

Service Level Agreement

These are the main points that constitute a Service Level Agreement between Nestlé Quality Assurance Centre York and our customers in relation to the provision of Microbiological testing for food safety and hygiene monitoring purposes and Chemistry testing for the purposes of Nutritional profiling.

This Service Level Agreement is valid from **06 December 2024**.

1. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: Nestlé Quality Assurance Centre York
Block 73
Haxby Road
York
North Yorkshire
YO31 8FY

Phone: +44 (0) 1904 602 289 (32289 from NUK)

Email: Customerservice.NQACYork@uk.nestle.com

Intranet site: [NQAC York](#)

2. SAMPLE SUBMISSION

Samples must be submitted by:

- Globe/SAP (where access is available)
- NesTMS (for R&D functions)
- Commercial Portal (for non-Globe customers)

In exceptional circumstances for any customer where the normal submission process above is not possible then testing can be requested via a laboratory specific submission form. The submission form must be emailed to NQAC York Customer Services prior to sample arrival and a physical copy included with the despatched samples:

- Chemistry submission form – download from our intranet [NQAC York](#)
- Microbiology submission form – download from our intranet [NQAC York](#)

Samples without the correct submission information will not be logged in until this is corrected. Customer Services will contact the customer on the day the error is found

in order to correct the issue. Where there is no response within 10 working days, samples will be disposed of.

Special Requests - Extremely urgent analyses and / or significantly increased submission volumes require consultation before these can be accepted.

Please contact NQAC York Customer Services to discuss your requirements prior to sending samples.

3. CHEMISTRY SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Please find below details on the following topics:

- [Chemistry analysis involving caffeine](#)
- [Chemistry analysis involving GOS](#)
- [Chemistry analysis involving Fructans](#)
- [Chemistry analysis of Insoluble Fibre](#)

3.1 Chemistry analysis involving caffeine

- Globe customers must send 2 separate samples for pure coffee Big 8 / caffeine analysis - one sample to NQAC York for Big 8 and a separate sample for caffeine analysis directly to another NQAC or an approved external laboratory. Both samples must be built under the same inspection lot in Globe.
- Non-Globe customers must send 2 separate samples for pure coffee Big 8 / caffeine analysis as one sample will be outsourced from NQAC York.

There will be a delay to this analysis if only one sample is sent.

3.2 Chemistry analysis involving GOS

The following additional requirements must be met before samples will be acknowledged and analysis started:

- For every sample submitted to NQAC York for GOS analysis, a sample of the GOS ingredient used in the production batch must also be supplied; 50g of GOS ingredient is required in a pot labelled with the batch number of the GOS ingredient and the physical sample numbers of the samples the ingredient relates to.
- A Certificate of Analysis stating the Vivinal GOS content of the ingredient supplied must also be provided.
Note - if GOS content is stated on a dry matter basis, the dry matter content of the ingredient must also be stated.

- If storage trials are being conducted over a longer period, a sample of GOS ingredient of the batch used in the stored product must also be kept for submission with each sample when removed from storage as detailed above.

This information should be submitted to NQAC York using the MS Form [here](#).

It must be clear which sample(s) the GOS ingredient and CoA refer(s) to.

3.3 Chemistry analysis involving Fructans

A. Fructan ingredients

To complete Fructans analysis and accurately calculate the fructan content (and thus total amount of fibre), details of the fructan ingredient(s) used in the submitted sample(s) are required:

- Please provide the brand name of the fructan ingredient, for example BeneoGR, BeneoP95, Frutalose L92. Exact brand names must be used to eliminate any misinterpretation.
- If two different types of Fructan ingredients are used in the recipe then please include the ratios between fructan ingredients (or the amounts added):

Example 1: 30% BeneoGR + 70% BeneoP95

Example 2: 0.78kg BeneoGR + 1.82kg BeneoP95 (calculated ratio would be 30%:70%)

- For GLOBE customers, this information must be included in the Inspection Lot Short Text. You will need to do this at the point of creating the GLOBE inspection lot (QA01).
- For submissions via Commercial Portal this information must be included in the “Sample Additional Information” field.
- For submissions made using the NQAC York Chemistry request form, enter the ingredient in the additional info section. Our request form will bring up a reminder of this process when selecting either of our fructan methods.

An updated list of fructan ingredients can be found in [Appendix A](#) at the end of this document.

If the ingredient information is NOT provided when the sample is received, the default factors will be used during calculation of the fructan content which can alter the result by up to 25%.

B. Fructan method

NQAC York offer 2 different fructan methods. The most appropriate method depends upon the respective fructan and sucrose content with some additional considerations detailed below:

- LI-00.581 HPAE chromatographic method (LOQ 0.2%)
- AOAC999.03(modified) enzymatic-spectrophotometric method (LOQ 0.5%)

Samples with Fructan content <= 0.5%:

- Select LI-00.581 for samples containing <0.7% sucrose.
- Select AOAC999.03(modified) >0.7% sucrose.

Samples containing between 18 and 40% Fructans (Fructans by Enzyme):

- Select AOAC999.03(modified) **AND** please inform Customer Services if the because the sample will require greater dilution at the start of the process.

Pure Chicory samples:

- Select LI-00.581
- If results are required to be reported as a “*percentage of dry matter*” you must also select Moisture test LM143. Please state this requirement in *Inspection Lot Short Text* if submitting via Globe, or in the *Additional info* section if submitting via the NQAC York submission form, or for submissions via Commercial Portal this information must be included in the “Instructions to Laboratory” field.
- If percentage of dry matter and moisture test is not requested, results will be reported in g/100g of the sample (as submitted).

Pure Fructan Ingredients:

- Select LI-00.581.
- If the manufacturer Certificate of Analysis details results as “*dry matter*” you must also select Moisture test LM143 (2g 4hr 102C). Please supply a copy of the Certificate of Analysis with submissions.
- Unless otherwise detailed results for Fructan ingredients will be as dry matter.

Please include the word “INGREDIENT” in the physical sample short text or inspection lot short text (Globe customer), Additional info (non-Globe customer) or in the “Sample Description” field (Commercial Portal) so we can ensure the correct process is used and minimise delays.

Samples containing guar gum:

- Select LI-00.581 if a sample also contains guar gum (this component causes interference in the chromatographic method).

3.4 Chemistry analysis of Insoluble Fibre

- If Insoluble Fibre is required you must also request Soluble Fibre and calculated Total Dietary Fibre.
- Please let us know if that fat content is >30% as this may mean a pre-defatting step is required. If this is not known, no pre defatting step will take place.

4. CONDITION OF SAMPLES

The condition of samples on arrival will be checked. The acceptance criteria are:

- Uniquely identified samples e.g. sample number/product description.
- Suitable / intact packaging.
- Appropriate temperature control e.g. ice packs with micro wet swabs to ensure temperature is maintained between 1 – 8C, insulated box and dry ice for frozen products.
- Stated time of sampling for swabs and water samples for micro analysis.
- Sealed samples or anaerobic or semi-anaerobic conditions for analysis of anaerobic bacteria.
- Sufficient quantity for analysis.

And for submission made using the request form:

- Hard-copy of the completed laboratory specific submission form (as previously emailed to Customer Services).

If there are issues with any of the above criteria then the customer will be informed.

5. ANALYTICAL METHODS, ACCREDITATION AND PRICE LIST

A list of the analytical methods and relevant prices is available on the [NQAC York intranet](#) or directly from Customer Services on request.

For any test not available in the above price list please contact Customer Services for advice.

Only those tests indicated with a '✓' have been accredited by UKAS to ISO17025. For other parameters please enquire at Customerservice.NQACYork@uk.nestle.com

A copy of NQAC York's UKAS ISO17025 accreditation certificate and current Schedule of Accreditation is available on request.

The current Schedule of Accreditation can also be viewed directly via [this link](#), or by searching for NQAC York lab number (2299) using the "Search Accredited Organisations" function on the [UKAS website](#).

A 5% tax mark-up will apply to all costs charged for work done for any part of the business sitting in a different legal entity from Nestle UK Ltd.

6. TURNAROUND TIME (TAT)

The target turnaround time (time from sample acknowledgement at NQAC to reporting of results), and any associated prioritisation, is based on the Inspection Type selected for each Inspection Lot and in the case of microbiology testing is also determined by the specific methods required.

TAT is measured per sample.

Other than exceptional circumstances the Chemistry department is staffed Monday to Friday and the Microbiology department is staffed Monday to Saturday.

6.1 TAT - Chemistry

	Standard TAT – 15 calendar days	Urgent TAT – 9 calendar days	Comments
Globe	Select inspection type “ZPRB” in Inspection Lot	Select inspection type “ZPRD” in Inspection Lot	For urgent TAT an additional premium of +50% of the standard analysis price will be applied for all requested parameters in the inspection lot.
Commercial Portal	Select Order shipping “Routine”	Select Order shipping “Rush”	
Non-Globe	Select standard (ZPRB) TAT on request form	Select Urgent (ZPRD) TAT on request form	

6.2 TAT - Microbiology

Microbiology Weekday Working

- Analysis will be started on the day of receipt at the laboratory (Monday – Friday), providing that samples arrive before 1pm. The exception to this is the coagulase positive Staphylococci detection method which will only be started Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday.
- Any sample due to be reported on a Sunday will be reported on the Monday before 12pm.
- Where **pooling of samples for Salmonella PCR analysis** is requested, samples must be received at the lab by 10:30 am to allow reporting of results by the close of the next working day.
- Where pooling for Salmonella by PCR analysis is requested, please contact NQAC York prior to sending to ensure suitable verification checks have been carried out per product/raw material type. Where individual sample analysis is required following a positive pooled result, please ensure the minimum sample amount sent allows for repeat testing of individual samples (e.g. 10 x 50 g product where 10 x 25 g product is to be initially pooled).

For circumstances where critical samples may be delayed and will arrive after 1pm, please contact NQAC York Customer Services prior to their arrival to discuss your needs.

Microbiology Weekend/Bank Holiday Working

For samples requiring analysis on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays, contact NQAC York Customer Services to discuss your requirements so the appropriate actions can be taken for in-house analysis or outsourcing.

NQAC York will endeavour to provide in-house analysis where possible to support exceptional urgent / crisis situations such as out of stock product, or unplanned line outages.

There will be an additional charge for non-routine weekend working.

- Contact NQAC York Customer Services no later than 4pm on the Thursday before the weekend of analysis and provide details of the number of samples, a brief description of each and the tests required.
- NQAC York Customer Services will send confirmation that your requirements can be met, either through in-house testing or outsourcing to an approved external laboratory.
- Make arrangements for the samples to arrive at NQAC York no later than 10am (or collection at an agreed location and time by the external laboratory).

If samples are not received at NQAC York before 10am you will be contacted by NQAC staff to understand the cause of the delay and to discuss the implications of this. We will endeavour to accommodate any delays to ensure business critical testing is completed.

If this is not possible, or if delayed samples are not business critical, then testing will commence the next working weekday.

For longer bank holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, specific communications regarding laboratory opening/closing times will be made, requesting customers to confirm required analysis during these periods.

7. SAMPLE DELIVERY

NQAC York is situated on the Nestle UK Ltd - York site.

Please use the following address for all deliveries:

Customer Services Team
Nestlé Quality Assurance Centre
Block 73
Haxby Road
York
YO31 8FY
United Kingdom

For more accurate location, [What3Words:///dreams.catch.blank](https://www.what3words.com/dreams.catch.blank) takes you directly to the NQAC entrance.

8. SAMPLE RETENTION

- On completion of Chemistry analysis samples will be kept for at least three weeks, up to a maximum of four weeks.

- Ambient and frozen samples submitted into the Microbiology laboratory for analysis will be retained for seven days. Chilled samples (e.g. canteen samples) will not be retained unless by prior arrangement. Investigative samples will be stored until investigation is concluded; where chilled, these samples will be stored frozen.

Sample retention may be affected by the stability of the sample or the quantity of sample submitted for testing.

If extended sample retention is required please contact NQAC York Customer Services prior to sample submission to make specific arrangements. Such extended storage, if possible, may result in additional charges to the customer.

9. OUTSOURCING

As a general rule, NQAC York carries out all the analyses and examinations requested of it. However, there are instances when analyses may be sent to another laboratory - for example due to heavy workload, need for further expertise, or when items of equipment necessary for that testing are out of service.

- Subcontracting is done in accordance with the relevant NQAC York Quality procedures.
- Samples may be subcontracted to another NQAC laboratory or to Nestle approved external laboratories.
- Any major changes or incidents which give rise to sub-contracted work will be communicated to the customer in advance, preferably in writing. We do not ask for your permission each time we outsource an analysis, but we shall indicate this on the report.
- Outsourcing will have no impact on the cost and should have no or limited impact on the TAT. We will inform you of any exceptions.

10. REPORTING OF RESULTS

Reporting is done in accordance with the relevant NQAC York Quality procedures:

- For Globe customers analysis results will be transmitted via SAP, and for non-Globe customer by PDF report.
- PDF reports can be provided to Globe customers upon request.
- Results of microbial identification or Salmonella typing are sent in a PDF report.
- For both Chemistry and Microbiology departments results are reported as 'Out of Spec' if the result is outside the tolerance provided. This does not take into account the uncertainty of measurement, which is available on request.
- The Microbiology department will inform customers about out of specification results via email for the following sample types: First Offs, Line samples, Ingredients and Finished Products. Supplementary telephone calls are

provided where requested. Detection of Salmonella will always be telephoned to the corresponding Quality Manager.

If you require any specific reporting needs, e.g. urgent results, changes to who the results should be sent to, changes to how OOS results should be reported or what OOS result should be reported, please contact NQAC York Customer Services to discuss your requirements.

11. INVOICING

All costs related to Chemistry and Microbiology testing will be charged monthly (for all completed samples) using details (contact names, address, cost centre, purchase order number, Icoform receiver) provided by the customer.

- Nestle UK factories will be charged via a cost centre and GL account code via the K2 tool.
- Nestle UK Co-Man / licensees etc. will be charged via a monthly invoice using the details provided by the Co-Man/Licensee unless the Nestle Division responsible for the Co-man has agreed to pay the cost which will then be charged as above.

In order to send a monthly invoice all Co-Man/Licensees need to be set up with a customer number in Globe. If they are not already set up with a customer number and for GB11 (Nestle UK) then they will be required to complete a Customer New Account Form which is submitted via the Sales Admin portal before any analysis is sent.

All costs for Nestle Overseas Factories will be charged via the Icoform process which is the Nestle intercompany invoicing process.

The Requestor of the analysis will receive the Icoform for payment unless they state an alternative name in the Icoform Receiver box on the Chemistry request form.

- Costs for Nestle Overseas Factories 3rd party Co-Man/licensees etc can be charged back to a Nestle Factory requesting testing on their behalf. The Nestle factory will then need to recharge the cost internally via their own market. If this approach is not possible then overseas Non-Nestle 3rd party Co-man/Licensees can be set up for the UK market in Globe in order to invoice them directly. As above a Customer New Account Form must be completed for either creation or extension of the customer number to GB11.

12. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND DOCUMENTATION

All services provided by the Nestlé Quality Assurance Centre in York (NQAC York) will be performed in accordance with the NQAC York Quality Assurance Procedures.

- The customer must notify NQAC York of specific documentation requirements prior to the start of any services. Note that not all requests for specific

documentation requirements can be accommodated, and are subject to review and approval by NQAC York, prior to the start of any services.

- NQAC York maintains analytical data for the current year plus an additional three years minimum after testing is complete. Copies of pertinent raw data will be provided at the customer's request. NQAC York reserves the right to charge for extended storage and copies of raw data, duplicate reports, or other special reporting requirements.

13. CONFIDENTIALITY

All services, analyses and reports are provided to customers on a confidential basis. No reference to the services, the analyses, the results, NQAC York or Nestlé UK in any form of advertising, news release or other public announcement may be made without prior written authorisation from NQAC York, unless obtaining authorisation would unduly delay the release of confidential information required by law. If confidential information is legally required to be released either by NQAC York or a customer of NQAC York then the other party shall be notified of the information provided, unless such notification is prohibited by law.

APPENDIX A – FRUCTAN INGREDIENT INFORMATION

Ingredient type	Mean chain average length (DP)	“k”	“f”
Inulin Beneo GR Chicory Raftiline GR & Raftiline ST	9.5	0.910	1.01
Beneo P95, Orafti P95 Raftilose P95	4.2	0.924	1.25
Prebio: 70% Beneo P95 + 30% Beneo GR	5.8	0.920	1.18
Frutalose L92	4.2	0.924	1.200
Frutafit IQ Original	11.3	0.909	1.010
Fibruline Instant	11.8	0.909	1.010
Beneo HSI	5.6	0.918	1.07
Beneo LGI	8.8	0.911	1.01
Beneo HP Gel	25	0.904	1.00
Beneo L90 Orafti L90	4.0 4.5	0.925	1.21
Synergy 1	6.9	0.914	1.08
Fibrulose F97	8.8	0.911	1.04
Frutafit F1	6.0	0.917	1.09
Actilight 950p	3.4	0.929	1.01

Organic FOS-P [Supplier – CREMAR]	3.2	0.931	1.014
Eurologo FOS P95S(Organic) [Supplier – QHT]	3.5	0.929	1.006
Fossence [Supplier – TATA]	3.4	0.929	1.007
Unknown fructan ingredient (default)	-	0.910	1.00