

Quality Technician

Introduction

As a Quality Technician, you will make sure that products meet quality and safety standards. You will do this by measuring and weighing products, examining samples and using machines to test them.

You could work in a wide range of industries, including food and drink, pharmaceuticals and electronics.

Also known as

- Fault Finder
- Quality Controller
- Quality Assurance Technician
- Quality Control Technician



Work Activities

As a Quality Technician, you will make sure that products meet quality and safety standards.

You will do this by measuring and weighing products, examining samples and using machines to test them. You might work in a factory, laboratory, workshop or an office. You'll visit the factory floor to take samples of products and inspect production, and discuss any problems with colleagues.

Quality Technicians also inspect products bought by their company. You'll maintain records of supplier performance, and regularly check and test samples of a product.

The testing methods that you'll use varies, depending on the type of product you are working with. For example, in the food processing industry, you are responsible for making sure that products meet food safety and nutritional standards. In a pharmaceutical company, you may test the safety and purity of drugs.

You will make visual inspections with the naked eye or you might use technical equipment, such as microscopes. Further tests may be necessary, including weighing and measuring.

You must keep records of all the tests you have carried out, and you may have to write a report to show your findings and perhaps present the results to others.

If there is a problem, you will have to meet with production staff to work out what is causing the problem and to decide whether current processes need to be changed at all. You might make recommendations for improvement.

Being able to read, write and speak Welsh may be an advantage when you're looking for work in Wales.

Personal Qualities and Skills

To become a Quality Technician, you need:

- to be observant
- to be very good at paying attention to detail
- to be patient as some tests are complex and take a long time to complete
- a logical, methodical approach to your work
- to be accurate when taking measurements and recording figures
- good number skills, for example, to measure and weigh samples, or perhaps to understand and use statistics
- good computer skills to analyse, store and display test results on computers
- tact and discretion to point out problems to production workers
- good communication skills to motivate others to improve the quality of their work, as well as to explain your findings clearly to other people
- good interpersonal skills to get on with people of all ages and backgrounds

- report writing skills

Depending on the area in which you work, you may also need the ability to use technical equipment, for example, microscopes and automated testing machines.

Pay and Opportunities

Pay

The pay rates given below are approximate.

- Starting: £21,500 - £22,500
- With experience: £24,000 - £26,500
- Senior Quality Technicians earn £29,500 - £32,000

Hours of work

As a Quality Technician, you will usually work 39 hours a week, Monday to Friday. Shift work, including weekend work, may be required in some production environments.

Where could I work?

Employers include firms in engineering, electronics, food and drink, pharmaceuticals and textiles.

Opportunities for Quality Technicians occur with employers in towns and cities throughout the UK.

Where are vacancies advertised?

Vacancies are advertised in local/national newspapers, on recruitment and employers' websites, and on Find a Job (www.gov.uk/jobsearch).

Social media websites, such as LinkedIn, Twitter or Facebook, are a great way to network, find vacancies and get in contact with possible employers. Make sure that your profile presents you in a professional manner that will appeal to potential employers.

Take a look at our General Information Article 'Finding Work Online'.

GreenJobs is a job board aimed at people interested in green careers:

www.greenjobs.co.uk/browse-jobs/quality-assurance/

Entry Routes and Training

Entry routes

It's possible to enter and train through an Intermediate, Advanced Level or Degree Apprenticeship.

Many Quality Technicians have previous work experience in a relevant manufacturing industry. Entry is possible, however, as a Trainee or Quality Control Assistant, with on-the-job training.

Training

Some posts in quality control only require on-the-job training.

The Chartered Quality Institute (CQI) offers a number of courses related to quality. Courses can be studied by distance learning or part-time, in the evenings. The CQI can provide a list of approved education centres.

It may also be possible to work towards certificates and diplomas in business improvement techniques (quality

improvement).

Work Experience

Many employers prefer people with experience of making production decisions, or giving instructions on the shop floor, in a manufacturing industry.

Progression

It's possible to progress to a quality management position. Quality Managers are likely to need a degree or higher national qualification, or be members of a professional body.

There are a number of specialist degree courses and several postgraduate courses on aspects of quality management.

CQI members can participate in their continuing professional development (CPD) scheme.

Qualifications

There are no formal entry requirements to become a Quality Technician.

To get onto an Intermediate or Advanced Level Apprenticeship, you'll usually need five GCSEs at grade C/4 or above, possibly including English and maths.

To get onto a Higher Level Apprenticeship, you will need at least two A Levels, or an Advanced Level Apprenticeship.

To get onto a Degree Apprenticeship, you will usually need at least 2 A levels.

Some employers might ask for 4 GCSEs at grade C/4 or above, including English, maths and a science, technology or engineering subject.

Depending on the technical level of the work, some employers prefer applicants to have higher qualifications, for example, A levels or higher national qualifications.

For some positions, a degree or even a postgraduate qualification may be required, usually in a science or engineering subject.

Some universities accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as equivalent to 1 A level.

Adult Opportunities

Age limits

It is illegal for any organisation to set age limits for entry to employment, education or training, unless they can show there is a real need to have these limits.

Skills/experience

Many employers prefer people with experience of making production decisions, or giving instructions on the shop floor, in a manufacturing industry.

Courses

A number of centres throughout the country offer Chartered Quality Institute (CQI) qualifications by distance learning . A list of providers is available from the CQI.

Further Information

Professional institutions Professional institutions have the following roles:

- To support their members.
- To protect the public by keeping standards high in their professions.

For more information on the institution(s) relevant to this career, check out the contacts below.

Contacts

- **City & Guilds**
Address: 1 Giltspur Street, London EC1A 9DD
Tel: 020 7294 2468
Email: learnersupport@cityandguilds.com
Website: www.cityandguilds.com
- **National Skills Academy for Food & Drink**
Sector Skills Council for the food and drinks industry
Email: info@nsafd.co.uk
Website: www.improveltd.co.uk
- **Tasty Careers**
Food and drink careers
Email: info@tastycareers.org.uk
Website: tastycareers.org.uk
- **Chartered Quality Institute (CQI)**
Address: 2nd Floor North, Chancery Exchange, 10 Furnival Street, London EC4A 1AB
Tel: 020 7245 6722
Email: info@thecqi.org
Website: www.thecqi.org
- **Quality Management and Training (QM&T)**
Address: PO Box 172, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7FN
Tel: 01483 453511
Email: info@qmt.co.uk
Website: www.qmt.co.uk
- **Careers Wales - Welsh Apprenticeships**
Tel: 0800 028 4844
Website: ams.careerswales.com/

Related Careers

- Factory Worker
- Packer - Heavy Goods
- Packer - Light Goods
- Recycling Operative
- Product Manager
- Assembler - Light Industry
- Bottling Operative
- Production Planner