

Supplier Quality Commitment



This document outlines the minimum quality standards stated in GfK's global quality program¹ and its commitment to clients. GfK expects its suppliers to adhere to these standards when providing project services and in all cases GfK may require proof standards have been applied on a specific piece of work.

Supplier will not outsource or sub-contract any GfK work. When/if supplier must engage partners for GfK projects, they must notify and gain written approval from GfK. Supplier must share with GfK the names of all sub-contractors they plan to use prior to using them. Notification and written approval from GfK must occur before utilization of any partners. When sub-contracting work, the same Supplier Quality Commitment standards apply to any sub-contractors. Supplier will ensure that any sub-contractors they work with will adhere to and deliver according to GfK Supplier Commitment standards. In addition, supplier will share with GfK the evaluation and vetting process utilized to select the sub-contract partner and will provide GfK with the sub-contractor's quality management details and will outline for GfK how they plan to monitor and ensure the quality of the work delivered by the sub-contract partner.

Supplier acknowledges and agrees that the terms and conditions outlined in the most recent Master Services Agreement between GfK and supplier will apply to any work performed by Supplier. In the case where a Master Services Agreement between GfK and Supplier does not exist, Supplier acknowledges and agrees that the Conditions of Purchase found at www.gfk.com/supplier will apply to any work performed by Supplier. The latest version of the GfK Supplier Quality Commitment can be found at this same web page. It is the responsibility of and obligation of Supplier to ensure they are working with and adhering to the quality standards outlined in the latest version of the Supplier Quality Commitment.

I. File and Data Transfer

1. Supplier agency will securely transfer all files that include data.
2. When files contain personally identifiable information (PII) or personal health information (PHI), files must be delivered using either a secure FTP site or file encryption software.
3. According to GDPR regulations (<https://eugdpr.org/>), when files containing PII and/or PHI are transferred between GfK and supplier, a Data Processing Agreement must be in place between GfK and the supplier. It is the mutual obligation/responsibility between GfK and supplier to ensure this data processing agreement is implemented.

II. Translations

1. Supplier agency will assign translations to professional translators with language skills comparable to mother-tongue competence in the source and target languages
2. Supplier agency will ensure assigned translator has the appropriate subject matter expertise, e.g., technology, health, legal, etc.

¹ GfK's global quality standards are aligned with ISO 20252. GfK ISO certified companies are required to use suppliers who are either ISO certified or who clearly demonstrate they work to ISO levels.

3. Supplier agency will perform a quality review of the translation before it is delivered to GfK; the quality review will be done by someone other than the original translator and who has similar subject matter and language competence
4. GfK and/or its clients will review and approve translations before they are used for any part of data collection and/or delivery.
5. Supplier agency will perform an additional quality check once the survey translation has been applied to our program. This link review must be completed by the original translator or the translator who completed the quality review. The link reviewer must be able to follow survey skip patterns to ensure all survey paths are tested to ensure the translated text appears correctly for all questions.

III. Survey Scripting

1. Supplier agency will perform internal quality control on survey scripts before delivering them to GfK; documentation of internal testing is required and may be requested. Supplier internal quality control checks must be completed by someone other than the original programmer.
2. All change requests, revisions and corrections must be documented in one master project document.
3. Supplier agency may not release survey scripts to interviewers/respondents until GfK has provided written acceptance the script is accurate and approved for data collection.
4. In some cases, GfK's client will want to test the survey script. In such instances, client communication, including change requests, will be managed by GfK.

IV. Sample List Cleaning & Programming

1. Supplier agency will clean and program GfK provided sample list files based on the specifications provided by GfK
2. Supplier agency will maintain a file of all records removed or suppressed from the initial file.
3. Supplier agency will monitor outputs vis-à-vis historical norms.
4. Supplier agency will document any programs used for independent logic checks used to ensure accuracy of sampling logic.
5. Supplier agency will provide GfK with a report after the sample processing and/or cleaning with the status of each sample record; specific report template may be provided by GfK.

V. Sample List Procurement (Offline)

1. For offline projects, supplier will provide GfK details regarding targeting and source of sample planned for use.
2. GfK must approve sample plan prior to supplier purchasing and/or using the sample for any offline project.

Supplier Quality Commitment

VI. Online Sample

1. All suppliers that are providing online sample must employ panel quality and security measures at recruitment, profiling and survey pre-screening that include (at minimum): deduplication software, bot detection mitigation software, fraud network comparison software, reward payment monitoring, trap questions, speeding checks, straight-lining checks, panelist participation rules, blacklisting or quarantining of problematic respondents, double opt-in panelist recruitment and survey specific secure entry/end page links and controls.
2. All suppliers that are aggregating online sample sources via a marketplace or other aggregation platform must employ a documented, systematic supplier quality assessment program for those sample sources they allow into their marketplace/aggregation platform. Those sample sources accessed via the supplier's marketplace or other aggregation platform for GfK projects must meet the security and quality measures noted above in point #1.
3. All suppliers that are aggregating online sample sources via a marketplace or other aggregation platform will provide feedback to GfK immediately when there are sample sources within the marketplace or other aggregation platform that are found to be of poor quality so that GfK can decide if the sample source can still remain available for use on GfK projects.
4. All suppliers that are providing online sample directly and/or via a marketplace or other aggregation platform will work with GfK when fraudulent respondents are identified. GfK reserves the right to have those respondents removed from active projects and/or prohibit identified respondents from accessing future GfK projects.

VII. Data Collection: CAWI (Online)

1. Detailed data collection requirements will be documented in the Project Specification Sheet/ or Vendor Instruction Sheet. A separate Quota Target & Sample Instruction Form will be provided, as appropriate
2. Supplier agency will complete a minimum of 10% of the completed interviews during the soft launch. The total number of completes desired will be confirmed by the GfK Field Manager prior to launching as the total percentage is just an estimate. Once the desired number of completes are obtained from the soft launch, the supplier agency will be instructed to pause data collection so GfK can complete appropriate Quality Assurance and Data Validation checks.
3. Supplier agencies are to be aware that the following tools will be or may be used during data collection to prevent duplication and/or bots in addition to the supplier agency tools.
 - a. GfK's proprietary fingerprinting tool (used to prevent duplication across panels) will be used for most online panel samples routed through surveys hosted by GfK control for sample duplication. (Consumer only). Our proprietary fingerprinting tool will not be used for HC, B2B or Client List Sample.
 - b. All surveys are checked to ensure they meet our minimum survey length requirements. The cases that fail to meet that requirement are not considered completed interviews.
 - c. A CAPTCHA has been implemented to minimize the risk of bots and protect data quality.
4. A data collection status report will be available via a live reporting link. The supplier agency is responsible to monitor the progress of the fieldwork using this link. The status report will include quota achieved, length of interview, incidence, terminates and other diagnostic information to help identify sample issues, etc. where action may need to be taken. GfK may set additional criteria to include in the progress report at the outset of the project.

Supplier Quality Commitment

5. Fraudulent interviews or surveys that do not meet our quality standards will not be accepted and have to be replaced by the supplier at no additional cost to GfK. In addition the supplier will be responsible for covering any additional GfK costs associated with the management of the fraud/quality issues.

VIII. Data Collection: Interviewer Training

1. Supplier agency will ensure the appropriate level of basic training for all interviewers before they are assigned to a GfK project.
2. Basic training shall be no less than 6 hours for telephone interviewers and no less than 12 hours for face-to-face interviewers.
3. Basic interviewer training content shall cover those topics identified in **Appendix 1** at a minimum.
4. Supplier agency will provide refresher training to interviewers who have not interviewed on any project for 6 months or longer before being assigned to a GfK project; refresher training will cover professionalism, screening, sample management and disposition, and classification/social grading, at a minimum.
5. Supplier agency will partake in client and/or industry specific trainings (e.g. Adverse Events training) as needed and will provide proof of training upon request.

IX. Data Collection: Project Set-up, Interviewer Briefing & Assignment

1. Supplier agency will be briefed by GfK and receive documented instructions for interviewer briefing.
2. GfK reserves the right to attend/participate in the interviewer briefing and/or have the end-client attend/participate in the interviewer briefing.
3. Upon request, the interviewer briefing must be recorded (ideally via video recording). Where this is not possible, supplier must alert GfK. Recording of the briefing to be completed in alignment with GDPR regulations.
4. Supplier agency will ensure each interviewer assigned to a GfK project is briefed on that project using the GfK provided briefing instructions prior to conducting respondent interviews.
5. Interviewers/recruiters must follow the GfK screener wording and logic verbatim. This also applies to the entire questionnaire. Supplier will not change screener during the course of recruitment and/or data collection. If supplier agency feels there is a reason to modify screening questions during the recruitment and follow up on them during the main interview, they must receive written approval from GfK.
6. Supplier agency will ensure each interviewer completes a minimum of one test interview for the assigned project as part of the briefing; agency will review PAPI test surveys prior to interviewer conducting respondent surveys. For tracking projects, if any changes are made to the questionnaire, the interviewers must be re-briefed on the project. Evidence of completed test interviews may be requested by GfK.
7. Supplier must assign unique interviewer identification (ID) numbers to all interviewers assigned to GfK projects. Those unique ID numbers must only be used by the interviewer to whom they were assigned (no sharing or recycling of ID numbers across different interviewers within AND across projects). The assigned unique ID numbers must be utilized by all interviewers assigned to GfK projects.
8. ID numbers for all interviewers assigned to GfK projects must be provided to GfK at the beginning of each project (and updated as new interviewers are assigned to projects).

9. Each completed survey must include the unique interviewer ID number. For situations where supplier partners with a sub-contractor (after gaining approval from GfK), the same unique interviewer ID requirements apply.
10. For F2F projects, supplier will provide GfK with a detailed project execution plan outlining the details for sampling, targeting and recruiting respondents. GfK to approve the plan. Any changes to project execution plan must be approved by GfK.

X. Data Collection: Recruitment Validation

1. Supplier agency will validate all respondent recruitment information prior to the date of the research event (Focus Group, IDI, Location, Clinic, etc.) and at the time of the event.
2. Prior to the research event, respondent recruitment will be validated using an appropriate re-contact method; in the case of telephone recruitment, live monitoring can be substituted for re-contact.
3. At the research event, respondent identity will be verified via physical identification document.
4. Validation will be performed by someone other than the recruiter.
5. GfK may validate respondent recruitment and/or request proof of supplier agency validation. Documentation of validation is required and must be stored for a period no less than 1 year.

XI. Data Collection: Survey Validation & Survey Reporting – F2F

1. Supplier agency will validate at least 10% (20% for the fieldwork of media audience currencies) of face-to-face interviews; validations will be done by someone other than the interviewer. An attempt to validate a proportionate percentage of each interviewer's work is required. Validations must use appropriate re-contact method, and be performed using a validation script created by GfK. Validation method must be communicated to and approved by GfK. If the supplier creates the validation script, it must focus on screening and demographic information and must be approved by GfK before the validations begin. Evidence of completed validations and a report indicating the outcome of all validation attempts must be delivered to GfK for all projects.
2. For random route / address random sample, the starting point and navigation procedure of the random walk has to be controlled via maps, e.g. Google maps. The planned routes should be shared with and approved by GfK. Supplier must show proof that the agreed-to random route / address random sample plan was followed
3. Supplier agency will begin validations following the first transmission of survey data and continue validating throughout the field period.
4. 10% of each interviewer's work will be validated via supervisor accompaniment and/or callback validation. For each project, each interviewer's first two completed surveys will be reviewed by a supervisor to ensure quality. Where this is not possible, GfK must be notified.
5. Supplier agency will provide GfK with validation reports weekly throughout the data collection and validation process. Validation reporting will include the data collected during the validation process along with the outcome of all validation attempts made (e.g. no answer, wrong number, etc). Supplier will provide interviewer ID as part of the validation reporting. Evidence of validations may be requested by GfK. Evidence of validations (not recordings) must be stored for a period no less than 1 year.

Supplier Quality Commitment

6. Where supplier agency is programming and hosting the survey or where supplier is utilizing their tablets/devices to conduct the surveys, supplier agency will provide to GfK reporting that includes statistics such as:
 - number of completes per interviewer per day
 - average survey length per interviewer
 - number of terminates per interviewer per day
 - IP address (if not able to provide GfK with this information, supplier must alert GfK)
 - GPS location of device used to conduct each survey (if not able to provide GfK with this information, supplier must alert GfK)
 - Interviewer ID along with start and end times for all completes, partials, terminates
 - other reporting that will be discussed on a project by project basis
7. Where supplier is collecting respondent contact details for validation purposes, supplier agency will provide to GfK a report showing the number of contact details collected per interviewer.
8. Where issues are found with an interviewer's work, GfK will work closely with the supplier and team to investigate the issue and supplier agency will validate 100% of that interviewer's work.
9. Where there are delays with supplier's validation reporting, GfK reserves the right to increase the supplier validation percentage requirement.
10. GfK may perform validation of supplier agency work and/or hire a third party to conduct validations.
11. Supplier agency will check data records, as appropriate, to ensure completeness of data records, sample/quota performance, consistency of responses and comparison of responses between fieldworkers, markets, etc.
12. Where checking of data records is the only viable method of validation that can be used, e.g., observational research, self-completion, retail audits, etc, the required level validation is 100%. When checking of data records is used in conjunction with other validation methods stated above, no specific validation level is required.
13. Fraudulent interviews will not be accepted and have to be replaced by the supplier at no additional cost to GfK. In addition the supplier will be responsible for covering any additional GfK costs associated with the management of the fraud/quality issues.
14. Where it is determined that interviewers have produced fraudulent surveys, those interviewers must be removed from current GfK projects and they must be immediately blacklisted from future GfK projects.

XII. Data Collection: Survey Validation & Survey Reporting – CATI

1. Supplier agency will validate at least 10% (20% for the fieldwork of media audience currencies) of telephone interviews via live monitoring or recordings with 75% of the interview monitored. Live monitorings can be considered validations only if the monitor both listens to the survey being conducted and can see the responses being entered into the program by the interviewers. Recordings can be considered validations only when the monitor both listens to the recording and compares what is heard in the recording with what has been entered into the survey program.
2. When live monitoring / review of recordings is not possible and/or does not meet the requirements noted, at least 10% (20% for the fieldwork of media audience currencies) of

Supplier Quality Commitment

completed interviews will be validated through callback validations. An attempt to validate a proportionate percentage of each interviewer's work is required. Callback validations will be done by someone other than the interviewer, use appropriate re-contact method, and be performed using a validation script created by GfK. If the supplier creates the validation script, it must focus on screening and demographic information and must be approved by GfK before the validations begin. Evidence of completed validations and a report indicating the outcome of all validation attempts must be delivered to GfK for all projects.

3. 10% of each interviewer's work will be validated via live monitoring, review of recording and/or callback validation. For each project, each interviewer's first two completed surveys will be reviewed by a supervisor to ensure quality. Where this is not possible, GfK must be notified.
4. At minimum one supervisor for every 15 interviewers is required.
5. Supplier agency will monitor telephone interviewing throughout the field period and will monitor some portion of each interviewer's work. Supplier agency will begin validations following the first transmission of survey data and continue validating throughout the field period.
6. Where issues are found with an interviewer's work GfK will work closely with the supplier and team to investigate the issue and supplier agency will validate 100% of that interviewer's work.
7. Where there are delays with supplier's validation reporting, GfK reserves the right to increase the supplier validation percentage requirement.
8. GfK may monitor interviewers upon request. GfK may perform validation of supplier agency work and/or hire a third party to conduct validations.
9. Supplier agency will provide GfK with validation reports weekly throughout the data collection and validation process. Validation reporting will include the data collected during the validation process along with the outcome of all validation attempts made (e.g. no answer, wrong number, etc). Supplier will provide interviewer ID as part of the validation reporting. Evidence of validations and/or interview recordings may be requested by GfK. Evidence of validations (not recordings) must be stored for a period no less than 1 year.
10. Where supplier agency is programming and hosting the survey, supplier agency will provide to GfK reporting that includes statistics such as:
 - number of completes per interviewer
 - average survey length per interviewer
 - number of terminates per interviewer
 - other reporting that will be discussed on a project by project basis
11. Where supplier is collecting respondent contact details for validation purposes, supplier agency will provide to GfK a report showing the % of contact details collected per interviewer
12. Supplier agency will check data records, as appropriate, to ensure completeness of data records, sample/quota performance, consistency of responses and comparison of responses between fieldworkers, markets, etc.
13. Fraudulent interviews will not be accepted and have to be replaced by the supplier at no additional cost to GfK. In addition the supplier will be responsible for covering any additional GfK costs associated with the management of the fraud/quality issues.
14. Where it is determined that interviewers have produced fraudulent surveys, those interviewers must be removed from current GfK projects and they must be immediately blacklisted from future GfK projects.

Supplier Quality Commitment

XIII. Data Collection: Fieldwork Monitoring & Reporting

1. Supplier agency will monitor fieldwork progress and provide GfK with a progress report on the schedule identified at the start of the project but will occur no less than once per week.
2. The progress report will include quota achieved to target, length of interview, incidence, response and/or refusal rates, and other diagnostic information to help identify sample issues, etc. where action may need to be taken. GfK may set additional criteria to include in the progress report at the outset of the project.
3. Throughout field work, supplier agency will provide GfK with ongoing field reports including number of dialing attempts per record and the disposition of each sample record. Reports will be delivered on an agreed upon schedule. Specific report may be provided by GfK.
4. At conclusion of data collection, supplier will deliver a sample/data file that includes interviewer ID along with start and end times for all completes, partials, terminates and shows each sample record attempted along with the number of attempts and the result of the final attempt made on the sample records (final disposition code). The disposition codes to be used have to be approved by GfK. Potential deviations from these requirements in the context of PAPI interviews have to be discussed with and approved by GfK on a project by project base.
5. Supplier agency will monitor individual interviewer productivity and quality throughout data collection.
6. Where supplier agency programs and hosts the survey, they will provide GfK with interviewer level productivity and quality statistics (specific reports to be determined on a project-by-project basis).
7. Where GfK programs and hosts the survey, supplier agency will request and receive interviewer level productivity and quality reports for use in managing data collection (specific reports to be determined on a project-by-project basis).
8. Each interviewer will complete no more than 10% of the total interviews for a project. If there is a need for this percentage to be adjusted, supplier agency must discuss with and gain approval from the GfK project team.
9. GfK may request regular meetings to review project status

XIV. Print & Mail

1. Supplier agency will provide GfK with a physical proof of all materials to approve before printing.
2. Supplier agency will randomly inspect each batch of print to verify quality of printing.
3. Supplier agency will randomly inspect 5% of each mail batch to ensure accuracy of mail match merge, incentive placement, etc.
4. Supplier agency will, when applicable, inspect undelivered returns for quality and accuracy, e.g., correct address, postage, etc.
5. Supplier agency will, when applicable, provide GfK with a mail return report weekly or as requested.
6. Supplier agency will immediately notify GfK in writing if any quality issues are identified.

Supplier Quality Commitment



XV. Data Entry

1. Supplier agency will follow rejection and substitution logic provided by GfK regardless of data entry program used.
2. Supplier agency will perform entry verification at the levels specified below; verification will be performed by a person other than the operator performing the data entry.
3. When a logic data entry program is used, the minimum verification level is 5%.
4. When a simple data entry program is used, the minimum verification level is 10%.
5. When excessive or consistent errors are found with an individual operator's work, 100% of that operator's work will be verified.
6. When scanning software is used, supplier agency will validate the program prior, using appropriate methods.
7. Documentation of verification results is required, may be requested and must be stored for a period no less than 1 year.

XVI. Coding

1. Supplier agency will perform coding using the GfK approved or provided code frame.
2. For Healthcare projects, supplier agency will be trained on adhere to GfK Adverse Events reporting procedures and/or client specific Adverse Events reporting procedures. Proof of training may be requested by GfK.
3. Supplier agency will review responses coded as "Other" when it contains 10% or more of the total responses. The supplier agency will review the "Other" codes to determine whether or not a new code is needed.
4. Supplier agency will clearly mark or highlight new codes so they can be easily identified.
5. Supplier agency will verify a minimum of 5% coded responses; verification will be performed by a person other than the individual performing the coding.
6. When excessive or consistent errors are found with an individual coder's work, 100% of that coder's work will be verified.
7. Documentation of verification results is required, may be requested and must be stored for a period no less than 1 year.

XVII. Data Processing

1. Supplier agency will develop data files and/or data tabulations based on the standards and specifications provided by GfK.
2. Supplier agency will develop and perform a data validation program prior to preparing data files or tabulations; data cleaning will be done based on instructions provided by GfK; the original file before cleaning has to be saved and handed over to GfK upon request.
3. Supplier agency will perform internal quality control on data files and tabulations before delivering them to GfK; documentation of internal testing is required and may be requested.

Supplier Quality Commitment



4. Where applicable, supplier agency will include a structural description of files, label contents of the file, provide instructions for or limitations of use, and/or encrypt files.
5. GfK will provide written acceptance that the data files and/or tabulations meet the specifications and are complete and accurate.

XVIII. Charting

1. Supplier agency will develop charts according to GfK specifications, using templates provided.
2. Supplier agency will review charts for quality and accuracy before delivering them to GfK; review of charts is to be performed by a person other than the individual creating the chart.
3. GfK will provide written acceptance that charts meet the specifications and are accurate.

Appendix 1 – Basic Interviewer Training Requirements

Company Background

1. Introduction to the organization, personnel, and administration
2. Use of the organization's employment and/or training manuals
3. Role of the supervisory team and head office

General Knowledge

1. Purpose and value of Market Research
2. Market Research Code of Conduct
3. Importance of accurate and ethical data collection
4. Appropriate aspects of data protection regulation
5. Appropriate elements of health and safety guidelines
6. Explanation of the types of research that will be undertaken
7. Review of sampling and recruitment methods
8. Market Research terminology and jargon

Interviewing Techniques

1. Professionalism, courtesy, and general manner
2. Making introductions, including use of identity cards where applicable
3. Assurance of respondent confidentiality and anonymity
4. Encouraging respondent participation
5. Special care instructions for interviewing children, older adults, etc.
6. Use of "Thank You" leaflets/reassurances where applicable

Appendix 1 – Basic Interviewer Training Requirements (continued)

Sample Administration & Disposition

1. How to manage paper sample, as applicable
2. How to disposition sample attempts, including a review of all sample dispositions, definitions, and how/when to use each

Questionnaire Administration

1. Identifying and screening the correct respondent
2. Types of questions and response categories
3. Probing and clarifying
4. Demographics, classification, and/or social grading
5. Controlling the interview, common problem, and how to respond
6. Use of visual aids, concepts, and/or products, as applicable
7. Quota controls and use of quota control sheets, as applicable
8. Technical training where CATI or CAPI equipment is used
9. Practical experience interviewing using test/orientation project

Quality Control and Assessment

1. System for monitoring progress of individual work
2. Quality control procedures, including live monitoring, validation, and accompaniment
3. Appraisal method and frequency