



Inspection

Who is doing your inspection work?

 **UKAS**
A world of confidence



Who is doing your inspection work?

By choosing a UKAS accredited inspection body, not only can you be assured that you are receiving the most appropriate service for your needs but you will also discover that the UKAS 'symbol' on your documentation brings with it national and international recognition to your business.

Do you commission or procure the inspection of a product, process, service, or installation or their design and determination of conformity with specific or general requirements?

If you do, you will want to make sure that the organisation undertaking that inspection has the people, facilities, technical expertise, management systems and track record to undertake the inspection competently, impartially and in a consistent manner.

It is not widely known that anybody can set-up as an inspection body. In some areas there are few rules, regulations or minimum standards. Fortunately, there is an assured way to check the technical competence of an inspection body. The internationally recognised standard for the competence of inspection bodies is ISO/IEC 17020.

What is ISO/IEC 17020?

The international standard ISO/IEC 17020 defines what is required of an inspection body in order for it to demonstrate technical competence, impartiality and the consistency of its inspection activities.

The QMS of an inspection body can either be designed around the relevant clauses of ISO 17020, or can follow the relevant clauses of ISO 9001 through either option A or option B in the standard.



Competence and impartiality

The competence of the inspection body you appoint may be crucial to maintaining your reputation as a responsible organisation. It is therefore surprising that organisations are still tempted to use the service of inspection bodies whose competence has not been confirmed by an independent, authoritative third party.

UKAS is the sole accreditation body recognised by government to assess organisations that provide inspection services against internationally recognised standards. UKAS combines a depth of technical knowledge and expertise built up over many years with scientific and technical specialists operating across a range of inspection activities.



What are your inspection needs?

There are many UKAS accredited inspection bodies in the UK mainly in the following broad sectors: engineering, food and facilities management (asbestos surveying, legionella risk assessments), forensics, and healthcare. Typically, inspections will cover product design, products, materials and equipment, installations, plant, processes and services.

So whatever your inspection needs are in these areas, it is likely that there is an inspection body, accredited by UKAS to ISO/IEC 17020, capable of meeting your needs.



What our customers say



The Bureau Veritas Group, Government Services and International Trade Division

It is important that the information collected from our physical verifications, coupled with a documentary review and possible laboratory testing, is correct. Governments rely heavily on the accuracy of this data to ensure conformity of the products with their national or international safety standards. Accreditation by UKAS gives governments the confidence that our services are technically competent and deliver precise data. This confidence is necessary for them to create robust and speedy trade facilitation programmes.

Dave Lattimore, Total Quality Manager



PHS Compliance

Accreditation allows our customers the ability to distinguish between a proven, competent evaluator that ensures that the selection of a laboratory, certification or inspection body is an informed choice and not a gamble. UKAS accreditation means the evaluator can show to its customer that it has been successful at meeting the requirements of international accreditation standards.

Paul Caddick, Managing Director



Allianz

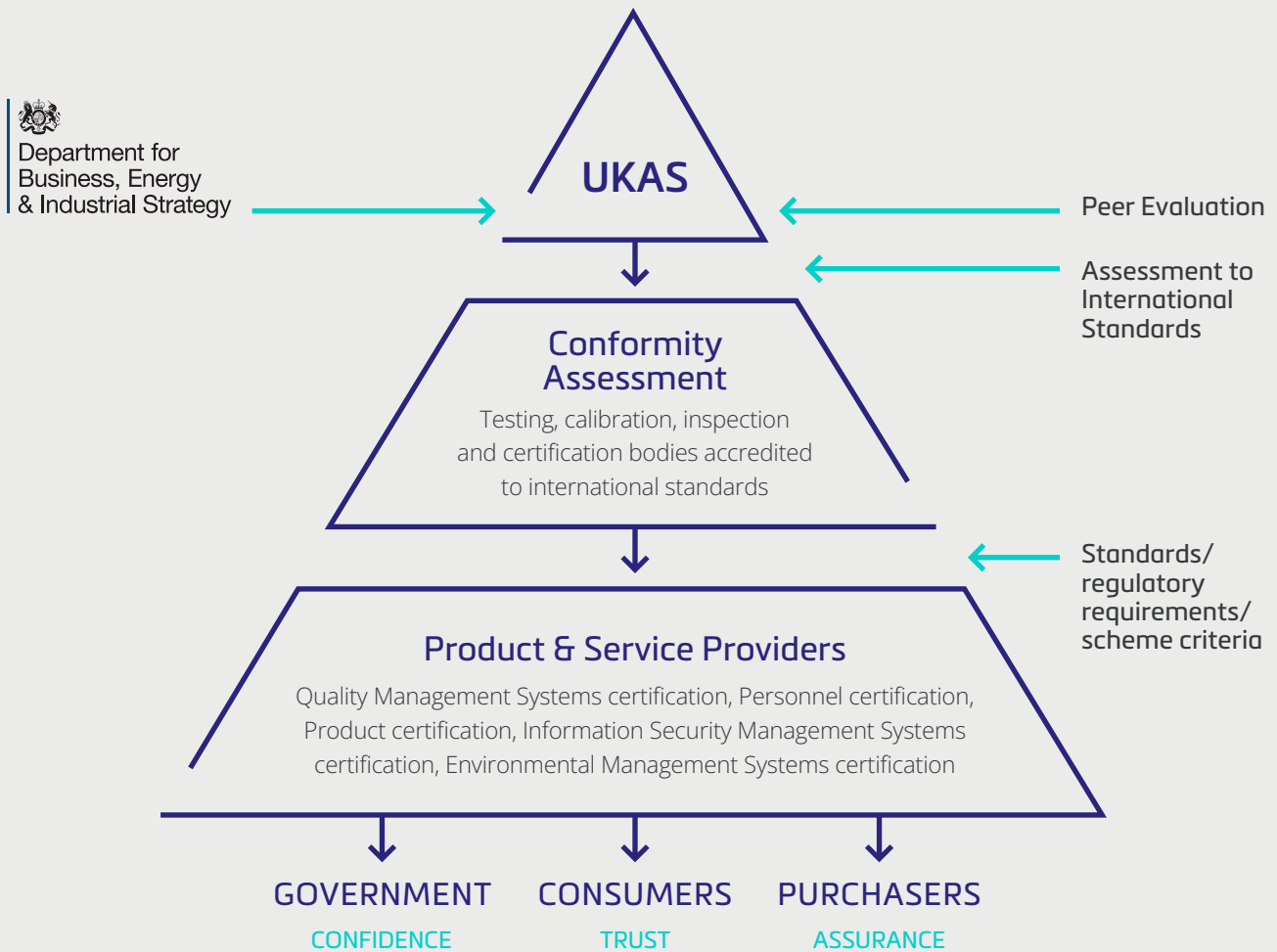
Potentially explosive atmospheres can quickly become extremely hazardous whenever there is a source of ignition present, particularly electrical equipment. It only takes one spark for that potential to become a reality. Therefore it is essential that the integrity of any electrical installation in this type of environment is maintained throughout the course of its life. In order to achieve this, the electrical equipment requires regular periodic inspection and/or regular supervision by skilled personnel, having UKAS accreditation provides confidence that all these inspections have been considered properly.

Phil Wright, Chief Engineer



UKAS market position

An inspection body accredited by UKAS has proven that it complies with best practice and is competent to deliver a consistently reliable and impartial service which meets the appropriate, internationally-recognised standard.



Mutual recognition: Global

- + Accreditation provides a global network of technical assurance, demonstrating equivalence to help eliminate technical barriers to international trade.
- + This assurance is underpinned by a robust process of peer evaluation, ensuring accreditation bodies comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011. This enables an Accreditation Body to become a signatory to a mutual or multilateral recognition arrangement.
- + Being a signatory to a recognized international mutual or multilateral recognition arrangement (such as EA MLA - Multilateral Agreement and ILAC MRA - Mutual Recognition Arrangement) means that the reports and certificates produced by bodies accredited by that signatory should be accepted as technically equivalent to reports and certificates issued in the countries of all other signatories.



ISO 9001 certification does not ensure technical competence and validity

ISO/IEC 17020 should not be confused with the quality management systems standard ISO 9001. The latter is the generic standard for quality management systems applicable to all organisations irrespective of type, size, product or service provided.

It does not require evaluation of the technical competence of an inspection body. ISO 9001 should not be regarded as an 'acceptable' alternative to ISO/IEC 17020. This is because with certification to ISO 9001 the emphasis is on establishing an organisations compliance with requirements for a quality management system, it does not contain technical requirements for personnel and operations.

Identifying a UKAS accredited ISO/IEC 17020 inspection body is simple, each UKAS accredited inspection body is permitted to display the national accreditation inspection symbol.

Benefits of accredited inspection

There are a host of reasons why you should use the services of a UKAS accredited inspection body.

Here are some of the most important:

- + **Minimise risk** – While risk can never be removed altogether, employing the services of a UKAS accredited inspection body will help reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.
- + **Maintain your reputation** – A UKAS accredited inspection body is able to demonstrate a full audit trail for the inspection, can call upon best practice within its sector and will only use the services of trained and experienced evaluators.
- + **Reduce costs** – Properly inspected equipment is more reliable, leading to improved productivity and reduced downtime.

- + **Access to international markets** – Accreditation provides confidence that inspections are delivered to relevant national/international standards. Recognition of this equivalence facilitates access to local and international markets.
- + **Win new business** – Accredited inspection provides independent assurance of competence, setting you apart from the competition and supporting the generation of new business and access to new markets.
- + **Supply chain confidence** – Accredited inspection can create confidence in industry supply chains and is often specified by public and private sector organisations as a prerequisite for acceptance.

What are the risks of using an inspection body that is not UKAS accredited?

Confidence in your choice of inspection body is essential. Using a supplier that has not been independently assessed to the relevant national/international standard runs the following risks:

- + **Inexperienced staff** – Competence is built on qualifications, experience, appropriate professional development and consistent adherence to best practice
- + **Insufficient resource** – Risking inadequate or incomplete work and unreliable results
- + A lack of impartiality
- + Insufficient feedback mechanisms with no formal complaints process, accountability or redress to UKAS
- + Lack of due diligence and exposure to claims
- + Uncertainty within the supply chain, causing quality concerns within your business.

Confused about the difference between accreditation and certification?

Here's what you need to know: In this leaflet we refer to both certification and accreditation. For inspection services, you need to ask for an accredited inspection body.

Certification

is written assurance by a third party that a product, process or service conforms to or complies with specified requirements.

Accreditation

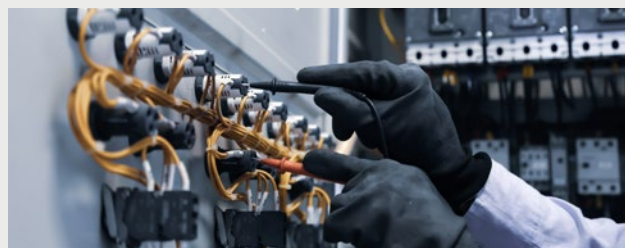
is the procedure by which an authoritative body gives formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific tasks.

How to find a UKAS accredited inspection body

All organisations accredited to ISO/IEC 17020 for Inspection are listed on the UKAS website. An organisation is only accredited for the activities that are listed on their schedule.

To find an inspection body that meets your needs, please visit our website.

UKAS has formally been appointed as the National Accreditation Body for the United Kingdom by The Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). BEIS works with UKAS to ensure that it operates in the public interest and meets the obligation imposed by the Regulation.



Look for the UKAS symbol

Make an informed choice and have confidence in your suppliers by looking for the UKAS symbol.

Only organisations accredited to ISO/IEC 17020 for inspection are permitted to display the inspection symbol, one of the national accreditation symbols.



Further information:

A full list of UKAS accredited inspection bodies can be found at: <https://www.ukas.com/find-an-organisation/>

Further information can be obtained from <https://www.ukas.com/accreditation/standards/inspection-body-accreditation/>

Get in touch

sales@ukas.com
+44 (0) 1784 429000
[ukas.com](https://www.ukas.com)