

Sample Labels

The accurate labelling of samples is crucial for ground investigation. Samples that are labelled incorrectly or with mistakes are often excluded from testing or the report due to their lack of clear identification, making them inadmissible within the report.

All samples should be labelled immediately after being extracted from the borehole. The samples need to be marked to eliminate any uncertainty about the upper and lower ends of the sample. After sampling and sealing, the labels must be affixed, displaying the following necessary information in accordance with BS EN 22475: Part 1:

Project identification:	<i>i.e. Project name and number</i>
Location identification:	<i>i.e. "Borehole 3"</i>
Sampling date:	<i>i.e. 10/04/2023</i>
Sample identification:	<i>i.e. "Sample 4"</i>
Sample type:	<i>i.e. U/100</i>
Sample depth from reference level:	<i>i.e. From 1.20m to 1.65m</i>

Additional information may be included but is not a requirement. A sample label can possess a unique reference number, often achieved through barcoding.

If samples are to be preserved with their natural moisture content, they should be sealed in an airtight container or coated with wax immediately.

Each sample must bear multiple means of identification to ensure recognition, even if one label becomes damaged or goes missing. Typically, this involves placing one label externally on the container or bag and another internally. The label should be securely attached to the sample, ensuring it remains affixed during transportation and storage. Labels should be placed on the body of tubs or jars, not on the lids. Both the box and liner must be labelled when labelling cores.


The label should be imprinted with indelible ink and possess the necessary durability to withstand environmental factors and the transportation of samples.

If the sample comprises potentially contaminated material or could contain hazardous substances, the label should include a warning, indicated, for example, by coloured (normally red) labels.

The sample details must be recorded on the Driller's Log. (see BDA Technical Guidance – Driller's Daily Report)

The BDA audit will check that all the relevant information is recorded by the drilling team. If any one or more pieces of information are missing or incorrect, this will be noted as a single minor non-conformance for audit purposes. As such, the BDA recommended that all companies looking to undertake a BDA audit review their sample label templates to ensure that all the above information is captured.

Example of a sample label:

Project	Buckley Hill Lane, Liverpool		
Project No.	P7248	Ref.	2
From	2.00	To	2.20
Hole No.	78	Type	ES
Sampled by	.	Date	16/03/16
GRM Development Solutions Ltd			
 EQ05160316002			