Schedules:
1 January to 31 December 2027

UKHSA Food and Water Microbiology External Quality Assessment Schemes

0006

We aim to meet all the dates in this document you will be advised as soon as possible if any changes have to be made.

Please contact us if you do not receive your samples within seven days of the listed dispatch dates

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STANDARD SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required Up to three sets of results can be reported
404	S0845 S0846	25/01/2027	05/03/2027	Presumptive *Bacillus cereus* enumeration Coagulase-positive staphylococci enumeration *Listeria* spp. (including *L. mono*) enumeration *Listeria monocytogenes* enumeration Aerobic colony count Coliform enumeration
406	S0849 S0850	08/03/2027	16/04/2027	*Listeria* spp. (including *L. mono*) detection *Listeria monocytogenes* detection *Salmonella* spp. detection *Clostridium perfringens* enumeration Sulphate-reducing *Clostridium* spp. Aerobic colony count *Escherichia coli* enumeration
408	S0853 S0854	10/05/2027	18/06/2027	*Campylobacter* spp. detection *Campylobacter* spp. enumeration *Escherichia coli* O157 detection *Salmonella* spp. detection Aerobic colony count *Enterobacteriaceae* enumeration
410	S0857 S0858	05/07/2027	13/08/2027	Presumptive *Bacillus cereus* enumeration Coagulase-positive staphylococci enumeration *Listeria* spp. (including *L. mono)* enumeration *Listeria monocytogenes* enumeration Aerobic colony count Coliform enumeration
412	S0861 S0862	13/09/2027	22/10/2027	*Cronobacter* spp. detection *Listeria* spp. (including *L. mono*) detection *Listeria monocytogenes* detection *Clostridium perfringens* enumeration Aerobic colony count *Escherichia coli* enumeration
414	S0865 S0866	08/11/2027	17/12/2027	*Campylobacter* spp. detection *Campylobacter* spp. enumeration *Escherichia coli* O157 detection *Salmonella* spp. detection Aerobic colony count *Enterobacteriaceae* enumeration *Yersinia enterocolitica*

Note for this scheme molecular methods can be used for pathogen examination or as a confirmation test

EUROPEAN MICROBIOLOGY LEGISLATION SCHEME

Regulation (EC) 2073/2005 Microbiological Criteria for Foodstuffs associated with Regulation (EC) 852/2004 and subsequent amendments

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Food category	Examinations and enumerations required
EFL78	EFL232 EFL233 EFL234	25/01/2027	26/02/2027	Miscellaneous	According to the Food Safety or Process Hygiene Criteria
EFL79	EFL235 EFL236 EFL237	10/05/2027	11/06/2027	Meat	
EFL80	EFL238 EFL239 EFL240	13/09/2027	15/10/2027	Dairy	
EFL81	EFL241 EFL242 EFL243	08/11/2027	10/12/2027	Ready to eat product	

NON-PATHOGEN SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required Up to three sets of results can be reported
NP085	NP0225 NP0226	25/01/2027	12/03/2027	*Pseudomonas* spp. Yeasts Moulds Coliforms *Enterobacteriaceae*
NP086	NP0227 NP0228	10/05/2027	25/06/2027	*Escherichia coli* Enterococci Lactic acid bacteria Aerobic colony count at 30°C
NP087	NP0229 NP0230	13/09/2027	29/10/2027	All the above enumerations are included for all samples. An option to register for PYM (*Pseudomonas* spp., yeasts and moulds only) is available

SHELLFISH SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required
SF085	SF0178 SF0179	08/03/2027	09/04/2027	*Escherichia coli* MPN *Salmonella* spp. detection
SF086	SF0180 SF0181	05/07/2027	06/08/2027	
SF087	SF0182 SF0183	08/11/2027	10/12/2027	

PATHOGENIC *VIBRIO* SCHEME

food and water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required
V077	V0194 V0195	08/03/2027	09/04/2027	Detection: *Vibrio cholerae* non-O1 and non-O139 strains *Vibrio vulnificus* Detection and enumeration: *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*
V078	V0196 V0197	05/07/2027	06/08/2027	
V079	V0198 V0199	08/11/2027	10/12/2027	

STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS ENTEROTOXIN SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations required
STA057	ST0113 ST0114	10/05/2027	11/06/2027	*Staphylococcus aureus* enterotoxin
STA058	ST0115 ST0116	13/09/2027	15/10/2027	

ENVIRONMENTAL SWAB SCHEME

environmental microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations required
ES44	ES0087 ES0088	08/03/2027	02/04/2027	***Enumeration of hygiene indicator organisms*** Aerobic colony count *Bacillus cereus* *Escherichia coli* *Enterobacteriaceae* *Listeria* spp.
ES45	ES0089 ES0090	10/05/2027	04/06/2027	Relevant pathogen relating to outbreak details as provided on the request form – note the list below is not exhaustive *Bacillus cereus* *Campylobacter* spp. Coagulase-positive staphylococci *Escherichia coli* O157 *Listeria monocytogenes* *Salmonella* spp.
ES46	ES0091 ES0092	13/09/2027	08/10/2027	***Enumeration of hygiene indicator organisms*** Aerobic colony count *Bacillus cereus* *Escherichia coli* *Enterobacteriaceae* *Listeria* spp.
ES47	ES0093 ES0094	08/11/2027	03/12/2027	Relevant pathogen relating to outbreak details as provided on the request form – note the list below is not exhaustive *Bacillus cereus* *Campylobacter* spp. Coagulase-positive staphylococci *Escherichia coli* O157 *Listeria monocytogenes* *Salmonella* spp.

SHIGA TOXIN-PRODUCING *ESCHERICHIA COLI* SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations required Samples can only be examined using molecular methods
STX21	STX041 STX042	25/01/2027	19/02/2027	Detection of the major virulence genes associated with *Escherichia coli* serogroups O157, O111, O26, O103, O145 and O104:H4 (STEC) Includes detection of *stx*-coding genes and the presence of the intimin-coding gene *eae*
STX22	STX043 STX044	05/07/2027	30/07/2027	

NOROVIRUS AND HEPATITIS A VIRUS SCHEME

(non accredited)

food and water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations required Samples can only be examined using molecular methods
NHV020	NHV0039 NHV0040	08/03/2027	09/04/2027	Detection of Norovirus GI and GII and Hepatitis A Virus Optional: Quantification of Norovirus GI and GII and Hepatitis A Virus
NHV021	NHV0041 NHV0042	08/11/2027	10/12/2027	

LEGIONELLA ISOLATION SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required per litre
G145	G145A G145B	04/01/2027	12/02/2027	Detection, enumeration and identification of *Legionella* spp.
G146	G146A G146B	12/04/2027	21/05/2027	
G147	G147A G147B	07/06/2027	16/07/2027	
G148	G148A G148B	11/10/2027	19/11/2027	

LEGIONELLA MOLECULAR SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2027

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required per litre Samples can only be examined using molecular methods
LM20	LM20A LM20B	15/02/2027	26/03/2027	Detection and quantification of *Legionella* spp.
LM21	LM21A LM21B	02/08/2027	10/09/2027	

RECREATIONAL AND SURFACE WATER SCHEME

water and environmental microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required *Salmonella* spp. per litre Colony count per 1mL All other counts are per 100mL
S133	S133A S133B	04/01/2027	05/02/2027	river, lake or stream waters: Coliform bacteria *Escherichia coli* Enterococci Faecal coliforms *Clostridium perfringens* *Salmonella* spp.
S134	S134A S134B	15/02/2027	19/03/2027	marine (bathing beach) waters: *Escherichia coli* Enterococci *Salmonella* spp.
S135	S135A S135B	12/04/2027	14/05/2027	swimming pool / hydrotherapy pool waters: Coagulase-positive staphylococci Coliform bacteria *Escherichia coli* Enterococci *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* Total staphylococci Colony count (37ºC/24 hours) Colony count (37ºC/48 hours)
S136	S136A S136B	07/06/2027	09/07/2027	river, lake or stream waters: Coliform bacteria *Escherichia coli* Enterococci Faecal coliform *Clostridium perfringens* *Salmonella* spp. detection
S137	S137A S137B	02/08/2027	03/09/2027	marine (bathing beach) waters: *Escherichia coli* Enterococci *Salmonella* spp.
S138	S138A S138B	11/10/2027	12/11/2027	swimming pool / hydrotherapy pool waters: Coagulase-positive staphylococci Coliform bacteria *Escherichia coli* Enterococci *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* Total staphylococci Colony count (37ºC/24 hours) Colony count (37ºC/48 hours)

DRINKING WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required Colony count per 1mL All other counts are per 100mL Up to three sets of results can be reported
W230	W230A W230B	04/01/2027	05/02/2027	Coliform bacteria *Escherichia coli* Enterococci *Clostridium perfringens* *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* Colony count (37ºC/48 hours) Colony count (22ºC/72 hours)
W231	W231A W231B	15/02/2027	19/03/2027	
W232	W232A W232B	12/04/2027	14/05/2027	
W233	W233A W233B	07/06/2027	09/07/2027	
W234	W234A W234B	02/08/2027	03/09/2027	
W235	W235A W235B	11/10/2027	12/11/2027	

BOTTLED AND MINERAL WATER SCHEME

water and food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required Sporulated sulphite-reducing anaerobes per 50mL Colony count per 1mL All other counts are per 250mL
BMW43	BMW43A BMW43B	04/01/2027	29/01/2027	Coliform bacteria *Escherichia coli* Enterococci *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* Sporulated sulphite-reducing anaerobes Colony count (37ºC/24 hours) Colony count (22ºC/72 hours)
BMW44	BMW44A BMW44B	12/04/2027	07/05/2027	
BMW45	BMW45A BMW45B	02/08/2027	27/08/2027	

WASTEWATER SCHEME
(non accredited)
water and environmental microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required *Salmonella* spp. per 1L SARS-CoV-2 per 1mL All other counts are per 100mL
WW004	WW004A WW004B	15/02/2027	19/03/2027	*Escherichia coli* Total coliforms Faecal coliforms Enterococci *Salmonella* spp. detection SARS-CoV-2 detection or enumeration
WW005	WW005A WW005B	02/08/2027	03/09/2027	

HOSPITAL WATERS

ENDOSCOPE RINSE WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required All counts are per 100mL Up to three sets of results can be reported
EW44	EW44A EW44B	04/01/2027	29/01/2027	Total viable counts (28ºC - 32ºC for 5 days) *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* Selected distribution: Yeasts/moulds (EW44)
EW45	EW45A EW45B	12/04/2027	07/05/2027	
EW46	EW46A EW46B	02/08/2027	27/08/2027	

MYCOBACTERIUM SPP. IN WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required All levels are per 100mL
MY030	MY030A MY030B	04/01/2027	12/03/2027	Heater cooler water
MY031	MY031A MY031B	12/04/2027	18/06/2027	Endoscope rinse water
MY032	MY032A MY032B	07/06/2027	13/08/2027	Heater cooler water
MY033	MY033A MY033B	11/10/2027	17/12/2027	Endoscope rinse water

HOSPITAL TAP WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required All counts are per 100mL Up to three sets of results can be reported
HTW38	HTW38A HTW38B	15/02/2027	12/03/2027	*Pseudomonas aeruginosa* Selected distribution: *Mycobacterium* spp. (HTW40)* *For this examination only result due by 17/12/2027
HTW39	HTW39A HTW39B	07/06/2027	02/07/2027	
HTW40	HTW40A HTW40B	11/10/2027	05/11/2027	

DIALYSIS WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required All counts are per mL Up to three sets of results can be reported
DW41	DW41A DW41B	15/02/2027	12/03/2027	Total viable counts (17ºC - 23ºC for 7 days)
DW42	DW42A DW42B	07/06/2027	02/07/2027	
DW43	DW43A DW43B	11/10/2027	05/11/2027	

HYDROTHERAPY POOL WATERS – Please select distributions S135 and/or S138 from Recreational and Surface Water Scheme (see page 8)