VDA | Verband der Automobilindustrie

6

Quality Management in the Automotive Industry

Certification Requirements

for VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2 and VDA 6.4

6th revised edition, September 2016

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6th revised edition, September 2016

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The Association of the German Automotive Industry (VDA) recommends its members to apply the following standard for the implementation and maintenance of quality management (QM) systems.

The VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2 and VDA 6.4 standards are a recommendation, freely available for general use. Anyone applying the standard as part of a 3rd party certification is responsible for ensuring that the complete implementation of the VDA volume 6 "Certification requirements for VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2, VDA 6.4" is carried out.

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Preface

Shorter model cycles and development times, increased international competition and rising cost pressure all demand new forms of organisation and shorter paths of information in the automotive industry. The expectations being placed on the product are increasing and product liability is viewed from a new legal basis. In order to meet these requirements, the VDA has documented its quality standards in the red and blue-gold volumes.

The first editions of the VDA Volume 6 series “QM in the Automotive Industry” published in 1991 met with a positive response. These were developed jointly with manufacturers and suppliers and based on the standards DIN ISO 9001:1989 and DIN ISO 9004:1989.

In the second edition, the further development of quality management systems was taken into account within the context of international harmonisation and the resulting adjustments to international standards and regulations in the automotive industry. The new editions of this standard series integrated DIN EN ISO 9000 ff and requirements from the E.A.Q.F. (Evaluation d’Apitude Qualite Fournisseurs, Frankreich) and AVSQ (Associazione nazionale dei Valutatori di Sisterni Qualità, Italy).

Within the framework of mutual recognition of audits between automobile manufacturers and suppliers as well as certificates issued by independent, recognised certification bodies, it was necessary to make the requirements, rules and procedures available in more detail in a separate VDA volume.

This VDA Volume is aimed at:

- Certification bodies recognised by VDA QMC
- Organisations that wish to establish a quality management system and obtain certification under one of the VDA quality standards.
- Organisations that want to have a quality management system audited according to one of the VDA quality standards and
- Organisations that want to evaluate QM systems, processes and products of their suppliers according to the assessment system described in this VDA volume.

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This VDA volume contains the following requirements:

- The qualification of auditors for system audits at certification bodies, automotive manufacturers and suppliers
- Procedure for the auditing of QM systems
- Process of the certification procedure

Not only organisations within the automotive branch can benefit from the VDA volumes. In addition to the automotive industry, other companies can also benefit from developing and extending their QM systems.

The 3rd edition replaced the 2nd edition of the VDA volume 6 "Basis of Quality Audits - Auditing and Certification" from the year 1999.

The synopses with the requirements from the VDA volumes, which were based on different requirements, were included in the respective VDA volumes and are no longer part of this edition.

Until the publishing deadline, the edition was supplemented by amendments and updates from the VDA working groups, the development of QM systems as well as the development in the area of the standard ISO/TS 16949 insofar as these changes influenced VDA audits and VDA certifications.

On the 1st of May 2006, the 4th edition replaced the 3rd edition of the VDA Volume 6 "Basis for quality audits - auditing and certification" from the year 2004.

On the 1st of January 2009, the 4th edition of the VDA Volume 6 "Basis for quality audits - certification and certification" from 2006 was replaced by the 5th edition.

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From the **January 1st, 2017**, this **6th edition** replaces the 5th edition of the Volume 6 "Basis for quality audits - auditing and certification" from 2008. From **July 1st, 2017** at the latest, all 3rd-party audits according to VDA Volume 6 Part 1, VDA Volume 6 part 2, VDA Volume 6 part 4 will be carried out according to this 6th edition.

Contained within this current VDA volume are all changes which affect VDA audits and VDA certifications that were made until the publication deadline:

- Amendments, findings and comments from the certification bodies
- Supplementary information and findings from the VDA working groups
- Expanded to include other VDA standards
- “Sanctioned interpretations” (SI)
- “Frequently asked questions” (FAQ)

In this edition, the certification requirements are given for VDA Volumes 6, Part 1, VDA 6, Part 2 and VDA 6, Part 4, (also referred to as "VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2, VDA 6.4 or VDA 6.x standards").

The requirements for certification bodies are set out in ISO/IEC 17021. ISO/IEC 17021 is therefore applicable for the VDA 6 standards and defines special or further requirements for VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2 and VDA 6.4. These requirements are to be met in respect to the VDA 6.x certificates.

The evidence of the fulfilment of the requirements from one of the respective VDA 6.x standards is shown by a VDA 6.x certificate.

The applicable documents relating to these requirements are, when necessary, specified in the following rules: Sanctioned Interpretations (SI) and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). These are issued as required by the VDA QMC in consultation with the working group 6:

- A “sanctioned interpretation” (SI) changes or amends the requirements
- A “frequently asked question” (FAQ) is an explanation of an existing rule or requirement

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These regulations (SI/FAQ including the examples for audit day calculation) will be made available on the VDA QMC homepage after publication of this volume and will be binding from the date of publication.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to the development and improvement of this VDA Volume

Berlin, in July 2016

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1 General Remarks

1.1 QM Systems in the Automotive Industry

Over time, the term “quality” has always varied in its content and it is still constantly changing. The company structure with its impact on employees and the customer is becoming more integrated and the development from product quality to to company quality can be clearly recognised.

Company quality can only be established with an integrated quality management system within an organisation that includes employees, customers, processes and the resulting outcomes. There are additional requirements for the automotive sector.

Today the management system covers all areas of an organisation and all of its functions in a horiziontal and vertical structure. Management systems (for example: integreted quality, occupational safety, environmental systems) regulate the cooperation of all areas involved, increase the potential for improvement and decisively influence the company result.

An organisation wanting to be successful in the market will develop a quality policy which forms the basis for the structure and application of a quality management system (QM system). Quality targets derived are to be alligned with customer requirements and expectations. They express the quality culture as part of the corperate culture and are guidelines for the performance of an organisation.

There is no model (quality) management system that is the best solution for every application. The QM system can only be defined by the company concerned.

A QM system is functional when it meets the following requirements:

- the system is understood, implemented, maintained, is effective and is constantly improved
- products and/or the services meet the customer requirements and expectations, which are specified in the respective “customer specific requirements”

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- the context of the organisation in the automotive environment is with the internal and external topics determined by interested parties, and considers chances and risks. This also includes the expectations/demands for multiple certifications (such as occupational safety, environmental protection, energy)
- the main focus is on risk prevention and not on risk detection after problems occur

The implementation must be systematically monitored.

The quality strategy of the VDA is defined as integrated quality management along the value chain, meaning the quality of products and/or services can be seen as the overall result of all activities in all company processes.

In order to enable automotive manufacturers, their suppliers and the associated service providers to provide a consistent and comparable assessment of their QM systems, processes, products and services, the VDA has developed the QM system and auditing standards for the automotive industry, which are included in VDA 6 Volumes (see Fig. 1.1)

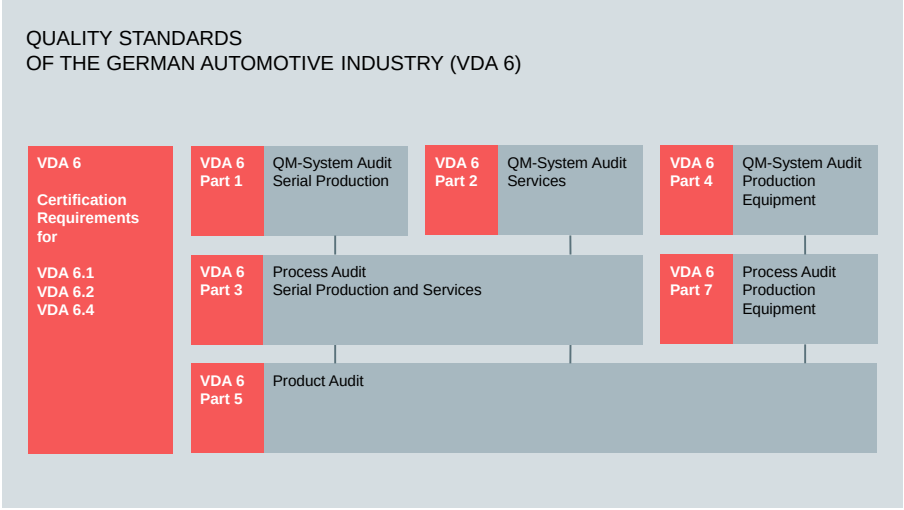

Figure 1.1: Quality standards (VDA 6

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1.2 Standards in the Automotive Industry

With the ISO 9000 family, a basis for the development of QM systems has been created which, however, does not meet the requirements of the automotive industry without specific additional content.

For this reason, international automotive specific standards were developed (e.g. VDA 6.x, EAQF, AVSQ, QS 9000, ISO/TS 16949) which extend the requirements of the ISO standard in a sector specific manner.

Initally these questionnaires and regulations were only valid for 1st-party and 2nd-party audits (internal/supplier). In order to promote mutial recognition, these schemes were recognised for certifications carried out by certification bodies (3rd-party).

1.3 Documentation of a QM System

The documentation of a QM system must correspond to the circumstances of the company because it is a company specific regulation. The appropriate documentation of all work processes and activities offers the possibility for:

- demonstration of controlled processes (the organisation must identify processes according to its own definition as well as defining the process owner and their responsibilities and the expected results and their indicators/key figures)
- the competence and awareness of the employees
- the implementation of improvement programmes

1.4 Auditing in quality management

ISO 19011 provides a comprehensive definition for an audit: “systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the audit criteria are fulfilled”.

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This is an accurate definition of the purpose and objectives of all audit types regardless of who carries out the audit or what is the object or characteristic of the audit.

The three types of audits: system audits, process audits and product audits are described below. With appropriate planning they can complement each other.

1.4.1 System audit

The system audit deals with the basic definition and requirements for the QM system and its practical application. It takes aspects of the structure and function into account, and more decisivly, considers the interaction of cross-sectional functions and cross-sectional tasks. The integrity, consistency and effectiveness of the installed QM system are checked during the auditing process.

The management functions are an integral part of every system audit. Nonconformities that are found within a system audit and initally do not show any systematic character can be followed up within the process and/or product audit.

The basic principles for auditing QM systems in accordance with the sector-specific requirements of the automotive industry are described in detail in the VDA standards VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2 and VDA 6.4.

The audits serve to demonstrate the conformity of a QM system. A distinction is made between internal and external audits.

1.4.2 Process audit

The process audit is a method for impartial analysis and and evaluation of the performance of the product development and realisation processes and/or the delivery of service process as well as the effectiveness with respect to the defined product/service.

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The goal of the process audit is to check the conformity of the process/ process steps with the requirements and specifications. Any nonconformities found are documented as audit findings and evaluated based on the product risk and/or the process risk.

Relevant for the evaluation is the extent to which possible nonconforming products/services can be expected from the audit findings as well as the resulting risk.

1.4.3 Product audit

The product audit uses a defined set of quality characteristics to evaluate the conformity of the product or the service, the effectiveness of the existing quality assurance measures and with this the QM measures for a paticular product in its different stages of realisation.

The basic principles for the auditing of products according the the sector-specific requirements of the automotive industry are described in the VDA standard VDA 6.5.

1.4.4 Criteria for the differentiation between system, process and product audits

The independent and separately applicable types of audits intersect and complement each other in the overall assessment of the QM system and the quality capability of an organisation/company.

Important distinguishing criteria are shown in table 1.4.4.

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Table 1.4.4: Comparison of audit types

Title	System audit	Process audit	Product audit
Object	Systems, QM system processes, Workflow management, documentation	Processes, machinery and equipment, manufacturing, testing and assembly processes, service processes	Products, materials, Parts and assemblies, finished products/ vehicles/services
Characteristic	System characteristics, completeness, effectiveness, implementation, accuracy	Process characteristics, parameters, efficiency, procedure, organisation	Product characteristics , identity, dimensions, surface properties, material properties, results of a service
Documents	System descriptions, manuals and QM documents, laws and legal regulations, business plans and strategies, customer requirements	Process descriptions and process instruction, manufacturing/test and/or control plans, machine settings, maintenance plans, legal requirements and customer specific requirements	Product description, specifications and/or technical drawings, evaluation criteria, samples, legal requirements and customer specific requirements
Requirements	Does the system meet the requirements of the standards, guidelines and internal objectives as well as those of the customer?	Is the process suitable to repeatedly produce the product/service? Does the process meet the requirements of the customer?	Does the product/service meet the defined specifications? Does the product/service meet the customer requirements?
Purpose, aim	System analysis, determination of the conformity of the system	Process analysis and process improvement	Confirmation of the product properties achieved
Type	Management tool	Management tool	Technical controlling
Personnel qualification	Engineer/technician or comparable	Master craftsman/technician or comparable with process specific expertise	Skilled worker, quality inspector or comparable
Auditor qualification	See section 4	See section 4	See section 4
Scope	According to the audit plan	According to the audit plan	According to the stipulations of the organisation in the control plan, QM or audit plan
Duration	Days	Hours to days	Hours

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1.5 Audit types

Audits serve to provide evidence of the QM system conformity. A distinction is made between internal and external audits:

Internal audits are referred to as 1st-party audits and are carried out within the respecitve management system.

External audits are:

Supplier audits (2nd-party audits). 2nd-party audits are carried out by customers or by persons on behalf of the customer. These audits may also be accepted by other customers.

External audits (3rd-party audits) are carried out by independent organisations (certification bodies).

3rd-party audits following the VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2 or VDA 6.4 standards are carried out by independent, accredited certification bodies that are recognised by the VDA QMC.

1.6 Area of application for the VDA standards VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2 and VDA 6.4

The following areas of application have been defined for the VDA 6.x standards:

1.6.1 Area of application VDA 6.1

VDA 6.1 refers to the quality of tangible products of the automotive industry and their outcomes.

Target groups are organisations (entities) of the automotive sector (automotive supply chain) that:

- manufacture (produce) passenger cars, commercial vehicles (light, medium and heavy), buses, motorcycles, and other vehicles for which an official road approval is necessary

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- manufacture (produce) assemblies, production materials, parts/ spare parts for the products mentioned above.

Furthermore, organisations that carry out heat treatment, welding, painting, coating or other processing and production related services (but not vehicle cleaning, consignment, delivery services to production areas etc.) can be certified under the specifications of the VDA volumes.

1.6.2 Area of application VDA 6.2

VDA 6.2 specifies the requirements for a quality management system for companies that provide automotive services within the product lifecycle and therefore influence the quality of the product/service of the automotive industry.

1.6.3 Area of application VDA 6.4

Target groups are organisations that manufacture and/or supply production equipment or custom made systems (production facilities, assembly systems, painting systems, special purpose machines, pressing tools etc.) as well as series manufacturing (components or standard products such as robots, drills, power screwdrivers, work benches etc.) and combinations that can arise from these.

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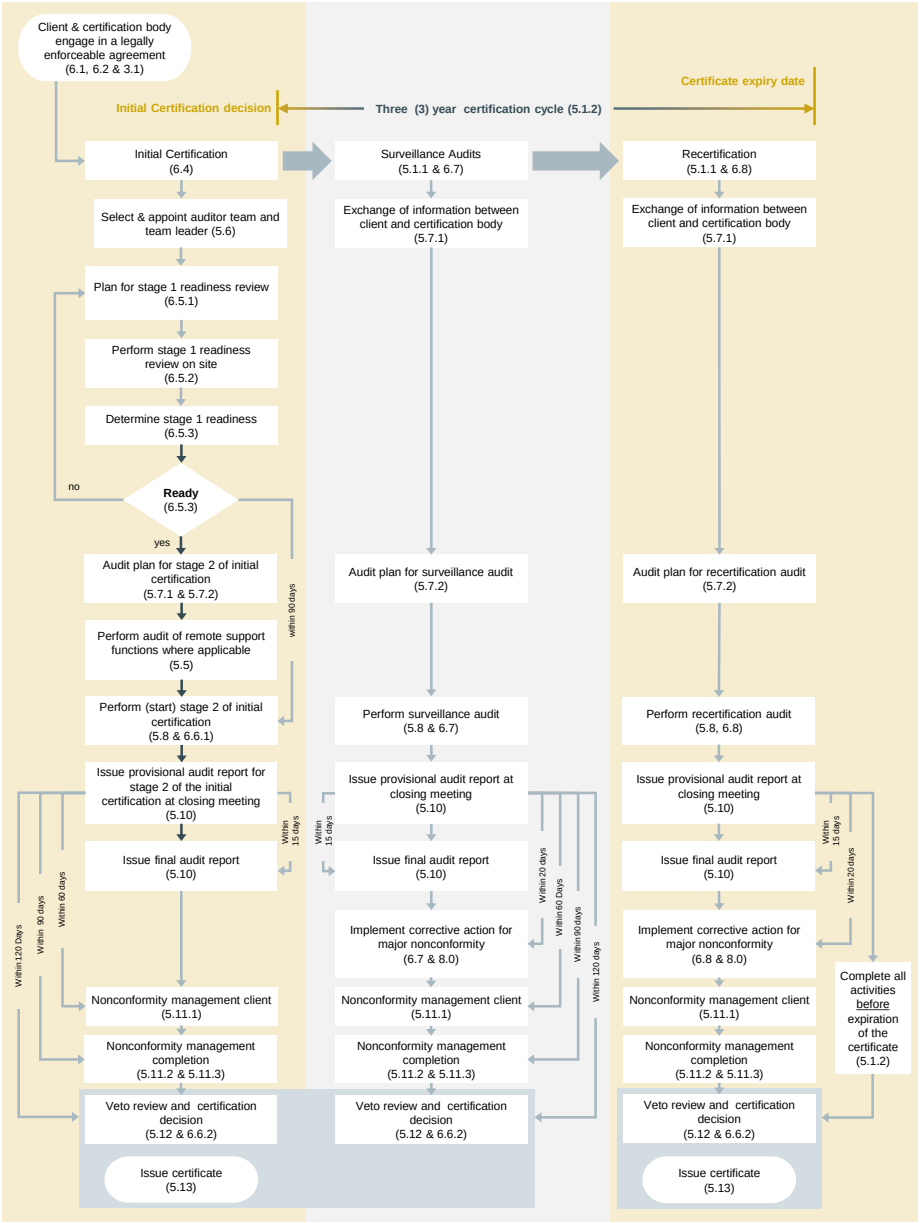
1.7 Global overview of the first 3 years of the VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2 and VDA 6.4 certification cycle



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Nur zur Internen Verwendung für Lisa-Draximaier GmbH bestimmt.

2 Requirements for certification bodies

2.1 VDA QMC certification body recognition requirements

A certification body shall be recognised by a valid contract with VDA QMC before it can issue a VDA QMC 6.x certificate to a client and use the VDA QMC logo on the certificate. The application and process to achieve VDA QMC recognition is maintained by VDA QMC and is not included in these requirements. The list of VDA QMC 6.x recognised certification bodies is available at www.vda-qmc.de.

A 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 certification body and any part of the same legal entity shall not operate as both a quality management system certification body and as a quality management system accreditation body.

A certification body and any part of the same legal entity shall not offer or provide management system consultancy.

If a certification body becomes a defined part of a corporate entity, no other VDA QMC recognised certification body shall exist within the same entity.

A certification body shall be compliant with the laws and regulations of each country in which it operates.

2.2 Management of impartiality

The certification body 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. The certification body shall use this information as input to identifying threats to impartiality raised by the activities of such personnel or by the organisations that employ them, and shall not use such personnel, internal or external, unless they can demonstrate that there is no conflict of interest.

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

The certification body, its auditors (full time or contractors) and any part of the same legal entity shall not offer or provide management system consultancy, site specific auditor training or internal audits to its certified clients within two years prior to contracting as their certification body. This restriction includes related bodies of the same parent company or affiliates, where the validity or reliability of an audit can be questioned because of a consulting relationship.

The provision of training, documentation development, or assistance with implementation of any management system and related training such as core tools, six sigma and lean manufacturing to a specific client is considered consulting.

Training open to the public, not specific to a client, and held at a public forum is not considered consulting.

The certification body's decisions shall be based on objective evidence of conformity (or nonconformity) obtained by the certification body and the decisions shall not be influenced by other interests or by other parties.

2.3 VDA QMC contractual requirements

The certification body shall cooperate with the VDA QMC in performing activities for the implementation and monitoring of the VDA 6.x certification scheme.

The certification body shall neither violate copyright of any VDA QMC documents, nor violate the copyright of or infringe the trademarks of the VDA QMC. The certification body shall only use the VDA QMC logo on the VDA 6.x certificate.

Subcontracting any part of the certification activities on behalf of the certification body shall not be permitted. Use of individual auditors and technical experts does not constitute subcontracting.

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The certification body shall notify VDA QMC, in writing, within twenty (20) calendar days of any changes related to its:

a) legal status

b) ownership status (e.g. mergers, acquisitions of other certification bodies)

c) commercial status (e.g. partnership agreement, subcontracting with other certification bodies)

d) organisational status (e.g. management structure, organisational and operational structure)

e) expansion of management system accreditations

f) loss or suspensions of management system accreditations

The certification body shall permit a representative of the VDA QMC to attend or review the decision making process for VDA 6.x certificates.

2.3.1 Certification body's contracted office

A certification body recognised by VDA QMC shall have a designated office approved by VDA QMC as the contracted office for the certification body. This contracted office shall appoint a person resident at the contracted office to be the one-point contact between VDA QMC and the certification body.

Where a certification body has multiple offices involved in the VDA 6.x certification process, the VDA QMC approved contracted office shall be responsible for the control of all VDA 6.x certification activities. The contracted office shall provide the VDA QMC with a list with the names and contact addresses of the other offices.

The contracted office shall notify in writing the VDA QMC annually of any changes to the regional office activities.

The contracted office shall be responsible to establish, document, maintain, control, monitor and improve their quality management system related to VDA 6.x regardless where those activities occur (see section 2.6).

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The contracted office shall specifically monitor and control the following processes:

a) determination process for resources (see section 4.0)

b) nomination process for individuals performing certification decisions (see section 4.1)

c) application process for VDA 6.x auditors (see section 4.2)

d) internal witness audit process (see section 4.4)

e) process for continuing approval and rejection of VDA 6.x auditors (see section 4.4)

The contracted office and all offices of the certification body responsible for certification decision and certificate issuance activities from VDA 6.x certificates shall be accredited to ISO/IEC 17021 by a national accreditation body.

The contracted office shall, upon request, be able to provide the VDA QMC relevant client information.

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2.4 VDA QMC ongoing recognition requirements

The ongoing recognition of the certification body shall be verified through VDA QMC activities. These include: witness audits and office assessments.

There are two types of witness audits and office assessments:

- planned audits (on an annual basis)
- special audits (event-driven), which can be carried out in addition to the planned audits.

The reasonns for a special audit can be:

- lack of completion of corrective actions from a previous audit,
- a complaint from VDA QMC and/or a complaint from an OEM,
- significant changes in the organisational and company law, taking into account VDA contracts

2.4.1 Witness audits

The VDA QMC shall schedule witness audits according to table 2.4.1

Witness audits are conducted, at a client site and/or at remote supporting locations (support function) as well as construction sites (construction sites only for VDA 6.4). Here an auditor or audit team from the certification body is monitored and reviewed during a VDA 6.x audit. One witness audit may include multiple physical locations of a client (e.g. a manufacturing site and relevant remote location(s)).

A witness audit shall verify the certification body's conformance with the requirements of:

a) the requirements given here and related Sanctioned Interpretations (SIs) and "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQs)

b) the certification body's key processes and operating procedures (see section 2.6)

in order to confirm that the certified clients have implemented a robust and reliable quality management system in accordance with the appropriate

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VDA Volume, the related Sanctioned Interpretations (SIs) and applicable customer specific requirements. The witness auditor shall not interfere with the audit.

The minimum number of witness audits (per year) is given in the following table:

Table 2.4.1: Minimum number of witness audits

Number of all valid VDA 6.3 certificates of the certification body (as of 30.09.)	**1-10**	**11-25**	***26-75***	***76-150***	***151-300***	***>301***
Minimum number of witness audits	**1** every 3 years	**1** every 2 years	**1** each year	**2** each year	**3** each year	**4** each year

Witness audits are selected to observe as many different certification body auditors as possible and to sample from the different audit types (initial certification audits (stage 1 and/or stage 2), surveillance, recertification, transfer and special audits). The global distribution of these witness audits should be in proportion of VDA certification activities performed by region.

The certification body shall provide a schedule of audits upon request to VDA QMC.

Once a witness audit has been confirmed any changes shall be communicated to the VDA QMC. Changes may only be made in accordance with the VDA QMC.

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2.4.2 Office assessments

Office assessments are to be conducted at the certification body´s contracted office. All processes and activities within the certification body, between the certification body and the organisation to be audited, as well as relating to the certification auditors of the certification body shall be examined.

Furthermore, the office assessment serves to verify the conformity of the audited certification body with the requirements of:

a) these requirements and related Sanctioned Interpretations (SIs) and “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQs)

b) the certification body’s key processes and operating procedures (see section 2.6)

Results from the office assessments may lead to additional assessments at contracted offices or other regional offices.

If a certification body has regional offices responsible for certification decisions those offices shall be audited at least once within a three (3) year period. Other offices with no responsibility for decisions regarding certification may be audited at the discretion of the VDA QMC.

2.4.3 Nonconformity management

A nonconformity can be issued at either an office assessment, witness audit or as a special nonconformity due to performance related issues, complaints received from VDA QMC members, or any violation of the certification requirements described here.

When nonconformities are issued, the certification body shall undertake an immediate risk based analysis of the situation. The analysis (problem investigation) shall include a review of the nonconformity and its impact across all certification body´s regional offices, all auditors and all audited clients.

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For major nonconformities this analysis shall include corrections (including immediate action) and be completed within a maximum of twenty (20) calendar days from the issue date of the nonconformity and submitted to VDA QMC.

Within a maximum of ninety (90) calendar days from the issue date of the nonconformity, the certification body shall submit evidence of the analysis (problem investigation), systemic corrective actions, root cause analysis, and verification of effective implementation to the VDA QMC for approval.

The VDA QMC shall verify the effective implementation of the corrective actions taken. Verification may occur at a special audit, at the next office assessment or at a witness audit.

When a certification body cannot provide evidence of implemented corrective actions or a major nonconformity cannot be closed within ninety (90) calendar days from the issue date of the nonconformity, VDA QMC shall initiate the certification body de-recognition process (see section 2.5) and perform special monitoring activities.

VDA QMC reserves the right to undertake additional activities (e.g. special witness audits or office assessments) in response to corrective action follow up or based upon performance.

2.5 Certification body de-recognition process

The certification body shall:

a) not violate any provision of the contract with VDA QMC

b) not violate the certification requirements given here

c) maintain ISO/IEC 17021 accreditation

d) maintain the “VDA 6.x certification database” accuracy and integrity as well as meeting the timeliness of entries which are part of these requirements

e) ensure the integrity of the auditor qualification and training process

f) be compliant with the regulations of each country in which it operates

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g) maintain an acceptable nonconformity management performance level (i.e. submit on time, approval first time, etc.) and

h) effectively implement the systemic corrective actions

Failure to implement, maintain or comply with one or more of these requirements results in the initiation of the de-recognition process as a VDA QMC certification body. The details of the VDA QMC de-recognition process is maintained by the VDA QMC and some parts of the process are not included in these requirements.

A certification body that is in a status of suspension may not use the VDA regulations affected by the suspension to:

- make quotes for any new business for further certifications
- conduct any stage 1 readiness reviews
- conduct any stage 2 audits

But remains committed to:

- conduct surveillance audits for existing clients
- conduct recertification audits for existing clients
- conduct transfer audits if the contract is signed prior to the official suspension date
- conduct special audits (see section 7.2)

The VDA QMC may impose additional controls on the certification body.

The final decision of de-recognition of an VDA QMC certification body results in cancellation of the contract with VDA QMC.

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2.6 Management system requirements for certification bodies

The certification body shall document its organisational structure, showing duties, responsibilities and authorities of management and other certification personnel and any committees.

The organisational structure shall include all lines of authority from the contracted office.

The certification body´s contracted office shall ensure that the roles, responsibilities and authorities are understood throughout the certification body.

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.

In the exceptional situation where an VDA QMC recognised certification body is affiliated with one or more certification bodies through joint venture(s) due to national or local regulation, the structure shall include all lines of authority associated with VDA 6.x certification activities.

“Certification activities” (see section 10.0) shall be considered as all activities pertinent to certifying a client to VDA 6.1, VDA 6.2, or VDA 6.4 standards.

The certification body shall define its key processes and operating procedures for VDA 6.x standards including their sequence, interactions, measures of effectiveness and efficiency together with appropriate objectives.

The certification body´s contracted office shall be responsible for establishing a documented process for effective nonconformity management, including corrective and preventive action plans. This process shall be initiated following customer complaints, internal complaints, internal witness and system audits and external audits.

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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

b) supervision of the implementation of the policies and procedures

c) supervision of the finances

d) development of management system certification services and regulations

e) monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the key processes against objectives

f) performance of audits and certification, and responsiveness to complaints

g) decisions on certification

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

i) contractual arrangements

j) provision of adequate resources for certification activities

k) internal audits

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2.7 Management review of the certification body

The certification body's top management at the contracted office shall review its management system at planned intervals to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness, including the stated policies and objectives related to the fulfillment of these certification requirements.

"Top management" is defined as the corporate level officer, or designee, responsible for system certification activities globally. Management reviews shall be conducted at least once a year. The frequency of management review should be increased based upon performance.

The process for carrying out management review must be in accordance with the requirements of ISO 9001 and must be supplemented by specific information regarding the activities of VDA 6.x certification processes of the certification body.

2.8 Certification body internal system audits

The certification body shall have a process for internal audits to verify the effective implementation of the defined key processes and operating procedures.

The process for internal system audits shall include system audits targeted at the certification activities of the certification body to demonstrate compliance with the requirements given here.

The internal system audit program shall be planned annually.

The certification body's contracted office shall plan, implement and track the internal audit programme to ensure that:

a) internal audits are conducted by qualified personnel

b) an audit plan is created for each audit

c) internal audits are undertaken using a process approach

d) auditors are selected to ensure impartiality and objectivity

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e) adequate time is planned to sample all relevant processes and procedures as well as an appropriate number of client files (including stage 1 and stage 2 certification audits, surveillance, recertification, special and transfer audits) and allow a check of the entries in the “VDA 6.x certification database” to be carried out.

f) personnel responsible for the processes audited are informed of the outcome of the audit,

g) internal system audit reports shall contain as a minimum:

- a list of the key processes and procedures audited
- the names of the clients of the certification procedures that were checked during the audit
- the detected findings (nonconformities)

h) actions resulting from internal audits are taken in a timely and appropriate manner

VDA QMC reserves the right to review the reports of the internal system audits and, if necessary, to request additional measures.

2.9 Appeals and complaints

The certification body shall have a process for addressing appeals from the client and complaints from any interested parties. The process shall include the following activities where applicable:

a) receiving, validating, investigating

b) determining the root cause

c) ensuring that any required correction and systemic corrective actions are taken

d) provision and distribution of status and results with defined deadlines and responsibilities

e) maintaining the records of appeals, claims and actions taken

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