**UK Certification Schemes**

The various Defra Certification Schemes available in the UK to facilitate the provision of SPS assurance for movement of POAO before final export from GB to EU are summarised Table 1 below. It is essential that all food business operators and exporters read this information carefully to establish which schemes may be applicable to their business.

An overview of the certification schemes is given in Table 1 below and full details are provided in the links contained under each scheme.

**Table 1**

| **Certification Scheme** | **Applies to:** | **Support document** | **Frequency** | **Issued in NI by** | **Further information**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [**Defra Risk Based Fish Export Certification**](http://apha.defra.gov.uk/external-operations-admin/library/documents/exports/ET196.pdf) (RBFEC)* Used in conjunction with the ‘Certification away from the premises of origin’ approach in NI.

[**Defra Guidance on Export Health Certification for POAO away from the premises of Origin**](http://apha.defra.gov.uk/external-operations-admin/library/documents/exports/ET197.pdf) | Fish,fishery products,live bivalve molluscs (LBM) | Support attestation: RBFEC template found at [RBFEC SA Template](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/sha-templates) | On a risk basis, determined in line with Local Authority risk assessment of premises of origin. | Local Authority Food Competent Certifying Officer | These support attestations can be issued on a risk based frequency from approved premises in NI to accompany relevant POAO moving to GB for direct onward shipment from a logistic hub/depot in GB to EU/NI or which may be further processed or stored in GB prior to final export to EU/movement to NI.  |
| [**Defra Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme (GEFS)**](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/export-groups-of-products-of-animal-origin-to-the-eu-from-1-january-2021?utm_source=841ed983-5f58-4675-a9e9-99a966caf9e4&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate) **– Guidance for exporters** | Retail packages for final consumer of meat preparations, meat / dairy / composite / fish / egg products, fish, LBM, eggs, honey for human consumption, processed pet food. | Support attestation (GEFS template can be found at [GEFS SA Template](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/GEFS%20PDF%20template%20v1%20%28Dec%2020%29.pdf) | Support attestation issued every 30 days, in advance of the consignment.**Note**: supplier declarations to accompany every consignment moved to logistics hub | Authorised veterinarianFood Competent Certifying Officer (for fish and some composite POAO). | Food producers/ exporters in NI do not need to apply to Defra to register for this scheme. Registration is only applicable to GB based exporters. However NI producers may participate as a supplier in this scheme to supply GEFS exporters in GB, where the eligibility criteria are met. Please read the **Requirement for suppliers** section. |
| [**Defra Guidance on Export Health Certification for POAO away from the premises of Origin**](http://apha.defra.gov.uk/external-operations-admin/library/documents/exports/ET197.pdf) **- Logistics Hub:** | All POAO commodities for human consumption  | * Support health attestation

[DAERA SHA Template](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/SHA%20PDF%20template%20V1%20%28dec%2020%29.pdf)* Support attestation using either RBFEC template, see above
 | * Per consignment or
* Per production batch where Standard Operating Procedure in place and strict criteria apply
* RBFEC template Part 1 on a risk basis **Note**: supplier declarations to accompany every consignment moved to logistics hub
 | Authorised veterinarian Food Competent Certifying Officer (for fish and some composite POAO). | This scheme applies to a logistics hub, such as a cold store or rewrapping centre, however other approved food establishments which consolidate consignments for export to EU may also be used. |

**Further information**

* A Food Competent Certifying Officer (FCCO) is an Environmental Health Officer working in a Local Authority in NI and authorised by DAERA to issue certification on behalf of DAERA.
* An authorised veterinarian is a veterinary surgeon who is a registered member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (MRCVS) and authorised by DAERA to provide certification on behalf of DAERA. An authorised veterinarian may be
* a government official employed directly by DAERA *or*
* a private veterinary practitioner who is an Authorised Veterinary Inspector (AVI).
* A Trade Certification Support Officer (TCSO) is an official authorised and directly employed by DAERA who works under the direction of a DAERA Certifying Officer and who may carry out directed checks to gather evidence which supports the issue of an SHA.
* A Certification Support Officer (CSO) is an official authorised by DAERA and employed by:
* a Local Authority in NI and working under the direction of a Food Competent Certifying Officer *or*
* a private veterinary practitioner / practice and working under the direction of an AVI.

CSOs may carry out directed checks to gather evidence which supports the issue of an SHA.

* A support health attestation is usually issued per commodity type and per consignment, from one dispatch (consignor) address to one destination (consignee) address. Multiple attestations may be needed per shipment depending on the number of destinations and the number of commodities in the shipment. SHA **cannot** be issued retrospectively.
* The use of a ‘flexible approach’ to the issue of an SHA per production batch, rather than per consignment may be adopted where a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is in place, agreed with the CO and the maximum batch size is one day’s production.
* A consignment is defined as a quantity of goods covered by the same certificate (or attestation), conveyed by the same means of transport, and being of the same type, class or description.
* Support attestations issued using RBFEC and GEFS are provided on a risk basis or at a set frequency, and in advance of consignments to which they relate, depending on the scheme being used. (See Table 1).
* Support Health Attestation templates and guidance are available to businesses and certifying officers on the DAERA website at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/sha-templates>
* Attestations can be provided by veterinarians or Local Authority Food Competent Certifying Officers (for fish, egg products and some composite POAO) who are authorised by DAERA to do so. Further information on how businesses can find a certifying officer authorised to provide such attestations is available at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/exporting-food-products-animal-origin-and-animal-by-products-gb>
* Where an attestation from NI is required to allow final export certification from GB to EU, businesses must provide all the necessary traceability and processing information to demonstrate that the POAO meets the requirements for entry to the EU, i.e. the requirements of the third country export certificate. The certifying officer must be able to carry out the necessary checks to satisfy themselves that all the requirements have been met.
* The requirement for SPS assurance in the attestation will be similar to and based on the content of the relevant EU EHC for that commodity. Businesses can familiarise themselves the relevant EU EHCs which are available on [.gov.uk Form Finder](https://www.gov.uk/export-health-certificates)