



SUPPLIERCHECK® Review

Food Hygiene Standards

**Health Safety & Quality Control
International**

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Purpose

An **HSQC SupplierCheck** review may be commissioned directly by the 'Supplier' company, or indirectly by a third party as part of their 'Due Diligence' procedures. Either way, HSQC undertake to provide a service to both parties in accordance with Codex Standards

- * Review will apply the HSQC Standards in this document
- * Will be undertaken by experienced auditors
- * The scope of the review will be made clear in the review report. Normally this will include Food Safety (systems and implementation) and a Food Standards systems review.
- * If the review covers only some of the products or activities of the plant, this will also be recorded in the review report.
- * The outcome will be discussed at a 'Summary Meeting' at the end of the review.
- * Action points will be re-iterated and a time-scale agreed.
- * A written review report will be sent to the Supplier - this will highlight major and minor non conformances with the standard.

The HSQC standard covers the basic requirements for a Food Safety Management System.

- ✓ It helps organisations to achieve an effective integration of HACCP in their management system.
- ✓ It is applicable for all organisations in the food supply chain that can have an impact on the safety of food products. This includes food manufacturers, manufacturers of non food materials (like packaging materials and machines) and service providers (like cleaning and pest control organisations).
- ✓ Using this standard in the whole supply chain will help improve the safety of food and result in more effective management systems and a reduction of costs.
- ✓ The standard is unique in its risk based, supply chain approach.
- ✓ The Hazard and Risk analysis form the basis of the system and it enhances communication between supply chain partners
- ✓ The HSQC Food Standard assesses a level of hygiene in an organisation at a single point in time. Approval at either Green or Gold standard and the granting of a certificate does not imply that the organisation will maintain the standards at any other time.

Marking scheme and standards

NOT APPROVED –Major non conformances and or a total score below 70%

TEMPORARY (DATE) – More than 5 minor non conformances (no known hazards to health) which must be rectified with 3 months and or a score of 70% or over

GREEN (APPROVED) 5 or less Minor non conformities and or a total score of 80% or over

GOLD (APPROVED) No more than 2 Minor non conformities and a total score of 90% or over.

- * Major non conformance will be a significant breach of legal requirements or failure of process control leading to imminent risk.
- * Minor non conformance will have a lesser degree of risk or purely technical breaches of legal requirement not critical to safety.
- * 'Approval' must be reviewed at least annually. Although 'Approved Supplier' status may be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of HSQC or the client.

S1 Hazard Analysis, Quality System & Records

S1.1	Full documented Hazard Analysis	The basis of Food Safety system must be an adequately documented hazard analysis which must: 1. identify possibilities for contamination (microbial or foreign material), growth of bacteria or their survival. 2. set effective & practical controls, especially at Critical Points in the process. 3. describe effective methods of monitoring the controls 4. have action plans for default 5. include records of monitoring and default action 6. include procedures for handling known allergens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant inadequacies (especially in points 1-3) will be major non-compliance. • Small omissions in record keeping will be minor n/c • Implementation of the system is covered in sections 2-8, especially section 8.
S1.2	Documented Quality System (Policy & procedures)	In addition, there may be a documented safety policy and procedures covering all relevant parts of the business. For example based on ISO 9000.	(Subject to other issues being satisfactory, a formal quality system is not essential to 'approved supplier' status. Absence of any system would be minor n/c.)
S1.3	Quality management structure & responsibilities	Should be defined to include decision making authority. There should be evidence of adequate technical expertise in or available to the business.	See also 1.11
S1.4	Staff Training ~ Commensurate, planned, recorded	Must have training in principles of Food Safety commensurate with job. (Minimum standard usually equivalent to CIEH 'Basic' for any food handler. Suitable 'in-house' training may be acceptable).	Training may include 'instruction', but see also 7.9 (instruction) & 7.10 (supervision) Major n/c if no formal hygiene training for any staff.
S1.5	Traceability & recall (tested?)	There must be adequate systems of traceability and a documented product recall procedure. The latter must include an easily accessible, up to date, customer contact list.	Batch by batch lot marks preferred. But 'Best before end' of month is minor n/c only.
S1.6	Calibration of test equipment - food safety	Evidence of frequent calibration of test equipment used in food safety monitoring.	But evidence of infrequent calibration is minor n/c only. Evidence of grossly inaccurate equipment could be major n/c in S8 or 9.5

S1.7	Complaints handling & records	A procedure for recording complaints and dealing with them systematically to include rectification of unnecessary or persistent problems.	
S1.8	Compliance reports - food safety	The auditors will expect to see other review reports, including local authority EHO.	Default by other auditors (Inc. EHO) may be classed as major or minor n/c.
S1.9	Development (product & process)	Product and process development must be designed to produce a safe product.	i.e. expect some technical input. Level of n/c depends on nature of product & risk.
S1.10	Technical support ~ third party (Food RAs?)	Membership of Food Research Associations should be the norm for all but the smallest operations. Other third party back-up may be used (consultancy) but evidence of competence will be needed?	See also 1.3 Major n/c if total absence of any necessary resource. e.g. not necessary in fruit & veg. wholesaler. is necessary in dressed salad packer).
	Compliance will depend upon a suitable combination of in-house and external expertise appropriate to the process.		
S1.11	Lab. Testing ~ accredited	There should be arrangements for end product test using accredited facilities and test procedures. The range of tests should be appropriate to the product.	The primary process control should be based on HACCP. Lab. testing unlikely to be major n/c.
S1.12	Pest control contract	Using a competent contractor, with frequency of surveys appropriate to the risk inherent in the business.	
S1.13	Product specs. current & adequate	Raw materials, formulation, process and end product should all be detailed. Specs must be communicated/agreed with purchaser as appropriate. Must be kept up to date. Ad hoc amendments by unauthorised staff must not be allowed. There should be effective document control to communicate changes.	
S1.14	Suitable assessment of shelf life	Must be systematic and must verify safety. Must relate to 'typical' field conditions. Routinely reviewed.	Major n/c only with respect to 'Use By' dates. Unsystematic assessment of Best Before dates is minor n/c.

Purchased Product

S1.15	Supplier review procedure	Must have systems appropriate to product. A business purchasing 'high risk' ingredients for product assembly (sandwiches?) or wholesale supply (soft cheese, deli) will be expected to place particular emphasis on supplier control procedures including known allergens	<i>Will be major n/c only in situations where a major CCP (e.g. cooking) is done by the supplier. Must also have regard for the relative size of buyer/seller.</i>
S1.16	Raw material specs. and conformance	Adequate specs. communicated and agreed with supplier. Sufficient checks/sampling of deliveries.	<i>Ditto</i>
S1.17	Clear sampling and reject criteria for RM.	Sampling protocols & action levels fixed communicated to 'goods in' staff.	<i>Ditto</i>
S1.18	Title to goods?	<i>Different responsibilities may apply where a distributor or processor does not take title to the goods.</i>	<i>[Point of information only. Non-compliance not applicable.]</i>

In the following sections S1 - S9 compliance or level of non-compliance must be a matter of judgement. It will depend upon the nature of the process as well as the default. The criterion must be the risk.

S2 Unit Fabric & Design

S2.1	Structure of suitable materials, in good repair and easy to clean.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Materials and construction appropriate to the nature of the operation.* Well defined site boundary* Good standards of repair and maintenance.* Redundant equipment removed from production areas
S2.2	Layout must allow access for cleaning and good production flow.	Layout and design must allow effective cleaning.
S2.3	Product flow avoids cross contamination	Cross contamination hazards must be avoided. For 'High Risk' products, strict segregation is the standard.
S2.4	Cleaning schedules?	All areas of the plant must have planned cleaning schedules. Where necessary, this must include disinfection.
S2.5	Actually clean?	Evidence that cleaning schedules are followed. Specific monitoring to be demonstrated where appropriate.
S2.6	Pest, access restricted.	Entire fabric of the building must be adequately proofed against pests of all types. (See also 9.7 for pest controls)
S2.7	Services: Water supply	Adequate supplies of potable water for all uses including cleaning. (If non-potable supply provided for fire-fighting it must be clearly marked and never used for cleaning.)
S2.8	Air supply/ Ventilation	Air supply must be 'clean'. Avoiding risks of airborne contamination. Special arrangements (filters, positive pressure) may be needed in 'high care' areas. Suitable ventilation to remove excess heat, steam, etc.
S2.9	Lighting	Lighting to be adequate for the tasks done and to allow proper cleaning. In stores (especially cold stores) adequate lighting to allow labels to be read and to minimise 'picking' errors.
S2.10	Drainage	Effective drainage which presents no contamination hazard. Flow from 'clean' to 'dirty' areas.
S2.11	Waste removal, storage & disposal	Waste stored appropriately and taken from site frequently. Collection receptacles in production areas do not need lids. Storage bins do. Waste stores must be guarded against pests.

S2.12	Monitored internally	Regular internal review of standards by designated personnel.
S2.13	Controlled storage of cleaning materials.	Separate from food and secure, definitely NO decanting into other containers.

S3 Processing Equipment

S3.1	All equipment fit for purpose & effective	Equipment used in key process controls must be able to perform to the required standard, and do so consistently (both within a batch & between batches). Also able to cope with typical production volumes. For example cookers, refrigerated stores, rapid chillers.
S3.2	Equipment of suitable materials, in good repair and easy to clean.	Especially direct food contact equipment.
S3.3	Wooden equipment restricted to HSQC standard.	Wooden butchers blocks are permitted if kept in good condition. Wood also permitted in very low risk operations (bread bakeries, produce). Otherwise no wooden equipment or structures in rooms where open food is handled. Wooden pallets only for goods totally enclosed in packaging.
S3.4	All equipment clean & disinfected	Evidence of effective cleaning and disinfection, following a written schedule, and properly monitored.
S3.5	Maintenance planned	Equipment maintenance to be planned, not emergency only.
S3.6	Maintenance staff & procedures controlled.	All necessary precautions taken to avoid product contamination during & following maintenance activity. Especially FM hazards. Staff trained & supervised.
S3.7	Dedicated equipment & sinks	In most situations, it is essential to have separate sinks for hand wash, food washing and equipment wash.

S4 Transport

S4.1	Transport fit for purpose.	Should be suitably constructed. Should allow segregation of incompatible products if necessary
S4.2	Capable of maintaining product temperature.	Properly designed and equipped with fridge units and monitoring systems.
S4.3	Effective operating system, esp. at loading/unloading	Either chilled 'assembly' area between stores and vehicle or 'time out of temperature control' stricter limited. Vehicles pre-cooled. Similar disciplines for frozen transport. Operators trained. Also appropriate delivery procedures. Separation of goods where necessary.
S4.4	Effectively monitored	Should have automatic logging in vehicles delivering high risk chilled or frozen food. Adequate supervision of loading process.
S4.5	Cleaned to schedule	Vehicle cleaning must also be covered by a written schedule.

S5 Foreign Material Control*

S5.1	Sources of FM minimised	There should be clear exclusion policies. Must include glass, porcelain etc. (cups), personal effects and jewellery. Canning or bottling operations should invert before filling, preferably with air jet.
S5.2	Food protected	All food should be kept covered whenever practicable
S5.3	Equipment for FM removal / detection as appropriate.	Metal detection is expected in all processing units. Other systems (sieves, magnets, X-ray, optical, etc.) as appropriate to the product.

***Vegetarian product? Any potential meat contamination must be regarded as major FM. Lack of adequate control is a major non-compliance.**

S6 Non-conforming production

S6.1	Contingencies to segregate from main product stream	Any defective batch must be clearly marked and stored securely pending rectification, return, rework or disposal. Where possible, fault detection systems should be auto-reject (metal detect, pasteurisers, etc.)
S6.2	Feed-back loop to correct failure	Reasons for failure must be examined and action taken to reduce recurrence.

S7 Personnel

S7.1	Suitable dress code, all areas (inc. ALL 'visitors')	Appropriate to the operation. Should include hair covering where open food is handled. Visitors include office staff, drivers, managers, maintenance staff, buyers, etc. etc.
S7.2	Clothing clean	Regularly laundered, probably commercially except in very low risk operations. Frequency of change according to nature of the process.
S7.3	Special precautions (esp. footwear) in 'high care'	To restrict environmental contamination. If boot wash is used, measures must be taken to prevent a build up of contamination on brushes &/or in the 'cleaning' fluid. Protective gloves if used must be changed very frequently.
S7.4	Jewellery etc. excluded to HSQC criteria. Hair (beards) covered.	Sleeper earrings plus plain wedding band. No watches, brooches, etc. Pens etc. restricted in coat pockets.
S7.5	Pre-employment questionnaire	Must identify recent contact with food borne illness. (See 'Food Handlers - Fitness to Work' Department of Health.) Questionnaires should be scrutinised by competent person. Routine stool testing is not recommended.
S7.6	Duty to report illness communicated & understood.	Staff must be aware of their duty to report relevant illness or contact (e.g. household) with such. Ideally this should be a condition of employment and there should be frequent reminders.
S7.7	Exclusion of sick staff	Sick staff must be excluded from food areas. Preferably Medical clearance as fit to handle food before redeployment.
S7.8	Wounds covered, no food/drink in production rooms	Dressings used should be food industry standard. Easily visible and designed to trigger metal detectors.
S7.9	Staff instructed/awareness.	Must be instructed in fundamentals of personal hygiene on 'induction'. Must be instructed on the specific safety issues relevant to their own job.
S7.10	Staff supervised	Must be evidence that staff are adequately supervised

S8 Process controls - (reviewed)

[Hazards identified must be controlled where possible and especially at Critical Points. Critical Targets/Limits must be clearly established. There must be adequate monitoring. There must be contingencies & lines of authority to deal with non-compliance. Records must be kept.]

Temperatures: (Time/temperature relationship)

S8.1	Cooking/Heat processing	Critical Limits/Targets must be identified. These must represent a safe process. E.g. 70°C for 2 mins. or equivalent. Monitoring must take account of variation within a batch or between batches
S8.2	Chilled storage	Normally automatic logging should be the standard. Temperature sensors must be located to give meaningful read-outs.
S8.3	Transfers/thawing	Must be controlled to avoid growth hazards from time &/or temperature abuse.
S8.4	Cooling/freezing	Critical Limits/Targets must be identified. These must represent a safe process e.g. chill to 10°C in 4 hours. Loading must not exceed design capacity? Monitoring must take account of variation within a batch or between batches
S8.5	Cleaning & disinfection to schedule and monitored	Overview of cleaning and disinfection procedures. Do they achieve a production environment in which contamination hazards are controlled as far as possible.
S8.6	Personnel hygiene	Overview. Are contamination hazards from staff effectively controlled.
S8.7	Pests ~ routine monitoring & control	Pest control measures., precautionary controls, e.g. baits, EFKs. Review reports and action.
S8.8	Other process controls (e.g. sanitisation of product, packing, Aw, pH, etc.)	Product specific. If Safety relies upon other 'hurdles', evidence for their control and monitoring? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the specification guarantee a safe product?• Are there controls to achieve the spec?• Adequate monitor and test?
S8.9	End product test	Amount of end product test must be adequate for the process and use appropriate test methods properly calibrated. Both systems and results will be reviewed.
S8.10	Contamination by Allergens	Are production processes such that there can be no contamination with known allergens. Process controls must ensure that nuts and other allergens do not contaminate other food stuffs.

S9 Food Standards & Labelling legislation ~ (basic module)*

S9.1	'Home Authority' liaison on labelling and other standards issues	This is expected as standard. Contact reports should be available for examination.
S9.2	Product development targets legal compliance	Must have regard for compositional legislation or other industry guidelines. Composition must correlate to the labelling, esp. 'Name of Food', the listing of ingredients and the QUID and GM Foods declaration.
S9.3	Labelling: adequate expertise and proper 'sign-off' authorities	There must be adequate internal or external expertise to ensure accurate and legal food labelling.
S9.4	RM. specs. include standards criteria	Where appropriate, where it will have a bearing on the end product supplied to the Purchaser.
S9.5	RM. intake checks	Where composition/standard of RM. will impact on the end product. E.g. ham for sandwich preparation. Should be sufficient checks on the standard and the labelling.
S9.6	Internal process specs. - esp. proper document control	There must be systems to ensure batch formulation complies to specification. Spec. changes must be controlled.
S9.7	Process controls, esp. ingredient weigh-up, process loss or 'pick-up'	Controls to ensure batch adherence to specification by accurate ingredient weigh-up / metering procedures..
S9.8	Line & end product checks.	Should be suitable and sufficient to control key criteria.
S9.9	Feed back loop to rectify failure & control of non conforming product	Line checks must be used to adjust production parameters where necessary.
S9.10	Regular check weigh & other metrology. (accurate equipment)	There should be regular end product check weigh (volume?) as necessary using properly calibrated equipment.
S9.11	Allergens: Labelling	Labels must clearly define product ingredients and state the presence of known allergens

***This review provides a basic systems check for control of food standards, composition and labelling issues. It does not imply a detailed review of the composition and labelling of every product the responsibility for which remains with the supplier.**

We can provide more detailed advice on composition and labelling. Talk to us about your requirements on 08458 387 487

S10 Environmental Impact on the community

The scope of this Food Safety review does not include an Environmental Review and hence marks will not be deducted for individual non compliances in the following section. However if it is felt that no regard has been taken for environmental issues, marks will be deducted.

S10.1	Compliance with legal requirements	Must comply with the (Packaging Waste) Regulations 1997.
S10.2	Packaging Waste	Quantify annual packaging waste Repackaging where practical
S10.3	Transport	Fuel usage and emissions Use of electric batteries Include fork lift trucks Conversion to LPG where practical
S10.4	Refrigeration	Insulation Regular checks and maintenance on equipment Prevention of warm air ingress Temperature checks Refrigerated equipment
S10.5	Lighting and Equipment	Use of dual or quadruple circuits to save energy costs Maximum use of low energy lighting (sodium)
S10.6	Energy cost accounting	Monitoring of all accounts relating to electricity, gas, water and diesel.
S10.7	Internal Waste	Transfer of all internal waste to external wheeled bins. Maintenance of all bins in good condition
S10.8	Chemicals and effluent control	Use of correct sanitising/ cleaning chemicals to minimise environmental impact. Water authority trade effluent agreements

S11 Process Specific

1. To complete the review, industry specific issues may need to be examined in more detail.
2. Information on industry specific Codes that may apply should come from:
 - the pre-review questionnaire
 - general knowledge of the auditor

Examples may include:

- quasi statutory guides (e.g. recognised guides to the Food Safety (General food Hygiene) Regulations 1995
- Government guides e.g. MAFF guidance on control of Salmonella in poultry or eggs
- other industry guides e.g. Chilled Food Association 'Best practice' guides

SCORE PROTOCOL

SECTION	TITLE	MAX SCORE	ACTUAL
1.0	Hazard Analysis, Quality System and Records	10	
2.0	Unit Fabric and Design	10	
3.0	Processing Equipment	10	
4.0	Transport	10	
5.0	Foreign Material Control	10	
6.0	Non Conforming Production	10	
7.0	Personnel	10	
8.0	Process Controls	10	
9.0	Food Standards and Labelling	10	
10.0	Environmental Impact	10	
TOTAL			

Important

The HSQC review does not indicate, guarantee or imply that the premises to which it applies complies fully with UK Legislation or will continue to comply with UK Law at any period during the validity of the Certificate.