

# BRCGS Gluten-Free Certification Program Global Standard Issue 3 GF316: Audit Duration Calculator

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## Document scope

This document is applicable to all Standalone audits associated with Issue 3 of the Gluten-Free Certification Program Global Standard. All Standalone audits starting on or after 1st January 2021 shall be completed in accordance with this version of the calculator. (Where Standalone audits have already been agreed with sites, Issue 3 audits may continue to operate to the timescale indicated in the Standard).

Where a GFCP audit is combined with a GFSI-benchmarked or Global Markets scheme audit, the duration allocated for the GFCP portion of the combined audit shall be 0.5 days.

## Change log

Version no.	Date	Description
1	08/01/2021	First issue

## 1. Introduction

In accordance with the Standard, this Standalone audit duration calculator and current practice, the typical Gluten-Free Certification Program (GFCP) Global Standard Issue 3 Standalone audit duration shall be 1.5 to 2 days, of which approximately half shall be spent auditing the production environment, site facilities, interviewing staff and observing processes.

## 2. Calculation of audit duration

Where a GFCP audit is combined with a GFSI-benchmarked or Global Markets scheme audit, the duration allocated for the GFCP portion of the combined audit shall be 0.5 days.

The Standalone audit duration calculator is based on:

- Number of employees – as full-time equivalent employees per main shift including seasonal workers. This should be based on the maximum number expected in a shift.
- Size of the manufacturing facility (in square metres) - including onsite storage facilities. The conversion from square feet to metres is 10.76 (e.g., 86,000 square feet equal 8,000 square metres).
- The number of HACCP plans included within scope – for the purpose of this calculator, a HACCP plan corresponds to a family of products with similar hazards and similar production technology and will therefore usually correspond to the number of product types.

### Table of Standalone GFCP audit durations:

When using the following table, it should be noted that a typical audit day is 8 to 10 hours (not including lunch breaks). An audit day must not exceed 10 hours, except in exceptional circumstances.

Number of Employees	Audit duration based on 1 - 3 HACCP Plans (in days)		
	Size of manufacturing facility		
	<10k sq. m	10k-25k sq. m	>25k sq. m
1 – 50	9 hours (Completed in 1 - 1.5 days)	9 hours (Completed in 1 - 1.5 days)	10 hours (Completed in 1 - 1.5 days)
51 – 500	10 hours (Completed in 1 – 1.5 days)	10 hours (Completed in 1 – 1.5 days)	12 hours (Completed in 1.5 - 2 days)
501 – 1500	11 hours (Completed in 1.5 - 2 days)	13 hours (Completed in 1.5 – 2 days)	15 hours (Completed in 1.5 - 2 days)
>1501	11 hours (Completed in 1.5 -2 days)	14 hours (Completed in 1.5 – 2 days)	16 hours (Completed in 2 days)

## 2.1 Time spent within the production environment

The audit of a site to the Standard will involve time spent both within the production environment and reviewing records and procedures within an office.

The audit process gives emphasis to the practical implementation of the GFMS procedures and general good manufacturing practices. It is expected that the auditor will spend an appropriate amount of time auditing production, interviewing staff, observing processes, and reviewing documentation in production areas with the relevant staff.

Therefore, approximately 50% of the audit will be spent auditing production and site facilities, interviewing staff, observing processes, and reviewing documentation in production areas with the relevant staff. However, it is recognised, that in smaller, simple operations, the time required may be less than 50% of the audit. In these circumstances the amount of time spent in production and site facilities can be reduced, but the expectation is that at least 30% of the audit (e.g., 0.5 day minimum for a 1.5-day audit), will still be spent in these areas. Where the size of the site is larger than 50 employees and 10,000 square metres then an increased proportion of the time allocated to the audit will be spent within these areas.

The production environment includes external site inspections as well as visits to ancillary services, for example maintenance departments, laboratories, NPD, and despatch departments. Good practice is for the auditor to make multiple visits into the production areas to view different activities, processes, areas of the facility or shifts, rather than spending one day (or one block of time) in production and one reviewing paperwork.

The duration of the production facility inspection must be recorded in whole hours, giving the total time that has been spent in these areas. Any deviation from the calculated audit duration (either for total audit duration or for the time spent in production and site facilities) needs a valid justification which is recorded on the audit report.

Multiple identical key processes need not extend audit duration as sampling during the audit should address those identical functions. However, where there are significant variations, or the auditor has concerns that require additional investigation (e.g., auditing of additional examples of the process) additional time shall be allocated.

## 3 Total time calculation

A typical audit day shall be 8 hours (not including lunch breaks) and should not exceed 10 hours, except where there are exceptional circumstances.

On-site audit duration should be stated in total man hours (using whole numbers e.g., 8 not 7.5) giving the time at the site conducting the audit (including time in production).

The start and finish times each day shall be clearly stated on the audit report and reflect the actual times at the site. These should be agreed as correct between the auditor and the authorised site representative i.e., the site should sign a record of the start and finish times, for each day of the audit, a copy of which must be retained by the certification body. (This may be combined with other audit documentation, for example, by adding the information to the non-conformity record sheet).

Allowance should be made (to deduct time) where audit teams are used and both auditors are present e.g., at the opening and closing meetings. Those personnel not 'auditing independently' should not be included within the total time calculation e.g.:

- Witness auditor
- Trainee auditor
- Technical expert

Where the GFCP audit has been undertaken as part of a GFSI combined audit, then a calculation for the total time taken for the GFCP audit only should be stated. BRCGS expect that additional time is allocated over and above the minimum time for the GFCP audit whenever a combination audit is undertaken.

The total hours shall not include any calculation for writing of the final audit report away from site. This is additional time and is typically 4 – 8 hours.

#### **4 Additional factors which may affect audit duration**

Factors which may affect the duration of the audit are:

- initial audit (i.e., the site's first ever audit) – it is likely that the auditor will require additional time, for example, during opening and closing meetings.
- complexity of the manufacturing process
- number of product lines – for example, this could mean there are a larger number of potential hazards (e.g., a large number of allergens onsite), making HACCP review or auditing of control mechanisms longer than typical.
- size and age of site and impact on material flow
- labour-intensity of processes
- communication difficulties, e.g., language
- the number of non-conformities recorded in the previous audit
- difficulties experienced during the audit requiring further investigation
- the quality of company preparation, e.g., documentation, HACCP, QMS
- additional storage facilities, locations or head office assessments included within the audit process
- a separate audit of the central system (head office audit) completed before the manufacturing site audit may reduce the duration calculated for the manufacturing site audit to take account of systems already audited at the central (head) office. This is typically a reduction of 2 hours.