

Virtual food handling: SITXFSA005 online, which states accept it, and the nine units it unlocks | CHT

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Details:

Product

Product Facts

Product Name: Food Handling Course Virtual | Food Safety Course - Complete Hospitality Training

Fulfillment Type: online **Category:** Education & Training > Professional Certification Courses

Virtual food handling: SITXFSA005 delivered online

Our Virtual Food Handling course lists three hours of online delivery, with assessments completed on our learning management system. Check the official page for current booking details.

This is the same unit as the classroom course — SITXFSA005 Use hygienic practices for food safety — delivered online. The unit code, the assessment requirements and the Statement of Attainment are identical. Only the delivery mode differs.

That matters because a nationally recognised outcome does not become less recognised for being delivered online. What does matter is whether the course is accredited at all, whether your state accepts online delivery for the obligation you are trying to meet, and whether SITXFSA005 is even the right unit for your sector. All three are answered below.

And one thing worth knowing before you start: this single unit is the prerequisite for nine other food and beverage units, which makes it the most leveraged short course in the hospitality stream.

Is online delivery accepted?

State	Position
New South Wales	Expressly accepted. The Food Authority lists face-to-face, online, workplace, correspondence, or a combination
Western Australia	Expressly accepted. WA Health's provider table carries a dedicated online-course column, and several listed providers deliver online only
Victoria	No restriction stated
Queensland	No restriction stated, and online is expressly promoted for food handlers

So for food handler training, online delivery is not the obstacle anywhere. The distinction regulators actually draw is accredited versus unaccredited .

What the obligation actually is

Food handler training is the first of three food safety management tools under Standard 3.2.2A of the Food Standards Code, which commenced 8 December 2023 :

Tool	Clause	Applies to
1. Food handler training	3.2.2A—10	Category 1 and 2
2. Food safety supervisor	3.2.2A—11	Category 1 and 2
3. Substantiation records	3.2.2A—12	Category 1 only, kept 3 months

A category one business complies with all three clauses; a category two business with the first two. One clause is the whole difference.

The requirement is that each food handler has completed training, or holds skills and knowledge commensurate with the activity, before engaging in it. There is no grace period here — unlike RSA, which allows a month in Victoria or 30 days in Queensland.

And "the activity" has a definition

Worth pinning down, because "before engaging in the activity" says nothing until you know which activity. The trigger is a prescribed activity : the handling by the food business of any unpackaged potentially hazardous food that is either used in preparing ready-to-eat food to be served to a consumer, or is itself ready-to-eat food intended for retail sale by that business.

That is the trigger point for all three tools, not just for training. It also makes the timing concrete: a venue opening on Friday cannot treat a course booked for next week as compliance, because the duty attaches before the first prescribed activity rather than before the first inspection. Online delivery is often the practical answer to exactly that problem — it is the mode you can complete before a shift starts rather than on the next scheduled classroom date.

The four topics it must cover

Safe food handling

Prevention of food contamination

Cleaning and sanitising of premises and equipment

Personal hygiene

Three ways to satisfy it, and why you might still pay

The standard does not mandate accredited training. You may satisfy it with a nationally recognised unit, a free state course, or training the business develops itself tailored to its own procedures, provided it covers those four topics. A business may also recognise prior learning itself — through competency-based training, in-house education, a food safety induction completed at another food business , or relevant previous industry experience in the food industry — and under the standard, record keeping of food handler training is optional .

So be clear about what you are buying. The accredited unit is the only one of the three that produces something portable . If you expect to change employers, move interstate, or continue into a

qualification, that is the whole argument for it. If none of those apply, a free course may genuinely be enough, and this page will not pretend otherwise.

The layer underneath, which is older than 2023

One duty predates all of the above and was not replaced by it. Clause 3 of Standard 3.2.2 has applied to every Australian food business since 2000 : the business must ensure that persons undertaking or supervising food handling operations have skills in, and knowledge of, food safety and food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activities .

Clause 3 is outcome-based — no course, no certificate, no unit code, no refresher period, just a requirement that the competence be present. Its only carve-out is narrow: it does not apply to persons handling food for fundraising events at which the only food sold is not potentially hazardous, or is to be consumed immediately after thorough cooking.

Standard 3.2.2A did not change clause 3; it added a prescriptive layer on top for category one and two businesses. The practical consequence: a business outside those two categories is not outside food safety training law. It still answers to clause 3, and an online unit is a straightforward way to evidence that the skills and knowledge are there.

Are you category one or category two?

Worth knowing, because it decides whether your business also carries the substantiation tool.

Category one is a caterer or food service that processes unpackaged potentially hazardous food into ready-to-eat food — restaurants, cafes, takeaways, caterers, bakeries, hospitals, aged care, childcare, school canteens, mobile vendors.

Category two sells ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food at retail without making or processing it, other than slicing, weighing, repacking, reheating or hot-holding — delicatessens, butchers, seafood retailers, convenience stores.

Those five permitted steps are the test. Start making sandwiches and you are category one.

Online, but not unassessed

A nationally recognised unit has assessment requirements that do not relax because delivery moved online, and this is where the detail is worth having rather than the generality.

SITXFSA005 's performance evidence requires the candidate to demonstrate hygienic food handling in line with organisational procedures , and to show each of the following on at least three separate occasions :

correct hand washing

appropriate use of uniform and personal protective equipment

effective personal health and hygiene practices

hygienic food service

And, separately, to follow the procedures for reporting unsafe hygiene practices — the reporting duty, not only the practice.

Read that list next to the words "online course" and the test becomes concrete. Three occasions each is not something a single set of multiple-choice questions can evidence. An online delivery of this unit therefore involves structured learning plus assessment evidence — which, depending on how the RTO has designed it, may include workplace observation or supervised practical evidence. What it cannot be is reading followed by a quiz.

This is the single most useful check: if there is no assessment beyond a quiz, and a certificate issues immediately, it is not SITXFSA005. The useful question to ask a provider is not how long the course takes, but across how many assessment occasions hand washing is observed.

Worth knowing what the unit does not cover, because that is the line between the handler and supervisor tiers. SITXFSA006, the second unit in SITSS00069, adds control of food hazards at nine critical control points — receiving, storing, preparing, processing, displaying, serving, packaging, transporting, disposing — plus the procedures to calibrate a temperature probe and to report food contamination incidents. SITXFSA005 is personal practice; SITXFSA006 is the system.

Virtual accredited training versus free state courses

Several states publish free online food safety courses, and they are a legitimate option for some purposes — but they are a different thing.

	Virtual SITXFSA005	Free state course
Examples	This course	DoFoodSafely, Food Handler Basics, FoodSafe, I'm Alert
Nationally recognised	Yes	No — Victoria states DoFoodSafely is explicitly not accredited
Produces	Statement of Attainment	Certificate of completion
On your national transcript	Yes	No
Credit-transfers to a qualification	Yes	No
Unlocks the nine dependent units	Yes	No
Cost	Fee applies	Free

That second-to-last row is the one most comparisons miss, and it is covered next.

The prerequisite nobody expects — and it gates nine units

This is the strongest practical reason to take the accredited unit rather than a free course, and it is rarely mentioned anywhere.

SITXFSA005 is a formal prerequisite for nine other units in the current food and beverage stream:

Unit	Title	Other prerequisite
SITHFAB022	Clean and tidy bar areas	—
SITHFAB023	Operate a bar	SITHFAB021 (RSA)
SITHFAB024	Prepare and serve non-alcoholic beverages	—
SITHFAB025	Prepare and serve espresso coffee	—
SITHFAB026	Provide room service	—
SITHFAB027	Serve food and beverage	—

SITHFAB030	Prepare and serve cocktails	SITHFAB021 (RSA) and SITHFAB023
SITHFAB034	Provide table service of food and beverage	SITHFAB021 (RSA)
SITHFAB035	Provide silver service	—

One unit unlocks nine. Nothing else in the stream has that leverage except RSA itself, which gates nine of its own, and it is why SITXFSA005 belongs at the front of any training plan that touches coffee, beverages or table service. A free non-accredited course does not open any of them, because a prerequisite can only be satisfied by the unit itself.

Read the figure as scoped to the food and beverage stream. Across the wider SIT package SITXFSA005 also sits in front of cookery, patisserie, Asian cookery and kitchen units, so a total for the whole package would be a different number about a different set of units.

Three specific consequences:

Barista training is blocked without it. Anyone planning a barista master class , coffee appreciation or latte art needs SITXFSA005 first, or already held. Clearing it online is a sensible way to do that before a practical, in-person coffee course — the theory unit online, the hands-on unit in a real venue.

Four units in the stream carry two or more prerequisites. SITHFAB034 Provide table service and SITHFAB023 Operate a bar each need two, because formal table service and bar operation also require SITHFAB021 responsible service of alcohol, whether or not the role involves pouring wine. The training package treats advising a customer through a menu in a licensed dining room as work presupposing RSA competence. SITHFAB030 Prepare and serve cocktails needs three — SITHFAB021 , SITHFAB023 and SITXFSA005 — and so does SITHFAB039 Manage the sale or service of wine, which needs SITHFAB021 , SITHFAB032 and SITHFAB033 . See restaurant waiting and hospitality package for how that reorders a training plan.

RSA is the equal of this unit as a gate. SITHFAB021 is itself a prerequisite to nine units in the stream — SITHFAB023 , 029 , 030 , 031 , 032 , 033 , 034 , 037 and 039 . If a plan runs through alcohol service as well as food, both belong early.

What this course does not do

SITXFSA005 on its own does not make you a Food Safety Supervisor in any state.

An FSS needs SITXFSA005 and SITXFSA006 Participate in safe food handling practices — together the skill set SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision Skill Set . In New South Wales an FSS additionally needs a state-issued FSS certificate from an RTO approved by the NSW Food Authority under s 106H of the Food Act 2003 , which is a separate document from the Statement of Attainment and carries a statutory five-year expiry . NSW also bars one person from being the FSS for more than one premises, under s 106B(1)(b) .

Why only NSW, when the units are national? Because Standard 3.2.2A defines a food safety supervisor certificate as certification by either (a) a registered training organisation or (b) an organisation recognised by the relevant authority under that state's Act — and NSW is the only state that has exercised limb (b) . Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia rely on limb (a), so there the RTO's Statement of Attainment is the artefact. No state operates any equivalent scheme for the food handler obligation, which is why this unit travels cleanly everywhere.

Two food safety skill sets, easily confused

We hold both, and they are different things:

Skill set	Title	Units	What it is for
SITSS00068	Food Handling Skill Set	SITXFSA005	The food handler level — this unit's territory
SITSS00069	Food Safety Supervision Skill Set	SITXFSA005 + SITXFSA006	The supervisor level

The difference is exactly one unit. Both have been on our scope since 10 June 2022 , at the extent deliver and assess, aligned to our registration period ending 30 June 2032 . If someone tells you "the food safety skill set", ask which number. Naming the code removes the ambiguity, and either is verifiable on training.gov.au.

See Food Safety Supervisor for that requirement, and food handling for the broader comparison.

And it may not be the right unit for your sector

If you work in a hospital, aged care facility or childcare centre, the published minimum standard in Victoria and Queensland is the health sector units — HLTFS001 , HLTFS005 and HLTFS007 , Release 1 of each — not the SIT hospitality units. Food processing businesses need FBPSY2002 , or FBPSY1002 in Queensland.

Note that in Victoria those settings are Class 1 premises, so the requirement is real rather than theoretical. Three points of precision:

Standard 3.2.2A names no sector units at all. This is a state determination, published by Safe Food Victoria and by Queensland Health. New South Wales names no sector-specific units of its own, and Western Australia publishes HLTSS00061 — the same three units bundled as a skill set — as an accepted equivalent rather than a mandate.

On the retail side, Safe Food Victoria accepts SIRRFSA001 and the two hospitality units as alternatives to each other for both sectors, so the hospitality pair covers a Victorian deli as well as a restaurant.

And the limit that applies to this course: of the three health units, only HLTFS001 is on our scope . HLTFS005 , HLTFS007 and FBPSY2002 are not. So we cannot complete the set Victoria or Queensland publishes for a hospital, aged care or childcare kitchen. Use a provider that holds all three, and check its scope on training.gov.au before enrolling with anyone, including us.

This is the most common way someone completes the wrong course, and it is entirely avoidable by asking one question before paying.

Where the unit sits in a qualification

SITXFSA005 is a core unit in SIT30722 Certificate III in Hospitality (Restaurant Front of House) , SIT30821 Certificate III in Commercial Cookery and SIT40521 Certificate IV in Kitchen Management .

Core, not elective — meaning it cannot be substituted out. Everyone completing those qualifications holds it.

Completing it standalone, online or otherwise, credit-transfers into any of them under Standard 1.7 of the Outcome Standards for RTOs. No reassessment: your Statement of Attainment is the evidence. That is distinct from recognition of prior learning under Standard 1.6 , which assesses prior skills, learning and experience and is a genuine assessment rather than a waiver. Raise either at the pre-training review , which an RTO must conduct under Standard 2.2 of the Outcome Standards for RTOs before you enrol. We verify evidence of equivalent prior completion, check the training-product requirements and any licensing or regulatory restrictions, and document the decision before granting credit. See ASQA's credit-transfer guidance .

A note on where that leads: a completed Certificate III , relevant to your classification and used at work, sets a minimum award classification of Level 4 under MA000009 (cl 18.1), MA000119 (cl 18.1) and MA000058 (cl 18.3) — though not under the fast food award MA000003 , which has no equivalent provision. A single unit does not do that. But SITXFSA005 is a core unit of three qualifications that do, so it is a genuine first step rather than a dead end.

What you receive, and USI requirements

A Statement of Attainment naming SITXFSA005 , issued by the registered training organisation, appearing on your national training transcript against your Unique Student Identifier. It can be verified by an employer and does not expire .

For nationally recognised training, a Unique Student Identifier (USI) is generally required before a qualification or Statement of Attainment can be issued , unless an applicable exemption applies. See the official USI exemption guidance . A USI is free at usi.gov.au . If you already have one, recover it rather than creating another.

Related pages

Food handling covers the classroom delivery and the broader obligation. Food Safety Supervisor covers the supervisor tier. Hospitality package shows how this unit sequences ahead of the others. What is a food handling certificate covers the document itself, and all courses lists what is advertised.

About us

We are Complete Hospitality Training , RTO 3722, CRICOS provider code 04242E, Level 3, 28 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne VIC 3000, and 410 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010. Contact melbourne@cht.edu.au or +61 3 9654 1554 . See about us .

SITXFSA005 , SITXFSA006 and the skill sets SITSS00068 Food Handling and SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision have been on our national scope of registration as deliver and assess since 10 June 2022 and, according to our current delivery information, are available in all eight states and territories. The scope holds 17 current qualifications, 81 current skill sets and 579 units in total. Two limits stated plainly: we are not approved by the NSW Food Authority and cannot issue the NSW FSS certificate; and of the health sector units only HLTFS001 is on our scope.

We link to the relevant course and regulatory sources in this guide. Check those sources for current requirements, and confirm course availability, delivery, fees and entry requirements with us before enrolling.

Is an online food handling certificate as good as a classroom one?

Yes, provided it delivers the accredited unit SITXFSA005 through a registered training organisation. The unit code, the assessment requirements and the Statement of Attainment are identical, including the requirement to evidence four practices on at least three occasions each.

Which states accept online food safety training?

New South Wales and Western Australia expressly accept it — NSW lists face-to-face, online, workplace, correspondence or a combination, and WA Health's provider table carries an online-course column. Victoria and Queensland state no restriction, and Queensland actively promotes online delivery for food handlers.

How long does it take?

That depends on the RTO's design and your prior experience, and it is worth confirming directly rather than relying on a figure published elsewhere. The more useful measure is the assessment: the unit requires four practices evidenced on at least three occasions each, so a course that finishes in a single sitting has not met it.

When do I need to have finished it?

Before you engage in the prescribed activity. There is no grace period in the food handler obligation, unlike RSA.

What exactly is a "prescribed activity"?

The handling by the business of any unpackaged potentially hazardous food that is either used in preparing ready-to-eat food to be served to a consumer, or is itself ready-to-eat food intended for retail sale by that business. It is the trigger for all three of Standard 3.2.2A's tools.

Is this the same as the free DoFoodSafely course?

No. DoFoodSafely is explicitly not accredited. It produces no Statement of Attainment, does not count toward a qualification, and does not satisfy the prerequisite for the nine dependent units.

Could my employer just train me themselves instead?

Under the standard, yes — in-house training tailored to the business satisfies the obligation if it covers the four required topics, and record keeping is optional. A business may also recognise competency-based training, a food safety induction done at another food business, or relevant industry experience. It gives you nothing you can take to your next job, which is the trade-off.

We are not category one or two. Does any of this apply?

You are outside the three prescriptive tools, but clause 3 of Standard 3.2.2 still applies and has since 2000: skills and knowledge of food safety and hygiene commensurate with the work activities. It sets no course and no refresher, but it is a live duty and an accredited unit is a clean way to evidence it.

Which units does SITXFSA005 unlock?

Nine, in the current food and beverage stream: SITHFAB022 clean and tidy bar areas, SITHFAB023 operate a bar, SITHFAB024 non-alcoholic beverages, SITHFAB025 espresso coffee, SITHFAB026 room service, SITHFAB027 serve food and beverage, SITHFAB030 cocktails, SITHFAB034 table service and SITHFAB035 silver service. SITHFAB023, SITHFAB030 and SITHFAB034 additionally require SITHFAB021 RSA, and SITHFAB030 requires SITHFAB023 as well.

Can I use it for the barista prerequisite?

Yes. SITXFSA005 is the prerequisite for SITHFAB025, and completing it online satisfies that. Doing the theory unit online before a practical barista course is a reasonable sequence.

Does it make me a Food Safety Supervisor?

No. An FSS needs SITXFSA005 plus SITXFSA006 — the SITSS00069 skill set — and in New South Wales a separate state-issued certificate from an RTO approved under s 106H, valid five years.

Why does only NSW have its own certificate?

Because Standard 3.2.2A allows it. The Standard defines a supervisor certificate as certification by either a registered training organisation or an organisation recognised by the relevant authority under the state's Act, and NSW is the only state to have used that second limb. It has no equivalent for food handlers in any state.

What is the difference between SITSS00068 and SITSS00069?

Exactly one unit. SITSS00068 is the Food Handling Skill Set, SITXFSA005 alone, at the food handler level. SITSS00069 is the Food Safety Supervision Skill Set, which adds SITXFSA006. We hold both, on scope since 10 June 2022.

Does it expire?

A Statement of Attainment does not expire, and no refresher period is set by regulation for food handler training. The five-year rule applies to the Food Safety Supervisor certificate, not to this unit.

I work in childcare. Is this the right course?

Probably not. Children's services, aged care and hospitals require HLTFS001, HLTFS005 and HLTFS007 in Victoria and Queensland, and those settings are Class 1 premises in Victoria. Only HLTFS001 is on our scope, so we cannot complete that set — ask before enrolling and use a provider that holds all three.

Is this unit core or elective in a qualification?

Core in SIT30722, SIT30821 and SIT40521 — so it cannot be substituted out, and everyone completing those qualifications holds it.

Will it raise my pay?

Not on its own; a single unit does not move an award classification. But it is a core unit of three Certificate III and IV qualifications, and a completed Certificate III used at work sets a Level 4 floor under MA000009, MA000119 and MA000058.

Do I need a USI?

For nationally recognised training, a USI is generally required before your qualification or Statement of Attainment can be issued, unless an applicable exemption applies. We can explain the requirements for your enrolment. See the official USI exemption guidance (<https://www.usi.gov.au/students/create-your-usi/exemptions-usi>). Creating a USI is free; recover an existing one rather than creating another.

What should make me suspicious of an online course?

No unit code, no RTO number, or a certificate issued instantly after a quiz with no further assessment. Any of those means it is not delivering the accredited unit, because the unit itself requires four practices evidenced on at least three occasions. Check the RTO code rather than the brand name, since a provider may trade under several registered names.