

HMC Accreditation for Schools



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1. Background & Context

Muslims in the UK

Islam has the second largest followers in the UK. Over the last three decades, the number of British Muslims has increased significantly. Latest figures of 2008 estimate the number to be over two million which forms 3.3% of the British population.

Dietary Requirements – Halal

The Muslim community share many common values with the Jewish community. At the heart of Islamic teachings lies the concept of Halal. This term is central to Muslims and encompasses the code of life including the dietary requirements. A crucial aspect of this code is the fulfilment of certain procedural requirements during the slaughter of animals. Certain animals are prohibited altogether whilst permitted Animals are required to be slaughtered in a certain method. Along with the animals, ingredients must also fulfil a certain criteria for lawful consumption.

Issues in the Current Market

For decades, Halal labelled items have entered the market without any mechanisms, legal or otherwise, to ensure its authenticity. Consumers were unable to verify the claim of Halal through an audit trail system. As a result, unverified and occasionally Non-Halal supplies have entered the Halal market. Ultimately, this undermined the confidence of the Muslim community. Halal certifying bodies started to operate throughout the world to reinstate the confidence through varying levels of monitoring systems.

School Meals Issues

Under the Government's standards for school lunches, all children must be offered red meat twice per week in primary schools and three times per week in high schools. Children are encouraged to consume white and red meat for nourishment and nutrient purposes. As Muslim children are bound by the dietary requirements of Halal, many schools provide Halal school meals to ensure inclusiveness. Many schools across England halted the provision of Halal school meals after scandalous revelations of the sources of the red and white meat. This document will briefly explore the role of the Halal Monitoring Committee (HMC) and its policies for schools to ensure provision of genuine Halal meals.

Benefits of HMC Accreditation for Schools

- The 'HMC Standard for Schools' accreditation will allow your school to demonstrate that food is prepared and served in a manner that is verifiably consistent with Islamic rulings.
- HMC envisages that HMC accreditation by schools with a significant proportion of Muslim children will instil confidence in Muslim parents that their children are consuming genuinely Halal.
- This will also allow the school to ensure that children consume lunch that has the desired nutritional content.
- As part of the HMC accreditation, your school will be invited to a free training event for staff to ensure that they are aware of the requirements of 'Halal' catering. This will be particularly useful for the induction of new staff as well as ensuring consistent practice in your school.

2. Halal Monitoring Committee

The need for a monitoring organisation

HMC is a non-profitable organisation established in 2003 and secured Charity Commission registration in May 2009. HMC was established to provide assurance of genuine Halal through a thorough monitoring system with certification procedures at every interval.

The establishment of HMC was a response to the unethical fraudulent practices prevalent in the Halal industry. Despite clear legal verdicts regarding pork, the injection of pork enzymes into Halal labelled poultry is one of the many examples of abuse HMC encountered. For this reason, HMC decided to devise a rigorous monitoring system with a universal slaughter criterion.

Slaughter Criteria of HMC

HMC adopted a universal Islamic slaughter criterion to ensure maximum benefit and efficiency in its operations. The HMC slaughter criteria include:

- Non Stunning
- Manual slaughter by a Muslim – Non Mechanical
- Verbal recitation of Allah's name – No blessed blades
- Ensuring minimum number of vessels are severed
- No Cross Contamination

Jurisdiction of HMC

HMC started its operations in Leicester and ever since has expanded across the United Kingdom. HMC Head Office is based in Leicester with Local Area Groups in over fifteen cities across the UK. HMC certified butchers and food outlets are present in almost all the Muslim dominated towns and cities. HMC is the largest certifying body in the UK with over 75 employees.

The primary aim of HMC was to focus on retail outlets and ensuring the provision of genuine Halal therein. Over the last two years, however, HMC has been approached by many public bodies including local authorities and prison services to certify its provision of Halal. The foundational mechanism established by HMC can adapt to any service-provider and HMC hopes to expand its jurisdiction across all statutory and private bodies.

3. Summary of Standards

This section provides an overview of the HMC criterion for Halal school meals from the point of delivery to consumption.

The standard HMC adopts prior to the point of delivery is available upon request.

School Deliveries

The content of the school deliveries for Halal school meals must be sourced from HMC approved products suppliers. The list of HMC approved products suppliers is available upon request.

Transportation

- I. Meat and poultry products must be clearly identifiable as HMC certified products by HMC certification labels or HMC seals.
- II. These products must be stored in individual sealed bags or sealed boxes
- III. These products must be stored in a clearly separate compartment of the vehicle and dealt with separately to avoid issues of cross-contamination.

Delivery at Premises

- I. Deliveries must be checked and verified to be HMC certified.
- II. Audit and traceability systems must be in place to record all deliveries.
- III. Records of consignments and serial numbers must be kept.
- IV. HMC certified products must be segregated, stored and handled appropriately to avoid issues of cross-contamination.

Storage Facility

- I. HMC certified products must be stored separately in separate fridges. If HMC certified products are stored in cold rooms, supply cages must be used with clear segregation.
- II. Pork products (packed or derivatives) and Non-HMC products must not be stored with HMC certified products.
- III. All HMC certified products must retain their labels and/or tags in halal designated (colour-coded) units or separate shelving.
- IV. If cold storage is of limited space, HMC certified products must be stored above the Non-HMC products and shelving must be clearly identified by labels
- V. All equipment and utensils must be stored separately and storage areas clearly marked.

Preparation of Halal Meals

- I. All Halal meals must to be prepared and cooked in accordance with Islamic rules; only Halal ingredients should be used.
- II. Halal meals must be prepared separately from non-halal meals.
- III. Separate equipment and utensils must be used in preparation of Halal meals.
- IV. All equipment must be clearly labelled, marked and easily identifiable by using different colours and/or permanent markings and/or labels.
- V. All surfaces must be cleaned thoroughly and sanitised prior to preparing Halal meals

Serving of Halal Meals

- I. All meals must be served in separate serving trays to avoid any cross contamination.
- II. Utensils must be colour-coded or clearly marked 'Halal'.
- III. Utensils must not come into contact with any Non-Halal products or Non Halal meals.

Training and Monitoring Procedures

- I. Staff involved in preparation, serving and storage of Halal foods must be adequately trained.
- II. In particular, staff must be trained for checking and authenticating products as HMC certified.
- III. Effective procedures such as feedback forms and issue logs must be issued.
- IV. Halal signs and certificates must be displayed.
- V. Staff should be aware of the importance of Halal and the context of HMC accreditation.
- VI. Staff should be aware of the possibility of HMC monitors entering premises for inspection on a random basis.

4. Application and Accreditation Process

This section outlines the application process and costs for schools to acquire HMC accreditation:

Application

An application form is to be completed by the organisation interested in HMC certification providing all the required necessary details of the organisation and its products. Once completed, the application form must be posted to the HMC Head Office.

Review of Application

Once the completed application is received, HMC will review the information details and then contact the organisation to arrange an audit.

Audit

An audit of the school/college will be carried out by a HMC specialist auditor to assess the requirements and the supply chain.

Contract

Upon agreement from both parties, HMC will draft a contract outlining its terms.

Accreditation

Upon compliance, relevant certification will be issued. HMC will also advertise certified schools on the website and relevant literature.

Supervision

HMC Monitors will inspect the school/college kitchen once a term. However HMC reserves the right to carry out further random checks at the school in order to verify and ensure HMC standards are maintained. All necessary files and records must be presented on request.

Certification Fees

The initial cost for the audit and application process is £50.00. This applies to secondary schools as well as primary schools. Thereafter there is an annual fee of £100.00 for primary schools and £200.00 for secondary schools payable within 14 days the certificate being issued. This fee contributes towards the cost of HMC monitoring and quality assurance and only applies to non profitable educational establishments.

HMC for Schools

Application Form

General Information

Name of School	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone No.	
E-mail	
Head teacher's Name	
HMC Contact Person	
HMC Contact Email	

Type of School/college	Primary, secondary, further education
Local Authority Area	
DCSF Number	

Catering Information

Please give details of each supplier of poultry, lamb and beef.

Name of Supplier 1	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone No.	

Name of Supplier 2	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone No.	

Name of Supplier 3	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone No.	

Preparation of Food

Please respond to each of the questions below:

1. Does the school only use frying oils that are suitable for vegetarians?

Yes

No

Other (Please Specify) _____

2. Does the school use separate preparation areas for Halal and non-Halal products?

Yes

No

3. Does the school use separate preparation and serving equipment (utensils, prep and serving cutlery) for Halal and non-Halal products?

Yes

No

4. Does the school label all of the food that it serves as 'Halal' or 'non-Halal' for students?

Yes

No

5. Does the school provide training to each of its catering staff so that they understand what the 'Halal' requirements are?

Yes

No

If yes Please provide details on how training is delivered (and by whom):

6. Does the school have its own internal 'Halal Monitoring Arrangements' that ensure that arrangements for the preparation and serving of 'Halal' food are satisfactory?

Yes

No

If "yes" please provide details of the internal 'Halal' monitoring arrangements below:

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7. Can you verify that all the ingredients that you use are 'Halal' compliant, i.e. free from alcohol and other animal derivatives?

Yes

No

HMC Inspection Arrangements

As part of HMC certification, the school will be inspected without notice each term. In order to facilitate this, please provide the following information:

Term 1 (Start & End Dates)	
Closure Dates during Term 1 (e.g. INSET Days etc)	

Term 2 (Start & End Dates)	
Closure Dates during Term 2 (e.g. INSET Days etc)	

Term 3 (Start & End Dates)	
Closure Dates during Term 3 (e.g. INSET Days etc)	

Opening & Closing time of canteen	
Daily Delivery Times to canteen	
Lunch Serving Times	

Signed: Name:

Position: Date:

Please send this application form with a £60 application fee to Halal Monitoring Committee, Unit 35 Cobden House, Cobden Street, Leicester, LE1 2LB. Once received, you will be contacted to arrange a preliminary inspection. The cost of HMC accreditation is £100 for a primary school and £200 for a secondary school or college. Payment is due once accreditation is given.

