FAQs – Foundation Fire Risk Assessment to BS 8674:2025

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1) Why do I need this qualification?

This qualification is specifically designed for those who are beginning their career as a fire risk assessor and who may be working under supervision. This includes those participating in a vocational training programme or who have enrolled in a fire risk assessment (FRA) apprenticeship scheme.

It is particularly beneficial for those undertaking roles such as in-house fire risk assessors, independent fire safety consultants, and those appointed by a Responsible Person or Duty Holder to undertake FRAs in buildings and premises that can be categorised as presenting a low-risk.

Entry to this qualification is subject to meeting the outlined criteria, ensuring candidates are adequately prepared for its demands.

2) Will I be competent to undertake fire risk assessments after I have completed the course?

The course provides an underpinning framework for an assessor to undertake a fire risk assessment for low-risk premises. It should be noted that competence is an ongoing process, and methods and sources of information to enhance the competency levels of assessors will be discussed during the course.

Competence of individual fire risk assessors is defined in BS 8674:2025. Extracts from the British Standard are listed below (for full details please refer to the published document).

Foundation level competence/low fire risk premises

The following factors typically characterize low fire risk premises.

a) Occupancy:
   1) low occupancy level of around 60;
   2) often a single person or family, or having low staff numbers;
   3) occupants who are very familiar with the premises layout; and
   4) occasional visitors, such as friends or customers.

b) Use:
   1) common parts of small multi-occupied buildings (such as converted houses and HMOs) and residential apartments;
   2) small offices and retail or commercial enterprises;
   3) small public venues such as village halls; and
   4) open, internally undivided small warehouses and production buildings.

Other qualifications cover the following levels of risk:

Intermediate level competence/moderate fire risk premises

The following factors typically characterize intermediate fire risk premises.

a) Occupancy:
   1) medium occupancy level of up to 500 persons;
   2) temporary or transient residents; and
   3) occasional visitors unfamiliar with the premises layout.

b) Use:

1) common parts of multi-occupied private and commercial residences, hotels and boarding houses, shops and offices, multi-occupied offices in retail premises, commercial enterprises, and retail shopping centres with multi-tenanted areas;
2) general warehousing, manufacturing and production enterprises not engaged with dangerous goods storage or use;
3) most single- or two-storey general technical learning and educational premises; and
4) entertainment and licensed public entertainment venues with an audience size up; to 500.

Advance level competence/high-risk premises

The skills expected of a fire risk assessor at Advanced level are those of Foundation level and Intermediate level, together with buildings beyond these scopes.

3) Does the course align with BS 9792:2025 Fire risk assessment - Housing - Code of practice

This course is delivered using the principles in PAS 79-1 and is not specifically housing related. The same principles apply in BS 9792:2025.

4) Will I be qualified to undertake fire risk assessments after I have completed the course?

Whilst there is no legally required formal qualification for fire risk assessors, this course provides an entry level qualification that is recognised by the fire industry for low-risk premises.

5) Can I still undertake fire risk assessments of high-risk premises after I have completed the course?

The course will explain fire safety principles and the process required for the recognition of hazards and risk that form the basis for all levels of fire risk assessment. However, the course is limited to low-risk buildings, as listed in 2) above.

6) I am new to fire risk assessments; can I still enrol on the course? Are there any prerequisites?

There are no prerequisites for registration and completion of this qualification. However, candidates must be at least 18 years old and be able to demonstrate proficiency in core skills such as literacy, numeracy, and communication.

Candidates must also have access to the relevant environment, equipment, and materials to allow them to successfully gather the evidence requirements as detailed within this specification.

7) Can I undertake fire risk assessments in Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as England after I have completed the course?

Whist the England and Wales course provides the basic framework required to carry out a fire risk assessment, it does not cover the specific legislation applicable to Scotland and Northern Ireland. If candidates want to undertake assessments in these areas of the UK, they would need to apprise themselves with the different legislation, as applicable, or, for Scotland, attend our Scottish fire risk assessment course.

8) I am attending from Northern Ireland. Which course should I undertake?

It is strongly recommended that you attend the Scottish course, due to the similarities between the relevant legislation in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

If you book the Scottish course, you will receive a hard copy of the Scottish notes when attending the course. However, you can request an electronic copy of the Northern Ireland notes, which will be sent approximately one week before the course (any printing is your responsibility). You can then choose to take the assessment based on either Northern Ireland or Scottish legislation, and this must be selected at the time of booking.

If you book the English course, you will receive a hard copy of the English notes when attending the course. However, you can request an electronic copy of the Northern Ireland notes, which will be sent approximately one week before the course (any printing is your responsibility). You can then choose to take the assessment based on either Northern Ireland or English legislation, and this must be selected at the time of booking.

Qualification certificates, whether Level 3 or Level 6, do not refer to legislation, but CPD certificates do refer to the legislation of the assessment.

9) Can I just participate in the five-day element of the training and not take the qualification?

Yes, although the candidate must state this intention on their initial application; the candidate must apply to the standalone course route.

10) How many CPD hours is the in-person training?

You will receive 32 FIA and IFSM CPD hours for attending the in-person training.

11) What arrangements are there for candidates with special needs?

As a training provider, the Equality Act 2010 places a positive obligation on C.S. Todd & Associates (CSTA) to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that learners who are disabled (as defined in the Act) are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled learners. The duty arises in relation to any:

- service provision, criterion or practice
- physical features particular to the service
- provision of auxiliary aids or support.

Full consideration will be given to each adjustment to determine whether it:

- reduces or removes the disadvantage faced by the disabled individual; and
- it is reasonable for CSTA to make.

As part of our ongoing commitment, CSTA will undertake periodic reviews of agreed adjustments to ensure these remain suitable and have the continued required effect. The outcome of any review may be that the adjustment in place continues, is altered, or alternative adjustments are introduced.

12) Can I pay in instalments?

No. Full prepayment is required four weeks prior to the course commencement date.

13) Is the course part refundable if I only participate in the five days?

No. If you only intend to take part in the five-day course, this must be notified at the start of the application process as we have upfront registration costs per candidate.

14) Will this course be offered again?

C.S. Todd & Associates aim to run this course three to five times a year. Details can be found on our website, or by contacting us at training@cstodd.co.uk.

15) Is this course offered closer to where I live?

The in-person training element of this course will be based in Surrey or Edinburgh and is not offered remotely. Full venue details can be found on our website, or by contacting us at training@cstodd.co.uk.

16) How long before the course begins do I need to register?

Registration and payment of this course is required no later than four weeks prior to the course commencement date.

17) Will my qualification need to be updated?

No formal update of the qualification is required, although it is incumbent on the candidate to carry out regular CPD activities. The course will cover these activities and suggested methods of how to record this. There is a requirement to undertake regular re-assessments conducted by any professional bodies with which you may register.

18) What materials will I need to bring?

A hard copy of the course notes and presentation is provided, as well as a number of other training materials. You should bring black pens and a notebook.

19) How long do I have to complete the course?

Candidates have two years from the start date of the in-person training to complete the course and submit their portfolios of evidence. This is inclusive of the professional interview.

20) What happens if I am unsuccessful?

If you fail to meet the criteria on the assessment, you have the option to begin the referral process. During this process you will be offered a mentoring session with one of our assessors. Normally, this involves a discussion of around one to two hours, in which each section of the assessment is carefully considered. Following this process, the candidate is offered the opportunity to participate in a second assessment. If a referral takes place within the candidates portfolio of evidence, a further mentoring session can be provided to address any areas of misunderstanding.

Only two mentoring sessions are included within the fee of the course (these are delivered only if the assessors have advised one is required). If any additional mentoring is required, this is chargeable and will be quoted at the time of request.

21) How long is each class?

The in-person training starts at 9am each morning and finishes at approximately 5pm. A lunch break and refreshments will be provided throughout the day.

22) What is reflective learning?

Reflective learning is the practice of using the experiences that you have gained to further inform your future development.

It may involve applying your critical thinking skills to your past experiences and those on the course, which can help you identify what you can do to further improve your performance.

For this module you will be provided with a short assessment paper to complete in your own time. The final version will need to be submitted to training@cstodd.co.uk.

As standard, a paper version will be provided during the in-person training. However, an electronic version can be provided upon request by contacting training@cstodd.co.uk.

23) Do my fire risk assessments have to be completed using the PAS 79 template?

No. You are able to use a template of your choice as long as it covers all the required sections within a fire risk assessment. However, the PAS 79 templates are the industry standard and are endorsed by the NFCC. The PAS 79 templates are available to download, free, on our website (PAS-79 Templates - C. S. Todd & Associates)

24) What is a professional interview?

The professional interview is the final stage of your portfolio of evidence. This will be conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams.

The professional interview will be with one or two of our assessors and last a maximum of two hours. The discussion will assess your overall understanding of the concepts of legal, regulatory and enforcement practices, and the methods and practices to undertake a fire risk assessment within low-risk premises.

The professional interview will be recorded and transcribed, which will be stored on our system. The interview transcript will be stored for up to seven years, whereas the recording will be destroyed after one year. In addition, the transcript and recording could be subject to auditing by FireQual. Please note that you must have a working camera on the device that is used, and this must be switched on for the duration of the interview.

The assessor(s) will discuss your portfolio of evidence and go through the processes you used to undertake your fire risk assessments. The discussion will cover your decision-making process to contextualise your learning, which will allow you to demonstrate your full understanding of the fire risk assessment process. This may include questions relating to your written assessment, your decision-making process with regard to the submitted fire risk assessments and reflective learning document. Your discussion may include how you quantified risk and standards you have applied. It is suggested that you have copies of your course notes, the redacted fire risk assessments and your reflective learning document whilst you attend the professional interview.

If you attend the confirmed appointment and your camera or IT does not work, there will be a charge to reschedule the appointment. This will need paying prior to a new date being confirmed.

25) What should I redact before submitting my fire risk assessments?

We request you remove all personal information that will identify the building or the company/client. This will include names (this could include company names or titles as well as individual names), addresses, phone numbers and email addresses (if applicable).

26) Is there an appeals process?

If you are dissatisfied with an assessment outcome, you have the right of appeal. There are three stages to the appeal procedure, and each stage must be exhausted before proceeding to the next stage. You are advised to keep copies of all the documents used in the appeal procedure as it progresses.

For more information on the appeals process, please visit the policies section on our website.

Glossary of Terms

BS:	British Standard
CPD:	Continuing Professional Development
CSTA:	C.S. Todd & Associates Limited
FireQual:	Awarding organization providing nationally recognised regulated qualifications
HMO:	House in Multiple Occupation
NFCC:	National Fire Chiefs Council
PAS 79-1:2020:	Fire risk assessment. Premises other than housing. Code of practice.
PAS 79-2:2020:	Fire risk assessment. Housing. Code of practice.