

How to spot a real peptide vendor (in 60 seconds).

Three things every legit COA will show — and four red flags vendors hope you don't notice. A practical guide to not getting scammed, getting poisoned, or getting fake.

1 annotated COA example 7 checks & flags v1.0 May 2026

Why this matters. Research peptides are an unregulated market. Anyone with a Chinese supplier and a Shopify account can sell vials. Most won't poison you. Some sell sugar pills. A few sell genuinely dirty product. The only reliable signal is the **Certificate of Analysis (COA)** — but most buyers can't read one, and shady vendors know it.

What this guide gives you. A 60-second framework for reading any COA, plus the four most common ways vendors fake legitimacy. Once you know what you're looking for, sketchy vendors get obvious fast.

What a real COA actually shows

Every batch of every peptide should arrive with — or have a downloadable link to — a one-page document called a **Certificate of Analysis**. It comes from a lab (ideally a third-party one) that has tested the actual batch and reports what's in it. Here's what one looks like in real life:

CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS		Batch #: BPC-2026-04-117
Product:	BPC-157 lyophilised powder	
Quantity:	5 mg per vial	← matches your vial
Appearance:	White lyophilised powder	
Identification (MS):	Confirmed, MW 1419.5	← molecular weight matches BPC-157
Purity (HPLC):	99.21%	← >98% is the bar
Water content:	5.4%	
Acetate content:	7.8%	
Bacterial endotoxin:	< 0.5 EU/mg	← contamination check
Test date:	2026-03-18	
Tested by:	Janoshik Analytical (third-party)	← INDEPENDENT lab

The three things you must see

- ✓ **HPLC purity \geq 98%.** Anything lower means contaminants, breakdown products, or trace solvents. Sub-95% is genuinely concerning. Sub-90% is failed product being sold off.
- ✓ **Identification confirmed by mass spectrometry (MS) or peptide mapping.** Tells you the molecule is actually what the label says — not a cheaper similar peptide swapped in.
- ✓ **Third-party lab name on the report.** Janoshik, Anabolic Lab, ChemRoar, KrakenLabs, and a handful of others. If the COA is signed by "[Vendor name] QC team," it's an in-house report — not worthless, but not independent verification either.

Four red flags vendors hope you miss

- ✗ **No COA, or COA on request only.** Real vendors put COAs publicly on the product page. "Email us for COA" is a delaying tactic that often produces a stock photo of a real lab's report — with the batch number cropped off.
- ✗ **Same COA reused across batches.** Check the batch number on the COA matches the batch number on your vial. If three different orders 6 months apart all came with the same COA, the vendor isn't testing every batch — they're recycling one good report to cover all their stock.
- ✗ **Lab name you can't find or verify.** Real third-party peptide labs publish their reports searchable on their own website. If the lab in the COA returns no results on Google, isn't on the vendor's "About" page, and has no independent presence — it's probably invented.
- ✗ **Suspiciously cheap pricing.** Real research-grade peptides are not bargain-bin. If a vendor is 60% below the median market price for the same compound, they're either dumping near-expiry stock, selling underdosed vials, or running pure scam volume. The mid-tier price is usually the safest tier.

UK / EU vs overseas sourcing

UK / EU domestic

- **Customs:** no border risk — domestic mail.
- **Speed:** 1–3 day delivery typical.
- **Returns:** consumer-rights coverage if vendor breaches contract.
- **Price:** 15–40% premium over Chinese direct.
- **COA scrutiny:** easier to verify lab claims via independent UK testing references.

Overseas (China / India)

- **Customs:** seizure risk — your parcel can vanish.
- **Speed:** 2–4 weeks typical, occasionally longer.
- **Returns:** realistically none if anything goes wrong.
- **Price:** often 40–60% cheaper at face value.
- **COA scrutiny:** harder to verify — many "labs" are actually the same supplier under a different name.

The hidden cost of overseas sourcing

The headline price is cheaper, but factor in: payment-method risk (most overseas vendors only accept crypto or bank wire, both irreversible), customs seizure rate (1 in 6 on average in the UK), and the time cost of re-ordering if your parcel disappears. Domestic at a 25% premium is often cheaper in expected value than overseas at face price.

The 60-second vendor sanity check

Before you put anything in a basket, walk this five-step check:

- ✓ **Step 1.** Open the product page. Is there a COA link or image visible without registering? If no — close tab.
- ✓ **Step 2.** Open the COA. Does it have an HPLC purity figure $\geq 98\%$, an MS or peptide-mapping identification, and a third-party lab name? If no to any — close tab.
- ✓ **Step 3.** Google the lab name. Does the lab have an independent website where you can verify report IDs? If no — be suspicious.
- ✓ **Step 4.** Compare price to the median across 3 reputable UK / EU vendors. If $>40\%$ cheaper — be suspicious.
- ✓ **Step 5.** Check the vendor has a real UK address, a working contact email, and at least one independent review on Trustpilot or a research community. If none — close tab.

A vendor that passes all five is in the top 5% of the market. A vendor that fails even one is gambling with what you put in your body.

Why we partner with DR Peps

StackCalc partners with **DR Peps** because they meet every criterion in this guide. UK-based, third-party COA on every batch (Janoshik), purity consistently >98% HPLC, mass-spec confirmed identity, transparent pricing in the mid-market band. No mystery batches, no recycled certificates.

We don't sell peptides ourselves. The DR Peps partnership lets us point you at one supplier we've actually checked, with batch records you can verify. The link is affiliated — if you buy through stackcalc, we earn a small commission. The link is also editorially-clean: we'd recommend the same vendor without the affiliation, because they're the one that passes the five-step check above.

UK-based · Royal Mail next-day **Janoshik COA** on every batch **HPLC ≥ 98%** across the catalogue

Research and educational purposes only. Information in this guide is general and based on the public structure of peptide-supply markets at the time of writing. It is not legal, medical, or import advice. Customs rules, vendor reputations, and lab affiliations change. Verify every claim about a specific vendor or lab against current sources before transacting. Compounds discussed are not licensed as medicines for human consumption unless stated otherwise.