

Technical Bulletin – Volume Scene of Crime Accreditation

9 June 2020

This Technical Bulletin provides an accessible record of communications relating to volume scene of crime accreditation previously sent by UKAS to relevant interested parties.

Updated UKAS Customer Guidance Communication for Volume Scene of Crime Accreditation - Law Enforcement (May 2020)

Introduction

Further to our communication in January 2020 this update provides information on the latest situation with respect to UKAS Scene of Crime assessments in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, it outlines revision to the effort guidance for Initial Assessment based on experiences gained from the assessments undertaken to date.

In response to the advice and guidelines from the UK Government, relating to travel restrictions and social distancing, UKAS has implemented a revised policy with respect to undertaking assessments. This is detailed in UKAS Publication [TPS 73 UKAS Policy on Accreditation and Conformity Assessment During the Covid-19 Outbreak](#).

In light of this revised policy it has been determined that due to the nature of Scene of Crime activity, and that this will be a new area of accreditation for police forces, that until the restrictions are lifted UKAS will not undertake remote Initial Assessments for applications for Scene of Crime activity.

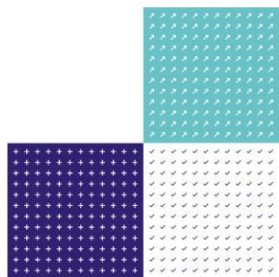
In recognition of the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic the Forensic Science Regulator (FSR) has published Regulatory Notice 01/2020, which along with the subsequent release of Version 5 of the FSR Codes of Practice and Conduct, indicates a deferral to the deadline for accreditation for Incident Scene Examination of at least six months.

Application Stage

Organisations can continue to submit applications for Scene of Crime activity using the Inspection Body Accreditation Application Form (AC2), ensuring that this is accompanied by the supporting documentation listed in the previous UKAS Scene of Crime Communication dated January 2020.

Pre-Assessment Stage

UKAS is able to conduct Pre-assessments remotely, for example, via Skype, Microsoft Teams etc. should any organisation wish to proceed with this type of assessment prior to the resumption of site visits.



For a limited time (until 30th September 2020) UKAS is able to offer those organisations that have had a Pre-assessment Visit and have demonstrably addressed the resulting areas identified in the Pre-assessment report an extra desktop review relating to their Preparedness for Assessment. The cost of the desktop review will be determined by the effort required to review the documents submitted and to produce the associated report (which will be in a similar format to the Pre-assessment report). It should be noted that if issues identified during the Pre-assessment have not been addressed then no further review / comment will be made in relation to these issues. The desktop review, by its nature, does not evaluate the implementation of policies and procedures, and therefore does not preclude issues being noted (either with the documentation or the practice) when the system is seen in operation during the subsequent Initial Assessment.

It should also be noted that a review of submitted documents will need to be completed in preparation for the subsequent Initial Assessment and will be charged as part of the Office Time for that visit. Consequently, the review of documents as part of a desktop review will not lead to a reduction in effort for the Initial Assessment.

Any request for a desktop review should be sent to Alison.Brodie@ukas.com on or before 30th September 2020.

Initial Assessment Stage

As detailed above UKAS will not be undertaking any Initial Assessments of Scene of Crime applications until such time as travel restrictions and social distancing guidelines allow for the resumption of site assessment visits.

As a consequence, all Scene of Crime Initial Assessments that had been previously booked have now been cancelled; and any dates that were being discussed / held for potential assessments have been released.

In preparation for the re-commencement of site assessments UKAS has identified some key principles that will help to ensure that these visits are progressed and booked in the most effective manner to allow as many police force customers to move toward accreditation as efficiently as possible. These principles are as follows: -

- UKAS will introduce a 'slots'-based system, similar to that operated for the Fingerprint Comparison project. UKAS will identify Assessment Teams for these 'slots' that will be allocated for the assessment of the next suitable customer.
- Prior to the allocation of a 'slot' an organisation will need to demonstrate (through the provision of appropriate finalised documentation) that they are ready to progress. Once the documentation has been evaluated as being suitable the organisation will be allocated the next available 'slot'.
- Priority will be given to those customers who have had visits cancelled.
- Due to this approach the next available slot may not always include the organisations Assessment Manger.

- During the allocation of ‘slots’, in order to maximise the potential for as many police forces to be assessed in the shortest timescale, UKAS will only assess one site per legal entity. Additional sites can be requested after successful closure of any findings from the first assessment.

Revised effort guidance for Volume Crime at one site.

Following the completion of the Scene of Crime Initial Assessments undertaken to date UKAS has reviewed the time taken to conduct all aspects of the assessment and has consequently revised the effort guidance for Initial Assessment. The revision of the effort has resulted in an increase in the office time, whilst leaving the time on site unchanged.

Initial ETS Assessment			
Role	Office	Site	Total (Days)
Assessment Manager	2	3	5
Technical Assessor #1	1.5	3	4.5
Technical Assessor #2	1.5	3	4.5
Total	5	9	14

If you have any queries in relation to the content of this document, please contact. Alison.Brodie@ukas.com

Links to Previous Communications

- [Updated UKAS Customer Guidance Communication for Volume Scene of Crime Accreditation - Law Enforcement \(January 2020\)](#)
- [Customer Communication relating to the process for the Accreditation of Scene of Crime Examination for Police Forces – Volume Crime \(December 2018\)](#)