

Date 25 June 2021
Our Ref 2021-000630
Enquiries to phs.foi@phs.scot

Dear Mark Paul,

Freedom of Information Reference: 2021-000630

Thank you for your information request of 9th June 2021.

“Can you please provide me with the details of how many cycles are carried out within the labs in relation to the PCR tests for Covid to determine the results (positive or negative)”

I confirm that Public Health Scotland holds the information you have requested.

There is no “standard” cycle threshold (Ct) value. There are a number of factors involved in the interpretation of a PCR test and are dependent on individual manufacturers and local validation. Ct values are not directly comparable between assays and may not be reported by some PCR platforms in use. Individual laboratories will hold details of the Ct reached for each individual specimen and have quality systems in place to ensure the veracity of the results, for further information, you can contact NHS National Labs Programme via the following link <https://www.labs.scot.nhs.uk/contact-us/>.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, you have the right to request a review. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this correspondence, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. The review will be undertaken by a reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process. The reviewer can be contacted as follows:

The FOI Reviewer
Public Health Scotland
Gyle Square
1 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh
EH12 9EB
Email: phs.foi@phs.scot

If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months of receipt of our review response. You can do this by using the Scottish Information Commissioner’s Office online appeals service at www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner’s response, you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

Yours sincerely,

Scott Heald
Director of Data Driven Innovation
Public Health Scotland