

Development of New Areas of Accreditation

Purpose

This document contains information for those parties (e.g. Government, Conformity Assessment Bodies and Scheme Owners etc) interested in utilizing accreditation to underpin the quality of evaluations conducted by conformity assessment bodies (e.g. certification bodies, laboratories, inspection bodies). It also includes a 'self-assessment' form which, whilst not absolutely necessary to complete, will help you to understand what it is we look for when new areas for accreditation are being proposed*.

Background

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) is the sole national accreditation body recognised by government to assess, against internationally agreed standards, organisations* (i.e. conformity assessment bodies) that provide certification, testing, inspection and calibration services.

* UKAS accreditation is granted to organisations who have demonstrated that they fully meet the requirements of relevant national and international standards

Accreditation by UKAS demonstrates the competence, impartiality and performance capability of these conformity assessment bodies. UKAS is a non-profit-distributing private company, limited by guarantee. UKAS is independent of Government but is appointed as the national accreditation body by the [Accreditation Regulations 2009 \(SI No 3155/2009\)](#) and [EU Regulation \(EC\) 765/2008](#) and operates under a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with the Government through the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Development of new areas of accreditation

We operate a new product development programme, enabling us to develop innovative ways to reflect and serve the market sectors in which we operate. When exploring new or emerging areas or schemes and fields of accreditation, we start by reviewing the validity of the proposal in order to establish whether:

- there is a genuine need for accreditation and appropriate ownership of the approach being proposed (driven by the market and/or government regulation or legislation and not solely by the evaluators);
- the proposed approach has been developed by relevant interested parties;
- the evaluation criteria meet appropriate technical standards;
- the proposed approach is eligible for UKAS accreditation i.e. in the public interest.

If the proposal does not satisfy these eligibility criteria, it is unlikely that we will be able to progress the proposal (see '**Eligibility - self-assessment**' below). Where agreement is reached to progress the proposal, we will provide you with information regarding the estimated development cost, identification of the appropriate accreditation criteria and the estimated timescales for conformity assessment bodies to achieve accreditation.

Development of New Areas of Accreditation

Development Costs

When UKAS is asked to develop new areas of accreditation, we usually seek to recover the development cost from the party sponsoring the proposal. The cost of accreditation development projects varies considerably depending on the size and nature of the subject matter but will typically require 20-30 UKAS man days' effort. The current day rate for this development activity is the same as the 'Rate for pre and initial assessments for new customers'. Full details can be found [here](#).

Timescales

Enquirers should be aware that adequate time needs to be built into any accreditation development project to allow for the development of any necessary specifications and guidelines documents, to give the conformity assessment bodies time to prepare for accreditation against the guidelines developed and for the assessment process to be carried out in a thorough and systematic way. Experience shows that this process typically takes at least a year from the announcement of the development project.

Next Steps

Interested parties are invited to carry out the self-assessment below to determine whether or not your proposal meets the eligibility criteria. If you believe that all criteria are satisfied then please contact UKAS (see contact details below) for further discussion on how to take the proposal forward. If you are unable to complete the self-assessment or believe that one or more criteria are not satisfied, we will still be pleased to discuss your proposal with you but may not be able to progress to achieve your desired accreditation outcome.

Contact our **Business Development Group**

Tel: +44 (0) 1784 429 012 E-mail: info@ukas.com

Our full postal address is:

UKAS
2 Pine Trees
Chertsey Lane
Staines-Upon-Thames
TW18 3HR

Development of New Areas of Accreditation

Eligibility – self-assessment

If you are responsible for determining policies that involve any form of independent evaluation, UKAS can help you define your needs or design an assessment service. The first stage is to 'self-assess' against the following eligibility criteria. Once completed, this self-assessment can be used in communications with UKAS to enable understanding and to progress your enquiry

For UKAS to offer accreditation as the National Accreditation Body, the activity undertaken by the body to be accredited must:

	Criteria	Explanation	Self-assessment
1	be 'conformity assessment'	Conformity assessment is formally defined as a 'demonstration that specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person or body are fulfilled'. It can be described as any type of independent 'evaluation' activity e.g. testing, calibration, verification, certification (of management systems/products/persons) and/or inspection	What kind of independent evaluation (e.g. testing, inspection, certification etc) would be conducted and by whom?
2	meet internationally recognised requirements or national requirements that offer an equivalent level of assurance	Accreditation must be carried out against recognised requirements and these requirements must provide the required level of assurance such that the approach is compatible with that taken for other accredited evaluation activities. In most cases the suitability of the requirements for new accreditation activity is self-evident given that they are standards agreed by consensus by the international (or European) standards organisations, these include*: ISO/IEC 17020 'Conformity assessment - Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection' ISO/IEC 17021 'Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems' ISO/IEC 17024 'Conformity assessment - General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons' ISO/IEC 17025 'General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories	Against which standard (e.g. ISO/IEC 17020, 17021 etc) do you anticipate the evaluation being conducted, if known?

Development of New Areas of Accreditation

For UKAS to offer accreditation as the National Accreditation Body, the activity undertaken by the body to be accredited must:

	Criteria	Explanation	Self-assessment
		<p>ISO/IEC 17065 'Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services'</p> <p>* This list is not exhaustive – see Accreditation Standards</p>	
3.	deliver national, economic or societal benefits	The market drivers that warrant accreditation can be grouped into four interrelated aspects of public interest – reducing technical barriers to trade, underpinning an effective national measurement system, supporting business competitiveness and providing public confidence or assurance. All of these aspects have an impact on the economy or society or both	What national, economic or societal benefits are perceived?
4	have a credible driver and the activity itself must be credible	Broad market and/or stakeholder support for the new activity can usually be taken as an indication of the credibility of the driver. The conformity assessment activity to be carried out by the accredited conformity assessment body also needs to be credible if UKAS is to be involved. To be credible, the standards used for the conformity assessment activity must be developed and owned by a reputable body such as ISO or BSI, government or for example a credible industry body. The level of market and stakeholder support can again be taken as an indication of the credibility of the body developing the standard which, in some cases will also be the driver of the scheme	What market/stakeholder support exists for the conformity assessment activity?
5	have the support of the relevant stakeholders	Where the new activity is to be carried out to recognised international or national standards (e.g. ISO/IEC 50001) or where it is in response to a Government backed initiative (e.g. Green Deal), it can usually be assumed that there is broad market support. Where these conditions do not apply, special care needs to be taken to ensure that broad market support exists. Where a new area of activity is proposed by a <u>single</u> applicant for accreditation (e.g. a certification body), it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide evidence to demonstrate to UKAS that the scheme/activity has the support of relevant stakeholders and that these stakeholders have had the opportunity to provide input to the development of the scheme/activity (NB If the proposed evaluation is the certification of a new management system then additional criteria may apply)	<p>1) As 4. Above</p> <p>2) What input have relevant stakeholders had to the development of the scheme/activity?</p> <p>3) What is the anticipated size of the market for the independent evaluation activity?</p>

Development of New Areas of Accreditation

Next Steps

Have you determined whether or not the eligibility criteria are satisfied by your proposal? If you believe that all criteria are satisfied then please contact UKAS (see contact details below) for further discussion on how to take the proposal forward. If you believe that one or more criteria are not satisfied or are unable to complete the self-assessment, we will still discuss your proposal with you but may not be able to progress to achieve your desired accreditation outcome.

Contact our **Business Development Group**

Tel: +44 (0) 1784 429 012 E-mail: info@ukas.com

Our full postal address is:

UKAS
2 Pine Trees
Chertsey Lane
Staines-Upon-Thames
TW18 3HR