

## FDQ - Qualification Specification

FDQ number	Qualification title	Qualification number (QN)	EQF Level	Review date
322-255	FDQ Level 1 Foundation Award in Chocolate Tasting	601/8735/9	2	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2026

### Qualification Purpose

This qualification is designed primarily for learners who wish to develop a sensorial understanding of chocolate tasting to support progress to the next level of vocational learning.

*Ofqual purpose B. Prepare for further learning or training and/or develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area. Sub purpose B2. Develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area*

Learners need to be 14 years old or over to take this qualification. Learners do not require any prior qualifications or food skills experience to take this qualification. The qualification assesses and recognises achievement within a learning environment.

The qualification covers mandatory chocolate tasting and related areas including: sensory aspects of chocolate evaluation and tasting, cacao and chocolate production and their effect on flavour, varieties and origins of cacao, flaws and off notes, ethical issues. There are no optional units in this qualification. The qualification comprises one mandatory unit. See below for details of the unit that makes up this qualification and its value within the qualification. This is a regulated qualification.

### This qualification could lead to

The qualification will support progression to further learning in:

1. subject areas including;
  - Chocolate evaluation, tasting and appreciation
  - Cacao varieties, origins and flavour

- Chocolate production from cacao
  - Chocolate confectionery and patisserie
2. particular qualifications including;
- FDQ Level 2 Award/Certificate for Proficiency in Food Industry Skills
  - FDQ Level 2 Certificate in Food Industry Skills
  - FDQ Level 2 Certificate in Professional Bakery
3. This qualification may support employment in/into operative level roles including;
- chocolatier
  - baker/confectioner
  - food processing operative

## Qualification support

This qualification supports progress to further learning and qualifications, and has been designed and developed in partnership with the International Institute of Chocolate & Cacao Tasting. It is also supported by the Food and Drink Training and Education Council.

## Further Information

Further information can be obtained from our website at: <http://www.fdq.org.uk>

Or by contacting FDQ:

Tel: 0113 859 1266

Email: [fdq@fdq.org.uk](mailto:fdq@fdq.org.uk)

## Assessment

Portfolio of Evidence or Practical Demonstration/Assignments

Overall grading: Pass

Assessment requirements are set out in individual units of assessment, see exemplar *T/508/3770 Principles of chocolate tasting*. FDQ has in place a quality system comprising policies and procedures to ensure its qualifications are developed, delivered and remain fit for purpose. FDQ externally quality assures all centre assessment and internal quality assurance quality and arrangements.

## Rules of Combination (RoC)

FDQ Level 1 Foundation Award in Chocolate Tasting	
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	10 hours
Group A – Mandatory unit	1 credit
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	7 hours

### Mandatory unit

Unit Ref	Unit type	Unit title	Level	Credit	GLH
T/508/3770	UK	Principles of chocolate tasting	1	1	7

### Exemplar unit of assessment

Title	Principles of chocolate tasting				
RQF Unit ref	T/508/3770				
RQF Level	1	Credit value	1	GLH	7
Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria				
The learner will:	The learner can:				
1. Understand how to take a sensory approach to tasting chocolate	1.1. State how the senses of smell and taste are important in the tasting of chocolate 1.2. Identify aromas and flavour notes resulting from the smelling or eating chocolate 1.3. Identify the presence of tongue tastes that affect the flavour profile of a chocolate 1.4. State how the approach to eating a fine chocolate can change its flavour profile				

	<p>1.5. State the importance and features of after-taste in evaluating quality in chocolate.</p>
<p>2. Understand cacao origins and varieties, cacao and chocolate production, and the types and styles of chocolate</p>	<p>2.1 State the regions and conditions in which Theobroma cacao grows</p> <p>2.2 Outline how cacao is harvested, fermented and dried</p> <p>2.3 Outline the main types of cacao and the regions and countries that produce fine cacao</p> <p>2.4 State the main stages of chocolate production</p> <p>2.5 Outline the different market segments for chocolate and the different chocolate production types</p> <p>2.6 State the characteristics that define fine chocolate and its desired flavour properties.</p>
<p>3. Understand how to evaluate, buy and store chocolate, and aspects of social and ethical issues in cacao</p>	<p>3.1 State the main features and criteria used in the chocolate evaluation process</p> <p>3.2 Identify the main faults in cacao production and chocolate making that lead to off-notes and flaws in chocolate</p> <p>3.3 State the optimal conditions required for storage of chocolate and the damage that can result from poor storage</p> <p>3.4 State the cacao certification schemes available and outline the social and ethical issues affecting fine cacao.</p>