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Australian/New Zealand Standard™

Conformity assessment—Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

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The following are represented on Committee QR-010:

Association of Accredited Certification Bodies
Australian Information Industry Association
Certification Interests (Australia)
Consumers Federation of Australia
International Accreditation Forum
Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand
National Association of Testing Authorities Australia
New Zealand Organisation for Quality

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Conformity assessment—Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee QR-010, Conformity Assessment, to supersede AS ISO/IEC 17021—2006, *Conformity assessment—Requirement for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems*.

The objective of this Standard is to specify principles and requirements for the competence, consistency and impartiality of the audit and certification of management systems of all types (e.g. quality management systems or environmental management systems) and for bodies providing these activities.

This Standard is identical with, and has been reproduced from ISO/IEC 17021:2011, *Conformity assessment—Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems*.

As this Standard is reproduced from an International Standard, the following applies:

(a) Its number appears on the cover and title page while the International Standard number appears only on the cover.

(b) In the source text 'this International Standard' should read 'this Australian/New Zealand Standard'.

(c) A full point substitutes for a comma when referring to a decimal marker.

References to International Standards should be replaced by references to Australian or Australian/New Zealand Standards, as follows:

Reference to International Standard		*Australian/New Zealand Standard*	
ISO 9000	Quality management systems—Fundamentals and vocabulary	AS/NZS ISO 9000	Quality management systems—Fundamentals and vocabulary
ISO/IEC 17000	Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles	AS ISO/IEC 17000	Conformity assessment—Vocabulary and general principles

The terms 'normative' and 'informative' have been used in this Standard to define the application of the annex to which they apply. A 'normative' annex is an integral part of a Standard, whereas an 'informative' annex is only for information and guidance.

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Full document details: AS NZS ISO IEC 17021-2011

CONTENTS

Page

1 Scope 1
2 Normative references 1
3 Terms and definitions 1
4 Principles 3
4.1 General 3
4.2 Impartiality 3
4.3 Competence 4
4.4 Responsibility 4
4.5 Openness 4
4.6 Confidentiality 4
4.7 Responsiveness to complaints 4
5 General requirements 5
5.1 Legal and contractual matters 5
5.2 Management of impartiality 5
5.3 Liability and financing 6
6 Structural requirements 7
6.1 Organizational structure and top management 7
6.2 Committee for safeguarding impartiality 7
7 Resource requirements 8
7.1 Competence of management and personnel 8
7.2 Personnel involved in the certification activities 9
7.3 Use of individual external auditors and external technical experts 10
7.4 Personnel records 10
7.5 Outsourcing 10
8 Information requirements 11
8.1 Publicly accessible information 11
8.2 Certification documents 11
8.3 Directory of certified clients 12
8.4 Reference to certification and use of marks 12
8.5 Confidentiality 13
8.6 Information exchange between a certification body and its clients 13
9 Process requirements 14
9.1 General requirements 14
9.2 Initial audit and certification 22
9.3 Surveillance activities 25
9.4 Recertification 26
9.5 Special audits 27
9.6 Suspending, withdrawing or reducing the scope of certification 27
9.7 Appeals 28
9.8 Complaints 28
9.9 Records of applicants and clients 29
10 Management system requirements for certification bodies 30
10.1 Options 30
10.2 Option 1: Management system requirements in accordance with ISO 9001 30
10.3 Option 2: General management system requirements 30

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AVA Documents
Document Sharing Hub

Full document details: AS NZS ISO IEC 17021-2011

Page

Annex A (normative) **Required knowledge and skills** **34**
Annex B (informative) **Possible evaluation methods** **35**
Annex C (informative) **Example of a process flow for determining and maintaining competence** **37**
Annex D (informative) **Desired personal behaviours** **39**
Annex E (informative) **Third-party audit and certification process** **40**
Annex F (informative) **Considerations for the audit programme, scope or plan** **42**
Bibliography **44**

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Document Sharing Hub

Full document details: AS NZS ISO IEC 17021-2011

INTRODUCTION

Certification of a management system, such as a quality or environmental management system of an organization, is one means of providing assurance that the organization has implemented a system for the management of the relevant aspects of its activities, in line with its policy.

This International Standard specifies requirements for certification bodies. Observance of these requirements is intended to ensure that certification bodies operate management system certification in a competent, consistent and impartial manner, thereby facilitating the recognition of such bodies and the acceptance of their certifications on a national and international basis. This International Standard serves as a foundation for facilitating the recognition of management system certification in the interests of international trade.

Certification of a management system provides independent demonstration that the management system of the organization

a) conforms to specified requirements,

b) is capable of consistently achieving its stated policy and objectives, and

c) is effectively implemented.

Conformity assessment such as certification of a management system thereby provides value to the organization, its customers and interested parties.

In this International Standard, Clause 4 describes the principles on which credible certification is based. These principles help the reader to understand the essential nature of certification and they are a necessary prelude to Clauses 5 to 10. These principles underpin all the requirements in this International Standard, but such principles are not auditable requirements in their own right. Clause 10 describes two alternative ways of supporting and demonstrating the consistent achievement of the requirements in this International Standard through the establishment of a management system by the certification body.

This International Standard is intended for use by bodies that carry out audit and certification of management systems. It gives generic requirements for such certification bodies performing audit and certification in the field of quality, environmental and other forms of management systems. Such bodies are referred to as certification bodies. This wording should not be an obstacle to the use of this International Standard by bodies with other designations that undertake activities covered by the scope of this document.

Certification activities involve the audit of an organization's management system. The form of attestation of conformity of an organization's management system to a specific management system standard or other normative requirements is normally a certification document or a certificate.

The publication of this International Standard includes the text of ISO/IEC 17021:2006, including amendments to delete relevant references to ISO 19011, with new text adding specific requirements for third-party certification auditing and the management of competence of personnel involved in certification.

Specific market needs have already been identified, resulting from a lack of specific and recognized requirements for third-party auditors of management systems, such as quality management systems, environmental management systems or food safety management systems. The lack of requirements for auditor competence and the way in which these auditors are managed and deployed has been identified by key interested parties, including industry interested parties, as being a drawback.

This International Standard provides a set of requirements for management systems auditing at a generic level, aimed at providing a reliable determination of conformity to the applicable requirements for certification, conducted by a competent audit team, with adequate resources and following a consistent process, with the results reported in a consistent manner.

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This International Standard is applicable to the auditing and certification of any type of management system. It is recognized that some of the requirements, and in particular those related to auditor competence, can be supplemented with additional criteria in order to achieve the expectations of the interested parties.

In this International Standard, the word “shall” indicates a requirement and the word “should” a recommendation.

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AUSTRALIAN/NEW ZEALAND STANDARD

Conformity assessment—Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

1 Scope

This International Standard contains principles and requirements for the competence, consistency and impartiality of the audit and certification of management systems of all types (e.g. quality management systems or environmental management systems) and for bodies providing these activities. Certification bodies operating to this International Standard need not offer all types of management system certification.

Certification of management systems (named in this International Standard “certification”) is a third-party conformity assessment activity (see ISO/IEC 17000:2004, 5.5). Bodies performing this activity are therefore third-party conformity assessment bodies (named in this International Standard “certification body/bodies”).

NOTE 1 Certification of a management system is sometimes also called “registration”, and certification bodies are sometimes called “registrars”.

NOTE 2 A certification body can be non-governmental or governmental (with or without regulatory authority).

NOTE 3 This International Standard can be used as a criteria document for accreditation or peer assessment or other audit processes.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 9000:2005, *Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary*

ISO/IEC 17000:2004, *Conformity assessment — Vocabulary and general principles*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 9000, ISO/IEC 17000 and the following apply.

3.1
certified client
organization whose management system has been certified

3.2
impartiality
actual and perceived presence of objectivity

NOTE 1 Objectivity means that conflicts of interest do not exist or are resolved so as not to adversely influence subsequent activities of the certification body.

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NOTE 2 Other terms that are useful in conveying the element of impartiality are: objectivity, independence, freedom from conflict of interests, freedom from bias, lack of prejudice, neutrality, fairness, open-mindedness, even-handedness, detachment, balance.

3.3
management system consultancy
participation in designing, implementing or maintaining a management system

EXAMPLES

a) preparing or producing manuals or procedures, and

b) giving specific advice, instructions or solutions towards the development and implementation of a management system.

NOTE Arranging training and participating as a trainer is not considered consultancy, provided that, where the course relates to management systems or auditing, it is confined to the provision of generic information that is freely available in the public domain; i.e. the trainer should not provide company-specific solutions.

3.4
third-party certification audit
audit carried out by an auditing organization independent of the client and the user, for the purpose of certifying the client's management system

NOTE 1 In the definitions which follow, the term “audit” has been used for simplicity to refer to third-party certification audit.

NOTE 2 Third-party certification audits include initial, surveillance, re-certification audits, and can also include special audits.

NOTE 3 Third-party certification audits are typically conducted by audit teams of those bodies providing certification of conformity to the requirements of management system standards.

NOTE 4 A joint audit is when two or more auditing organizations cooperate to audit a single client.

NOTE 5 A combined audit is when a client is being audited against the requirements of two or more management systems standards together.

NOTE 6 An integrated audit is when a client has integrated the application of requirements of two or more management systems standards into a single management system and is being audited against more than one standard.

3.5
client
organization whose management system is being audited for certification purposes

3.6
auditor
person who conducts an audit

3.7
competence
ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results

3.8
guide
person appointed by the client to assist the audit team

3.9
observer
person who accompanies the audit team but does not audit

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3.10
technical area
area characterized by commonalities of processes relevant to a specific type of management system

4 Principles

4.1 General

4.1.1 These principles are the basis for the subsequent specific performance and descriptive requirements in this International Standard. This International Standard does not give specific requirements for all situations that can occur. These principles should be applied as guidance for the decisions that may need to be made for unanticipated situations. Principles are not requirements.

4.1.2 The overall aim of certification is to give confidence to all parties that a management system fulfils specified requirements. The value of certification is the degree of public confidence and trust that is established by an impartial and competent assessment by a third-party. Parties that have an interest in certification include, but are not limited to

a) the clients of the certification bodies,

b) the customers of the organizations whose management systems are certified,

c) governmental authorities,

d) non-governmental organizations, and

e) consumers and other members of the public.

4.1.3 Principles for inspiring confidence include

— impartiality,

— competence,

— responsibility,

— openness,

— confidentiality, and

— responsiveness to complaints.

4.2 Impartiality

4.2.1 Being impartial, and being perceived to be impartial, is necessary for a certification body to deliver certification that provides confidence.

4.2.2 It is recognized that the source of revenue for a certification body is its client paying for certification, and that this is a potential threat to impartiality.

4.2.3 To obtain and maintain confidence, it is essential that a certification body's decisions be based on objective evidence of conformity (or nonconformity) obtained by the certification body, and that its decisions are not influenced by other interests or by other parties.

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4.2.4 Threats to impartiality include the following.

a) Self-interest threats: threats that arise from a person or body acting in their own interest. A concern related to certification, as a threat to impartiality, is financial self-interest.

b) Self-review threats: threats that arise from a person or body reviewing the work done by themselves. Auditing the management systems of a client to whom the certification body provided management systems consultancy would be a self-review threat.

c) Familiarity (or trust) threats: threats that arise from a person or body being too familiar with or trusting of another person instead of seeking audit evidence.

d) Intimidation threats: threats that arise from a person or body having a perception of being coerced openly or secretively, such as a threat to be replaced or reported to a supervisor.

4.3 Competence

Competence of the personnel supported by the management system of the certification body is necessary to deliver certification that provides confidence.

4.4 Responsibility

4.4.1 The client organization, not the certification body, has the responsibility for conformity with the requirements for certification.

4.4.2 The certification body has the responsibility to assess sufficient objective evidence upon which to base a certification decision. Based on audit conclusions, it makes a decision to grant certification if there is sufficient evidence of conformity, or not to grant certification if there is not sufficient evidence of conformity.

NOTE Any audit is based on sampling within an organization's management system and therefore is not a guarantee of 100 % conformity with requirements.

4.5 Openness

4.5.1 A certification body needs to provide public access to, or disclosure of, appropriate and timely information about its audit process and certification process, and about the certification status (i.e. the granting, extending, maintaining, renewing, suspending, reducing the scope of, or withdrawing of certification) of any organization, in order to gain confidence in the integrity and credibility of certification. Openness is a principle of access to, or disclosure of, appropriate information.

4.5.2 To gain or maintain confidence in certification, a certification body should provide appropriate access to, or disclosure of, non-confidential information about the conclusions of specific audits (e.g. audits in response to complaints) to specific interested parties.

4.6 Confidentiality

To gain the privileged access to information that is needed for the certification body to assess conformity to requirements for certification adequately, it is essential that a certification body keep confidential any proprietary information about a client.

4.7 Responsiveness to complaints

Parties that rely on certification expect to have complaints investigated and, if these are found to be valid, should have confidence that the complaints will be appropriately addressed and that a reasonable effort will be made to resolve the complaints. Effective responsiveness to complaints is an important means of protection for the certification body, its clients and other users of certification against errors, omissions or unreasonable behaviour. Confidence in certification activities is safeguarded when complaints are processed appropriately.

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NOTE An appropriate balance between the principles of openness and confidentiality, including responsiveness to complaints, is necessary in order to demonstrate integrity and credibility to all users of certification.

5 General requirements

5.1 Legal and contractual matters

5.1.1 Legal responsibility

The certification body shall be a legal entity, or a defined part of a legal entity, such that it can be held legally responsible for all its certification activities. A governmental certification body is deemed to be a legal entity on the basis of its governmental status.

5.1.2 Certification agreement

The certification body shall have a legally enforceable agreement for the provision of certification activities to its client. In addition, where there are multiple offices of a certification body or multiple sites of a client, the certification body shall ensure there is a legally enforceable agreement between the certification body granting certification and issuing a certificate, and all the sites covered by the scope of the certification.

5.1.3 Responsibility for certification decisions

The certification body shall be responsible for, and shall retain authority for, its decisions relating to certification, including the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification.

5.2 Management of impartiality

5.2.1 The certification body shall have top management commitment to impartiality in management system certification activities. The certification body shall have a publicly accessible statement that it understands the importance of impartiality in carrying out its management system certification activities, manages conflict of interest and ensures the objectivity of its management system certification activities.

5.2.2 The certification body shall identify, analyse and document the possibilities for conflict of interests arising from provision of certification including any conflicts arising from its relationships. Having relationships does not necessarily present a certification body with a conflict of interest. However, if any relationship creates a threat to impartiality, the certification body shall document and be able to demonstrate how it eliminates or minimizes such threats. This information shall be made available to the committee specified in 6.2. The demonstration shall cover all potential sources of conflict of interests that are identified, whether they arise from within the certification body or from the activities of other persons, bodies or organizations.

NOTE A relationship that threatens the impartiality of the certification body can be based on ownership, governance, management, personnel, shared resources, finances, contracts, marketing and payment of a sales commission or other inducement for the referral of new clients, etc.

5.2.3 When a relationship poses an unacceptable threat to impartiality (such as a wholly owned subsidiary of the certification body requesting certification from its parent), then certification shall not be provided.

NOTE See Note to 5.2.2.

5.2.4 A certification body shall not certify another certification body for its management system certification activities.

NOTE See Note to 5.2.2.

5.2.5 The certification body and any part of the same legal entity shall not offer or provide management system consultancy. This also applies to that part of government identified as the certification body.

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5.2.6 The certification body and any part of the same legal entity shall not offer or provide internal audits to its certified clients. The certification body shall not certify a management system on which it provided internal audits within two years following the end of the internal audits. This also applies to that part of government identified as the certification body.

NOTE See Note to 5.2.2.

5.2.7 The certification body shall not certify a management system on which a client has received management system consultancy or internal audits, where the relationship between the consultancy organization and the certification body poses an unacceptable threat to the impartiality of the certification body.

NOTE 1 Allowing a minimum period of two years to elapse following the end of the management system consultancy is one way of reducing the threat to impartiality to an acceptable level.

NOTE 2 See Note to 5.2.2.

5.2.8 The certification body shall not outsource audits to a management system consultancy organization, as this poses an unacceptable threat to the impartiality of the certification body (see 7.5). This does not apply to individuals contracted as auditors covered in 7.3.

5.2.9 The certification body's activities shall not be marketed or offered as linked with the activities of an organization that provides management system consultancy. The certification body shall take action to correct inappropriate claims by any consultancy organization stating or implying that certification would be simpler, easier, faster or less expensive if the certification body were used. A certification body shall not state or imply that certification would be simpler, easier, faster or less expensive if a specified consultancy organization were used.

5.2.10 To ensure that there is no conflict of interests, personnel who have provided management system consultancy, including those acting in a managerial capacity, shall not be used by the certification body to take part in an audit or other certification activities if they have been involved in management system consultancy towards the client in question within two years following the end of the consultancy.

5.2.11 The certification body shall take action to respond to any threats to its impartiality arising from the actions of other persons, bodies or organizations.

5.2.12 All certification body personnel, either internal or external, or committees, who could influence the certification activities, shall act impartially and shall not allow commercial, financial or other pressures to compromise impartiality.

5.2.13 Certification bodies shall require personnel, internal and external, to reveal any situation known to them that may present them or the certification body with a conflict of interests. Certification bodies shall use this information as input to identifying threats to impartiality raised by the activities of such personnel or by the organizations that employ them, and shall not use such personnel, internal or external, unless they can demonstrate that there is no conflict of interests.

5.3 Liability and financing

5.3.1 The certification body shall be able to demonstrate that it has evaluated the risks arising from its certification activities and that it has adequate arrangements (e.g. insurance or reserves) to cover liabilities arising from its operations in each of its fields of activities and the geographic areas in which it operates.

5.3.2 The certification body shall evaluate its finances and sources of income and demonstrate to the committee specified in 6.2 that initially, and on an ongoing basis, commercial, financial or other pressures do not compromise its impartiality.

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6 Structural requirements

6.1 Organizational structure and top management

6.1.1 The certification body shall document its organizational structure, showing duties, responsibilities and authorities of management and other certification personnel and any committees. When the certification body is a defined part of a legal entity, the structure shall include the line of authority and the relationship to other parts within the same legal entity.

6.1.2 The certification body shall identify the top management (board, group of persons, or person) having overall authority and responsibility for each of the following:

a) development of policies relating to the operation of the body;

b) supervision of the implementation of the policies and procedures;

c) supervision of the finances of the body;

d) development of management system certification services and schemes;

e) performance of audits and certification, and responsiveness to complaints;

f) decisions on certification;

g) delegation of authority to committees or individuals, as required, to undertake defined activities on its behalf;

h) contractual arrangements;

i) provision of adequate resources for certification activities.

6.1.3 The certification body shall have formal rules for the appointment, terms of reference and operation of any committees that are involved in the certification activities.

6.2 Committee for safeguarding impartiality

6.2.1 The structure of the certification body shall safeguard the impartiality of the activities of the certification body and shall provide for a committee to

a) assist in developing the policies relating to impartiality of its certification activities,

b) counteract any tendency on the part of a certification body to allow commercial or other considerations to prevent the consistent objective provision of certification activities,

c) advise on matters affecting confidence in certification, including openness and public perception, and

d) conduct a review, at least once annually, of the impartiality of the audit, certification and decision-making processes of the certification body.

Other tasks or duties may be assigned to the committee provided these additional tasks or duties do not compromise its essential role of ensuring impartiality.

6.2.2 The composition, terms of reference, duties, authorities, competence of members and responsibilities of this committee shall be formally documented and authorized by the top management of the certification body to ensure

a) representation of a balance of interests such that no single interest predominates (internal or external personnel of the certification body are considered to be a single interest, and shall not predominate),

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b) access to all the information necessary to enable it to fulfil its functions (see also 5.2.2 and 5.3.2), and

c) that if the top management of the certification body does not respect the advice of this committee, the committee shall have the right to take independent action (e.g. informing authorities, accreditation bodies, stakeholders). In taking independent action, committees shall respect the confidentiality requirements of 8.5 relating to the client and certification body.

6.2.3 Although this committee cannot represent every interest, a certification body should identify and invite key interests. Such interests may include: clients of the certification body, customers of organizations whose management systems are certified, representatives of industry trade associations, representatives of governmental regulatory bodies or other governmental services, or representatives of non-governmental organizations, including consumer organizations.

7 Resource requirements

7.1 Competence of management and personnel

7.1.1 General considerations

The certification body shall have processes to ensure that personnel have appropriate knowledge relevant to the types of management systems and geographic areas in which it operates.

It shall determine the competence required for each technical area (as relevant for the specific certification scheme), and for each function in the certification activity.

It shall determine the means for the demonstration of competence prior to carrying out specific functions.

7.1.2 Determination of competence criteria

The certification body shall have a documented process for determining the competence criteria for personnel involved in the management and performance of audits and certification. Competence criteria shall be determined with regard to the requirements of each type of management system standard or specification, for each technical area, and for each function in the certification process. The output of the process shall be the documented criteria of required knowledge and skills necessary to effectively perform audit and certification tasks to be fulfilled to achieve the intended results. Annex A specifies the knowledge and skills that a certification body shall define for specific functions. Where additional specific competence criteria have been established for a specific certification scheme, e.g. ISO/TS 22003 (Food safety management systems), these shall be applied.

NOTE The term 'technical area' can be applied differently depending on the management system standard being considered. For any management system, the term is related to products and processes in the context of the scope of the management system standard. The technical areas can be defined by a specific certification scheme (e.g. ISO/TS 22003); or can be determined by the certification body. Examples of the application of the term 'technical area' for different types of management systems are as follows:

— For a quality management system standard, the term “technical area” is related to the processes needed to fulfil customer expectations and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements for the organization's products and services.

— For an environmental management system standard, the term “technical area” is related to the categories of activities, products and services related to the environmental aspects affecting air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna and humans.

— For a supply chain security management system standard, the term “technical area” is related to processes in the context of security risk of supplies, such as transportation, storage, and information.

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— For an information security management system standard, the term “technical area” is related, among others, to the categories of information security technologies and practices, information and communication technology and business activities related to the selection of adequate and proportionate security controls that protect information assets.

7.1.3 Evaluation processes

The certification body shall have documented processes for the initial competence evaluation, and on-going monitoring of competence and performance of all personnel involved in the management and performance of audits and certification, applying the determined competence criteria. The certification body shall demonstrate that its evaluation methods are effective. The output from these processes shall be to identify personnel who have demonstrated the level of competence required for the different functions of the audit and certification process.

NOTE A number of evaluation methods that can be used to evaluate knowledge and skills are described in Annex B.

7.1.4 Other considerations

7.1.4.1 In determining the competence requirements for its personnel performing certification, the certification body shall address the functions undertaken by management and administrative personnel in addition to those directly performing audit and certification activities.

7.1.4.2 The certification body shall have access to the necessary technical expertise for advice on matters directly relating to certification for technical areas, types of management system and geographic areas in which the certification body operates. Such advice may be provided externally or by certification body personnel.

7.2 Personnel involved in the certification activities

7.2.1 The certification body shall have, as part of its own organization, personnel having sufficient competence for managing the type and range of audit programmes and other certification work performed.

7.2.2 The certification body shall employ, or have access to, a sufficient number of auditors, including audit team leaders, and technical experts to cover all of its activities and to handle the volume of audit work performed.

7.2.3 The certification body shall make clear to each person concerned their duties, responsibilities and authorities.

7.2.4 The certification body shall have defined processes for selecting, training, formally authorizing auditors and for selecting technical experts used in the certification activity. The initial competence evaluation of an auditor shall include the ability to apply required knowledge and skills during audits, as determined by a competent evaluator observing the auditor conducting an audit.

NOTE During the selection and training process described above desired personal behaviours can be considered. These are characteristics that affect an individual's ability to perform specific functions. Therefore, knowledge about the behaviours of individuals enables a certification body to take advantage of their strengths and to minimize the impact of their weaknesses. Desired personal behaviours that are important for personnel involved in certification activities are described in Annex D.

7.2.5 The certification body shall have a process to achieve and demonstrate effective auditing, including the use of auditors and audit team leaders possessing generic auditing skills and knowledge, as well as skills and knowledge appropriate for auditing in specific technical areas.

7.2.6 The certification body shall ensure that auditors (and, where needed, technical experts) are knowledgeable of its audit processes, certification requirements and other relevant requirements. The certification body shall give auditors and technical experts access to an up-to-date set of documented procedures giving audit instructions and all relevant information on the certification activities.

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7.2.7 The certification body shall use auditors and technical experts only for those certification activities where they have demonstrated competence.

NOTE Assignment of auditors and technical experts to teams for specific audits is addressed in 9.1.3.

7.2.8 The certification body shall identify training needs and shall offer or provide access to specific training to ensure its auditors, technical experts and other personnel involved in certification activities are competent for the functions they perform.

7.2.9 The group or individual that takes the decision on granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification shall understand the applicable standard and certification requirements, and shall have demonstrated competence to evaluate the audit processes and related recommendations of the audit team.

7.2.10 The certification body shall ensure the satisfactory performance of all personnel involved in the audit and certification activities. There shall be documented procedures and criteria for monitoring and measurement of the performance of all persons involved, based on the frequency of their usage and the level of risk linked to their activities. In particular, the certification body shall review the competence of its personnel in the light of their performance in order to identify training needs.

7.2.11 The documented monitoring procedures for auditors shall include a combination of on-site observation, review of audit reports and feedback from clients or from the market and shall be defined in documented requirements. This monitoring shall be designed in such a way as to minimize disturbance to the normal processes of certification, especially from the client's viewpoint.

7.2.12 The certification body shall periodically observe the performance of each auditor on-site. The frequency of on-site observations shall be based on need determined from all monitoring information available.

7.3 Use of individual external auditors and external technical experts

The certification body shall require external auditors and external technical experts to have a written agreement by which they commit themselves to comply with applicable policies and procedures as defined by the certification body. The agreement shall address aspects relating to confidentiality and to independence from commercial and other interests, and shall require the external auditors and external technical experts to notify the certification body of any existing or prior association with any organization they may be assigned to audit.

NOTE Use of individual auditors and technical experts under such agreements does not constitute outsourcing as described under 7.5.

7.4 Personnel records

The certification body shall maintain up-to-date personnel records, including relevant qualifications, training, experience, affiliations, professional status, competence and any relevant consultancy services that may have been provided. This includes management and administrative personnel in addition to those performing certification activities.

7.5 Outsourcing

7.5.1 The certification body shall have a process in which it describes the conditions under which outsourcing (which is subcontracting to another organization to provide part of the certification activities on behalf of the certification body) may take place. The certification body shall have a legally enforceable agreement covering the arrangements, including confidentiality and conflict of interests, with each body that provides outsourced services.

NOTE 1 This can include outsourcing to other certification bodies. Use of auditors and technical experts under contract is addressed in 7.3.

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