

## Q&A

### Demystifying accreditation webinar series: 'Your journey to accreditation'

**Q: If you provide Proficiency Testing, are you associated with ILAC? Many insurance companies require that your accreditation be associated with ILAC.**

**A:** If you are a proficiency testing provider (PTP) that is accredited to ISO/IEC 17043 by an Accreditation Body, which is a member of ILAC and has ISO/IEC 17043 within their approved scope of accreditation activities (which UKAS is), then you are associated with ILAC as a consequence of its Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA).

NB: ILAC only lists the accreditation bodies that provide recognised accreditation for PTP and not the specific PTPs that are accredited by those bodies. Please see the following link for further details: [https://ilac.org/latest\\_ilac\\_news/ilac-mra-extended-to-include-ptp/](https://ilac.org/latest_ilac_news/ilac-mra-extended-to-include-ptp/).

**Q: Will ISO/IEC standards adopt a 'high-level structure' to make multiple standards easier to integrate?**

**A:** Yes. Whenever international standards are being reviewed, and particularly those in the 17000 series, the drafting committees will try and align the clauses with the ISO 9000 family of standards. Having a common structure provides better consistency and enables accredited organisations to make savings by avoiding unnecessary duplication in the management of their systems.

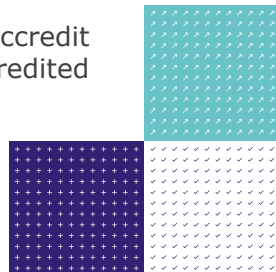
**Q: We have been quoted a £12-£15k fee for accreditation. Do we pay this in one go and is this payable as soon as we sign up?**

**A:** The £1,500 application fee is payable as soon as you submit your documents. This allows UKAS to review the fundamental elements of your application; we will review your application, forms, management systems/documentation and so on, before we progress any further. This is to prevent you from wasting time and money by setting off on a journey that may never lead to accreditation.

The costs associated with each step of the process will be provided as an estimate before being formally quoted to you, with invoices being issued based on the payment terms we have agreed with you. This could be payment in advance (this is a default for overseas customers or for those with poor credit ratings) or more likely 30 days after the assessment. This "staged" process means that large lump sums are less likely to be invoiced, and you are always aware of how much it will cost before any assessment is undertaken. This gives you the opportunity to decide whether you want to go ahead with accreditation.

**Q: If we become accredited as an inspection body and we assess businesses' conformance for service provision to a set of industry standards, are we accrediting them?**

**A:** UKAS is the sole national accreditation body for the UK, and therefore do not accredit organisations to perform accreditation services. An inspection body would be accredited





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by UKAS to undertake inspection activities, and would be providing an accredited inspection service to their customers. Their customers would not have accreditation. Additionally, it is always recommended to contact UKAS on [+44 \(0\)1784 429000](tel:+44(0)1784429000) or by email at [info@ukas.com](mailto:info@ukas.com) to discuss whether Inspection (ISO/IEC 17020) is the most appropriate standard for you, or whether you are actually undertaking certification activity and should therefore be applying for accreditation as a certification body than an inspection body.

**Q: I work for an inspection management software company. Many of the businesses we work with are either UKAS accredited or working towards UKAS accreditation. As a solution to these organisations, we'd like to ensure our system supports them with UKAS Inspections 9202. How as a business serving industries that are going for accreditation can we work with UKAS to ensure our system provides the features and services required?**

**A:** If there is a standard for it and a set of criteria that can be provided, we can certainly determine whether we can provide accreditation for the activity. Many Certification Bodies (CBs) operate under ISO/IEC 17021-1 for information security management systems under ISO/IEC 27001, and it may be that this requires the support of such inspection activities. Please contact our info team on [+44 \(0\)1784 429000](tel:+44(0)1784429000) or by email at [info@ukas.com](mailto:info@ukas.com) if you require further specific information on this (or any other) technical queries.

**Q: What level of implementation is expected for a start-up?**

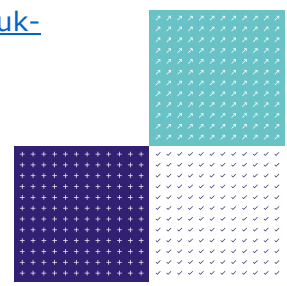
**A:** UKAS needs to see that you have the policies and procedures that comprise your management system in place, and that you have made a start on implementing the more important elements of those (evaluations of training/competence, internal audit, complaints and anomalies, management review and so on). For example, we would expect you to have undertaken a range of internal audits to provide evidence to us of the effectiveness of the system, and how you deal with issues that arise as a consequence. If you haven't made any findings during your audit, but our initial assessment raises many in the area that you have audited, then this would probably call into question how effective your audits are.

**Q: Can you accredit laboratories outside of the UK?**

**A:** Yes we can. However, we have an agreement with organisations in the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) that only one accreditation body will service the needs of customers in that particular economy. For example, if you are based in France, you would first be required to seek accreditation from COFRAC, the French national accreditation body (NAB). It may be that COFRAC do not offer accreditation for the standard or activity that you want, in which case UKAS may be able to conduct the assessment and confer the accreditation for you. It may be that for some specific reason you require UKAS accreditation i.e. your customers are demanding it, and while UKAS can grant accreditation, we would still work collaboratively with the local accreditation body to deliver this.

Regulations are different if you are located outside of the EA (the European Union), although we will always seek to involve your local accreditation body if possible. You can find more information on our overseas policy here:

<https://www.ukas.com/accreditation/about/apply-for-accreditation/overseas-non-uk-application/>.





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**Q: Will UKAS raise a non-conformity if we name a finding as a non-conformity in the internal audits? Having the same approach and giving freedom to Lab managers to decide on actions CAPA, NCW, correction.**

**A:** You can call it anything you like so long as everybody understands what it is. In fact, UKAS routinely has to adapt its approach during assessments because using the term “finding” for one organisation often means something entirely different to another customer.

