

# BRCGS Packaging Materials Issue 7

Answering your questions

The LRQA logo is a white square containing the letters 'LRQA' in a bold, sans-serif font. It is positioned in the bottom right corner of the image, overlaid on the background of a factory conveyor belt.

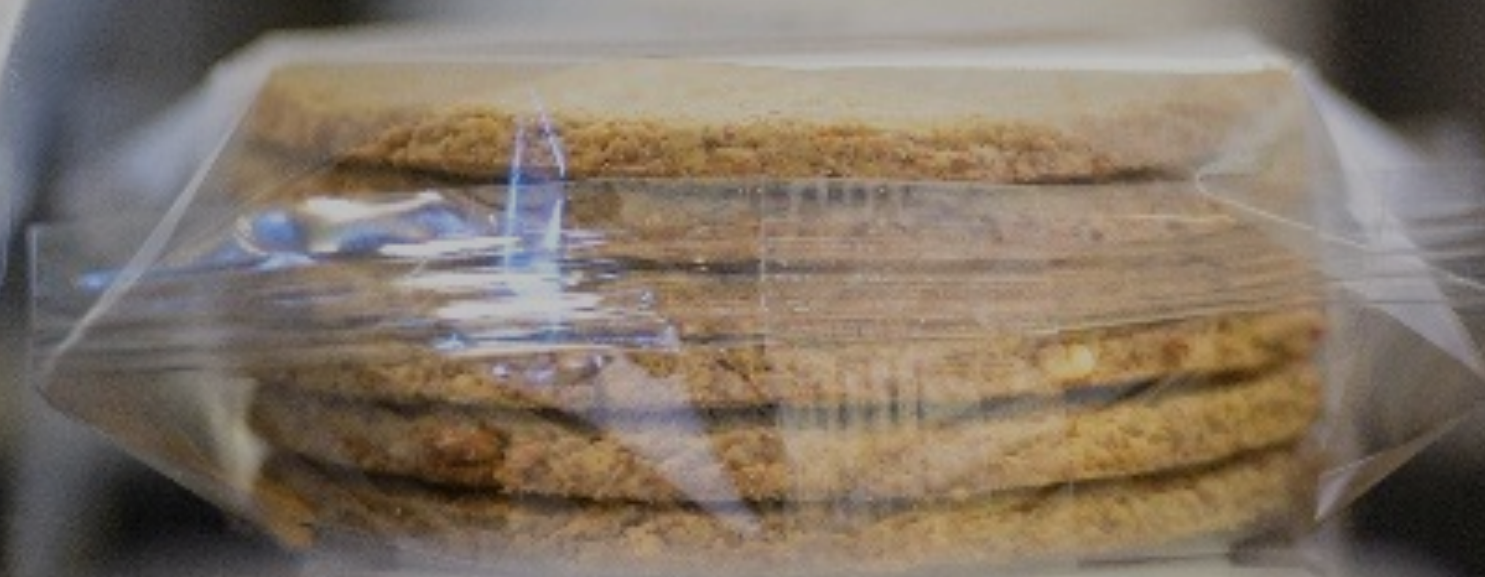
LRQA



## Adapting standards to meet demands for safe and sustainable food packaging

The BRCGS (Brand Reputation Compliance Global Standards) Packaging Materials Issue 7 is the latest edition of the globally recognised standard for packaging quality, safety and compliance. Released in October 2024, this version brings updates designed to meet the evolving demands of the packaging industry, with a focus on traceability, risk management and environmental sustainability.

Effective from April 2025, Issue 7 introduces new requirements and guidelines that help manufacturers ensure consistent quality and safety in their packaging materials, while also addressing increasing regulatory expectations and consumer concerns about sustainable and ethical practices.





# Frequently asked questions

**Q** | **Our audit is scheduled for June 2025, and I'm concerned about potential weak areas that could lead to non-conformities. What is the best approach to address this?**

**A** | To identify and address potential weak areas before your June 2025 audit, consider the following steps:

1. **Conduct a self-assessment:** Perform a thorough internal audit against the BRCGS Packaging Materials Standard Issue 7 requirements to pinpoint improvement areas.
2. **Review previous non-conformities:** Analyse past audit reports to identify recurring issues and ensure corrective actions have been effective.
3. **Engage in training:** Participate in BRCGS-approved training courses to stay updated on the latest standards and best practices.
4. **Utilise BRCGS resources:** Access tools and guidance documents provided by BRCGS to assist in audit preparation.
5. **Consult with experts:** If necessary, seek advice from consultants or industry experts to gain insights into compliance strategies.
6. **Request your certification body to conduct a gap-analysis** against the new version of the standard.

**Q** | **In a blended audit, is the unannounced portion conducted on-site rather than remotely?**

**A** | A blended audit cannot be unannounced; both the onsite and remote part of the audit must be announced.



**Q** Our organisation is currently certified to Issue 6 of the BRCGS Packaging Materials Standard. How long will this certification remain valid?

**A** Certifications to Issue 6 will remain valid until their expiration date. However, starting from 28 April 2025, all audits will be conducted against Issue 7 of the standard. It is advisable to transition to Issue 7 requirements before your next audit to maintain certification.

**Q** Based on non-conformities observed in Issue 6, are there key areas a business should focus on to improve compliance?

**A** Common non-conformities in Issue 6 included deficiencies in product safety culture, hazard analysis, and risk assessment systems. To enhance compliance:

- **Strengthen product safety culture:** Foster an environment where safety is a shared responsibility among all employees.
- **Enhance hazard analysis and risk assessment:** Ensure these systems align with Codex Alimentarius guidelines.
- **Implement continual improvement processes:** Regularly review and improve operational systems to meet evolving standards.

**Q** What support resources are available for companies beginning their BRCGS certification journey, and how can they leverage these to ensure compliance?

**A** BRCGS offers several resources to assist companies:

- **Training courses:** Access courses designed to educate on standard requirements and best practices.
- **Guidance documents:** Utilise tools and documents that provide detailed explanations of standard clauses.
- **Webinars and workshops:** Participate in events that offer insights into compliance strategies and updates.



Q

**We are preparing for our first BRCGS packaging audit. If we receive non-conformances and submit corrective actions and root cause analyses, will these be reviewed by the auditor? Can they be rejected, and would this impact our certification?**

A

Yes, submitted corrective actions and root cause analyses are reviewed by the auditor. If they are deemed inadequate, they can be rejected, which may delay certification until appropriate actions are implemented. It is crucial to provide thorough and effective corrective measures to address non-conformities.

Q

**What is the minimum number of audit days required for a BRCGS Packaging Materials audit?**

A

The minimum number of audit days depends on factors such as the size and complexity of the operation. Specific requirements are detailed in the BRCGS audit protocol.

Q

**How often do BRCGS Packaging Materials standards undergo revision, and how should companies prepare for upcoming changes?**

A

BRCGS standards are typically reviewed and updated every three to four years to reflect industry developments and best practices. Companies should:

- **Stay informed:** Monitor BRCGS communications for announcements of revisions.
- **Participate in training:** Engage in training sessions on new standard versions.
- **Update internal systems:** Align quality management systems with the latest standard requirements.





Q

## What are the main drivers for the revision of the BRCGS Packaging Materials Standard?

A

The revision aims to:

- **Clarify and strengthen requirements:** Address common non-conformities from previous issues.
- **Align with industry trends:** Incorporate practices such as the inclusion of single-use disposable products.
- **Enhance product safety culture:** Emphasise the importance of safety throughout the supply chain.

Q

## What trends are driving the changes in BRCGS Packaging Materials standards, and what implications might these have for global packaging markets?

A

Key trends influencing the standard include:

- **Increased focus on sustainability:** Emphasis on environmentally friendly packaging materials.
- **Advancements in technology:** Integration of digital tools for traceability and quality control.
- **Regulatory changes:** Adaptation to evolving global regulations on packaging safety and materials.

Q

## Is it up to the site to decide whether to have a blended announced audit or not? What if they prefer not to have any blended announced audit in a three-year cycle?

A

Participation in blended announced audits is optional. Sites can choose not to engage in blended audits within a three-year cycle.



Q

**Do we need to purchase the new issue to have it on-site, or will an electronic version suffice?**

A

An official copy of the standard is required for audits. Both physical and electronic versions are acceptable.

Q

**Will internal auditors for BRCGS Version 6 need to undergo training again to obtain an auditor certificate?**

A

Internal auditors trained on Issue 6 should update their knowledge to align with Issue 7.

Q

**Is this certification for both manufacturing and trading goods, or only for manufacturing?**

A

The certification primarily covers manufacturing. For details on trading goods, refer to the standard's scope or consult BRCGS.

LRQA will release a gap-analysis checklist outlining new requirements in BRCGS Packaging Materials Issue 7.

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## About LRQA:

LRQA is a leading global assurance partner, bringing together decades of unrivalled expertise in assessment, advisory, inspection and cybersecurity services – underpinned by data-driven insights – to help its clients navigate a new era of risk.

Operating in more than 160 countries with a team of more than 5,000 people, LRQA's award-winning compliance, supply chain, cybersecurity and ESG specialists help more than 60,000 clients across almost every sector to anticipate, mitigate and manage risk wherever they operate.

## Get in touch

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