

Policy for Authorisation of Food Competent Certifying Officers (FCCO) in Great Britain by APHA

December 2021

Version 3.1

Change notice

The following changes have been made to Version 3:

- Definitions, paragraph 1, sub paragraphs o and q added
- Authorisation, paragraphs 8 (i and ii, e.), 9, 10, 14 to 20 added, paragraph 21 updated
- Revalidation section added
- Investigation, paragraphs 53 and 55 updated
- Decision of the review panel, paragraph 59 updated.

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Definitions

1. For the purposes of this document the following definitions shall apply:

- a. **Agency** means the Animal and Plant Health Agency, an executive agency of Defra.
- b. **Authorisation** means official recognition by the Agency to carry out official export health certification on behalf of Defra and the devolved administration Ministers, as appropriate. Authorisation is denoted by the allocation of a stamp with a unique number and inclusion on the definitive list of Food Competent Certifying Officers (FCCOs), held and managed by the Agency.
- c. **Central Competent Authority (CCA)**, for the purposes of export certification, means Defra and its executive agency, APHA, in relation to any international trade functions for animals and animal products as reserved to the UK Government. It extends to representing the UK and any devolved administration in negotiations relating to animal health and public health certification of imports and exports. However, Central Competent Authority (CCA) also means the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in relation to other matters of animal health and welfare and where they are responsible for the implementation and execution of certification of animal products and animals.
- d. **Competent Authority (CA)** includes the Local Authority (LA) responsible or authorised to implement and enforce food hygiene controls and animal health and welfare legislation, as specified in such legislation.
- e. **Certifying Officer (CO)** - Means any person authorised to sign officially issued export health certificates on behalf of the appropriate CCA.
- f. **Day** means a day in the calendar, including Saturday, Sunday, bank and public holidays.
- g. **Export Certificates** are paper or electronic records, which denote and attest to attributes and the origin(s) of a consignment of goods to which they relate, verified by the person or authority making the record.
- h. **Official Export Health Certificates (EHC)** are export certificates issued by, or under, the control of the exporting country's CCA, including by a certifying body recognised by the CCA to issue such certificates.
- i. **Food Competent Certifying Officer (FCCO)** is a Certifying Officer authorised by the Agency, that has competencies to operate official controls under the Food Safety Act 1990 and means a person deployed by a competent authority, either as staff or otherwise, and who is appropriately qualified to perform official controls and other official activities in accordance with the Official Controls Regulation (2017/625), and any other relevant rules.
- j. **Official Veterinarian** means a veterinarian authorised as an Official Veterinarian (OV) by the Agency.

- k. **Lead Food Officer** means a person as defined by the relevant Food Law Code of Practice, or equivalent in the case of FSS.
- l. **Local Authority authorised officer** means a person who has been authorised by a Local Authority (LA) according to the Food Law Code of Practice for the Country in which they are authorised under the applicable Food Safety Act 1990, in the context of their employment or contract and with responsibilities in relation to that Local Authority (LA).
- m. **Notes for Guidance** means official guidance documents issued and specific to an EHC, providing explanation and information to aid and direct the exporter and Certifying Officer in the requirements and the completion of an EHC.
- n. **Official control** means any form of control that any appropriate Competent Authority performs for the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules.
- o. **Official Controls Qualification (OCQ)** means an accredited qualification achieved following training and assessment by a government approved training provider in a particular discipline.
- p. **Products of Animal Origin (POAO)** means products derived from animals for human consumption and includes legally defined living animals ready to be presented to the final consumer for human consumption.
- q. **Revalidation** means the renewal of the OCQ(FCCO) prior to its date of expiry to enable continuation of both the qualification and authorisation
- r. **Revocation** means the withdrawal of authorisation to act as a certifying officer on behalf of the CCA in relation to official export health certification.
- s. **Suspension** means the temporary withdrawal of authorisation to act as a certifying officer on behalf of the CCA in relation to official export health certification, pending the outcome of a specified process and/or action.
- t. **Verification** means checking by examination in person or, if permitted, by deploying a Certification Support Officer (CSO) acting under the direction of the certifier, and considering objective evidence, to determine whether the specified requirements of a certificate have been fulfilled or complied with.
- u. **Working day** means a day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, bank, or a public holiday.

Introduction

2. This Policy sets out the relationship between the Animal and Plant Health Agency (hereafter referred to as 'APHA') and the person authorised as a Food Competent Certifying Officer (FCCO) by APHA. APHA designates FCCOs through this Policy for Authorisation.

3. APHA acts on behalf of the relevant Ministers in England, Scotland and Wales to designate individuals who may then carry out specific tasks in relation to official export certification on behalf of those Ministers.
4. Authorised persons are titled 'FCCO' but may also be referred, alongside Official Veterinarians (OVs), with the generic term as Certifying Officers (CO). A CO may provide official export health certification in relation to products of animal origin (POAO) and composite products as permitted by the country or trading zone of destination and as indicated on the official Export Health Certificate (EHC) for a commodity. Many certificates use the title 'Official Inspector' and this is interchangeable with CO, therefore a CO may sign such certificates
5. Official EHCs are officially negotiated and agreed between the central competent authorities (CCAs) of the trading countries and carry the backing of the state when used to certify exports. A FCCO is not empowered to negotiate an official EHC directly with the CCAs of importing countries and this activity is reserved to Defra on behalf of the UK. Official EHCs have specific requirements and may not be altered by the CO except where this is expressly permitted or required in the Notes for Guidance (NFG) that accompanies the certificate, or as otherwise permitted in writing by the CCA.
6. In order to facilitate the effective implementation of GB official controls and for the execution of export certification, COs must inspect and certify processes, commodities and consignments. They must take into consideration the specific requirements on the EHC, the NFG that accompany the EHC and the collective knowledge from official control systems in the UK, e.g. rapid alert systems, official disease freedom status and local authority inspections and enforcement, before issuing certification.
7. The FCCO shall operate in accordance with the standards for authorised persons who carry out official controls. These standards are laid down in relevant GB legislation, including retained EU legislation, particularly the Official Controls Regulation 2017/625.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) also set standards for the authorisation and conduct of officials in relation to the certification of animals and animal products and food for international trade. This is detailed in Section 3 of the OIE's Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Annex II) concerning the quality of veterinary services for member countries and in guideline [CAC/GL 38-2001](#) of the Codex on the issuance and use of official certificates.

Authorisation

8. APHA will authorise as an FCCO any person who:
 - i. Holds a valid OCQ(FCCO) certificate, demonstrating their understanding in relation to delivering export certification on behalf of APHA, *and*
 - ii. Holds a recognised qualification, demonstrating their skills and knowledge to undertake official controls according to the Food Law Code of Practice for the country in which they are authorised to act, namely:

- a. Diploma in Environmental Health awarded by the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS); or
- b. Certificate of Registration as an Environmental Health Practitioner awarded by the Environmental Health Registration Board (EHRB) (including its antecedents and replacement); or
- c. Higher Certificate in Food Control (HCFC) awarded by the Environmental Health Registration Board (EHRB); or
- d. Higher Certificate in Official Control (HCOC) awarded by the Scottish Food Safety Officer's Registration Board (SFSORB); or
- e. Higher Certificate in Food Practice awarded by the Scottish Food Safety Officer's Registration Board (SFSORB)
- f. Advanced Professional Certificate in Food Hygiene and Standards Control awarded by CIEH (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health); or
- g. Other qualification deemed to be equivalent by their recognized Professional Body (Annex I).

and

iii. Is employed or contractually engaged by either:

- a. a Local Authority in GB and authorised according to the Food Law Code of Practice, for the inspection and execution of official food hygiene controls; or
- b. Food Standards Scotland (FSS) and deemed competent to carry out the role of FCCO;

and

iv. Has had their contact email address and eligibility criteria verified to APHA by their Lead Food Officer;

and

v. Is regarded by APHA as suitable for carrying out tasks on behalf of Ministers, taking into account any previous performance as an official.

9. By exception APHA may also decide to authorise persons based on relevant previous experience, training and performance, on a case-by-case basis and in direct discussion with the responsible Lead Food Officer.

10. From 30 November 2021, new applicants must complete the OCQ(FCCO) qualification in order to become authorised as FCCOs. FCCOs authorised prior to 30 November 2021 will need to complete the FCCO revalidation training by 31 May 2022 in order to maintain their authorisation. If an authorised FCCO does not undertake the training course within this time period then their authorisation will be revoked as 'lapsed'. The APHA FCCO authorisation register shall be updated accordingly by APHA. In exceptional circumstances only, the authorisation may be suspended rather than expired, pending completion of the revalidation training (see para 31).

11. Applicants and authorised FCCO's must report any criminal convictions to APHA immediately. The Agency will then consider whether the FCCO authorisation can continue.
12. Once authorised, the FCCO shall be included in the definitive list of officially authorised COs on APHA's register.
13. At no time shall a FCCO be considered an Agency member of staff or an employee of the CCA.
14. For new applicants, once OCQ(FCCO) training has been successfully completed and the FCCO provided with their certification from the training provider the Agency will complete the authorisation process and send the successful applicant the following:
 - i. FCCO authorisation letter
 - ii. FCCO Stamp and Terms and Conditions of Use – for use only on official EHCs issued by APHA for export certification (where NFGs indicate these may be signed by an FCCO) and supporting attestations within the UK to other Certifying Officers. The stamp shall bear a unique number assigned to that FCCO. The FCCO must stamp their assigned number where indicated on official EHCs and for any permitted alterations and deletions on the certificate
 - iii. A unique identifier number on authorisation
15. The training certificate issued by the training provider alone does not provide authorisation to act as a FCCO. Authorisation is granted by the Agency on issuance of the letter referred to in paragraph 14.
16. Such authorisation shall be made within ten working days of obtaining the OCQ(CO) - FCCO certificate, providing all other requirements have been met.
17. Applicants must not act as a FCCO until they have received their authorisation letter and official stamp.
18. An FCCO authorisation is not a guarantee or representation by the Agency of the amount and nature of the work required to be performed as an FCCO.
19. Where an electronic signature is required to be affixed to an authorised document, the signature provided by the FCCO at the time of registration with the training provider and which is maintained on the personal training dashboard relating to that FCCO shall be used. Changes of name must be updated on the training record without delay.
20. The Agency will only supply critical materials such as FCCO stamps and Export Certificates to FCCOs who are authorised for the relevant task. It is important to remember that the stamp is and remains, the property of APHA. APHA will instruct the destruction of any stamps if a FCCO is removed from the authorised list.
21. All official communication to an individual in relation to authorised status will be via the email address that is supplied to APHA on application for the OCQ(FCCO) course. It is a condition of the authorisation that any changes to contact details are notified to APHA by the FCCO.

22. If such circumstance arises that an FCCO wishes to move from one Local Authority's employment to another, their FCCO authorised status will stay with them (as long as all conditions for authorisation are met). Similarly, FCCO's can work temporarily for a different LA at the agreement of both LA's involved. The FCCO must notify APHA of the move which must be confirmed by the Lead Food Officer at the new LA. The FCCO can continue to use their existing stamp while working for the new LA. Moves between FSS and LA will be assessed on a case by case basis, subject to meeting specific requirements.

Revalidation

23. FCCOs authorised prior to 30 November 2021 will be required to successfully complete the revalidation training by 31 May 2022 in order to maintain their authorisation.

24. Once a new applicant or authorised FCCO has completed the OCQ(FCCO) course for the first time, they will be required to revalidate their authorisation every four years from the date of the successful completion of the training.

25. If the FCCO's revalidation is not completed before the expiry of the four year period the authorisation will be suspended. The FCCO has the option to revalidate the qualification at any time during the six month period immediately following the deadline in order to have the authorisation reinstated.

26. Failure to complete the revalidation within the six months period following the deadline will result in expiry of the authorisation.

27. The training provider will notify the FCCO of the completion deadline for the revalidation and will send reminders, prior to the expiry date of the OCQ.

28. The FCCO may have their authorisation revalidated in the following circumstances without a break in their authorisation:

- i. before the expiry of the authorisation period the FCCO may undertake the revalidation training and obtain a certificate confirming that retraining from the training provider
- ii. if this revalidation is completed within the specified window for revalidation the start date of the next period of the authorisation shall be the original expiry date
- iii. if revalidation takes place prior to that window, the start date of the new period of authorisation shall be from the date of certification
- iv. if revalidation takes place during the six month period of suspension, the start date of the new period of authorisation shall be from the date of certification.

29. Agency records shall be updated accordingly.

30. From 31 May 2022, it is a requirement to hold the relevant OCQ(FCCO). Any FCCO who was authorised prior to 30 November 2021 must have completed the revalidation training by this date in order to continue to operate as a FCCO. Failure to complete the

training by the deadline will result in expiry of the authorisation and a FCCO will be unable to carry out FCCO work unless requalification is completed.

31. If an FCCO's authorisation has expired the FCCO will need to complete the full OCQ training, or apply to the Agency for permission to revalidate outside of the deadline. The Agency retains the right to grant or refuse permission based on the reasons provided for the request.
32. If a FCCO is unsuccessful in obtaining revalidation, then there will be an opportunity to retake the revalidation qualification again on two occasions. Following three unsuccessful attempts it will be necessary to take the full qualification again in order to seek reauthorisation as a FCCO.
33. Spot check audits (internal verification) will be carried out by the training provider on behalf of APHA to ensure that the information being submitted at revalidation is correct and compliant. This will occur on an ongoing basis so it will not delay the revalidation process.

Performance of tasks

34. Authorised FCCOs will act on behalf of the CCA when carrying out official export health certification, which must follow an EHC application by an exporting business. COs may not use their FCCO authorisation status, number and stamp for any other accreditation, attestation or declaration that they may make personally, professionally or on behalf of their LA, whether in the context of compliance with Food Hygiene regulatory requirements or not. FCCOs providing supporting attestations to other COs (either OVs or other FCCOs), which rely on their authorisation status as an FCCO, must therefore do so in only their capacity as an authorised CO employed by the LA or FSS, and not in any personal capacity or as a private contractual agreement.
35. APHA will not supply any materials necessary for the performance of the FCCO role other than the issuing of an official stamp.
36. APHA will monitor the performance of all certifying officers that it has authorised as it sees fit through a range of checks and inspection activities including, but not limited to:
 - i. Analysis of data and copies of export certificates and supporting documentation
 - ii. Investigation of complaints or observations, in particular, from officials at border control posts and reports from CCAs in importing countries.

Acting in an official capacity

37. Export related information, additions and amendments may be issued as necessary and it is essential that a FCCO refers to the latest information on the FCCO pages of Vet Gateway. It is the FCCO's responsibility to be up to date with all aspects relevant to their authorisation. As such, a FCCO must monitor their registered email address for communications from APHA.

38. An FCCO must keep up to date with any revisions to the Guidance on Export Certification.
39. An FCCO has responsibility for the security of all information obtained in the course of their duties, whether documentary, oral, pictorial, digital, or printed. All such data is considered personal and commercially sensitive data and may not be disclosed unless authorised under applicable sections of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. The unlawful disclosure of protected data shall be grounds for suspension or revocation of authorisation.
40. An FCCO must abide by the standards set out in the applicable Food Law Code of Practice (as applicable for the country in which the certification is undertaken), official communications whether direct or indirect and the NFGs issued with each EHC. Where a batch of certificates are held, the NFGs must be checked online for changes before issuing each certificate.
41. A FCCO must act without conflict of interest. This requirement underpins all official activities and reflects UK and international requirements. FCCOs should consider potential conflicts of interest and discuss with their Lead Food Safety Officer in order to make a decision on whether a conflict exists. In cases where questions over conflict of interest remain, the FCCO must refer to APHA for further consideration and advice. FCCOs should make a record of any potential conflict of interest and the advice received.

Revocation of authorisation

42. The authorisation of a FCCO may be revoked for a number of reasons. These include:
 - i. If they no longer meet the criteria that allow them to be authorised by APHA in paragraph 3.1 or 3.3. *or*
 - ii. If a FCCO voluntarily requests their authorisation to be revoked, giving one week's notice in writing or by email to APHA from their registered address; *or*
 - iii. Following the final decision of a review panel or appeal outcome following any investigative process; *or*
 - iv. If they are convicted of a criminal offence that renders them unfit to be a FCCO.
43. If a FCCO has their authorisation revoked for any of the above reasons APHA will send a letter by email to their registered email address or office address giving full reasons for the action taken. The FCCO has a right of appeal against this decision as set out the appeals section of this Policy Document.
44. Stamps must be permanently destroyed or returned to APHA when authorisation is revoked.
45. In cases where concerns arise about the conduct of a FCCO, APHA will not revoke a FCCO authorisation without first carrying out an investigation.
46. The Lead Food Officer and LA of employment (or FSS) will be kept informed of all proceedings.

Suspension of authorisation

47. The authorisation of a FCCO may be suspended in the following circumstances:

- i. If a preliminary report is made by any party that APHA considers serious enough to warrant an investigation, authorisation status may be suspended until such time as the investigation process is completed and the authorisation is restored or revoked, as the case may be;
- ii. If APHA becomes aware of an investigation by a statutory body into the conduct of a FCCO and where such investigation concerns animal health, animal welfare, public health, acts of fraud or dishonesty or violence, which could affect the safe and effective performance of the FCCO or bring APHA or responsible Minister into disrepute;
- iii. If there is evidence to suggest the FCCO is unable to undertake the safe and effective performance of the FCCO duties due to physical or mental impairment;
- iv. If, in APHA's opinion, a FCCO infringes or fails to comply with official instructions or consistently performs official tasks unsatisfactorily;
- v. In case of a breach of any requirement provided for in this policy, such as unlawful disclosure of data.
- vi. Any other circumstance provided for in this policy.

48. A FCCO who is suspended shall not continue to exercise the role of an authorised FCCO. The suspended person must surrender their stamp to their lead food officer or APHA, in person or by recorded delivery, until such time as any investigation process is completed and authorisation is restored or revoked, as the case may be.

49. The Lead Food Officer and LA of employment (or FSS) will be kept informed of all proceedings.

Investigation

50. Investigations pursuant to any potential breach of the terms of this Policy for the Authorisation of a Food Competent Certifying Officer (FCCO) shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

- i. A sole investigator, who is an employee of APHA and a Grade 6 or Grade 7 Senior Veterinary Manager or an employee of the FSS or LA with equivalent seniority, will be appointed to carry out and complete an investigation without unreasonable delay;
- ii. The investigator shall notify the FCCO in writing of the terms of the allegation and request a relevant account from the FCCO in writing or in person. Such notification shall be sent to the FCCO's registered email address;
- iii. An investigation would normally include a meeting with the FCCO to enable them to present further evidence and explanation. However, in some cases the investigator may decide that this is not necessary. For example, in cases where the facts are

beyond dispute (e.g. following admission in writing by the FCCO or following a legal conviction).

- iv. The FCCO shall be given a minimum of five days' notice of the interview, which may be undertaken face to face or remotely using APHA security compliant options.
- v. If the FCCO is requested to appear in person, they may be accompanied¹ to any interview or be represented at their own expense. They shall notify the investigator of the attendance of their representative no later than 72 hours before the appointed date of interview;
- vi. APHA will treat all reports and other documents as confidential except that they may be shared with any other statutory body with a legitimate interest where such disclosure is authorised under relevant data protection or other legislation or if criminal action or intent is evident or suspected.

51. The investigator may interview such parties as they consider fit and shall make reasonable attempts to interview persons suggested by the FCCO who are considered to be relevant to the allegation made. Should the investigator fail to interview parties suggested by the FCCO, the investigator shall give reason for such failure in any report produced.
52. The FCCO shall cooperate with any reasonable request to assist the investigation, including the production of documents or attendance at an interview. Failure to comply will be considered as grounds for immediate suspension of authorisation.
53. At any point in time if, in the opinion of a Senior Veterinary Manager (The Head of OV Regulation or not below Grade 6), there is sufficient evidence or concern that during the period of investigation the FCCO may continue to undertake their official role in non-compliance with this policy, or that doing so may bring the UK system of controls into disrepute the FCCO's authorisation will be suspended.
54. The FCCO will be given a draft of the investigator's report by email and invited to correct any factual errors or to make any relevant comments. The FCCO will have ten working days to do this and will be expected to respond by email to the person appointed to receive such communication. Upon request, APHA may grant extra time to the FCCO to review the report if there is reasonable justification provided the request is received in writing before the expiry of the ten working day period.
55. The investigator may decide that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the alleged misconduct and recommend to the APHA Head of OV Regulation or Grade 6 Senior Veterinary Manager that the case is closed. If the Senior Veterinary Manager agrees a letter will be sent to the FCCO informing them of this.
56. The final report shall be forwarded to a review panel and copied to the Veterinary Director.
57. The Lead Food Officer and LA of employment (or FSS) will be kept informed of all proceedings.

¹ This may be any person to accompany the FCCO and can be a Union representative or their Lead Food Officer.

Decision of the Review Panel

58. A review panel will be set up comprising two members, at least one of whom shall be an Agency MRCVS of Grade 6 and the other an official permanently employed by either APHA, FSS or LA at a suitable level of seniority (equivalent Grade SEO or above). The investigator will not be a member of the review panel.
59. A member of the review panel will invite the FCCO to a review panel meeting, which may be carried out face to face or remotely. The FCCO will be given at least five working days' notice of the date of the meeting. The FCCO will be invited to make representations and given the opportunity to present any relevant mitigating factors. The FCCO may do this orally at the meeting or in writing before the meeting. No expenses will be payable to the FCCO for attendance at this meeting.
60. The FCCO may be accompanied at the review meeting but the cost of their representative attending the meeting will be at their expense. The FCCO must notify the member of the review panel who invited them to the meeting, that they will be accompanied by a representative no later than 72 hours before the appointed date of the interview.
61. The review panel shall consider the investigator's report as well as any representations made by the FCCO at the hearing or in writing, when making their deliberations.
62. The review panel will normally make a decision within five working days of the hearing. The findings and decision will be immediately reported to the FCCO in writing, sent to their registered email address.
63. The review panel may decide on one or more of the following outcomes in proportion to their findings:
- i. The panel finds in favour of the FCCO and no further action is required or, if they were suspended, their authorisation is restored;
 - ii. Written advice given to the FCCO;
 - iii. Suspension (or further suspension) of APHA authorisation pending retraining at the FCCO's expense;
 - iv. Revocation of authorisation for a period of up to five years;
 - v. If applicable, referral to a relevant professional or membership body, where there are grounds for concerns as to professional conduct;
 - vi. Additional conditions such as undergoing retraining, or working under the direct supervision of a named Lead Food Officer or named FCCO for a specified period of time;
 - vii. invalidation of relevant output where the review panel is sufficiently concerned that the FCCO has not acted appropriately in performing the specific task.
 - viii. Referral to the police if there is evidence that fraudulent or criminal acts may have been committed;

- ix. Any other reasonable action that APHA considers necessary, including disclosure of their findings to the employer of the FCCO.
- 64. In determining the outcome of the investigation the review panel will consider previous training, performance and conduct as well as the facts of the specific case. Professional misconduct and intentional or repeated noncompliance with FCCO procedures would justify a long period of suspension.
- 65. If the review panel decides that it is necessary to revoke the authorisation of a FCCO and there has been a similar incident within the previous five years then they will normally decide on refusal to authorise for five years from the date of the decision.
- 66. The review panel will send copies of all their documents to the relevant Local Authority (or FSS as appropriate), Veterinary Director, APHA OV Team and APHA Regulatory Affairs, Compliance and Enforcement (RACE) Team.
- 67. The review panel will notify the Lead Food Officer and LA of employment (or FSS), as registered on the CSO's training record, of the outcome.

Appeals

- 68. Appeals pursuant to the final decision of the review panel shall be conducted as follows:
 - i. The appeal must be in writing and addressed to the APHA Veterinary Director; and sent by either email or letter to the following address:

[APHA Corporate Correspondence@apha.gov.uk](mailto:APHA_Corporate_Correspondence@apha.gov.uk) or
Corporate Correspondence
APHA Weybridge
Woodham Lane
New Haw
Addlestone
Surrey
KT15 3NB
 - ii. It must be received within 28 calendar days of the date of the review panel's written communication detailing their findings and the outcome; and
 - iii. It must set out the grounds for appeal and include any relevant evidence.
- 69. The Veterinary Director may within 10 working days decide the appeal or on receipt of the appeal immediately appoint a Senior Veterinary Manager (not below Grade 6) who has not previously been involved in the case to decide the appeal on their behalf. The appointed person will have 10 working days to decide the appeal.
- 70. Where the FCCO's authorisation has been suspended or revoked then this will continue whilst the appeal is being considered.
- 71. The decision of the Veterinary Director, or the person appointed by them, at appeal is final with regard to the authorisation.

72. The Lead Food Officer and LA of employment (or FSS) will be kept informed of all proceedings.

Restoration of authorisation

73. If authorisation has been suspended or revoked and the review panel or appeals decision permits restoration of authorisation, then the authorisation will be restored to the extent that their authorisation is still valid.

74. When a FCCO has had their authorisation revoked as result of an investigation and a review panel decides that they can reapply for their authorisation at the end of the period set (maximum five years), their application for re-authorisation has to be reviewed and approved by the Veterinary Director who will consider if following the period of removal they are now fit to be a FCCO.

75. Where a FCCO has been suspended pending investigation and the review panel decides that there is no case to answer then their authorisation will be reinstated automatically without referral to Veterinary Director.

Cessation of authorisation

Resignation

76. If a FCCO resigns from authorisation a written or email confirmation must be sent to the Agency. If the FCCO decides to resume FCCO work, reapplication for authorisation will be required.

Retirement

77. If a FCCO intends to retire and no further work is to be carried out on behalf of the Agency they must provide written or email notification to the Agency.

Death of FCCO during appointment

78. Upon notification that a FCCO has died the Agency will:

- update the Agency list of authorised officers and
- request that the Official Stamp is returned or seek assurance that it has been destroyed.

Annex I: Recognised Professional Bodies

England and Wales	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)
Scotland	Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS)

Annex II: OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code

Section 3. Quality of Veterinary Services

Chapter 3.1 Veterinary Services Article 3.1.1.

...

The same fundamental principles should apply in countries where the responsibility for establishing or applying certain animal health or animal welfare measures, or issuing some international veterinary certificates, is exercised by an organisation other than the

Veterinary Services, or by an authority or agency on behalf of the Veterinary Services. In all cases, the Veterinary Services retain ultimate responsibility for the application of these principles.

These fundamental principles are presented in Article 3.1.2. [of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code].



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Data Protection:

For information on how we handle personal data visit www.gov.uk and search Animal and Plant Health Agency Personal Information Charter.

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.