GUIDE 62

General requirements for bodies operating assessment and certification/registration of quality systems

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Contents

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

Draft Guides adopted by the responsible Committee or Group are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as a Guide requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

ISO/IEC Guide 62 was prepared by the Committee on Conformity Assessment (CASCO).

This Guide cancels and replaces ISO/IEC Guide 48:1986, *Guidelines for third-party assessment and registration of a supplier's Quality System*.

Introduction

Certification/registration of a supplier's quality system is one means of providing assurance that the certified/registered supplier is capable of supplying products or services that meet specified requirements.

This Guide specifies requirements, the observance of which is intended to ensure that certification/registration bodies operate third-party certification/registration systems in a consistent and reliable manner, thereby facilitating their acceptance on a national and international basis. This Guide should serve as a foundation for the recognition of relevant national systems in the interests of international trade.

This Guide is intended for use by bodies, however described, which carry out the functions of assessment and certification/registration of quality systems. For convenience of drafting, such bodies are referred to as "certification/registration bodies". This wording should not be an obstacle to the use of this Guide by bodies with other designations which undertake activities which it covers. Indeed, this Guide should be usable by any body involved in quality system assessment.

The requirements contained in this Guide are written, above all, to be considered as general requirements for organizations operating quality system certification/registration programmes, therefore the requirements may have to be supplemented when specific industrial or other sectors (e.g. health and safety) make use of it.

Quality system certification/registration involves only the assessment of a supplier's quality system and not the certification of products, processes or services. Evidence of conformity to the appropriate quality system standard and any supplementary documentation will be in the form of a certification/registration document or a quality system certificate.

While this Guide is intended for use by bodies concerned with recognizing the competence of certification/registration bodies, many provisions contained herein may be useful in second-party assessment procedures.

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General requirements for bodies operating assessment and certification/registration of quality systems

Section 1: General

1.1 Scope

This Guide specifies general requirements for a third-party body operating quality system certification/registration to meet if it is to be recognized as competent and reliable in the operation of quality system certification/registration.

NOTE 1 In some countries, the bodies which verify conformity of quality systems to specified standards are called "certification bodies", in others "registration bodies", in others "assessment and registration bodies" or "certification/registration bodies", and in still others "registrars". For ease of understanding, this Guide always refers to such bodies as "certification/registration bodies". This should not be understood to be limiting.

The requirements contained in this Guide are written, above all, to be considered as general requirements for any body operating certification/registration of quality systems.

1.2 References

ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, *General terms and their definitions concerning standardization and related activities.*

ISO 8402:1994, *Quality management and quality assurance — Vocabulary.*

ISO 9000-1:1994, *Quality management and quality assurance standards — Part 1: Guidelines for selection and use.*

ISO 9000-2:1993, *Quality management and quality assurance standards — Part 2: Generic guidelines for the application of ISO 9001, ISO 9002 and ISO 9003.*

ISO 9000-3:1991, *Quality management and quality assurance standards — Part 3: Guidelines for the application of ISO 9001 to the development, supply and maintenance of software.*

ISO 9000-4:1993, *Quality management and quality assurance standards — Part 4: Guide to dependability programme management.*

ISO 9001:1994, *Quality systems — Model for quality assurance in design, development, production, installation and servicing.*

ISO 9002:1994, *Quality systems — Model for quality assurance in production, installation and servicing.*

ISO 9003:1994, *Quality systems — Model for quality assurance in final inspection and test.*

ISO 9004-1:1994, *Quality management and quality system elements — Part 1: Guidelines.*

ISO 9004-2:1991, *Quality management and quality system elements — Part 2: Guidelines for services.*

ISO 9004-3:1993, *Quality management and quality system elements — Part 3: Guidelines for processed materials.*

ISO 9004-4:1993, *Quality management and quality system elements — Part 4: Guidelines for quality improvement.*

ISO 10005:1995, *Quality management — Guidelines for quality plans.*

ISO 10007:1995, *Quality management — Guidelines for configuration management.*

ISO 10011-1:1990, *Guidelines for auditing quality systems — Part 1: Auditing.*

ISO 10011-2:1991, *Guidelines for auditing quality systems — Part 2: Qualification criteria for quality systems auditors.*

ISO 10011-3:1991, *Guidelines for auditing quality systems — Part 3: Management of audit programmes.*

ISO 10012-1:1992, *Quality assurance requirements for measuring equipment — Part 1: Metrological confirmation system for measuring equipment.*

ISO 10013:1995, *Guidelines for developing quality manuals.*

1.3 Definitions

For the purposes of this Guide, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2 and ISO 8402 and the following definitions apply.

1.3.1 supplier: The party that is responsible for the product, process or service and is able to ensure that quality assurance is exercised.

This definition may apply to manufacturers, distributors, importers, assemblers, service organizations, etc.

1.3.2 certification/registration body: A third party that assesses and certifies/registers the quality system of suppliers with respect to published quality system standards and any supplementary documentation required under the system.

1.3.3 certification/registration document: Document indicating that a supplier's quality system conforms to specified quality system standards and any supplementary documentation required under the system.

1.3.4 certification/registration system: System having its own rules of procedure and management for carrying out the assessment leading to the issuance of a certification/registration document and its subsequent maintenance.

Section 2: Requirements for certification/registration bodies

2.1 Certification/registration body

2.1.1 General provisions

2.1.1.1 The policies and procedures under which the certification/registration body operates shall be non-discriminatory, and they shall be administered in a non-discriminatory manner. Procedures shall not be used to impede or inhibit access by applicants other than as specified in this Guide.

2.1.1.2 The certification/registration body shall make its services accessible to all applicants. There shall not be undue financial or other conditions. Access shall not be conditional upon the size of the supplier or membership of any association or group, nor shall certification/registration be conditional upon the number of suppliers already certified/registered.

2.1.1.3 The criteria against which the quality system of an applicant is assessed shall be those outlined in the quality system standards or other normative documents relevant to the function performed. If an explanation is required as to the application of these documents to a specific certification/registration programme, it shall be formulated by relevant and impartial committees or persons possessing the necessary technical competence, and published by the certification/registration body.

2.1.1.4 The certification/registration body shall confine its requirements, assessment and decision on certification/registration to those matters specifically related to the scope of the certification/registration being considered.

2.1.2 Organization

The structure of the certification/registration body shall be such as to give confidence in its certifications/registrations.

In particular, the certification/registration body shall

a) be impartial;

b) be responsible for its decisions relating to the granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification/registration;

c) identify the management (committee, group or person) which will have overall responsibility for all of the following:

   1) performance of assessment and certification/registration as defined in this Guide,

   2) the formulation of policy matters relating to the operation of the certification/registration body,

   3) decisions on certification/registration,

   4) supervision of the implementation of its policies,

   5) supervision of the finances of the certification/registration body,

   6) delegation of authority to committees or individuals, as required, to undertake defined activities on its behalf;

d) have documents which demonstrate that it is a legal entity;

e) have a documented structure which safeguards impartiality, including provisions to assure the impartiality of the operations of the certification/registration body; this structure shall enable the participation of all parties significantly concerned in the development of policies and principles regarding the content and functioning of the certification/registration system;

f) ensure that each decision on certification/registration is taken by a person or persons different from those who carried out the assessment;

g) have rights and responsibilities relevant to its certification/registration activities;

h) have adequate arrangements to cover liabilities arising from its operations and/or activities;

i) have the financial stability and resources required for the operation of a certification/registration system;

j) employ a sufficient number of personnel having the necessary education, training, technical knowledge and experience for performing certification/registration functions relating to the type, range and volume of work performed, under a responsible senior executive;

k) have a quality system, as outlined in 2.1.4, giving confidence in its ability to operate a certification/registration system for suppliers;

l) have policies and procedures that distinguish between supplier certification/registration and any other activities in which the body is engaged;

m) together with its senior executive and staff, be free from any commercial, financial and other

pressures which might influence the results of the certification/registration process;

n) have formal rules and structures for the appointment and operation of any committees which are involved in the certification/registration process; such committees shall be free from any commercial, financial and other pressure that might influence decisions (see note 2);

o) ensure that activities of related bodies do not affect the confidentiality, objectivity or impartiality of its certifications/registrations and shall not offer or provide

   1) those services that it certifies/registers others to perform,

   2) consulting services to obtain or maintain certification/registration,

   3) services to design, implement or maintain quality systems (see note 3);

p) have policies and procedures for the resolution of complaints, appeals and disputes received from suppliers or other parties about the handling of certification/registration or any other related matters.

NOTES

2 A structure where members are chosen to provide a balance of interests, where no single interest predominates, will be deemed to satisfy this provision.

3 Other products, processes or services may be offered, directly or indirectly, provided they do not compromise confidentiality or the objectivity or impartiality of its certification/registration process and decisions.

2.1.3 Subcontracting

When a certification/registration body decides to subcontract work related to certification/registration (e.g. audits) to an external body or person, a properly documented agreement covering the arrangements, including confidentiality and conflict of interests, shall be drawn up. The certification/registration body shall

a) take full responsibility for such subcontracted work and maintain its responsibility for granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification/registration;

b) ensure that the subcontracted body or person is competent and complies with the applicable provisions of this Guide and is not involved, either directly or through its employer, with the design, implementation or maintenance of a quality system in such a way that impartiality could be compromised;

c) obtain the consent of the applicant or certified/registered supplier.

NOTE 4 Requirements a) and b) are also relevant, by extension, when a certification/registration body uses, for granting its own certification/registration, work provided by another certification/registration body with which it has signed an agreement.

2.1.4 Quality system

2.1.4.1 The management of the certification/registration body with executive responsibility for quality shall define and document its policy for quality, including objectives for quality and its commitment to quality. The management shall ensure that this policy is understood, implemented and maintained at all levels of the organization.

2.1.4.2 The certification/registration body shall operate a quality system in accordance with the relevant elements of this Guide and appropriate to the type, range and volume of work performed. This quality system shall be documented and the documentation shall be available for use by the staff of the certification/registration body. The certification/registration body shall ensure effective implementation of the documented quality system procedures and instructions. The certification/registration body shall designate a person with direct access to its highest executive level who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have defined authority to

a) ensure that a quality system is established, implemented and maintained in accordance with this Guide;

b) report on the performance of the quality system to the management of the certification/registration body for review and as a basis for improvement of the quality system.

2.1.4.3 The quality system shall be documented in a quality manual and associated quality procedures, and the quality manual shall contain or refer to at least the following:

a) a quality policy statement;

b) a brief description of the legal status of the certification/registration body, including the names of its owners, if applicable, and, if different, the names of the persons who control it;

c) the names, qualifications, experience and terms of reference of the senior executive and other certification/registration personnel influencing the quality of the certification/registration function;

d) an organization chart showing lines of authority, responsibility and allocation of functions stemming from the senior executive and, in particular, the relationship between those responsible for the assessment and those taking decisions regarding certification/registration;

e) a description of the organization of the certification/registration body, including details of the management (committee, group or person) identified in 2.1.2 c), its constitution, terms of reference and rules of procedure;

f) the policy and procedures for conducting management reviews;

g) administrative procedures including document control;

h) the operational and functional duties and services pertaining to quality, so that the extent and limits of each person's responsibility are known to all concerned;

i) the policy and procedures for the recruitment and training of certification/registration body personnel (including auditors) and monitoring their performance;

j) a list of its subcontractors and details of the procedure for assessing, recording and monitoring their competence;

k) its procedures for handling nonconformities and for assuring the effectiveness of any corrective actions taken;

l) the policy and procedures for implementing the certification/registration process, including

   1) the conditions for issue, retention and withdrawal of certification/registration documents,

   2) checks of the use and application of documents used in the certification/registration of quality systems,

   3) the procedures for assessing and certifying/registering suppliers' quality systems,

   4) the procedures for surveillance and reassessment of certified/registered suppliers;

m) the policy and procedure for dealing with appeals, complaints and disputes;

n) the procedures for conducting internal audits based on the provisions of ISO 10011-1.

2.1.5 Conditions for granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing certification/registration

2.1.5.1 The certification/registration body shall specify the conditions for granting, maintaining, reducing and extending certification/registration and the conditions under which certification/registration may be suspended or withdrawn, partially or in total, for all or part of the supplier's scope of certification/registration. In particular, the certification/registration body shall require the supplier to notify it promptly of any intended changes to the quality system or other changes which may affect conformity.

2.1.5.2 The certification/registration body shall require the supplier to have a documented quality system which conforms to applicable quality system standards or other normative documents.

2.1.5.3 The certification/registration body shall have procedures to

a) grant, maintain, withdraw and, if applicable, suspend certification/registration;

b) extend or reduce the scope of certification/registration;

c) conduct reassessment in the event of changes significantly affecting the activity and operation of the supplier (such as change of ownership, changes in personnel or equipment), or if analysis of a complaint or any other information indicates that the certified/registered supplier no longer complies with the requirements of the certification/registration body.

2.1.5.4 The certification/registration body shall have documented procedures which shall be made available on request for

a) the initial assessment of a supplier's quality system, in accordance with the provisions of ISO 10011-1 and other relevant documents;

b) surveillance and reassessment of supplier's quality systems in accordance with ISO 10011-1 on a periodic basis for continuing conformity with relevant requirements and for verifying and recording that a supplier takes corrective action on a timely basis to correct all nonconformities;

c) identifying and recording nonconformities and the need for corrective action by suppliers on a timely basis for such items as incorrect references to the certification/registration or misleading use of certification/registration information.

2.1.6 Internal audits and management reviews

2.1.6.1 The certification/registration body shall conduct periodic internal audits covering all procedures in a planned and systematic manner, to verify that the quality system is implemented and is effective. The certification/registration body shall ensure that

a) personnel responsible for the area audited are informed of the outcome of the audit;

b) corrective action is taken in a timely and appropriate manner;

c) the results of the audit are recorded.

2.1.6.2 The body's management with executive responsibility shall review its quality system at defined intervals sufficient to ensure its continuing suitability and effectiveness in satisfying the requirements of this Guide and the stated quality policy and objectives. Records of such reviews shall be maintained.

2.1.7 Documentation

2.1.7.1 The certification/registration body shall document, update at regular intervals, and make available (through publications, electronic media or other means), on request,

a) information about the authority under which the certification/registration body operates;

b) a documented statement of its certification/registration system including its rules and procedures for granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing certification/registration;

c) information about the assessment and certification/registration process;

d) a description of the means by which the certification/registration body obtains financial support, and general information on the fees charged to applicants and certified/registered suppliers;

e) a description of the rights and duties of applicants and certified/registered suppliers, including requirements, restrictions or limitations on the use of the certification/registration body's logo and on the ways of referring to the certification/registration granted;

f) information on procedures for handling complaints, appeals and disputes;

g) a directory of certified/registered suppliers, including their locations, describing the scope of certification/registration granted to each.

2.1.7.2 The certification/registration body shall establish and maintain procedures to control all documents and data that relate to its certification/registration functions. These documents shall be reviewed and approved for adequacy by appropriately authorized and competent personnel prior to issuing any documents following initial development or any subsequent amendment or change being made. A listing of all appropriate documents with the respective issue and/or amendment status identified shall be maintained. The distribution of all such documents shall be controlled to ensure that the appropriate documentation is made available to personnel of the certification/registration body or supplier, when required to perform any function relating to the activities of an applicant or certified/registered supplier.

2.1.8 Records

2.1.8.1 The certification/registration body shall maintain a record system to suit its particular circumstances and to comply with existing regulations. The records shall demonstrate that the certification/registration procedures have been effectively fulfilled, particularly with respect to application forms, assessment reports, and other documents relating to granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification/registration. The records shall be identified, managed and disposed of in such a way as to ensure the integrity of the process and confidentiality of the information. The records shall be kept for a period of time so that continued confidence may be demonstrated for at least one full certification/registration cycle, or as required by law.

2.1.8.2 The certification/registration body shall have a policy and procedures for retaining records for a period consistent with its contractual, legal or other obligations. The certification/registration body shall have a policy and procedures concerning access to these records consistent with 2.1.9.

2.1.9 Confidentiality

2.1.9.1 The certification/registration body shall have adequate arrangements, consistent with applicable laws, to safeguard confidentiality of the information obtained in the course of its certification/registration activities at all levels of its organization, including committees and external bodies or individuals acting on its behalf.

2.1.9.2 Except as required in this Guide, information about a particular product or supplier shall not be disclosed to a third party without the written consent of the supplier. Where the law requires information to be disclosed to a third party, the supplier shall be informed of the information provided, as permitted by the law.

2.2 Certification/registration body personnel

2.2.1 General

2.2.1.1 The personnel of the certification/registration body involved in certification/registration shall be competent for the functions they perform.

2.2.1.2 Information on the relevant qualifications, training and experience of each member of the personnel involved in the certification/registration process shall be maintained by the certification/registration

body. Records of training and experience shall be kept up to date.

2.2.1.3 Clearly documented instructions shall be available to the personnel describing their duties and responsibilities. These instructions shall be maintained up to date.

2.2.2 Qualification criteria for auditors and technical experts

2.2.2.1 In order to ensure that assessments are carried out effectively and uniformly, the minimum relevant criteria for competence shall be defined by the certification/registration body.

2.2.2.2 Auditors shall meet the requirements of the appropriate international documentation. For the assessment of a quality system, the relevant guidelines for auditing are those defined in ISO 10011-1 and the relevant criteria for auditors are those defined in ISO 10011-2.

2.2.2.3 Technical experts are not required to comply with the requirements for auditors covered in ISO 10011-2. Guidance on their personal attributes may be obtained from ISO 10011-2:1991, clause 7.

2.2.3 Selection procedure

2.2.3.1 Selection of auditors and technical experts, in general

The certification/registration body shall have a procedure for

a) selecting auditors and, if applicable, technical experts, on the basis of their competence, training, qualifications and experience;

b) initially assessing the conduct of auditors and technical experts during assessments, and subsequently monitoring the performance of auditors and technical experts.

2.2.3.2 Assignment for a specific assessment

When selecting the audit team to be appointed for a specific assessment, the certification/registration body shall ensure that the skills brought to each assignment are appropriate. The team shall

a) be familiar with the applicable legal regulations, certification/registration procedures and certification/registration requirements;

b) have a thorough knowledge of the relevant assessment method and assessment documents;

c) have appropriate technical knowledge of the specific activities for which certification/registration is sought and, where relevant, with associated procedures and their potential for failure (technical experts who are not auditors may fulfil this function);

d) have a degree of understanding sufficient to make a reliable assessment of the competence of the supplier to provide products, processes or services in its certified/registered scope;

e) be able to communicate effectively, both in writing and orally, in the required languages;

f) be free from any interest that might cause team members to act in other than an impartial or non-discriminatory manner, for example,

   1) audit team members or their organization shall not have provided consulting services to the applicant or certified/registered supplier which compromise the certification/registration process and decision,

   2) in accordance with the directives of the certification/registration body, the audit team members shall inform the certification/registration body, prior to the assessment, about any existing, former or envisaged link between themselves or their organization and the supplier to be assessed.

2.2.4 Contracting of assessment personnel

The certification/registration body shall require the personnel involved in the assessment to sign a contract or other document by which they commit themselves to comply with the rules defined by the certification/registration body, including those relating to confidentiality and those relating to independence from commercial and other interests, and any prior and/or present link with the suppliers to be assessed. The certification/registration body shall ensure that, and document how, any subcontracted assessment personnel satisfy all the requirements for assessment personnel outlined in this Guide.

2.2.5 Assessment personnel records

2.2.5.1 The certification/registration body shall possess and maintain up-to-date records on assessment personnel, consisting of

a) name and address;

b) affiliation and position held in the organization;

c) educational qualifications and professional status;

d) experience and training in each field of competence of the certification/registration body;

e) date of most recent updating of records;

f) performance appraisal.

2.2.5.2 The certification/registration body shall ensure, and verify, that any subcontracted body maintains records, which satisfy the requirements of this Guide, of assessment personnel who are subcontracted to the certification/registration body.

2.2.6 Procedures for audit teams

Audit teams shall be provided with up-to-date assessment instructions and all relevant information on certification/registration arrangements and procedures.

2.3 Changes in the certification/registration requirements

The certification/registration body shall give due notice of any changes it intends to make in its requirements for certification/registration. It shall take account of views expressed by the interested parties before deciding on the precise form and effective date of the changes. Following a decision on, and publication of, the changed requirements, it shall verify that each certified/registered supplier carries out any necessary adjustments to its procedures within such time as, in the opinion of the certification/registration body, is reasonable.

2.4 Appeals, complaints and disputes

2.4.1 Appeals, complaints and disputes brought before the certification/registration body by suppliers or other parties shall be subject to the procedures of the certification/registration body.

2.4.2 The certification/registration body shall

a) keep a record of all appeals, complaints and disputes, and remedial actions relative to certification/registration;

b) take appropriate corrective and preventive action;

c) document the actions taken and assess their effectiveness.

Section 3: Requirements for certification/registration

3.1 Application for certification/registration

3.1.1 Information on the procedure

3.1.1.1 A detailed description of the assessment and certification/registration procedure, the documents containing the requirements for certification/registration and documents describing the rights and duties of certified/registered suppliers, shall be maintained up to date as specified in 2.1.7.1 and shall be provided to applicants and certified/registered suppliers.

3.1.1.2 The certification/registration body shall require that a supplier

a) always complies with the relevant provisions of the certification/registration programme;

b) makes all necessary arrangements for the conduct of the assessment, including provision for examining documentation and the access to all areas, records (including internal audit reports) and personnel for the purposes of assessment, surveillance, reassessment and resolution of complaints;

c) only claims that it is certified/registered with respect to those activities for which it has been granted certification/registration;

d) does not use its certification/registration in such a manner as to bring the certification/registration body into disrepute, and does not make any statement regarding its certification/registration which the certification/registration body may consider misleading or unauthorized;

e) upon suspension or withdrawal of its certification/registration (however determined), discontinues use of all advertising matter that contains any reference thereto and returns any certification/registration documents as required by the certification/registration body;

f) uses certification/registration only to indicate that the quality system is in conformity with specified standards or other normative documents, and does not use its certification/registration to imply that a product or service is approved by the certification/registration body;

g) ensures that no certification/registration document, mark or report, or any part thereof, is used in a misleading manner;

h) in making reference to its certification/registration in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising, complies with the requirements of the certification/registration body.

3.1.1.3 When the desired scope of certification/registration is related to a specific programme, any necessary explanation shall be provided to the applicant.

3.1.1.4 If requested, additional application information shall be provided to the applicant.

3.1.2 The application

3.1.2.1 The certification/registration body shall require an official application form, duly completed and signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant, in which or attached to which

a) the scope of the desired certification/registration is defined;

b) the applicant agrees to comply with the requirements for certification/registration and to supply any information needed for its evaluation.

3.1.2.2 At least the following information shall be provided by the applicant prior to the on-site assessment:

a) the general features of the applicant, such as corporate entity, name, addresses, legal status and, where relevant, human and technical resources;

b) general information concerning the quality system and the activities it covers;

c) a description of the systems to be certified/registered and the standards or other normative documents applicable to each;

d) a copy of the quality manual and, where required, the associated documentation.

The information gathered from the application documentation and the quality manual review may be used for the preparation of the on-site assessment and shall be treated with appropriate confidentiality.

3.2 Preparation for assessment

3.2.1 Before proceeding with the assessment, the certification/registration body shall conduct, and maintain records of, a review of the request for certification/registration to ensure that

a) the requirements for certification/registration are clearly defined, documented and understood;

b) any difference in understanding between the certification/registration body and the applicant is resolved;

c) the certification/registration body has the capability to perform the certification/registration service with respect to the scope of the certification/registration sought, the location of the applicant's operations, and any special requirements such as the language used by the applicant.

3.2.2 The certification/registration body shall prepare a plan for its assessment activities to allow for the necessary arrangements to be made.

3.2.3 The certification/registration body shall nominate a qualified audit team to evaluate all material collected from the applicant and to conduct the audit on its behalf. Experts in the areas to be assessed may be attached to the certification/registration body's team as advisers.

3.2.4 The supplier shall be informed of the names of the members of the audit team who will carry out the assessment, with sufficient notice to appeal against the appointment of any particular auditors or experts.

3.2.5 The audit team shall be formally appointed and provided with the appropriate working documents. The plan for and the date of the audit shall be agreed with the supplier. The mandate given to the audit team shall be clearly defined and made known to the supplier, and shall require the audit team to examine the structure, policies and procedures of the supplier, and confirm that these meet all the requirements relevant to the scope of certification/registration, and that the procedures are implemented and are such as to give confidence in the products, processes or services of the supplier.

3.3 Assessment

The audit team shall assess the quality system of the supplier covered by the defined scope against all applicable certification/registration requirements.

3.4 Assessment report

3.4.1 The certification/registration body may adopt reporting procedures that suit its needs but, as a minimum, these procedures shall ensure that

a) a meeting takes place between the audit team and the supplier's management prior to leaving the premises, at which the audit team provides a written or oral indication regarding the conformity of the supplier's quality system with the particular certification/registration requirements and provides an opportunity for the supplier to ask questions about the findings and their basis;

b) the audit team provides the certification/registration body with a report of its findings as to the conformity of the supplier's quality system with all of the certification/registration requirements;

c) a report on the outcome of the assessment is promptly brought to the supplier's attention by the certification/registration body, identifying any nonconformity to be discharged in order to comply with all of the certification/registration requirements;

d) the certification/registration body shall invite the supplier to comment on the report and to describe the specific actions taken, or planned to be taken within a defined time, to remedy any nonconformity with the certification/registration requirements identified during the assessment, and shall inform the supplier of the need for full or partial reassessment or whether a written declaration to be confirmed during surveillance will be considered adequate;

e) the report shall contain as a minimum

1) the date(s) of the audit(s),

2) the name(s) of the person(s) responsible for the report,

3) the names and addresses of all sites audited,

4) the assessed scope of certification/registration or reference thereto, including reference to the standard applied,

5) comments on the conformity of the supplier's quality system with the certification/registration requirements, with a clear statement of nonconformity and, where applicable, any useful comparison with the results of previous assessments of the supplier,

6) an explanation of any differences from the information presented to the body at the closing meeting.

3.4.2 If the report authorized by the certification/registration body differs from the report referred to in clause 3.4.1 c) and e), it shall be submitted to the supplier with an explanation of any differences from the previous report.

The report shall take into consideration

a) the qualification, experience and authority of the staff encountered;