

What is the right choice for you?

Choosing the right supplier for your business needs

If you are thinking about using testing, calibration, inspection or certification to support your business but you are not sure about the difference between accreditation and certification – we can explain!

Accreditation – a means to demonstrate technical competence

Accreditation is the process that determines **technical competence** of organisations offering testing, calibration, inspection or certification services.

If you require testing, calibration, inspection or certification services that demand technical competence then you need to use a UKAS-accredited supplier. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has published a guide for businesses to explain why. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/accreditation-and-conformity-assessment-guidance-for-business-and-government-departments/>

Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025 provides authoritative assurance of the technical competence of a laboratory to undertake specified testing or calibrations, and accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020 provides assurance of an inspection body to undertake competent inspections. These standards also include the principles of the management system requirements.

Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17024, and ISO 14065 provides authoritative assurance of the technical competence of a certification body to undertake assessments.

So what does having accredited certification to ISO 9001 mean?*

ISO 9001 is a Quality Management Systems standard. **Certification to ISO 9001 means that the emphasis is on establishing an organisation's compliance with requirements for a quality management system.** This generic standard for quality management systems is applicable to all organisations irrespective of type, size, product or service provided.

Organisations that provide testing and calibration services can be certified to ISO 9001 for their quality management systems – but this should not be interpreted to mean that an organisation has demonstrated the technical competence to produce valid and accurate data and results.

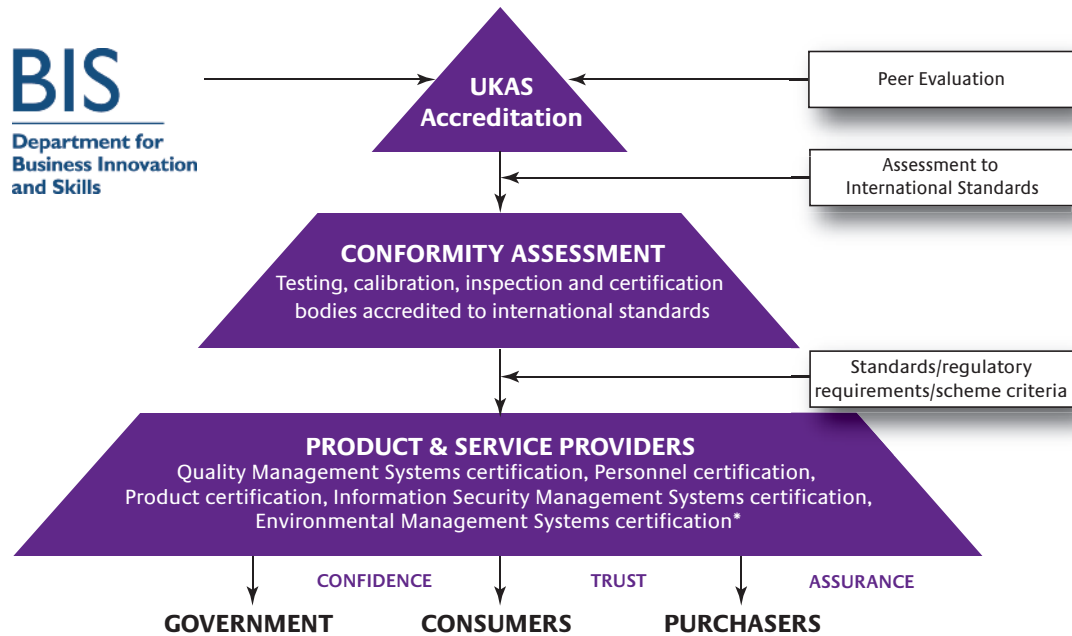


What is the right choice?

You need to think about your business needs. Before choosing a supplier, remember:

- Save time and money by selecting an organisation that will understand and meet your business requirements. Using a UKAS-accredited supplier can be an invaluable tool in your decision-making and risk management.
- Check the scope of accreditation. Each accredited body has a scope which details what its accreditation covers.
- ISO 9001 is a generic standard for quality management systems applicable to all organisations irrespective of type, size or product or service provided.
- An organisation accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 and ISO/IEC 17020 has demonstrated the technical competence to produce valid and accurate data and results.
- Using a UKAS-accredited body to carry out an independent evaluation helps demonstrate due diligence in the event of legal action.

What is the right choice?



* While Quality Management System certification accounts for a large proportion of work undertaken by certification bodies, there are other equally important areas of work such as Product certification, Personnel certification, Environmental Management Systems and Information Security Management Systems. A full list can be found on the UKAS website <https://www.ukas.com/sectors/management-systems-certification/>

Look for the UKAS symbol

Make an informed choice and have confidence in your suppliers by looking for the UKAS symbols. A UKAS-accredited body is permitted to display one of the national accreditation symbols.

Testing and calibration symbol

To find an accredited laboratory look for the UKAS testing or calibration symbol.



Inspection symbol

To find an accredited organisation look for the UKAS inspection symbol.



Management system symbol

If an organisation is certified by a UKAS-accredited certification body, look for the UKAS Management system symbol along with their company logo and certification body accreditation number.



A full list of UKAS-accredited organisations can be found at: <https://www.ukas.com/search-accredited-organisations/>

Alternatively contact **UKAS Corporate Communications**:
Tel: +44 (0) 1784 429000
Email: info@ukas.com

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