

Technical Bulletin: MIGRATION TO 'PREFERRED' ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR APPROVED BODIES – Extension to deadline

13 April 2023

Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) holding accreditation for the purposes of appointment as an Approved Body should be aware that a project undertaken by the European cooperation for Accreditation (EA) reviewed and revised the applicable standards used to accredit Notified Bodies. At the time this work began the UK was still a member of the European Union and following the UK's exit from the EU it was determined that it would be in the best interests of UK business to remain aligned with this work.

The requirements relating to the most applicable standard, referred to as 'preferred standards', was specified in EA mandatory publication EA-2/17, with this then being transcribed into UKAS publication GEN 5. These documents required CABs to transfer their accreditation to the preferred standard, where a different preferred standard to that already being used was identified, by the end of April 2023. Note: This did not affect all Approved Bodies.

It had become clear to UKAS that a number of CABs were struggling to achieve this migration by the stated deadline, particularly where the new standard for accreditation was markedly different to the one they were currently accredited against. Discussions with some of our European peers revealed that it was not just the UK that was finding this migration challenging, and that a number of countries were looking at how this could be addressed without wholesale suspension of CABs accreditations.

UKAS opened discussions with the Department of Business and Trade (DBT) in March to discuss concerns over the deadline not being met and the impact that this could have on the CAB capacity for UKCA marking. It was agreed that adhering to the current April deadline would put the UKCA scheme at risk, to the detriment of UK business. As a consequence, and as permitted within EA-2/17, ministers within DBT agreed that it was in the UK's best interest to extend the deadline, and a [formal letter](#) was sent to UKAS to this effect. This letter was welcomed by UKAS, and provided legitimate justification to extend the deadline for migration completion from April until the end of the year.

Therefore, this communication is to inform you that where CABs have been required to seek new accreditation to the preferred standard in order to maintain their Approved Body status, the deadline to complete this has now been extended until **31st December 2023**.

However, CABs that are still going through the transition process should not see this as a reason to slow their efforts, and UKAS still expects work to complete migrations to continue with the minimum of delay. DBT has requested UKAS to provide progress reports on the migration process throughout 2023, and we shall be liaising closely to ensure this is achieved with minimal impact to UK business. An action plan has been developed that details mandatory milestones in order for the migration to be completed.

The significant dates are as follows:

- Applications for migration (with supporting information) submitted by 30th April 2023
- Assessment completed by 31 July 2023
- All related nonconformities addressed and closed by UKAS by 31 October 2023

Any CAB that has not yet begun their transition process should contact their Assessment Manager immediately to get the process started.

It is important to understand that any CAB failing to complete a required transition by the end of the year will lose their accreditation until the transition is complete. Such a loss of accreditation shall automatically lead to the withdrawal of their Approved Body status.

Any queries regarding the content of this communication should be directed to your Assessment Manager in the first instance, or to the UKAS Technical Manager, Mr Kevin Belson (kevin.belson@ukas.com).