
Level 4 (Equivalent to first cycle, certificate level)	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change Supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities
Level 5 (Equivalent to first cycle, diploma level)	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change Review and develop performance of self and others



<p><i>Each of the 8 levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications.</i></p>	<p><b>KNOWLEDGE</b> In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.</p>	<p><b>SKILLS</b> In the context of EQF, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).</p>	<p><b>COMPETENCE</b> In the context of EQF, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.</p>
<p>Level 6 (Equivalent to first cycle, Bachelor's degrees)</p>	<p>Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles</p>	<p>Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study</p>	<p>Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts Take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups</p>
<p>Level 7 (Equivalent to second cycle, Master's degrees)</p>	<p>Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields</p>	<p>Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields</p>	<p>Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches Take responsibility for contributing for professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams</p>
<p>Level 8 (Equivalent to third cycle, doctorates)</p>	<p>Knowledge of the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields</p>	<p>The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice</p>	<p>Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research</p>