

TR539 Requirements for the Approved Tuberculin Tester Qualification

August 2020

1. Minimum age qualification at initial application is 18 years.
2. Completion of satisfactory identification and basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) security checks before enrolment on the training. Candidates need to await the results of their DBS checks before commencing training and this needs to be considered by the employer when recruiting potential candidates. The employer is required to confirm Approved Tuberculin Tester (ATT) eligibility before the training commences and the Approved Veterinary Supervisor (AVS) is responsible for confirming this prior to conditional authorisation being granted.
3. Minimum academic requirement is either:
 - three GCSEs or equivalent qualifications in Mathematics, English and in a Science subject or Food Production
 - three years performance in a Government regulatory role e.g. Local Authority (LA) Inspector or Environmental Health Officer (EHO)
4. A minimum of six months previous livestock handling experience.
5. A Conflict of Interest declaration completed at enrolment onto ATT training.
6. The Official Controls Qualification (Animal Health Paraprofessional) - Approved Tuberculin Tester (OCQ(AHP) - ATT) qualification must be gained before authorisation to carry out any TB testing is granted.
7. The theory training must be completed with an examination invigilated by a Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (MRCVS), a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) or an online invigilator appointed by the training provider.
8. Conditional authorisation to test under supervision for a maximum of six months is granted by APHA following successful completion of the online course, examination and the confirmation of an AVS and deputies on the training record. The candidate will be granted conditional access to the required IT system for the recording and submission of TB tests.
9. An AVS must be nominated who must be an MRCVS with a current OCQ(V) - TT qualification. One AVS is able to supervise a maximum of two ATTs, but only one of whom can be in training at any time. A deputy AVS must also be nominated with the option for a second. The AVS is also able to act as a deputy for other ATTs.

10. The AVS is required to confirm an understanding of their role and responsibilities as detailed on the training record and declare their own position including a successful on farm TB audit (not including the OCQ(V)- TT practical assessment) within the last two years with no breaches. The AVS must accept responsibility and declare that they are supervising no more than the maximum permitted number of ATTs. An option for additional supervisors will be included for each candidate, to cover the possibility that the candidate may need to move to another area to see test reactions in order to complete the requirements.
11. Candidates are required to test a minimum of 500 animals in at least ten herds under the direct and continuous supervision of an AVS. This must include some beef and some dairy type animals. The maximum number of cattle that may contribute to that number at any one test is 100 (ATTs are permitted to test more than 100 animals in any test at the discretion of the AVS but only 100 will count towards the final required total number of cattle).
12. Each candidate is required to see a minimum of 80 skin reactions to the test and within that a certain number of different types of reaction (minimum of 20 oedematous and 20 circumscribed). These can be observed on cattle in the tests that they carry out, on cattle that have been TB tested by another authorised TB Tester or a combination of both, as long as the ATT has seen and recorded them. ATTs are permitted to move to another participating practice under the supervision of another AVS/deputy (who must be added to their training record) if necessary to meet these requirements.
13. Whilst training, candidates need to be under constant direct supervision, i.e. physical presence of AVS on farm, whilst testing with no exceptions.
14. An AVS is required to sign off on the training requirement for the numbers tested and reactions seen, once numbers are met.
15. Candidates need to enrol and pay for a practical assessment. This can be completed once the ATT is considered competent by the AVS and the minimum number of animals have been tested and reactions seen. The assessment should be booked as far in advance of the likely required date as possible, with a minimum of six weeks' notice.
16. A practical assessment is carried out by an independent assessor using the APHA contracted training provider. Candidates need to be assessed both on the injection day and reading day of the test (TT1 and TT2). Testing of a minimum of 30 cattle must be assessed.
17. The AVS must be present at the practical assessment as the candidate will not be qualified to test alone at this stage. Group assessments are acceptable i.e. more than one ATT with the same supervisor (or additional supervisors) being assessed at the same test.

18. If the assessment is passed, full authorisation to test is issued by APHA. Candidates are not permitted to test alone until authorisation is received.
19. If the candidate does not pass the assessment the supervisor will need to take over the test. APHA will decide on further action required which will depend on the reasons for failure.
20. The AVS must complete an on-farm assessment of the testing of at least 20 animals at TT1 and TT2 between four and six months after the ATT's full authorisation is granted. Failure to add the record of a successful audit to the training record will result in automatic suspension or expiry of the authorisation if not completed.
21. A full on-farm audit must be carried out for all ATTs in the first twelve months following full authorisation by the VDP, the training provider or APHA.
22. Following the initial on farm audit the ATT must have a VDP, training provider or APHA audit at least once every two years. The ATT will have to provide evidence that at least 30 cattle have been tested in every two year interval.
23. Revalidation of the OCQ(AHP) - ATT (theory only) will be required:
 - two years from the initial date of authorisation of the ATT or
 - thereafter every four years.



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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.