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## **Food safety scheme helps build customer trust and loyalty**

***Coeliac UK is celebrating 10 years since the launch of its Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme for food and catering businesses***

Coeliac UK is celebrating 10 years of its Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme, with the mission to guarantee that gluten free food being served in catering establishments in the UK is safe and abides by Regulation (EU) No 828/2014<sup>1</sup>.

Prior to the launch no such scheme existed, but now there are around 3,000 accredited establishments in the UK, including restaurants, hospitals, schools and takeaways.

Coeliac disease is a serious autoimmune condition where the body's immune system reacts to gluten found in food and attacks the gut. It affects one in 100 people and currently the only treatment is to follow a strict gluten free diet for life. Safe food preparation is vital for those with coeliac disease as even very small amounts of gluten can be damaging.

The Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme reassures safe delivery of gluten free food for the whole gluten free community, helping establishments to meet the increasing customer demand for medically required dietary needs. The Gluten Free Accreditation symbol automatically tells customers that an establishment is safe – building trust, loyalty and driving new visitors.

According to a recent Coeliac UK poll<sup>2</sup>, 96% said their gluten free needs, or a member of their party's, determines where they eat out to ensure the food establishment will meet their dietary requirements. In addition, 97% said that when they've found a gluten free venue they trust, it becomes a preferred place to visit.

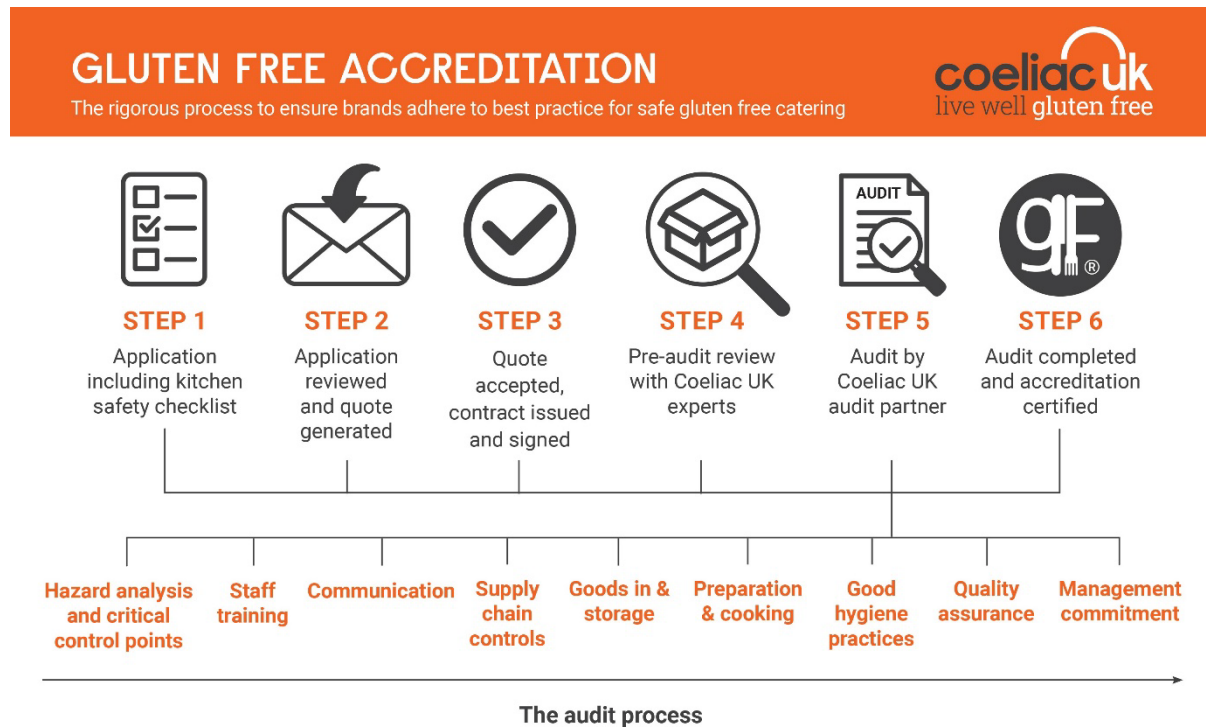
With some existing accredited partners reporting a 10-12% increase in business levels<sup>3</sup> and a meal out costing on average of £10-£22<sup>4</sup> per person, there is great potential for increased revenue for food and catering businesses across the UK.

Another benefit of the accreditation scheme is access to Coeliac UK's online training courses for staff, which covers clarity on the law for allergens and gluten free food preparation, serving customers and menu labelling. This training equips food establishments to deliver a safe dining experience, while instilling confidence and trust in their customers.

Hilary Croft, CEO of Coeliac UK, said: "We are incredibly proud of the scheme and its growth over the last 10 years. By joining the Coeliac UK Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme, catering establishments are able to give customers certainty of the gluten status of a dish beyond the use of the wording 'gluten free' on menus. By law, food labelled as gluten free must contain no more than 20 parts per million of gluten – accredited partners commit to

going over and above this and meet an exacting standard, and this assurance plays an important role in venue choice.”

Coeliac UK developed the Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme on peer-reviewed research and has established a rigorous process to ensure establishments adhere to best practice for safe gluten free catering. The following illustrates<sup>5</sup> the process to achieve the Gluten Free Accreditation:



Hilary Croft continued: “The need and demand for safe eating environments for those following a gluten free diet, which is crucial for people with coeliac disease, continues to grow. We will be continuing our work to increase the number of venues carrying the accreditation into 2023 and beyond - and I encourage any caterer that is not currently accredited to get in touch with us to learn more about its benefits for them as a business, and their customers.”

Accredited UK businesses are already benefitting from the scheme, experiencing an uplift in their sales and consumer loyalty, as well as receiving excellent consumer feedback. Helen Allan, Director of Food Safety and Technical at Domino’s Pizza, explained: “Working with Coeliac UK as part of the accreditation process gave us the benefit of their insight and expertise, which we applied to our catering practices to ensure we met the Gluten Free Standard. The response from the coeliac community was overwhelming and we have seen an increase in business volumes, as well as fantastic feedback.”

Hannah Thompson, Marketing Director at Prezzo, added: “Prezzo is proud of our Gluten Free Accreditation from Coeliac UK. We’re delighted to offer our customers a variety of over 40 gluten free dishes throughout our adult and kids’ menu. Working with Coeliac UK gives our customers the reassurance that all strict standards are adhered to. Our

restaurant teams are fully trained and confident in cooking and serving our delicious gluten free dishes. It means more people can experience the joy of Italian dining at Prezzo.”

Coeliac UK has made the Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme as accessible as possible by offering a scalable annual accreditation fee, to help even small independents offer safe gluten free food.

To find out more about Coeliac UK’s Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme and discover its full range of benefits, please visit: <https://www.coeliac.org.uk/food-businesses>

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For more information, please contact the team at McKenna Townsend:

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## Notes to Editors

### References:

1. The term gluten free is covered by European regulation (Regulation (EU) No 828/2014) and embedded in UK law. To label a dish gluten free on a menu, dishes must contain 20 parts per million (ppm) or less of gluten.  
<https://www.coeliac.org.uk/food-businesses/retailers/gluten-free-and-the-law/>
2. Social media polls completed via Coeliac UK’s Facebook and Instagram Stories in January 2023 with 1,736 votes
3. Coeliac UK, ‘[Accreditation for the Catering Industry](#)’
4. Lumina Intelligence, ‘[UK Eating Out Market Report 2022](#)’ and ‘[UK Restaurant Market Report 2021/22](#)’
5. The Gluten Free Accreditation process illustration is owned by Coeliac UK. If you use or feature the graphic, it must be credited to Coeliac UK under copyright law

### About the Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme:

- The Gluten Free Accreditation Scheme was launched by Coeliac UK in 2012 and is the only scheme of its type in the UK
- The scheme is a charity led and run initiative and does not receive any government funding
- Coeliac UK has trained over 4,000 catering staff across the country
- Gluten Free accreditation can be found in around 3,000 food and catering establishments across the UK, ranging from cafes, restaurants, schools and hospitals

### About Coeliac UK:

For over 50 years, Coeliac UK has been the expert on coeliac disease and the gluten free diet. We are an independent charity helping people living without gluten to live happier, healthier lives. We do this by providing trustworthy advice and support, funding critical research into coeliac disease, working with healthcare professionals to improve diagnosis

and fighting for better availability of gluten free food. And we do it all so that one day, no one's life will be limited by gluten.

For more information visit: [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk)

See our [fact sheet](#)

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