

ACMSF Internal Review 2022

The Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) has been internally reviewed by the FSA, following the Cabinet Office '[Guidance for the Review of Public Bodies](#)'.

A self-assessment model (SAM) was used to assess the efficacy, efficiency, governance and accountability.

The FSA has concluded that the results of this SAM indicate that the ACMSF does not require a full-scale review and will therefore be reviewed again as part of the next cycle of FSA Science Advisory Committee (SAC) reviews in 2025.

The conclusions and recommendations are summarised below.

Conclusions

Efficacy

There is no complaints procedure published for the ACMSF. This isn't relevant as there are no public-facing services. Policy departments at the FSA and other risk management colleagues are where complaints should be received and dealt with.

Performance of the ACMSF is appraised annually by the Chair, members, Secretariat and the FSA's Chief Scientific Advisor (CSA). This adheres to the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory committees ([CoPSAC](#)) and, therefore, is deemed suitable for the ACMSF.

Efficiency

There are no areas of concern in this section.

Governance

There are no published guidelines for ACMSF members on lobbying and political activity. Members receive these when they are inducted into the ACMSF.

Diversity and Inclusion is a topic of particular interest for the FSA within the SACs. The FSA should continue its focus on encouraging diversity of applicants to all FSA SAC memberships.

Accountability

The ACMSF Chair meets biannually with the FSA's CSA. The ACMSF Chair does not regularly meet with the FSA Board, which is suggested in the CoPSAC. A letter produced by the Chair is included in the ACMSF's annual report. There is not an annual letter sent to the ACMSF Chair from the FSA.

Results

Table 1: The major indicators for concern for the ACMSF.

Conclusion	Sub-Areas	Major
Efficacy		2/8
Efficiency		0/2
Governance		2/26
Accountability		1/14
Total		5/50

Table 1 provides a summary of the binary and data questions only, and is not fully representative of all answers given in the SAM.

The Self-Assessment Model has shown very few areas of concern for the ACMSF.

Recommendations

1. The ACMSF should consider publishing a complaints procedure on its website.
2. The ACMSF and FSA could consider publishing performance data to show transparency around SAC performance.
3. The ACMSF should consider publishing rules on lobbying and guidelines for political activity for ACMSF members to ensure compliance with any restrictions.
4. The ACMSF Chair should be given opportunities to meet with the FSA Board, as is stated in the CoPSAC.
5. The FSA Board should send a 'Chair's Letter' to the ACMSF Chair annually setting out the FSA's shorter-term priorities and expectations.