



# What is the right choice for you?



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!

## Demonstrate technical competence

Accreditation is the process that determines technical competence of organisations offering services including 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, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has published a guide for businesses to explain why.

[Conformity assessment and accreditation – GOV.UK](#)

Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO 15189 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.

Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17024, and ISO/IEC 17029 provides authoritative assurance of the technical competence of a certification body to provide certification services within its scope. The ongoing competence of all of these bodies is underpinned by an effective quality management system, and the principles for this are built in to each of these standards.

## 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.

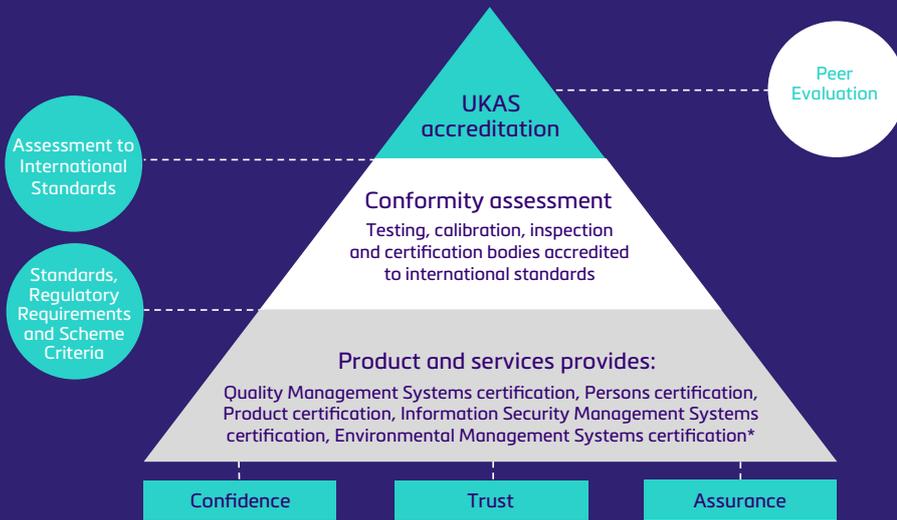
## What is the right choice?

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 enhances your risk management strategy and can simplify the decision making process when selecting suppliers.
- + Check their scope of accreditation, via the [UKAS website](#). 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 or ISO 15189 has demonstrated the technical competence to produce valid and accurate data and test results.
- + Using a UKAS accredited body to carry out an independent evaluation helps demonstrate due diligence in the event of legal action.



\*While Quality Management Systems certification accounts for a large proportion of work undertaken by certification bodies, there are equally important areas of work such as Environmental Management Systems, Information Security Management Systems, Product certification and Persons certification. A full list can be found on the [UKAS website](#).



## 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.

### Medical, Calibration and Testing symbol



To find an accredited laboratory look for the UKAS Medical, Calibration or Testing symbol.

### Inspection symbol



To find an accredited organisation look for the UKAS Inspection Body symbol.

### Management System symbol



To find an accredited certification body, look for the UKAS Management System symbol.

All accredited bodies are required to include their unique accreditation number below the accreditation symbol. This helps to trace their accreditation back to their published scope on the UKAS website and to combat fraud.

## Conditions for use of symbols

For guidance and usage restrictions please refer to the government website: [National accreditation logo and symbols: conditions for use](#)

A full list of UKAS accredited organisations can be found on the [UKAS website](#)

## Get in touch

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