

HQC.S4:2025

Sampling and Laboratory Testing Scheme

For High-Risk and Critical Classifications



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1. Introduction

The HQC Sampling and Laboratory Testing Scheme has been designed to ensure consistency, accuracy, and compliance with Halal standards across applicable certified companies and their products.

This scheme establishes clear protocols for sampling, laboratory testing, and reporting, aligned with globally recognized Halal and quality management standards.
The aim is to safeguard Halal integrity while meeting customer expectations and regulatory requirements.

2. Scope

2.1 The HQC Sampling and Laboratory Testing Scheme applies to:

a) **Certified Companies**: All entities certified under HQC, particularly those classified as High-Risk or Critical.
b) **Auditors**: HQC auditors are responsible for verifying compliance during audits.
c) **Laboratories**: Accredited laboratories contracted for Halal-specific testing.
d) **Stakeholders**: Including regulatory authorities, consumers, and other partners relying on HQC certification for Halal assurance.

2.2 The primary objectives of this scheme are:

a) To ensure product compliance with Halal standards through accurate and validated testing methods.
b) To provide a transparent framework for sampling and testing, ensuring consistency across certified entities.
c) To verify the traceability and authenticity of raw materials and products.
d) To uphold consumer confidence in Halal-certified products.
e) To support HQC auditors and certified companies with clear guidance on laboratory requirements and processes.

3. References

Halal Standards:
OIC/SMIIC 2:2019 (Organization of Islamic Countries)
OIC/SMIIC 22:2021 (Organization of Islamic Countries)
GSO 2055-2:2021 (Gulf Region)
MS 2627:2017 (Malaysia)
SJPH Decree 20:2023 (Indonesia)

HQC Schemes:
HQC Halal Assurance Program Scheme
HQC Halal Service Providers Scheme
HQC Animal Slaughtering and Awareness Scheme

4. Approved Testing Methods

Testing should align with ISO/IEC 17025 and methods outlined in applicable Halal standards.

Analytical methods include:

a) **DNA Testing**: For species detection in gelatine and other products.

b) **HPLC (High-Performance Liquid Chromatography) and GC-MS (Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry)**: For alcohol content analysis.

c) **PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction):** For detecting porcine DNA or other animal species, particularly in products like gelatin.

d) **ELISA (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay):** For detecting animal-based derivatives.

e) **Water Permeability:** detecting water exposure **(**applicable mainly for the Indonesian/Malaysian market for cosmetic and personal care products; not always required).

5. Sampling Requirements

5.1 HQC-Specific Sampling Rules:

a) Sampling is mandatory only if a certified company falls under the **High-Risk** or **Critical** categories as per the **HQC Risk Classification Table.**

b) Certified companies are permitted to send selected samples directly to an accredited laboratory, provided they have a valid contract with the laboratory and ensure compliance with Halal integrity during the process (see Laboratory Requirements in the next clause).

5.2 Sampling Plan:

- Sampling is to be carried out during an on-site assessment.
- The recording of the sampling details is mentioned during audit reporting.

5.3 Sample Collection:

a) Conducted by an HQC auditor

b) An HQC lead auditor will determine the sample to be tested.

c) Representative samples may be taken from various production batches or lots.

d) All sample details (s) taken will be recorded in writing during reporting.

e) Tools, swabs, and containers must be clean and free from direct contamination.

5.4 Storage and Transport:

a) To maintain integrity, samples should be stored at appropriate temperatures (e.g., frozen, refrigerated).

b) Ensure labeling and traceability from the collection point to the laboratory.

6. Laboratory Requirements

6.1 Laboratories must:

a) Be accredited under ISO/IEC 17025 for relevant testing scopes.

b) Be accredited for the testing methods as specified in clause 4.

c) Be accredited by an accreditation body recognized by ILAC.

d) Ensure no cross-contamination with forbidden (Haram) substances.

6.2 The laboratory must provide:

a) A Certificate of Analysis (COA) detailing the test results, methods used, and a clear compliance statement.

7. Contracting Requirements

7.1 HQC recommends certified companies to have a contract with laboratories that:

a) Are accredited under ISO/IEC 17025 and recognized by a governmental authority or relevant body under ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) approval.

b) Do not necessarily need to be Halal-approved laboratories but must demonstrate compliance with Halal testing requirements through validated methods.

c) Expertise in testing methods for specific needs, such as animal DNA or protein detection and alcohol analysis, as specified in clause 3.

d) Provide timely and detailed reports.

7.2 HQC (any established office with accreditation) must have a form of contract or agreement with laboratories that:

a) Are accredited under ISO/IEC 17025 and recognized by a governmental authority or relevant body under ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation) approval.

b) Do not necessarily need to be Halal-approved laboratories but must demonstrate compliance with Halal testing requirements through validated methods.

e) Expertise in testing methods for specific needs, such as animal DNA or protein detection and alcohol analysis, as specified in clause 3.

c) Provide timely and detailed reports.

d) Are preferably located within the country of its legal registration.

8. Financial Responsibilities

Where applicable, the certified or audited company will bear all costs for sampling, laboratory testing, and reporting during each audit.

9. Reporting of Results

The following details must be available on each laboratory test result:

9.1 Identification of the Laboratory

a) Name and logo of the laboratory.

b) Accreditation details (e.g., ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation number and scope).

c) Contact information, including address, phone, and email.

9.2 Report Identification

a) Unique identification number (e.g., report or test reference number).

b) Date of issue of the report.

c) Identification of the version or revision number (if applicable).

9.3 Customer Information

a) Name and address of the client or entity that requested the testing.

b) Contact person (if applicable).

9.4 Sample Information

a) Detailed description of the sample tested (e.g., product name, batch/lot number, physical state, and condition upon receipt).

b) Unique sample identification code assigned by the laboratory.

c) Date of sample receipt and testing.

d) Storage and handling conditions prior to testing.

9.5 Test Details

a) Specific test methods used, with references to standards (e.g., ISO, ASTM, CAC, etc.).

b) Parameters tested (e.g., moisture content, DNA analysis, heavy metals, etc.).

c) Units of measurement (e.g., ppm, mg/kg, CFU/g).

d) Detection limits (LOD/LOQ) for the methods applied.

e) Whether the test is qualitative or quantitative.

9.6 Results

a) Clear presentation of results (e.g., tabular format or detailed findings).

b) Pass/fail criteria or conformity assessment if applicable.

c) Interpret results if requested by the client.

9.7 Approvals and Signatures

a) Name, title, and signature (or electronic equivalent) of the authorized person(s) approving the report.

b) Date of report approval.

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10. Reporting of Results

