

Terms and Conditions of Participation

1. Samples distributed as part of the Campden Microbiology Proficiency Scheme (CMPS) may contain microbiological pathogens of Hazard Groups 1 and 2 as defined by the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens (Categorisation of pathogens according to hazard and categories of containment. 4th edition, London: HMSO, 1995). Members must ensure that their laboratory facilities and expertise are adequate to ensure the safe handling of these organisms during their participation in the CMPS in order with all applicable health and safety legislation, regulations or otherwise.
2. Membership of the CMPS is for a period of 12 months. A member may withdraw from the CMPS Scheme at any time on giving 30 days' written notice to Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd, but this shall not entitle the member to a refund in respect of any fees paid.
3. Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd. reserves the right to decline renewal of membership at the end of each annual period or to change the annual fee, but, in either case, will give the member at least 2 months' written notice of its intention to do so.
4. Membership to the CMPS is offered with the understanding that members will carry out analyses in the same way as their routine samples. This will enable the laboratory to independently assess its ability to produce accurate test results.
5. In the event of a member failing to pay the membership fee by the due date Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd. reserves the right to terminate, without notice, the membership of that member without prejudice to any claim for payment for samples already provided.
6. All reports, and the data they contain, issued by the CMPS are Copyright and may not be published in any form without permission of Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd.
7. All members' results will be treated as confidential.
8. Members must inform the CMPS team if their test material has not arrived within 7 working days of the despatch date. CMPS shall have no liability for replacement of the test material if the member has not informed CMPS that the test material has not arrived within these timescales.
9. In the unlikely event of test material arriving damaged or incorrect when delivered, the member must inform the CMPS team immediately. It is at CMPS sole discretion to replace the test materials or refund the goods.
10. Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd. shall not be liable in any circumstances for indirect or consequential loss howsoever caused, including, without limitation, loss of anticipated profits, goodwill, reputation, business receipts or contracts, or losses or expenses resulting from third party claims.
11. Members of CMPS have entire responsibility and liability for all samples distributed to them under the Scheme and all activities carried out by them or any third party in relation to the samples from the time of delivery of the samples.
12. Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd. warrants that all work carried out by it in relation to the Scheme will be carried out using all reasonable care and skill. All conditions, terms and warranties implied by common law, statute or otherwise are, to the extent permitted by law, hereby excluded.
13. Members shall abide by the Campden BRI Standard Terms and Conditions of contract as amended from time to time ("Standard Terms"), a full copy can be provided on request or can be downloaded from our website <http://www.campdenbri.co.uk/campdenbri/terms.pdf>. If there is an inconsistency between any of these conditions and the provisions of the Campden BRI Standard Terms and Conditions, these conditions shall prevail.
14. The liability of Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd. to the member in any 12 month period resulting from or in connection with the provision of the Campden Microbiology Proficiency Scheme by Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd. to the member shall under no circumstances exceed the amount of the annual fee paid by the member in respect of that 12 month period.
15. These conditions shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English law and Campden BRI (Chipping Campden) Ltd. and the member submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. How can the CMPS benefit my laboratory?

A. Participation in an external proficiency programme is an essential part of laboratory quality assurance. It is not possible for a laboratory to independently adequately assess their ability to produce accurate and precise test results. Participating in the CMPS scheme will help demonstrate that staff within the laboratory are proficient in microbiological techniques and methods.

Q. Some proficiency schemes are complicated, how straightforward is CMPS?

A. It couldn't be easier! Simply:

- (a) select which type of test material that you would like to receive (Intermediate or Advanced) - this will reflect the tests/methods you do in your laboratory;
- (b) select the frequency of receipt of test material; and then
- (c) carry out the tests that you wish to cover.

Because the test material contains a 'cocktail' of micro-organisms you don't have to worry about choosing numerous samples at different points of the year.

Q. Can I join at any point during the year?

A. Yes. You can join the scheme at any time during the year, the membership is for a period of 12 months from the date of joining.

Q. What if I require an option that is not included on the information sheet?

A. Please contact the CMPS team. We will be happy to discuss the possibilities of a schedule especially tailored for your laboratory's needs.

Q. When are the distribution dates?

A. February, April, June, August, October and December.

Q. How do I choose the right type of test material for my laboratory?

A. Two types of test material are available: 'Intermediate' contains a matrix of spoilage and pathogenic microorganisms and 'Advanced' contains the same as the Intermediate test material plus major pathogens e.g. *Salmonella*, *Listeria* and *Campylobacter* sp. (The Advanced test material should only be requested if you have a pathogen testing facility).

Q. What tests do I need to do?

A. You only need to perform the analyses applicable to your laboratory.

Q. In what format is the test material provided?

A. The test material takes the form of a freeze-dried matrix in an 'easy to open' vial.

Q. How will I receive my CMPS test material?

A. You will receive your sample in packaging compliant with internationally accepted regulations.

Q. How do I handle my CMPS test material?

A. Vials must be opened and used by, or under the direct supervision of, person(s) trained and competent in microbiological techniques, and in laboratories meeting the containment requirements for ACDP Category 2 organisms.

FAQs continued

Q. How do I store my CMPS test material?

A. In a refrigerator at 2-8° C.

Q. How soon do I need to return my results.

A. You will have 3 weeks from the despatch date to return the results.

Q. How soon will I receive the analysis of my results?

A. The results analysis is usually returned within 3 weeks of the deadline date.

Q. What will my report consist of?

A. Your laboratory will receive a detailed and precise report explaining the results. Included with the report are charts representing your enumeration results compared to other laboratories plus statistical information e.g. z-scores, assigned value, mean etc.

Q. Why does CMPS not supply their test microorganisms in real food/water matrices?

A. In order to ensure that all proficiency test material is sufficiently stable and homogenous for each participating laboratory, it is necessary to supply test material in a freeze-dried state. This adequately simulates food samples.

Q. What additional technical support is provided?

A. The scheme can provide full support including advice and 'trouble-shooting' utilising the experience and knowledge of staff of the Campden BRI Microbiology Department.

Q. Is the CMPS accredited?

A. Yes. We follow the strict guidelines as laid down by the ISO 9001 Quality Management Standard.

Q. Are my CMPS results confidential?

A. Yes. All clients' results are treated as confidential and would not (unless agreed by the participant) be disclosed to a third party.

Q. How are my results assessed?

A. An 'assigned value' is established for each microorganism under test. Z-scores are calculated as differences between the laboratory's results and the assigned value, divided by the 'standard deviation for proficiency assessment'. Performance is then assessed using the Z-score thus:

- ≤ 2 is 'Satisfactory';
- 2-3 is 'Marginal'; and
- > 3 is Unsatisfactory.

Q. Can you 'trend' results for clients as an extra service?

A. Yes. If required, we can trend clients results for them. Sufficient results would be needed before we could offer this service.