

Accreditation: Helping Government transform regulation

The influence and use of accreditation continues to grow across a wide range of Government policy areas including better regulation, good governance, fair markets and public confidence. Accreditation is being used by Government in a number of new areas such as healthcare and climate change. As pressure on Government finances continues to build, accreditation is increasingly being seen as a market led solution to public sector imperatives.

The accreditation process determines, in the public interest, the technical competence and integrity of organisations offering testing, inspection, calibration and certification services (collectively known as conformity assessment or evaluation services).

As the national accreditation body, UKAS is the only body recognised by Government to assess these types of organisations against internationally recognised standards and it does so across all market sectors by offering a single, transparent and repeatable approach which:

- builds business and consumer confidence;
- is voluntarily embraced by business;
- enables innovation in the private and public sectors;
- reduces the need for central and local government to employ its own specialist assessment personnel.

If you are responsible for setting or implementing policies that involve any form of independent evaluation, UKAS can help in a number of ways including defining your needs or designing an assessment or accreditation service to suit your particular regulatory requirements.

Accreditation in action: Plant health inspection



UKAS has granted the first accreditation for plant health inspection.

Plant health inspection is an important function under the EU framework directive 2000/29/EC, which concerns the regulation of the movement into and within the community of plant materials that are potential carriers of injurious organisms to indigenous plants and pose a threat to the delicate balance of the ecosystem. Plant health inspection activities are therefore essential to reducing the risks of importing harmful objects such as viruses, viroids, bacteria, fungi, insects, mites and nematodes.

UKAS accreditation provides confidence in the competence and consistency of the inspections required to ensure the 'protected zone' status of the UK.

homes from the past into the future, so it's vital people can trust it. I'm therefore pleased to appoint UKAS to ensure that installers and assessors will meet the necessary standards from the start."

The appointment of UKAS to support the Green Deal in this way is another indication of the Government's increasing use of accreditation to provide confidence in the services needed to deliver policy initiatives over a growing field of activity.

UKAS and the Green Deal

The Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has appointed UKAS to accredit certification bodies for the certification of Green Deal advisors and installers.

The Green Deal is aimed at revolutionising the energy efficiency of British properties. Following an assessment, consumers may be offered energy efficiency improvements at no up-front cost. Instead, the value of the investment will be recouped through a charge on the energy bill, fixed to the property. The intention is that the scheme will be fully operational by October 2012.

To provide reassurance to those undertaking Green Deal improvements on their homes, community spaces and businesses, DECC has announced that it will require installers and assessors to be subject to accredited certification. UKAS accreditation will provide end consumers with confidence that there is a complete chain



of competence right through to the organisations or individuals undertaking the Green Deal projects.

As Greg Barker, Minister of State at DECC, said when announcing UKAS' appointment: "The Green Deal will be the biggest home improvement programme since the Second World War, shifting our outdated draughty

Making a difference to public sector delivery

UKAS accreditation is an on-going business process to establish that:

- the evaluator is **impartial**;
- the evaluator is technically **competent**;
- the resources and facilities are **appropriate**;
- the evaluator's performance meets **the required standard**;
- the evaluator's standard of performance **can be sustained**.

UKAS carries out this accreditation work to internationally-recognised standards and is itself regularly reviewed by its international peers.



Protecting the environment – UKAS accredits certification of environmental management systems



Ensuring public confidence in what we eat – UKAS accredits food testing laboratories

Because UKAS has well-established and transparent assessment procedures applicable to all forms of conformity assessment, its accreditation helps:

- **reduce bureaucracy**—the use of accredited services in a sector moderates the need for legislation and reduces the risk of unintended consequences;
- **enhance efficiency**—business innovates to meet standards in efficient and cost-effective ways. Accreditation also allows for a rapid response to new issues and priorities by swiftly adapting existing regimes according to circumstances;
- **engender trust**—the UKAS symbol is a well-known means of identifying organisations that meet and maintain high standards. The public gain more confidence in services when they know standards are checked, updated and enforced.

Accreditation in action: Crime scene investigation



Underpinning the justice system – UKAS accredits the examination and collection of materials from crime scenes

UKAS is running a pilot programme to test the methodologies required for the accreditation of crime scene investigation. The pilot programme will operate against the same rigorous processes as for all UKAS assessment activities, but adapted to satisfy the particular requirements placed upon it by the UK's criminal justice system.

Accreditation has underpinned quality assurance of forensic analysis for over 20 years, ensuring confidence of analysis of samples and results produced in the laboratory. However, until now the examination and collection of materials from crime scenes has not been covered by accreditation. Accredited examination and collection of materials from crime scenes will provide additional confidence in the integrity and chain of custody of the materials being collected.

UKAS accreditation demonstrates the technical competence, impartiality and integrity of the organisations offering scene of crime investigation services.

UKAS accreditation is helping to establish and maintain confidence across the public sector in policy areas such as:

Environmental management	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Medical laboratories and devices	Department of Health
National Measurement System	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Vehicle exhaust gas analysers	Department for Transport
Monitoring Certification Scheme (MCERTS)	Environment Agency
Food safety	Food Standards Agency
Building regulations	Department of Communities and Local Government
Asbestos surveys and testing	Health and Safety Executive
Gas safety	Health and Safety Executive
National DNA database	Home Office
Forensic science laboratories	Home Office
Microgeneration	Department for Energy and Climate Change

Accreditation in action: Telecommunications Service Providers

UKAS has granted the first accreditation for certification for CESG Assured Service (Telecoms). In 2010, the UK National Technical Authority for Information Assurance, CESG, announced a certification scheme for telecommunication service providers, now known as the CESG Assured Service (Telecoms) Scheme. This is part of the development of the Security Standards for the Public Sector Network (PSN) although it is not exclusive to PSN.

The scheme is intended to provide assurance of security to meet Government defined Business Impact Level 224 (level 2 for integrity, 2 for confidentiality and 4 for availability). It is based on Information Security Management System (ISMS) certification to ISO/IEC 27001, and adds requirements specific to the telecommunications sector. The scheme establishes a new model for certifying telecom services and has been a collaborative effort between UKAS, industry and CESG. The outcome is a scheme that provides confidence in the organisations that will certify service providers in this sensitive area.



Security Management Systems – UKAS accredits certification for telecommunications integrity, confidentiality and availability



Delivering confidence in test results – UKAS accredits DNA testing

Delivering confidence...

UKAS accredits:

- **1,500 laboratories**
- **150 certification bodies**
- **280 inspection bodies**

In doing so it enables them to provide services and products that meet agreed standards, delivering confidence on the part of consumers, government and purchasers alike.

Look for the Crown

Accredited organisations are entitled to display symbols that incorporate the Royal Crown, signifying Government recognition of the accreditation process.



Key facts about UKAS

- The only national accreditation body recognised by Government to assess organisations carrying out evaluations to international standards
- Non-profit-distributing company limited by guarantee
- Over 40 years' experience

UKAS Members

Rather than shareholders, UKAS has members that represent those who have an interest in different aspects of accreditation. Current members are:

Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
Association of British Certification Bodies
British Measurement and Testing Association
British Retail Consortium
Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply
Chartered Quality Institute
Confederation of British Industry
Consumer Focus
Department of Health
Federation of Small Businesses
Food Standards Agency
Health Protection Agency
Health and Safety Executive
Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services
Ministry of Defence
Safety Assessment Federation
Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Science Council



Ensuring the quality of healthcare – UKAS operates the Imaging Services Accreditation Scheme



Removing barriers to trade – UKAS' international recognition facilitates trade and commerce

Who to contact for further information

If you wish to find out more about how accreditation might be of assistance to you in your capacity as a public servant, please contact:

Malcolm Hynd, External Affairs Manager Telephone **020 8917 8443** Email malcolm.hynd@ukas.com Or visit our website at www.ukas.com

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service has made the greater public awareness of accreditation and its benefits a key strategic priority.

Activities towards this objective are carried out under the banner of the **Accreditation Awareness Campaign** and are supported by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

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Delivering
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