



REAL Biofertiliser Certification Scheme

Application Guidance Notes for Laboratories

These Guidance Notes explain the steps and procedure for assessing applications for providing PAS110 digestate testing under the REAL Biofertiliser Certification Scheme (BCS).

1. Applicants complete an Application Form for becoming a laboratory appointed by REAL BCS, and return it to georgia@realschemes.org.uk. Applicants should provide with the Application Form an organogram setting out the names and roles of people involved in handling digestate samples on behalf of the Applicant (including sub-contractors).
2. REAL acknowledges receipt of the Application Form and reviews the information provided.
3. REAL decides whether a meeting is required to discuss arrangements between the Applicant and any sub-contractors and whether additional audits of any sub-contractors are required.
4. REAL discusses the Application with the BCS laboratory auditor.
5. Following the review of the Application, any meeting (if necessary) and discussions with the BCS laboratory auditor, REAL notifies Applicants whether they qualify for an initial assessment.
6. The BCS independent auditor contacts qualifying Applicants to organise the initial assessment.
7. Qualifying Applicants are sent three digestate samples for full PAS110 testing in advance of the initial assessment.
8. The Applicant pays the Application Fees (see below).
9. The BCS laboratory auditor carries out the initial assessment consisting of a one day site visit and involving an assessment of:
 - a. The laboratory quality management system (QMS)
 - b. Technical and support staff competency (through discussion and method witnessing)
 - c. Recent and relevant digestate results using PAS110 methods
 - d. Testing equipment
 - e. Test and storage facility capacity
10. The BCS laboratory auditor carries out initial assessments of the sub-contractors (if required).
11. The auditor provides a report to REAL within 2 weeks from the initial assessment of the Applicant (and any sub-contractors if relevant), with recommendation about the appointment.

12. A successful Applicant will be appointed for digestate testing under the BCS. The initial appointment is for a period of six months. If continued, the appointment will be renewed on an annual basis subject to passing a full annual audit.

Application Fees and Costs

- a. **Standard Fee:** Applicants are required to pay a Standard Fee of £1,000.00 plus VAT in respect of the initial assessment. Payment of the Standard Fee must be received by REAL before the date of the initial assessment.
- b. **Additional Fee:** The Standard Fee is based on the assumption that all PAS 110 test methods are carried out at the Laboratory. REAL will charge an Additional Fee to recover the cost associated with auditing any sub-contracted laboratories, if this is required. Where the applicant sub-contracts tests to another BCS Appointed Laboratory, a separate audit of the sub-contractor may not be required. The need to carry out further audits will be discussed at the meeting referred to a clause 5 above. The amount of any Additional Fee will be assessed on a case by case basis. If a further audit or audits are required. Applicants will be informed of the amount of any Additional Fee in advance. Payment of the Additional Fee must be received by REAL prior to the audit of the sub contracted laboratory.
- c. All Application Fees are non-refundable and are due and payable whether or not the application is successful.
- d. **Costs:** In addition to the Application Fees, the applicant will cover the handling and analytical costs of the three digestate samples referred to at clause 6 above.

Full details of the BCS and the contract terms and conditions can be found [HERE](#).