

Frequently asked questions regarding QAP

1. Q: What does QAP mean and what does it consist of?
A: The acronym QAP stands for Quality and Auditing Programme. This voluntary programme consists of two main elements: the “EDANA standard” and the third-party auditing programme.
The **EDANA standard** sets the requirements that quality management systems in the absorbent hygiene industry should meet. It was developed by a Working Group comprising of EDANA members active in the industry, in close collaboration with BSI. The EDANA standard, i.e. the text, is copyrighted by EDANA but will be publicly available. Since the text will be in the public domain, any company will be able to consult and use it.
The **third-party auditing** programme aims at verifying that the requirements set in the standard are systematically met by suppliers who have committed to it. Participation in the third-party audit (currently through BSI) is entirely voluntary. There is no obligation for any company (whether supplier or converter) to join the auditing programme – all are free to maintain their current ways of working, or to go for another option entirely.
2. Q: What is the goal of the QAP?
A: The QAP was developed with the aim of assuring that participating suppliers in the global absorbent hygiene products supply chain have implemented a quality management system that meets the specific and detailed requirements that are expected in that industry today. The EDANA standard is recognised by most of the converters (manufacturers of consumer goods). Participating converters rely on the QAP audits to assess whether their suppliers have quality systems in place and to measure their effectiveness, thereby making their own audits redundant and allowing more time for technical visits (for new projects) or other, more complex issues.
3. Q: Who is the owner of QAP?
A: EDANA is the owner of the programme.
4. Q: Who is carrying out the audits?
A: The audits are conducted by a team of BSI auditors. Before joining the EDANA QAP pool, these auditors have gone through a dedicated training and qualification programme, to ensure they have the necessary competencies to run the audits in an effective manner.
5. Q: How is the confidentiality of the audit results managed?
A: Suppliers own the audit findings. They choose to provide access to those converters with whom they are willing to share their audit results. Please note such access rights are granted or withdrawn on a site-converter relationship rather than on an ad hoc basis.
Audit reports will not contain information that reveals specific supplier-converter relations: findings are based on references to article numbers, shop orders etc., without any references to brands or brand-owners.
6. Q: As a supplier, how can I participate?
A: Please contact EDANA for further instructions, which include invoicing (Q8 & Q9), scheduling (Q10) and most importantly getting access to the BSI portal through which all activities are scheduled and reported.
7. Q: As a converter, how can I participate?

A: Please contact EDANA for further instructions, which include invoicing (Q8 & Q9) scheduling (see Q10), and most importantly getting access to the BSI portal through which all activities are scheduled and reported.

8. Q: How much does an audit cost?

A: Audit costs, as well as any additional costs such as travel and accommodation, will be part of the contractual relationship between suppliers and BSI. This contractual relationship will be entirely and solely owned by and at the discretion of these two parties. The cost per audit day is comparable to the cost of an ISO 9001 audit day. The auditor base should be wide enough to prevent intercontinental travel and associated costs.

9. Q: Who pays for the audits?

A: Suppliers receive an invoice from BSI following each audit, with the applicable auditing fee as well as related travel and accommodation cost.

10. Q: How are audits scheduled?

A: BSI manages the auditing plan, taking into account all suppliers that are participating and the agreed auditing frequencies (see Q12). BSI will contact the audit site to arrange all logistics. In parallel, BSI will also inform all converters which are 'linked' to the audit site about the upcoming audit, inviting them to submit any points which should receive particular attention. The word 'linked' refers to relationships between converters and supplier sites in the BSI portal.

11. Q: How long does an audit take?

A: For the time being the length of the audits has been estimated to be 3 days. Later on, shorter audits may be considered as well, based on experience and audit results.

12. Q: What is the frequency of the audits?

A: Participating sites will be initially subject to annual audits. In due time, longer intervals between audits may be considered, again depending on experience and results.

13. Q: How will audit results be reported?

A: During the close-out meeting at the end of each audit, the auditor will provide a preliminary verbal report. Soon after the audit, a formal written report will be posted on the BSI portal, listing the non-conformities (NCs) found. Next to the NCs, a numerical rating sheet will be made available.

14. Q: Is there a rating system in place to 'rate' the audit results? What is the meaning of a rating?

A: Yes, there is. The extent to which each detailed requirement is met is rated using a six-step scale, which is calculated in a numerical value per area and turned into an overall score. The methodology is useful to track progress over time. Currently there is no 'threshold' agreed for minimum or expected performance. Converters will make their own assessment of the score and decide how it will affect their procurement strategy.

15. Q: How does a supplier manage non-conformities?

A: The supplier responds to each NC on the BSI portal with a corrective action (CA). BSI will review the CA for effectiveness and close the NC.

16. Q: Which converters and suppliers have committed to the programme?

A: The list with converters and suppliers that have signed up will be made available soon.

17. Q: Does EDANA have access to audit results?
A: No, EDANA does not have access to specific, individual reports or non-conformities. EDANA however, has access to certain system KPI's to monitor the general status of the programme.
18. Q: How is the QAP initiative supervised overall?
A: Respecting the limits imposed by the confidentiality requirements, EDANA hosts the QAP Working Group, which oversees the status and effectiveness of the QAP. The Working Group is open to any EDANA member active in absorbent hygiene. The Terms of Reference of the working group can be found [here](#).