

TPS 65

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UKAS Policy on Issuance of Accredited and Non-accredited Certificates by Accredited Certification Bodies

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Changes since last edition

This publication has been updated to incorporate additions to the international position as agreed at the November 2016 International Accreditation Forum General Assembly.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In October 2015, the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) passed the following Resolution at its General Assembly in Milan:

IAF Resolution 2015-14:

The General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the Technical Committee, resolved that IAF Accreditation Body members shall have legally enforceable arrangements with their accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) that prevent the CAB from issuing non-accredited management systems certificates in scopes for which they are accredited.

The resolution is the result of a need to remove confusion in the marketplace between accredited and non-accredited certificates. If a certificate is issued without accreditation indicated, the end user could still look at the accreditation schedule on the National Accreditation Body's website, see from this that the CAB holds the accreditation concerned, and make an assumption that therefore the certificate is covered by accreditation.

Further to this, at the IAF General Assembly in November 2016, the following additional Resolution was passed:

IAF Resolution 2016-17 – (Agenda Item 9) Accredited MS Certification Document - Further to Resolution 2015-14:

The General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the Technical Committee, resolved that in order for a management system certification document to be considered accredited, it must display the accreditation symbol, and/or, reference the accreditation status of the Certification Body (CB) including the identification of the Accreditation Body (AB).

The General Assembly further agreed that management systems certification bodies:

1. must transition certification documentation to include the accreditation symbol, and/or, reference the accreditation status of the CB including the identification of the AB, at the time of recertification decision; no later than 06 November 2019;
2. when granted initial accreditation (for a standard or scope), as of 06 November 2016, the CB must transition (re-issue) previous unaccredited certification documents, within one year after the accreditation decision;
3. must apply this resolution to all management system standards.

Note: If there is an exception to the above, the client must justify the exception to the CB and AB, and if accepted by both the CB and AB, the certification is still considered accredited.

- 1.2 This Technical Policy Statement has been produced in response to these IAF Resolutions, and specifies the UKAS policy and rules for their implementation.
- 1.3 This Technical Policy Statement is applicable to all UKAS accredited Management Systems Certification Bodies, and refers to all Management System standards covered by accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021-1.
- 1.4 For the purposes of this publication, certificate means the certification document issued by the Certification Body to its certified client, relating to the certified Management system.

2. Requirements

- 2.1 As specified in the IAF Resolution, CBs shall not issue any non-accredited certificates in the scopes for which they hold UKAS accreditation and, further to this, all certificates covered by accreditation must include the UKAS symbol or reference to UKAS Accreditation.
- 2.2 The scope of accreditation is defined for each CB within its schedule of accreditation as published on the UKAS website (www.ukas.com), and encompasses the areas of specified competence, as presented in 'IAF codes'. Therefore, if accreditation covers the appropriate scope then the certification must be clearly issued as accredited: In such circumstance non-accredited certificates cannot be issued.
- 2.3 Where accreditation only covers part of an EA scope (i.e. limited scope) then the CB can issue non-accredited certificates for activities falling outside of the limitation.
- 2.4 This requirement is applicable whether or not the accredited certificate includes the UKAS symbol or reference to accreditation.
- 2.5 Non-accredited certificates can be issued for new scope areas where the CB is working towards accreditation. However, once the accreditation is granted, the CB is required to take appropriate action to transfer the previously issued non-accredited certificates to accredited ones within 30 days. These actions may require the CB to carry out a review and additional validation activities of each certificate before confirming its accredited status.
- 2.6 CBs should also refer to, and comply with, **EA-3/01 M: EA Conditions for the use of accreditation symbols, text reference to accreditation and reference to EA MLA signatory status**.
- 2.7 With regard to the note at the end of IAF Resolution 2016-17, UKAS will only consider exceptions to the rules regarding use of the accreditation symbol and reference to accreditation in extreme circumstances. Such exceptions will need to be fully justified with a clear reason why the accreditation symbol or reference to accreditation cannot be included and will be subject to UKAS review and acceptance.

3. Implementation

- 3.1 This policy was originally published in June 2016 with an implementation date of 31st October 2016. CBs should take note of the clarified requirements in this update and ensure they are appropriately covered within their systems and procedures with immediate effect.
 - 3.1.1 CBs are required to update the status of each existing non-accredited certificate in their accredited scope at the next update or renewal of the certificate concerned. At this time the certificate should be confirmed as accredited or withdrawn.
 - 3.1.2 With regard to the use of the UKAS symbol or reference to UKAS accreditation, all CBs must implement this at the time of the next update or renewal; and no later than 06 November 2019. There may be a need for the CB to review each case to ensure that the unaccredited certificate fully meets the requirements for accreditation before updating.

4. Queries

- 4.1 Any queries regarding this policy should be made to the CBs appointed Assessment Manager or to the UKAS Technical Manager, Kevin Belson (kevin.belson@ukas.com).