

Continuing recognition of UKAS accreditation across Europe

As 2020 draws to a close, this also marks the end of the UK's Brexit-transition period, with EU rules and regulations no longer applying to Great Britain from the 1st January 2021 (subject to a last-minute trade deal). As the UK looks to strike out on its own, industry is keen to understand what the implications of this independence actually means to them. Since the Brexit outcome in 2016 there have been numerous statements issued by various parties, some factual, others confusing and conflicting, and to get a true balanced picture has, on occasion, proven quite difficult. This article is aimed at clarifying the position of UKAS accreditation across Europe from the beginning of 2021.

[What is the position regarding Regulation \(EC\) No. 765/2008?](#)

The European Commission has been consistent in its messaging regarding UKAS accreditation, although fully understanding the context in which its position is presented can be challenging. Indeed, UKAS has been approached by a wide range of companies and stakeholders seeking clarification and reassurance.

The basis for the Commissions position is that from 1st January 2021 the European regulation on accreditation (Regulation (EC) No. 765/2008) shall no longer apply to Great Britain (under the Northern Ireland Protocol this may not be the case for Northern Ireland). Therefore, where the Regulation refers to National Accreditation Bodies the Commission does not recognise this as applying to UKAS, hence its statement that UKAS *"will cease to be a national accreditation body within the meaning and for the purposes of Regulation No 765/2008 as from the end of the transition period"*.

It is important to appreciate that this is with respect to the European Commission and does not relate to recognition outside of the Regulation or EU regulatory framework.

[UKAS remain the UK's National Accreditation Body](#)

The fact is that UKAS shall remain the UK's National Accreditation Body, as appointed by the UK Government via the UK Accreditation Regulations 2009 (SI No 3155/2009). Further to this, the statement from the Commission goes on to state that *"as a consequence, UKAS's accreditation certificates will no longer be considered as 'accreditation' within the meaning of Regulation No. 765/2008 and no longer be valid or recognised in the EU pursuant to that Regulation as of the end of the transition period"*.

Again, this statement relates to the view of the Commission and is directly linked to regulatory activities covered under Regulation (EC) No. 765/2008, it does not relate to activities outside of the regulatory framework.

To underline this point, UKAS has received confirmation from DG Environment within the European Commission that our ongoing recognition by the European cooperation for Accreditation (EA) will be sufficient to ensure the accreditation of ETV Verification Bodies and therefore their activity in the EU Environmental Technology Verification scheme.

[Continued recognition of UKAS certificates](#)

UKAS shall remain a member of the EA following the end of the Brexit-transition period and, importantly, a full signatory to the EA Multilateral Agreement (MLA). Under this MLA, UKAS accreditation is recognised by other EA MLA signatories as technically equivalent to their own, meaning that reports and certificates issued under UKAS accreditation should still be recognised across Europe.

In confirmation of this the EA has recently issued a clarifying statement on 'continuing recognition of UKAS under the EA MLA' which can be read/downloaded [here](#). This statement applies to all UKAS

accredited work covered under the scope of the EA MLA, no matter where the accredited body is located or operating.