

## BIO SEARCH POLICY ON DEVIATING SAMPLES

Following recent guidance issued by UKAS and European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA) regarding deviating samples, Bio Search has reviewed and enhanced its policy on assessment of samples, in relation to the analysis required by the customer. This is to ensure not only compliance with the requirements of our accreditation provider, but also to further improve the service offered to all our customers.

Sample assessment procedures are already in place and ensure that the sample type and condition meet the description originally provided, also to ascertain the suitability of the sample for the testing that has been requested.

Many factors can affect the outcome of both microbiological and chemical analysis, for example: sample containers or packaging; addition of preservatives; storage temperature and time, etc.

In most situations the assessment and, if necessary, any recommendations will be made at the initial enquiry stage, where we will discuss with the customer any appropriate requirements for sampling and analysis. However, in some cases of ad hoc samples we may need to discuss with a customer upon receipt of the sample, before (and if) analysis can commence.

It is possible that if the customer is in agreement and analysis can proceed on a sample which is deemed to be 'deviating' that results may be invalid and, if necessary, the test report will include a disclaimer to state this. This is to reflect our responsibility as a laboratory providing technical information, upon which decisions may be made by a customer or other third party; and our commitment to ensure that this information is representative for the sample which has been subject to analysis.

This policy requirement is equally applicable to all accredited laboratories and therefore our subcontract partners are also required to have an effective policy in place, indeed our routine partners have issued similar statements to this effect.

At all times we remain fully committed to providing the highest possible quality of service to our customers and would be happy to discuss any aspect of this policy. Please contact our Quality Manager, Karen Topping by telephone on +44 (0)28 9035 2066, or email [karen@biosearch.co.uk](mailto:karen@biosearch.co.uk).

The UKAS Policy on Deviating Samples can be found at:

<https://www.ukas.com/download/publications/Technical%20Policy%20Statements/TPS63%20Deviating%20samples%20Ed%201%20Jun%2013%20final.pdf>

