

**Schedules and prices:
1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**

UKHSA Food and Water Microbiology External Quality Assessment Schemes



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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

**UK Health Security Agency
Food and Environmental Proficiency Testing Unit (FEPTU)**
61 Colindale Avenue
London
NW9 5EQ
United Kingdom

Tel: + 44 (0)20 8327 7119
Email : foodega@ukhsa.gov.uk
Website: www.feptu.org.uk

STANDARD SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required Up to three sets of results can be reported
384	S0805 S0806	12/05/2025	20/06/2025	<i>Campylobacter</i> spp. detection <i>Campylobacter</i> spp. enumeration <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157 detection <i>Salmonella</i> spp. detection Aerobic colony count <i>Enterobacteriaceae</i> enumeration
386	S0809 S0810	30/06/2025	08/08/2025	Presumptive <i>Bacillus cereus</i> enumeration Coagulase-positive staphylococci enumeration <i>Listeria</i> spp. (including <i>L. mono</i>) enumeration <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> enumeration Aerobic colony count Coliform enumeration
388	S0813 S0814	01/09/2025	10/10/2025	<i>Cronobacter</i> spp. detection <i>Listeria</i> spp. (including <i>L. mono</i>) detection <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> detection <i>Clostridium perfringens</i> enumeration Aerobic colony count <i>Escherichia coli</i> enumeration
390	S0817 S0818	03/11/2025	12/12/2025	<i>Campylobacter</i> spp. detection <i>Campylobacter</i> spp. enumeration <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157 detection <i>Salmonella</i> spp. detection Aerobic colony count <i>Enterobacteriaceae</i> enumeration <i>Yersinia enterocolitica</i>
392	S0821 S0822	26/01/2026	06/03/2026	Presumptive <i>Bacillus cereus</i> enumeration Coagulase-positive staphylococci enumeration <i>Listeria</i> spp. (including <i>L. mono</i>) enumeration <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> enumeration Aerobic colony count Coliform enumeration
394	S0825 S0826	09/03/2026	17/04/2026	<i>Listeria</i> spp. (including <i>L. mono</i>) detection <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> detection <i>Salmonella</i> spp. detection <i>Clostridium perfringens</i> enumeration Sulfite-reducing <i>Clostridium</i> spp. Aerobic colony count <i>Escherichia coli</i> enumeration

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

EUROPEAN FOOD 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 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Food category	Examinations and enumerations required
EFL71	EFL211 EFL212 EFL213	12/05/2025	13/06/2025	Meat	According to the Food Safety or Process Hygiene Criteria
EFL72	EFL214 EFL215 EFL216	01/09/2025	03/10/2025	Dairy	
EFL73	EFL217 EFL218 EFL219	03/11/2025	05/12/2025	Ready to eat product	
EFL74	EFL220 EFL221 EFL222	26/01/2026	27/02/2026	Miscellaneous	

NON-PATHOGEN SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required Up to three sets of results can be reported
NP080	NP0215 NP0216	12/05/2025	27/06/2025	<i>Pseudomonas</i> spp. Yeasts Moulds Coliforms
NP081	NP0217 NP0218	01/09/2025	17/10/2025	<i>Enterobacteriaceae</i> <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci Lactic acid bacteria Aerobic colony count at 30°C
NP082	NP0219 NP0220	26/01/2026	13/03/2026	All the above enumerations are included for all samples. An option to register for PYM (<i>Pseudomonas</i> spp., yeasts and moulds only) is available

SHELLFISH SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required
SF080	SF0168 SF0169	30/06/2025	01/08/2025	<i>Escherichia coli</i> MPN <i>Salmonella</i> spp. detection
SF081	SF0170 SF0171	03/11/2025	05/12/2025	
SF082	SF0172 SF0173	09/03/2026	10/04/2026	

PATHOGENIC *VIBRIO* SCHEME

food and water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required
V072	V0184 V0185	30/06/2025	01/08/2025	Detection: <i>Vibrio cholerae</i> non-O1 and non-O139 strains <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i>
V073	V0186 V0187	03/11/2025	05/12/2025	
V074	V0188 V0189	09/03/2026	10/04/2026	Detection and enumeration: <i>Vibrio parahaemolyticus</i>

STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS ENTEROTOXIN SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations required
STA053	ST0105 ST0106	12/05/2025	13/06/2025	<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> enterotoxin
STA054	ST0107 ST0108	01/09/2025	03/10/2025	

ENVIRONMENTAL SWAB SCHEME

environmental microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations required
ES37	ES0073 ES0074	12/05/2025	06/06/2025	Relevant pathogen relating to outbreak details as provided on the request form – note the list below is not exhaustive <i>Bacillus cereus</i> <i>Campylobacter</i> spp. Coagulase-positive staphylococci <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157 <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> <i>Salmonella</i> spp.
ES38	ES0075 ES0076	01/09/2025	26/09/2025	<u>Enumeration of hygiene indicator organisms</u> Aerobic colony count <i>Bacillus cereus</i> <i>Escherichia coli</i> <i>Enterobacteriaceae</i> <i>Listeria</i> spp.
ES39	ES0077 ES0078	03/11/2025	28/11/2025	Relevant pathogen relating to outbreak details as provided on the request form – note the list below is not exhaustive <i>Bacillus cereus</i> <i>Campylobacter</i> spp. Coagulase-positive staphylococci <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157 <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> <i>Salmonella</i> spp.
ES40	ES0079 ES0080	09/03/2026	03/04/2026	<u>Enumeration of hygiene indicator organisms</u> Aerobic colony count <i>Bacillus cereus</i> <i>Escherichia coli</i> <i>Enterobacteriaceae</i> <i>Listeria</i> spp.

SHIGA TOXIN-PRODUCING *ESCHERICHIA COLI* SCHEME

food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations required Samples can only be examined using molecular methods
STX18	STX035 STX036	30/06/2025	25/07/2025	Detection of the major virulence genes associated with <i>Escherichia coli</i> serogroups O157, O111, O26, O103, O145 and O104:H4 (STEC) Includes detection of <i>stx</i> -coding genes and the presence of the intimin-coding gene <i>eae</i>
STX19	STX037 STX038	26/01/2026	20/02/2026	

NOROVIRUS AND HEPATITIS A VIRUS SCHEME
(non accredited)

food and water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations required Samples can only be examined using molecular methods
NHV017	NHV0033 NHV0034	03/11/2025	05/12/2025	Detection of Norovirus GI and GII and Hepatitis A Virus
NHV018	NHV0035 NHV0036	09/03/2026	10/04/2026	Optional: Quantification of Norovirus GI and GII and Hepatitis A Virus

LEGIONELLA ISOLATION SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required per litre
G138	G138A G138B	07/04/2025	16/05/2025	Detection, enumeration and identification of <i>Legionella</i> spp.
G139	G139A G139B	02/06/2025	11/07/2025	
G140	G140A G140B	29/09/2025	07/11/2025	
G141	G141A G141B	05/01/2026	13/02/2026	

LEGIONELLA MOLECULAR SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required per litre Samples can only be examined using molecular methods
LM17	LM17A LM17B	28/07/2025	05/09/2025	Detection and quantification of <i>Legionella</i> spp.
LM18	LM18A LM18B	16/02/2026	27/03/2026	

RECREATIONAL AND SURFACE WATER SCHEME

water and environmental microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required <i>Salmonella</i> spp. per litre Colony count per 1mL All other counts are per 100mL
S123	S123A S123B	07/04/2025	09/05/2025	<u>swimming pool / hydrotherapy pool waters:</u> Coagulase-positive staphylococci Coliform bacteria <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> Total staphylococci Colony count (37°C/24 hours) Colony count (37°C/48 hours)
S124	S124A S124B	02/06/2025	04/07/2025	<u>river, lake or stream waters:</u> Coliform bacteria <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci Faecal coliform <i>Clostridium perfringens</i> <i>Salmonella</i> spp. detection
S125	S125A S125B	28/07/2025	29/08/2025	<u>marine (bathing beach) waters:</u> <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci <i>Salmonella</i> spp.
S126	S126A S126B	29/09/2025	31/10/2025	<u>swimming pool / hydrotherapy pool waters:</u> Coagulase-positive staphylococci Coliform bacteria <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> Total staphylococci Colony count (37°C/24 hours) Colony count (37°C/48 hours)
S127	S127A S127B	05/01/2026	06/02/2026	<u>river, lake or stream waters:</u> Coliform bacteria <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci Faecal coliforms <i>Clostridium perfringens</i> <i>Salmonella</i> spp.
S128	S128A S128B	16/02/2026	20/03/2026	<u>marine (bathing beach) waters:</u> <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci <i>Salmonella</i> spp.

DRINKING WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 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
W220	W220A W220B	07/04/2025	09/05/2025	Coliform bacteria <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci <i>Clostridium perfringens</i> <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> Colony count (37°C/48 hours) Colony count (22°C/72 hours)
W221	W221A W221B	02/06/2025	04/07/2025	
W222	W222A W222B	28/07/2025	29/08/2025	
W223	W223A W223B	29/09/2025	31/10/2025	
W224	W224A W224B	05/01/2026	06/02/2026	
W225	W225A W225B	16/02/2026	20/03/2026	

BOTTLED AND MINERAL WATER SCHEME

water and food microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 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
BMW38	BMW38A BMW38B	07/04/2025	02/05/2025	Coliform bacteria <i>Escherichia coli</i> Enterococci <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> Sporulated sulphite-reducing anaerobes Colony count (37°C/24 hours) Colony count (22°C/72 hours)
BMW39	BMW39A BMW39B	28/07/2025	22/08/2025	
BMW40	BMW40A BMW40B	05/01/2026	30/01/2026	

WASTEWATER SCHEME

(non accredited)

water and environmental microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Please note this scheme is being offered for one year to establish the demand – this will be reviewed once more information is known

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required Per 100mL unless otherwise specified
WW001	WW001A WW001B	28/07/2025	29/08/2025	<i>Escherichia coli</i> Total coliforms Enterococci
WW002	WW002A WW002B	16/02/2026	20/03/2026	<i>Salmonella</i> spp. per litre SARS-CoV-2 per 200mL

HOSPITAL WATERS

ENDOSCOPE RINSE WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 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
EW39	EW39A EW39B	07/04/2025	02/05/2025	Total viable counts (28°C - 32°C for 5 days) <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> Selected distribution: Yeasts/moulds (EW41)
EW40	EW40A EW40B	28/07/2025	22/08/2025	
EW41	EW41A EW41B	05/01/2026	30/01/2026	

MYCOBACTERIUM SPP. IN WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Distribution number	Sample numbers	Dispatch date	Date results due by	Examinations and enumerations required
				All levels are per 100mL
MY023	MY023A MY023B	07/04/2025	13/06/2025	Endoscope rinse water
MY024	MY024A MY024B	02/06/2025	08/08/2025	Heater cooler water
MY025	MY025A MY025B	29/09/2025	05/12/2025	Endoscope rinse water
MY026	MY026A MY026B	05/01/2026	13/03/2026	Heater cooler water

HOSPITAL TAP WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 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
HTW33	HTW33A HTW33B	02/06/2025	27/06/2025	<i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i>
HTW34	HTW34A HTW34B	29/09/2025	24/10/2025	
HTW35	HTW35A HTW35B	16/02/2026	13/03/2026	

DIALYSIS WATER SCHEME

water microbiology examinations

Sample schedule for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 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
DW36	DW36A DW36B	02/06/2025	27/06/2025	Total viable counts (17°C - 23°C for 7 days)
DW37	DW37A DW37B	29/09/2025	24/10/2025	
DW38	DW38A DW38B	16/02/2026	13/03/2026	

HYDROTHERAPY POOL WATERS – Please select distributions S123 and/or S126 from Recreational and Surface Water Scheme (see page 8)