




BRCGS Global Standard START

Guide to certification



**Engage with your
chosen certification
body as early in the
process as you can.**

**For more than 25 years,
BRCGS has been at the
forefront of standards**

**With over 2,500
auditors worldwide,
BRCGS certification is
accessible no matter
where you are located.**

EMPOWERING DEVELOPING BUSINESSES TO SUCCEED IN FOOD SAFETY

For more than 25 years, BRCGS has been at the forefront of standards, and at the heart of our work is a mission to deliver the most rigorous third-party certification schemes for the best results possible. BRCGS certification provides vital assurance and confidence in the supply chain, and ensures high levels of safety and quality to guarantee consumer protection. As the most established global market leader across both food and non-food categories, BRCGS is the most recognised certification of its type and is accepted globally by brands, retailers and specifiers.

With over 35,000 certificated sites in more than 130 countries, BRCGS certification delivers trusted results and assurance of product integrity, which is why it is often the preferred choice when it comes to certification.

START IS A FOOD SAFETY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME CREATED SPECIFICALLY FOR ASPIRATIONAL FOOD BUSINESSES. IT HELPS BUSINESSES TO BUILD THE STRUCTURE, CONFIDENCE, AND CREDIBILITY TO MOVE BEYOND LOCAL AND HACCP-BASED CERTIFICATIONS, AND TOWARD RECOGNISED CERTIFICATION.

There are two levels of certification, Basic and Intermediate, providing developing businesses with a way to achieve globally recognised certification at a level suitable to their business.



**LEARN WITH THE
EXPERTS AT THE BRCGS ACADEMY**
Over 65 interactive courses available all
delivered by experts worldwide in
a range of languages.



WHY CHOOSE START?



- A trusted global food safety development programme that enables developing and emerging food businesses to place their products on the shelves of big retailers.
- Opens market opportunities for your products through recognition and acceptance from leading global brands and retailers.
- A certification solution that grows with your business as it provides a clear pathway to progress to Global Standard Food Safety Issue 9 certification if required.
- Increased exposure for your business through your public listing on BRCGS Directory, the tool that brands and retailers use for supplier selection.
- Elevate your brand reputation by using the BRCGS logo to showcase that you are developing your food safety systems with the global leader in food safety certification.

**The standard can be
accessed free of charge
via the BRCGS Store.**

MORE THAN CERTIFICATION – THE PROVEN ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Independent Research carried out by the University of Birkbeck found that sites certificated to a BRCGS Standard see benefits that go beyond compliance.

Commercial benefits

50%

benefit from
domestic growth

60%

benefit from
export growth

28%

benefit from
greater
profitability

47%

benefit from
fewer customer
audits

7.5%

average sales
growth

6%

average increase
in profitability

Operational efficiencies and improvements in productivity

70%

have achieved
efficiencies and
greater productivity

30%

have benefited
from product
innovation

63%

reported
production
improvements

40%

reduction in
food recalls

STEPS TO CERTIFICATION

1

GETTING STARTED

Download the free START implementation pack to receive all the documents and guidance you need to begin. Familiarise yourself with the Standard and Interpretation Guidelines thoroughly.



2

LEARN

Attend training with the BRCGS Academy to gain a practical understanding of implementing the requirements.



3

REVIEW

Use the 'Get Started Assessment Tool' to complete a gap analysis with the Standard (further tools available at brcgs.com). Assemble and train a team for implementation or obtain consultancy if needed.



4

PREPARE

Use the outputs of the self-assessment to develop an action plan to implement the Standard requirements in your operation. Carry out risk assessments where needed and establish necessary control points. Prepare your procedures and undertake internal audits.



5

PLAN AUDIT

BRCGS certification audits are delivered by our network of approved certification bodies. A list is available in the BRCGS Directory. Contact your chosen certification body to arrange an audit. Make sure you plan ahead so that staff are available and preparations are made.



6

ON-SITE AUDIT

The audit will assess the practical implementation of the Standard requirements. Observation of procedures and processes, review of documentation, and staff interviews will all take place.



7

NON-CONFORMITIES AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

If non-conformities are identified, you will need to carry out any corrective action, root cause analysis and plan preventive action. These will be closed out within 28 days following the audit.



8

CERTIFICATION

Your certification body will review the non-conformities and finalise the audit report to determine whether certification be awarded. If certification is achieved, the certification body will issue your certificate within 42 calendar days from the first day of your audit.





TRAINING FOR SITES PREPARING FOR START CERTIFICATION

Kick-start your preparation by training with the BRCGS Academy. This will provide you with the essential knowledge and insights required for a successful certification audit.

START SITES TRAINING COURSE (2 DAYS)

By the end of this course, you will:

- Understand what is required to comply with and practically implement the Standard requirements
- Be able to describe the scope of companies and products covered by the Standard
- Know how to prepare for an audit and what to expect during the audit
- Know to use the BRCGS resources and tools available to support compliance

START E-LEARNING MODULE (4-6 hours)

Learn at your own pace and convenience with the e-learning module for START. This e-learning training course has been to provide an understanding of the standard requirements and to provide guidance on implementing the requirements. It also explains the process to become certificated to the Standard.

Find out more and book your place at
www.brcgs.com/training/overview

APPROACHING BRCGS CERTIFICATION FOR THE FIRST TIME

Download the free START Implementation Pack from the BRCGS Store to get all the essential documents and resources you need to begin your journey toward START certification.



The Implementation Pack includes:

- Global Standard START Issue 2
- Interpretation Guideline for Issue 2
- Get Started Assessment Tool *NEW*
- Assessment Tool Guideline
- Site Self-Assessment Checklist
- Food Safety Management System Transition Tool
- SALSA to START Transition Tool

The brand-new innovative Get Started Assessment Tool will be an invaluable resource in your preparations. This provides a framework for food businesses of any size to assess the maturity of their quality and food safety management system. It is based on series of questions which are categorised into seven areas - site commitment, competence, HACCP, prerequisites, sites, product and process control, and management system. The outcome shows the current state of your system, allowing you to pinpoint areas for improvement and bridge any existing gaps.

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TIP FOR BEST SUCCESS
Use the Interpretation Guideline alongside
the Standard when implementing the
requirements. It will help you to understand
each requirement and ways to comply.





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To learn more about BRCGS and certification,
please visit **[brcgs.com](https://www.brcgs.com)**.

To access or purchase a BRCGS Global Standard or to book training,
please visit **[brcgs.com/store](https://www.brcgs.com/store)**.

To find a BRCGS-approved certification body,
please visit directory.**[brcgs.com](https://www.brcgs.com)**.