



This report is available to view on our website: <https://www.hsl.gov.uk/proficiency-testing-schemes/group-reports>

ROUND 86 SAMPLE DETAILS

380 labs were assigned to Round 86 with 371 labs submitting complete results. All samples were prepared for circulation following our normal internal screening process and were scanned using stereozoom microscopy to assess homogeneity and suitability. Approximately 10% of all samples prepared were validated by 17 independent laboratories using either PLM or SEM analytical techniques.

The round consisted of four manufactured or commercial samples of materials that may contain asbestos and would typically be submitted for analysis at an asbestos testing laboratory:

Sample 1 was a manufactured plaster sample containing both 0.2% crocidolite asbestos and 0.2% chrysotile asbestos.

Sample 2 was a commercial vermiculite product.

Sample 3 was a manufactured non-asbestos painted plasterboard sample containing plastic fibres within the black paint layer. The plasterboard also contains organic fibres as part of its production contained within the outer cardboard layer.

Sample 4 was a manufactured mortar sample containing 0.4% chrysotile asbestos with added viscose fibres.

The majority of errors in Round 86 occurred on Sample 4 with a small number of labs failing to either identify the chrysotile present, misidentifying it or reporting incorrect asbestos types.

This sample contained viscose fibres along with the chrysotile asbestos and a thorough examination at both the stereozoom stage and further microscopical analysis should have led analysts to positively identify the viscose fibres and dismiss them as asbestos fibres.

Sample	Validation Number	Product Type	Target Component	Asbestos Present (%)	Other Added Fibres Present
1	365	Plaster (Manufactured)	Crocidolite & Chrysotile	0.2% of each asbestos type	None
2	366	Vermiculite (Commercial)	Non-Asbestos	N/A	None
3	367	Board (Manufactured)	Non-Asbestos	N/A	Plastic fibres
4	368	Mortar (Manufactured)	Chrysotile	0.4%	Viscose fibres



GROUP REPORT

Round 86

ASBESTOS IN MATERIALS SCHEME (AIMS)

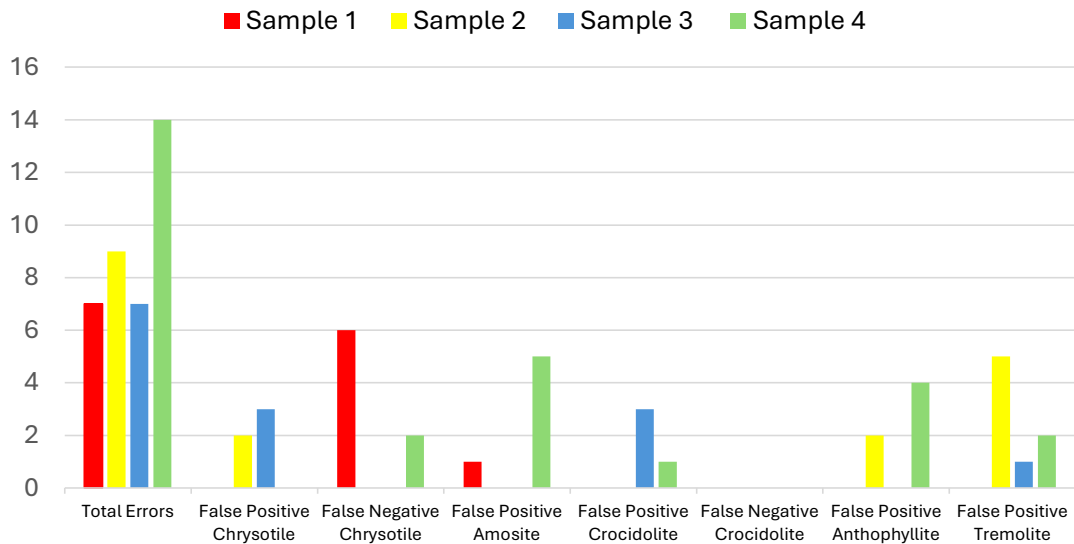
October 2025



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1. Type Of Errors Obtained

Chart 1 - AIMS Round 86 Errors

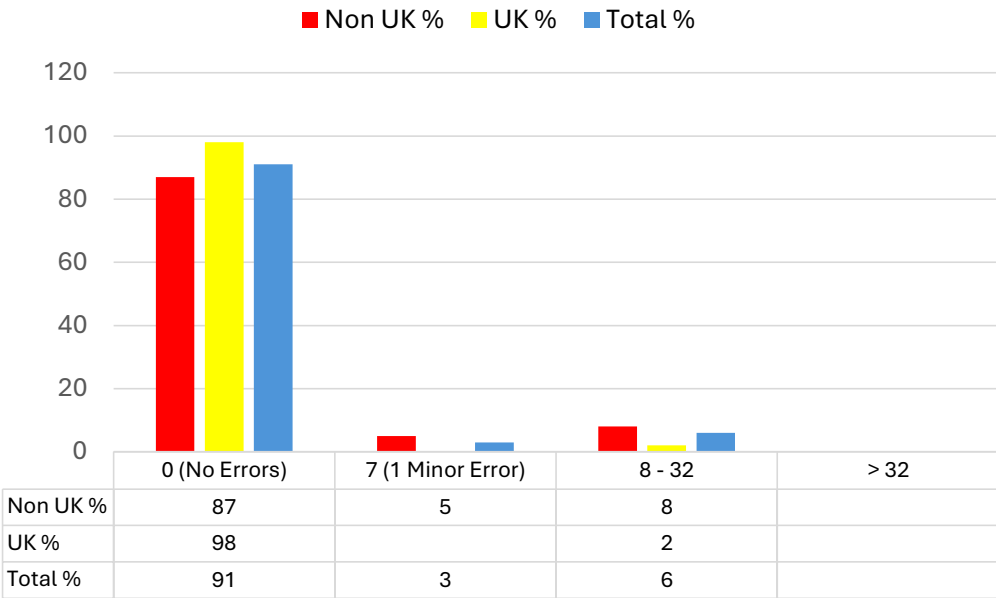


False Negative = Component has been missed. False Positive = Component has been incorrectly identified as present.

2. Round Scores

Chart 2 illustrates the distribution of scores for all participating laboratories. 338 (91%) laboratories obtained a score of zero in this round, indicating that these laboratories had not made any errors. The distribution of scores obtained by UK (United Kingdom) and Non-UK laboratories is also compared; 145 (98%) UK laboratories and 193 (87%) Non-UK laboratories obtained a score of zero for the round.

Chart 2 - Distribution & Comparison of Errors AIMS Round 86





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Chart 3 shows the percentage distribution of cumulative three round scores for all UK and Non-UK laboratories. 18 laboratories (5%) in total had not yet completed 3 rounds and therefore did not accumulate a score. Following this round :

- 284 laboratories (74%) obtained a good cumulative score (0 – 7 penalty points cumulatively).
- 65 laboratories (17%) obtained an acceptable cumulative score (8 – 32 penalty points cumulatively)
- 13 laboratories (3%) obtained an unsatisfactory cumulative score (33 or more penalty points cumulatively)

Chart 3 - Distribution & Comparison of Cumulative Scores
Following AIMS Round 86

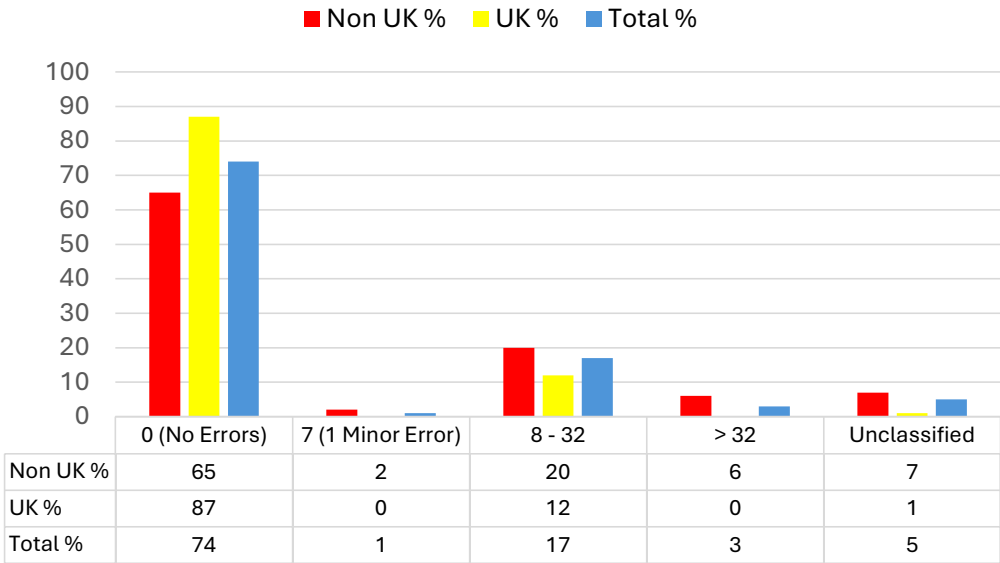
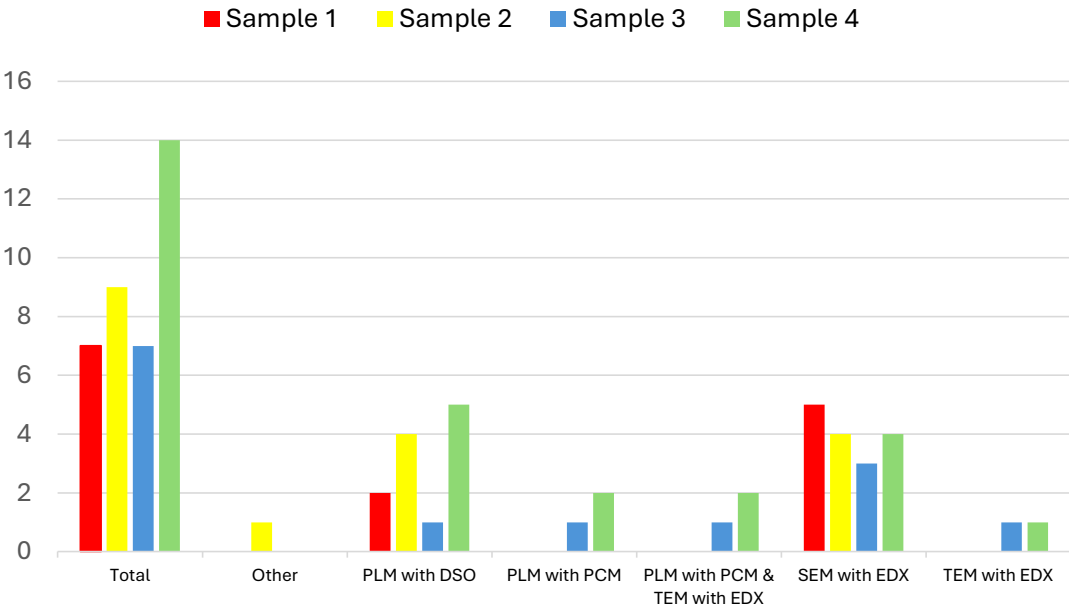


Chart 4 shows the number of errors made on each sample for all UK and Non-UK laboratories. PLM - polarised light microscopy. DSO - dispersion staining objective. PCM - phase contrast microscopy, SEM - scanning electron microscopy. EDX - energy dispersive X-ray. TEM - transmission electron microscopy. XRD - X-Ray diffraction.

Chart 4 - AIMS Round 86 Errors by Method





GROUP REPORT
Round 86

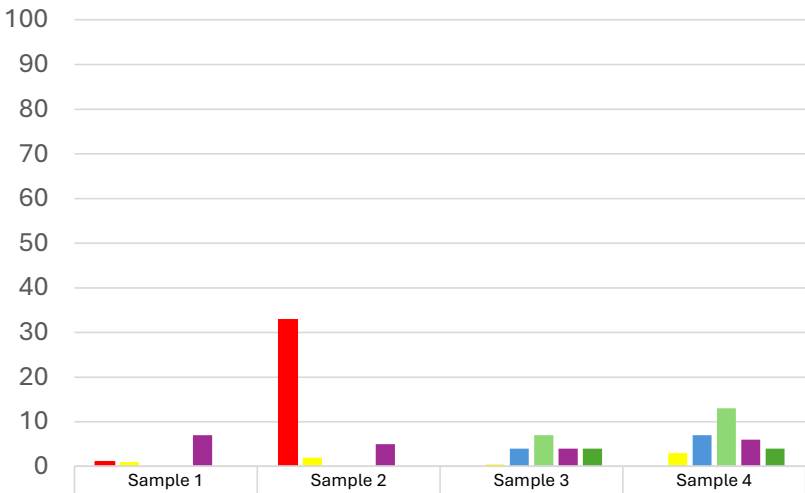
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Chart 5 shows the percentage of sample errors by method. Of the 371 participating labs in R86 the method used in terms of the number of labs was as follows : FTIR, 3 labs; PLM with DSO, 189 labs; PLM with PCM, 27 labs; SEM with EDX, 72 labs; TEM with EDX, 25 labs; PLM with DSO & TEM with EDX 26 labs; PLM with PCM & SEM with EDX, 12 labs; PLM with PCM & TEM with EDX, 14 labs, and Other, 3 labs.

Chart 5- Percentage of Errors by Sample Round 86



Other %	1	33		
PLM with DSO %	1	2	0.5	3
PLM with PCM %			4	7
PLM with PCM & TEM with EDX %			7	13
SEM with EDX %	7	5	4	6
TEM with EDX %			4	4

3. For Your Information - AIMS NEWS !!

Sample Investigations

Following R85 there were three sample investigations for validation number 362. HSE fully investigated all three samples and assessed the round data. No reports were reissued. If you require a sample to be investigated by HSE please contact the team within 10 working days of the report being issued. Further details regarding sample investigations can be found in our Information Book for Participants, available in the Useful Links Section of our website page: [AIMS](#)

Next Round

AIMS R87 will be packed before the Christmas break, so please ensure you check your contact information is up to date by logging on to the PT Online System ([HSE Proficiency Testing Schemes](#)) and clicking on 'Laboratory Details'. If you need to make any changes, please email the PT Team. Samples will be despatched by 5th January 2026.

Quality Control Samples

- We have a wide range of quality control samples available to purchase, including:
- additional rounds (PT038A) to help gain accreditation sooner
 - replacement rounds (PT038R) to replace the latest round of AIMS
 - past AIMS samples (PT040) for internal QC/ training
 - water absorption samples (PT046)
 - asbestos aggregate samples (PT047/8)
- Further information is available on our website: [PT Quality Control Samples](#)

For enquiries, please contact the PT Team by email, quoting your HSE PT Lab Number.



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