CONF-IDENT

Proficiency Testing scheme for confirmation and identification of microorganisms

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Record of issue status and modifications

ISSUE	ISSUE DATE	DETAILS	AUTHORISED BY
1	Sept 2018	First issue	T.Noblett
2	March 2019	Add further sample types	T.Noblett
3	Aug 2019	Addition of new sample types Added UKAS logo	R.Smith A McCarthy
4	Nov 2019	Updated Portal details	T.Noblett
5	Sept 2020	Removed fax number and hard copy report info	A McCarthy
6	July 2021	Updated email address and UKAS logo. Removed samples 04 and 05. New sample 08	A.Collins T.Noblett
7	Sept 2022	Amended sample descriptions	T.Noblett

Notes:
Where this document has been translated, the English version shall remain the definitive version

Scheme Aims and Organisation
There are a wide range of methods available for carrying out microbial identification, from the more traditional based on biochemistry and immunology, to newer methods based on genomic and molecular techniques. The primary aim of the CONF-IDENT scheme is to enable laboratories performing confirmation and identification of microorganisms to monitor their performance and compare it with that of their peers. The CONF-IDENT scheme also aims to provide information to participants on technical issues and methodologies relating to identification and confirmation of microbiological cultures.

Further information about the scheme, including test material availability, round despatch dates and reporting deadlines, are available on the current CONF-IDENT application form and on the LGC website www.lgcstandards.com.

Test Materials
Details of test materials are given in Appendix A. Test material batches are tested for homogeneity for at least one test parameter where deemed appropriate. Details of homogeneity tests performed and results are given in the Scheme Reports.

Some aspects of the scheme, such as test material production, homogeneity testing and stability assessment, can from time to time be subcontracted. When subcontracting occurs, it is placed with a competent subcontractor and LGC is responsible for this work. The planning of the scheme, the evaluation of performance and the authorisation of the final report will never be subcontracted.

Statistical Analysis
Information on the statistics used can be found in the General Protocol and in the Scheme Report. Methods for determining assigned values and the values for SDPA used for individual samples are given in Appendix A.

Methods
Participants may use any appropriate method, but should use their routine testing method, so that the results of the PT scheme accurately reflect performance in routine testing. However, the PT scheme does allow the reporting of results from more than one method and as such, may be used to compare or validate different methods. In order to help with assessment of results, please report details of the method(s) used when requested

Results and Reports
PT scheme results are returned through our electronic reporting software, PORTAL, full instructions for which are provided by email.

Scheme reports should be available on the website within 10 working days of round closure. Participants will be emailed a link to the report when it is available.

APPENDIX A - Description of abbreviations used

Assigned Value (AV)

The assigned value may be derived in the following ways:

- From the robust mean (median) of participant results (RMean). This is the median of participant results after the removal of test results that are inappropriate for statistical evaluation, e.g. miscalculations, transpositions and other gross errors. Generally, the assigned value will be set using results from all methods, unless the measurement is considered method-dependant, in which case the assigned value will be set by method as illustrated in the report tables.
  For some analytes, where there is a recognised reference method for that type of measurement, this may be used as the assigned value for a particular analyte i.e. it would be applied to results obtained by any method.

  Traceability: Assigned values which are derived from the participant results, or a sub-set of the results are not traceable to an international measurement standard. The uncertainty of assigned values derived in this way is estimated from the participant results, according to ISO 13528.

- From a formulation value (Formulation). This denotes the use of an assigned value derived from sample preparation details, where known and exact quantities of analyte have been used to prepare the sample.

  Traceability: Assigned values calculated from the formulation of the test sample are traceable, via an unbroken metrological traceability chain, to an international measurement standard. The measurement uncertainty of the assigned value is calculated using the contributions from each calibration in the traceability chain.

- From a qualitative formulation (Qual Form). This applies to qualitative tests where the assigned value is simply based on the presence/absence of the analyte in the test material.

  Traceability: Assigned values calculated from the qualitative formulation of the test sample are traceable to a certified reference standard or a microbiological reference strain.

- From expert labs (Expert). The assigned value for the analyte is provided by an ‘expert’ laboratory.

  Traceability: Assigned values provided by an ‘expert’ laboratory may be traceable to an international measurement standard, according to the laboratory and the method used. The uncertainty of measurement for an assigned value produced in this way will be provided by the laboratory undertaking the analysis. Details of traceability and the associated uncertainty will be provided in the report for the scheme/round.

Sample PT-CI-01 Salmonella Panel
Supplied as: 3 x 2ml vials each containing single lyophilised organism (contents may or may not be Salmonella)

Analyte	Method	AV
Confirmation and /or Identification of *Salmonella* species	ALL	Formulation

Sample PT-CI-02 Listeria Panel
Supplied as: 3 x 2ml vials each containing single lyophilised organism (contents may or may not be Listeria)

Analyte	Method	AV
Confirmation and /or Identification of *Listeria* species including *Listeria monocytogenes*	ALL	Formulation

Sample PT-CI-03 Gram-negative Panel
Supplied as: 5 x 2ml vials each containing single lyophilised organism (contents may include pathogens e.g. Salmonella, Campylobacter, Cronobacter and/or non-pathogens)

Analyte	Method	AV
Confirmation and /or Identification of Gram-negative organisms	ALL	Formulation

Sample PT-CI-06 Yeast & Mould Panel
Supplied as: 3 x 2ml vials each containing single lyophilised organism)

Analyte	Method	AV
Confirmation and /or Identification of yeast strains	ALL	Formulation

Sample PT-CI-07 Gram-positive Panel
Supplied as: 5 x 2ml vials each containing single lyophilised organism
(contents may include pathogens e.g. Listeria and/or non-pathogens)

Analyte	Method	AV
Confirmation and /or Identification of Gram-positive organisms	ALL	Formulation

Sample PT-CI-08 Mixed population
Supplied as: 1 x 2ml vial containing up to 5 lyophilised organisms
(contents may include pathogens and/or non-pathogens)

Analyte	Method	AV
Identification of organisms	ALL	Formulation