

The Role of UKAS Technical Advisory Committees

The Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) are a vital mechanism for UKAS to seek independent and impartial advice and guidance on the technical services that we offer across a range of sectors, hence ensuring that our services remain fit for purpose. For these to be effective it is important that the roles of the committee members are well defined, and these are summarised below:

Chairperson:

The Chairperson of a TAC is normally an external person appointed by UKAS to work with the committee secretary and ensure that meetings are managed effectively and the group kept on track towards achieving successful outcomes. They are supported in the administrative duties by the TAC secretariat who will ensure papers, including the minutes, are circulated in a timely manner. Because of the integral part they play in keeping these components moving steadily forward, the Chairperson shall have the following responsibilities:

- They shall act as the TAC's leading representative, clearly and impartially presenting the aims and policies of the TAC to all members of the committee.
- They shall hold position as Chair at each meeting, including determining the order of the agenda, ensuring committee members receive accurate, timely, and clear information, keeping track of the contributions of individual members and ensuring that each has the opportunity to input into discussions and outcomes.
- They shall direct discussions towards consensus views and agreement and should summarise discussions to ensure clarity on the proposed outcome.
- They shall be expected to take a leading role in ensuring that the composition of the TAC remains balanced, and that impartiality is always maintained.

Committee secretary:

The role of secretary is held by a permanent UKAS employee who has demonstrated competence and experience in the sector that the TAC is concerned with. This person may also hold the position of UKAS technical focus person for accreditation matters related to the sector, or part of the sector. They shall provide technical support to the Chair and help with such matters as drawing up the agenda, identifying new members, and technical input to the drafting of the minutes.

Committee members:

It is essential for the smooth running and effectiveness of the TAC that a balanced and technically knowledgeable membership is in place. Membership is via invitation from UKAS only, and they are chosen to represent a recognised group of stakeholders (e.g. Regulators, conformity assessment bodies, end-users, etc). The following attributes shall be expected of committee members:

- Full participation during discussions of topics that are related to their area of expertise (it is noted that due to the nature of TACs there may be times when the areas being discussed may be outside their specific area of expertise).
- Regular attendance at meetings either remotely through TEAMS or face to face when requested by the Chair / secretariat.
- To act impartially throughout the discussions and ensure confidentiality of information disseminated prior to or during these meetings.
- Treat the views and opinions of each member of the TAC with consideration and respect.

Initial invitations shall ensure that members have the correct technical background, knowledge and experience to sit on the committee: this shall be formulated by UKAS in conjunction with the secretariat and the Chair.

TAC Secretariat (UKAS Governance administrator):

The TAC secretariat plays an important administrative function for the day-to-day running and maintenance of TACs that are operated by UKAS. Key amongst their functions are the following:

- To work closely with the TAC Chair and secretary.
- To provide secretariat support to all UKAS Technical Advisory Committees to ensure UKAS has effective and timely input from reliable technical sources.
- Logistical arrangements for all TAC meetings including initial contact for availability, co-ordination of dates, confirmation of meeting, and arrangement of facilities and venues.
- Assist in preparing agendas with each Chair.
- Distribution of papers to deadlines to ensure participants receive the appropriate papers sufficiently in advance of meetings.
- Attendance at TAC meetings and production of minutes within agreed timeframe, ensuring all members have access to these minutes.
- Log all actions and support the Chair in follow ups to ensure all are completed in a timely manner.
- Provisional dates for the next meeting should normally be set at the end of each meeting, typically set at six-monthly intervals.

NB: more information regarding TACs can be found in the Terms of Reference.