Certification Scheme

PwC Certification Services GmbH | Certification Body for Management Systems
Version 7.0 | May 28, 2026

Contents

1. Document Control

Document Status, Approval, and Confidentiality

Status	Version	Date	Confidentiality	Name	Role
Released	Version 7.0	May 28, 2026	Public	Sarah M. S. Seidel	Deputy Head of Certification Body for Management Systems

Approval and Change Procedures

Preparation, periodic review, and updating	Review, approval	Frequency of regular review
Head of Certification Body for Management Systems	Head of Certification Body for Management Systems (Deputy)	Annually

Scope

This document applies to the management system certification body of PwC Certification Services GmbH, Friedrich-Ebert-Anlage 35-37, 60327 Frankfurt am Main.

Purpose of the Document

The certification scheme is a binding supplementary provision to the offer for the certification of a client’s management system and is therefore part of the client’s engagement of the Management Systems Certification Body of PwC Certification Services GmbH. It outlines the certification cycle, the audit and certification process, and the procedure for transferring an accredited certification. In addition, it sets forth the client’s obligations to cooperate, the specific obligations of the management system certification body, and other terms of service.

Underlying Standards

DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 “Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements (ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015)”
IAF MD 2:2023 “Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Management System Certifications”

1. Document Control

Location

The current version of this document is available in SharePoint **PwC Cert Services GmbH – ZS MS | 05_Templates | E_Auditing and Certification** for all internal and external personnel of PwC Certification Services GmbH. This document is sent to clients along with the offer for management system certification. Furthermore, the current version is published at www.pwc-cert.com.

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Role	Changes
Version 1.0	October 31, 2023	Sarah M. S. Seidel	Head of Certification Body for Management Systems (Deputy)	Initial creation of the document as part of the revision of the documentation
Version 2.0	November 28, 2023	Sarah M. S. Seidel	Head of Certification Body for Management Systems (Deputy)	Change of address for PwC Certification Services GmbH and update due to changes in the Standard Terms and Conditions of PwC Certification Services GmbH
Version 3.0	January 23, 2024	Sarah M. S. Seidel	Head of Certification Body for Management Systems (Deputy)	Removal of information regarding the maximum proportion of remote audits
Version 4.0	May 23, 2024	Sarah M. S. Seidel	Head of Certification Body for Management Systems	Changes due to deviations from the DAkkS operational audit 03/2024 (assignment of “H Action Plan” to Phase 3 “Conducting Audits” of the audit and certification process, inclusion of “Application and Application Review” for transfers of an accredited certification, obligations to cooperate regarding DAkkS supervision / on-site assessment by technical experts, special obligations of the certification body, service conditions regarding appeals and complaints) as well as changes following quality assurance by Legal (in particular clarification of responsibilities in the audit and certification process)
Version 5.0	January 30, 2025	Sarah M. S. Seidel	Head of Certification Body for Management Systems	Only a change in the storage location on this slide from “Google Drive” to “SharePoint”

1. Document Control

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Role	Changes
Version 6.0	March 11, 2025	Sarah M. S. Seidel	Head of Certification Body for Management Systems	Update of the reference to IAF MD 2:2023 under “Underlying Standards” (page 3) and under “Transfer of an Accredited Certification” (page 14), as well as correction of the period for the Year 2 surveillance audit (page 6)
Version 7.0	May 28, 2026	Sören Scholz	Head of Certification Body for Management Systems (Deputy)	Adaptation of the layout to PwC’s new branding.

Remark

The German version of this certification scheme shall be taken as authoritative. No guarantee can be given to the English translation.

2. Certification Cycle

Overview of Audit Activities in the Three-Year Certification Cycle

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.1–9.6

The following diagram provides an **overview of the audit activities in the three-year certification cycle** (initial certification audit (IC), surveillance audit Year 1 (SA 1), and Year 2 (SA 2)), which are required to demonstrate that the client's management system meets the requirements applicable to certification. These activities thus form the basis for granting certification and maintaining it over the three-year certification cycle. In subsequent cycles, the recertification audit replaces the initial certification audit.

Initial Certification Audit Stage 1 → **Initial Certification Audit Stage 2** → **Surveillance Audit Year 1** → **Surveillance Audit, Year 2** → **Recertification Audit**

Initial certification audit stage 1

- **Objective:** To gather necessary information for planning stage 2 and to assess the client's readiness for stage 2
- **Audit type:** Remote audit, with a partial on-site audit if necessary
- **Timeframe**: After conducting at least one internal audit and one management review
- **Result:** Stage 1 audit report in accordance with DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1 | 9.3.1.2.3

Initial certification audit stage 2

- **Objective:** To review the implementation, including the effectiveness, of the information security management system
- **Audit type:** On-site audit, with a partial remote audit if necessary
- **Timeframe:** Interval since the stage 1 audit depends on the client's requirements to address vulnerabilities identified in stage 1
- **Result:** Audit report in accordance with DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1 | 9.4.8; if requirements are met, issuance of the certificate (Validity: 3 years)

Year 1 Surveillance Audit

- **Objective:** To ensure the certification body's confidence that the certified information security management system maintains continuity in meeting the requirements
- **Audit type:** On-site audit, with a partial remote audit if necessary
- **Timeframe:** During the first year and no later than 12 months after the date of the certification decision
- **Result:** Audit report in accordance with DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1 | 9.4.8; if the requirements are met, confirmation of the certificate's continued validity

Surveillance audit, Year 2

- **Objective:** To ensure the certification body's confidence that the certified information security management system maintains continuity in meeting the requirements
- **Audit type:** On-site audit, with a partial remote audit if necessary
- **Period:** during the second year and up to 24 months after the date of the certification decision
- **Result:** Audit report in accordance with DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1 | 9.4.8; if the requirements are met, confirmation of the certificate's continued validity

Recertification audit

- **Objective:** To confirm the continued conformity and effectiveness of the information security management system as a whole, as well as its ongoing relevance and applicability to the scope of certification
- **Audit type:** On-site audit, with a partial remote audit if necessary
- **Timeframe:** In a timely manner prior to the certificate's expiration date to enable timely renewal
- **Result:** Audit report in accordance with DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1 | 9.4.8; if the requirements are met, issuance of the certificate

3. Audit and Certification Process

Overview of the Four Phases of the Audit and Certification Process

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.1–9.5

The audit activities listed on the previous page for the three-year certification cycle (IC, RC 1, RC 2) are each conducted in accordance with the **audit and certification process** outlined here. The EZ must be a stage 1 audit; ÜW 1 and ÜW 2 may require a stage 1 audit if, for example, there are significant changes to the management system, the organization, or in connection with the operation of the client's management system. The stage 2 audit is mandatory for all of the above-mentioned audit activities.

Phase

Procedure

1 Activities Prior to Certification

A Application and Application Review

The client provides the necessary information with the application for certification. The certification body reviews the application and any additional information, if applicable, and notifies the client of the acceptance or rejection of the application.

B Audit Programme and Scope

Based on the information provided in the certification application, the audit programme is developed or updated for the three-year certification cycle, and the audit time required—including the sampling plan—is determined or updated.

C Certification Agreement

Prior to the start of the three-year certification cycle, the certification agreement is concluded through a quotation and the issuance of a contract.

2 Planning Audits

D Audit Plan

A separate audit plan is prepared for each audit scheduled in the certification cycle (initial certification or surveillance audit). This plan includes specifications regarding the conduct and planning of audit activities, including, for example, audit objectives, scope, and criteria, audit schedule, roles and responsibilities, and the audit team.

E Audit Team

Taking into account the competences required for this audit and the impartiality of the audit team members, a suitable audit team is appointed. Furthermore, tasks are assigned to the audit team members.

3 Conducting Audits

F Stage 1 Audit

The opening meeting is followed by audit procedures to review the client's readiness for the stage 2 audit and preparations for it. The audit results are discussed during the closing meeting and documented in the stage 1 audit report.

G Stage 2 Audit

The opening meeting is followed by audit procedures for a review of the client's management system. The audit results are discussed during the closing meeting and documented in the audit report.

H Action Plan

For all nonconformities, the client prepares an action plan, which is verified and accepted by the certification body. The client implements this plan. Further audit activities follow to verify implementation.

4 Certification Decision

I Effective Review

To prepare for the certification decision, an effective review of the audit results and, if applicable, the action plan and evidence of its implementation is conducted.

J Certification Decision

Finally, the certification decision is made and communicated. If the certification decision is positive, the certification documents are prepared and sent. If the certification decision is negative, the audit and certification process is concluded.

3. Audit and Certification Process

Objectives, Activities, and Results of Phase 1 “Activities Prior to Certification” of the Audit and Certification Process

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.1.1–9.1.5, 9.2.1

This and the following pages provide further details on the **objectives, activities, and results of the four phases of the audit and certification process**: “Pre-certification Activities,” “Planning Audits,” “Conducting Audits,” and “Certification Decision.”

1 Pre-certification Activities

Objectives

- Conducting the application review
- Creating/updating the audit programme
- Determining/updating the audit time required, including the sampling plan

Activities

Application and Application Review

- Submission of the certification application completed by the client, including any additional requested information, to the certification body
- Review of the certification application and notification of the client regarding the certification body’s acceptance or rejection of the application

Audit Programme and Time Commitment

- Developing/updating the audit programme for the entire certification cycle; and determining/updating the audit time commitment and a sampling programme, if sampling is used at multiple sites, by the certification body

Certification Agreement

- Prior to the start of the certification cycle, submission of the offer for the three-year certification cycle based on the information from the application process, the audit programme, and the determined audit effort (including the sampling programme) by the certification body, as well as acceptance by the client, thereby establishing the certification agreement

Results

- Application review completed
- Audit programme created
- Audit time requirements determined, including the sampling plan
- Certification agreement concluded

3. Audit and Certification Process

Objectives, Activities, and Results of Phase 2 “Planning Audits” of the Audit and Certification Process

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.2.2, 9.2.3

2 Planning of Audits

Objectives

- Final determination of the audit objectives, scope, and criteria
- Preparing and communicating the audit plan
- Selecting and appointing the audit team, as well as assigning and coordinating tasks

Activities

Audit Plan

- Incorporation by the certification body, in consultation with the client, of the contractually specified audit objectives, scope, and criteria into the audit plan, including any relevant changes
- Preparation of the audit plan by the certification body as the basis for defining the conduct and planning of audit activities, including audit objectives, scope, and criteria, audit schedule, roles and responsibilities, and the audit team, as well as coordinating the audit schedule with the client
- Communication of the audit plan by the certification body to the client and the audit team

Audit Team

- Selection and appointment of audit team members by the certification body, taking into account the competencies identified as necessary for this audit and the impartiality of the audit team members
- Assigning responsibility for auditing specific processes, functions, sites, areas, or activities to the audit team members by the certification body

Results

- Communicated audit plan, including audit objectives, criteria, scope, and schedule finalized with the client
- Appointed audit team

3. Audit and Certification Process

Objectives, Activities, and Results of Phase 3 “Conducting Audits” of the Audit and Certification Process (1/3)

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.3.1.2

3 Conducting Audits

Objectives

- Preparing and conducting the stage 1 audit to gather necessary information for planning the stage 2 audit and to determine the client’s readiness for stage 2

Activities

Stage 1 Audit

- Announcement and preparation of the stage 1 audit, as well as the audit team’s request for documents to be reviewed from the client and the client’s provision of the requested documents
- Preparation and conduct of the opening meeting by the audit team to explain how the audit activities will be carried out
- Conducting the necessary audit procedures (including scope of the management system, site-specific conditions, level of preparation / understanding of the management system standard’s requirements, documents, planning/conduct of internal audits and management reviews) and preparations for the stage 2 audit (including allocation of resources, focus for planning the stage 2 audit) by the audit team to achieve the objectives specified for the stage 1 audit
- Conducting status meetings, typically held daily, between the audit team and the client to discuss audit progress as well as any concerns and identified weaknesses
- Preparation and conduct of the closing meeting by the audit team to explain conclusions regarding the achievement of the stage 1 audit objectives and the client’s readiness for stage 2, including notes on identified weaknesses
- Preparation and provision of the stage 1 audit report by the audit team
- Review of the results of the stage 1 audit and the client’s readiness for stage 2 by the certification body, and communication of the results of this review

Results

- Presentation of the results of the stage 1 audit during the closing meeting
- Provision of the stage 1 audit report, including conclusions regarding the achievement of the stage 1 audit objectives, the client’s readiness for stage 2, and recommendations addressing identified weaknesses
- Communicated the results of the review of the stage 1 audit findings and the client’s readiness for stage 2

3. Audit and Certification Process

Objectives, Activities, and Results of Phase 3 “Conducting Audits” of the Audit and Certification Process (2/3)

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.3.1.3, 9.3.1.4, 9.4.2–9.4.8

3 Conducting Audits

Objectives

- Preparing and conducting the stage 2 audit to review the implementation, including the effectiveness, of the anti-corruption management system

Activities

Stage 2 Audit

- Announcing and preparing for the stage 2 audit; as well as preparing and conducting the opening meeting by the audit team to explain how the audit activities will be carried out
- Gathering and verifying information relevant to the audit objectives, scope, and criteria through appropriate sampling, including interviews, observations, and review of documentation and records by the audit team
- Conducting status meetings, typically held daily, between the audit team and the client to discuss audit progress as well as any concerns, identified nonconformities, and suggestions for improvement
- Identifying, classifying, and documenting audit findings by the audit team (Note: Conformities are described in summary form, while nonconformities and suggestions for improvement are described in detail.); and Discussing the identified nonconformities and suggestions for improvement with the client to verify that the supporting evidence is correct and that the nonconformities are understood, and to resolve any disagreements as far as possible
- Preparation and conduct of the closing meeting by the audit team to present the conclusions drawn from the audit, including the recommendation regarding certification, and to resolve any disagreements as far as possible
- Preparation and provision of the audit report by the audit team

Results

- Audit findings explained during the closing meeting
- Provision of the audit report, including audit findings, conclusions, required follow-up actions, and the audit team’s recommendation regarding certification of the client’s management system

3. Audit and Certification Process

Objectives, Activities, and Results of Phase 3 “Conducting Audits” of the Audit and Certification Process (3/3)

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.3.1.3, 9.3.1.4, 9.4.2–9.4.8

3 Certification Decision

Objectives

- Prepare, submit, verify, and accept an action plan (including root cause analysis) to correct all nonconformities
- Implementing and verifying the corrections and corrective actions for the nonconformities

Activities

Action Plan

- Preparation and submission of the action plan (root cause analysis of all minor and major nonconformities documented in the audit report, as well as the resulting corrections and corrective actions for all nonconformities) by the client
- Verification and, following any necessary changes or additions to the action plan by the client, acceptance of the action plan by the audit team
- Implementation of the corrections and corrective actions agreed upon in the action plan within the target dates agreed upon therein, as well as enabling additional audit activities to verify the client’s completion of these
- Conducting additional audit activities (e.g., reviewing evidence regarding the resolution of nonconformities, additional limited or full audit) by the audit team to verify the effectiveness of all implemented corrections and corrective actions (Note: For a positive certification decision, the full implementation and verification of the corrections and corrective actions for any significant nonconformities is required. The implementation and verification of the corrections and corrective actions for minor nonconformities may, in accordance with the target dates agreed upon in the action plan, continue even after the certification decision.)

Results

- Verified and accepted action plan
- Implemented and verified corrections and corrective actions (especially for significant nonconformities)

3. Audit and Certification Process

Objectives, Activities, and Results of Phase 4 “Certification Decision” of the Audit and Certification Process (2/2)

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.5.2 – 9.5.4

4 Certification decision

Objectives

- Conducting an effective review to prepare the certification decision
- Making the positive/negative certification decision

Activities

Effective review

- Conducting an effective review of the audit results and, if necessary, the action plan and evidence for correcting significant nonconformities by the certification body to verify whether:
  - the information provided by the audit team is sufficient with regard to the certification requirements and the scope,
  - for all significant nonconformities, the corrections and corrective actions have been reviewed, accepted, and verified;
  - for all minor nonconformities, the action plan regarding corrections and corrective actions has been reviewed and accepted

Certification decision

- Consideration of the results of the effective review and, if necessary, the audit results, the action plan, and the evidence for correcting significant nonconformities, and making and communicating a positive certification decision (granting, expansion of the scope, reinstatement, or renewal of certification) or a negative certification decision (refusal, restriction of the scope, suspension, or withdrawal of certification); in the case of a positive certification decision, transmission/confirmation of the maintenance of the certification documents by the certification body

Results

- Effective review completed
- Positive/negative certification decision made
- In the event of a positive certification decision, certification documents are issued

4. Transfer of an Accredited Certification

Procedure in accordance with IAF MD 2:2023 “Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Management System Certifications”

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.1.1, 9.1.2, 9.5.3.3; IAF MD 2:2023

The transfer of certification is defined as the recognition by one accredited certification body of a valid management system certification issued by another accredited certification body for the purpose of issuing its own certification. Only certifications that meet the requirements specified by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) in the IAF document (IAF MD 2:2023) “Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Management System Certifications” are eligible for transfer. The IAF supports regulatory authorities through a global agreement on mutual recognition among accreditation bodies.

Application and Application Review → Approval of the Client → Review Prior to Transfer → Transfer of Certification → Entering the Certification Cycle

Application and application review

- Submitting the certification application completed by the client, including any additional requested information, to the certification body
- Reviewing the certification application and informing the client of the acceptance or rejection of the application

Approval of the client

- Notifying the client of the certification transfer process
- Obtaining the client’s approval for the issuing certification body to provide the information requested by the receiving certification body

Pre-transfer review

- Reviewing the certification by the receiving certification body through a document review
- Conducting an on-site visit at the client to be transferred to, to confirm the validity of the certification, if necessary, e.g., in the case of outstanding significant nonconformities (Note: The pre-transfer site visit is not an audit.)
- Note: If the pre-transfer review reveals issues that prevent the transfer from being completed, the receiving certification body will treat the client as a new client.

Transfer of certification

- Conducting the effective review in accordance with the audit and certification process outlined in this document (including evaluating the results of the “pre-transfer review”; Review the verification of the implementation of corrections and corrective actions regarding all outstanding significant nonconformities; verify whether the client’s plans for corrections and corrective actions for all outstanding minor nonconformities have been accepted)
- Making the certification decision in accordance with the audit and certification process; if the certification decision is positive, issuing the certification documents (the date of the certificate is the original certification date)

Entry into the certification cycle

- Entry into the client’s previous certification cycle by the certification body taking over
- Developing the audit programme for the remainder of the certification cycle and implementing this audit programme accordingly

5. Clients’ Obligations to Cooperate

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.1.1, 9.1.2.1, 9.2.2.2.3, 9.4.2, 9.4.4.1–9.4.4.2

Obligations to Cooperate (1/4)

Contact Person

1. At the start of the audit and certification activities, the client shall designate one authorized representative as the responsible contact person, who shall be available for the three-year certification cycle. In addition, the client shall ensure that a substitute is designated in the event of the representative’s unavailability. The authorized representative’s primary responsibility is to provide all necessary information and documentation in a timely manner, establish contact with relevant decision-makers and experts, coordinate schedules, and ensure that necessary decisions are made in a timely manner.
2. In addition, at the start of the “Planning Audits” phase of each audit within the three-year certification cycle, the client shall designate at least one supervisor who will provide support for the audit during the “Planning Audits” and “Conducting Audits” phases and who will be assigned to assist the audit team. The responsibilities of a supervisor include, for example, establishing contacts and scheduling interviews, organizing visits to specific parts of the site or the organization, ensuring that regulations regarding safety and security procedures at the site are known to and complied with by the members of the audit team, and contributing to the conduct of the audit on behalf of the client and, at the request of an auditor, to clarify questions and provide information. Supervisors must neither hinder nor influence the audit and certification process or its outcome.

Premises, technical equipment, occupational health and safety, emergency, and security measures

1. The client shall provide premises and technical equipment for the on-site audits to be conducted, in accordance with the requirements communicated by the audit team during the “Audit Planning” phase. This typically includes a lockable office with workstations for the audit team (equipped with a local printer, telephone, projector, and Wi-Fi/internet connection) and a meeting room for the opening, closing, and status meetings as well as the interviews (equipped with a telephone/video conferencing system, projector, and Wi-Fi/internet connection; size depending on the planned number of participants) at the sites to be audited.
2. The client shall provide the occupational health and safety, emergency, and security measures relevant to the audit team in a timely manner prior to the on-site audit and shall brief the audit team and, if applicable, participating observers and assessors on these matters no later than the first day of the on-site audit.

Audit and Certification Process

1. An authorized representative of the client shall provide the certification body with the application for certification completed by the client, including any additional information relevant to the application review, in full accordance with the requirements of the certification body of PwC Certification Services GmbH.
2. The client shall provide all information, documentation, and records requested during the audit and certification process that are relevant to the audit objectives, scope, and criteria (including information on the interfaces between functions, activities, and processes). In addition, the client shall facilitate the conduct of interviews as well as the observation of processes and activities and shall involve sufficient personnel capable of providing information for this purpose. Furthermore, the client shall ensure that persons being interviewed are granted access to all relevant areas and the personnel working therein, and that the ongoing production processes for all services and products included within the scope of certification are verifiable, in order to enable a comprehensive audit.

5. Clients' Obligations to Cooperate

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 7.2.4, 7.2.11, 8.4.4, 9.4.9, 9.4.10, 9.5.2

Obligations to Cooperate (2/4)

Audit and Certification Process

3. The client agrees to cooperate in a timely manner during the audit follow-up. This includes the following responsibilities on the part of the client:
   - Analyzing the causes of all minor and major nonconformities documented in the audit report, deriving and describing the corrections and corrective actions to eliminate all identified nonconformities, and preparing and submitting the action plan to the audit team. If necessary, adapting the action plan in accordance with the audit team's instructions.
   - Implementing the corrections and corrective actions in accordance with the action plan agreed upon with the audit team, as well as documenting the evidence of the resolution of the nonconformities and submitting this to the audit team. If necessary, submitting any additional evidence requested by the audit team following verification.
   - If required by the audit team, provide support for conducting further audit activities to verify effective corrections and corrective actions (e.g., an additional limited or full audit).

   The deadlines for these responsibilities are specified in the audit report. Timely implementation of the audit follow-up is crucial for the possibility of granting and subsequently ensuring continuity of certification.

Supervision by the German Accreditation Body (DAkkS)

1. All auditing and certification activities performed by the certification body are subject to the supervision of DAkkS. This supervision includes, among other things, the conduct of office audits at the certification body and so-called witness audits at client sites. The client consents to the presence of DAkkS assessors during audit activities at the client's premises for the purpose of conducting a witness audit. It is ensured that the audit and certification process and the audit result are neither hindered nor influenced. For DAkkS assessors, confidentiality is comprehensively regulated by law.
2. The client grants DAkkS assessors the right to inspect, remove, and use all accreditation-relevant records and information pertaining to the client's auditing and certification activities. The Accreditation Body Act grants DAkkS the necessary rights of access, inspection, and examination to properly fulfill its supervisory duties. The inspection and use of information containing personal data and any operations or business secrets therefore takes place on a legal basis.

Observers from the certification body

1. The assessment of the competence of audit team leaders, auditors, and technical experts by the certification body must, in accordance with accreditation requirements, include evidence of the ability to apply the required knowledge and skills during audits. This must be determined by a competent assessor from the certification body who observes them while conducting an audit. The client agrees to the presence of observers from the certification body to carry out this on-site review of audit team leaders, auditors, and technical experts.

5. Clients' Obligations to Cooperate

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 8.5.3, 9.6.1, 9.6.2.1.1–9.6.2.1.2, 9.6.2.2, 9.6.4.2

Obligations to Cooperate (3/4)

Continuity of Certification

1. The client undertakes to maintain the management system throughout the entire three-year certification cycle for the full scope of certification and to comply with the requirements of the management system standard, the requirements of other relevant regulations and standards, as well as the applicable legal, regulatory, and contractual requirements. The client acknowledges the currently applicable standards, regulations, and requirements of the accreditation body.
2. Surveillance activities for the continuity of certification during the three-year certification cycle may include, in addition to the planned surveillance audits as on-site audits of the management system, inquiries from the certification body to the client regarding aspects of certification, a review of the client's information regarding its activities (e.g., promotional materials, websites), the provision of documented requirements by the client, as well as other means of monitoring the client's performance. The client shall fully facilitate and support the conduct of these surveillance activities.
3. The client agrees that the certification body may conduct short-notice and unannounced audits at the client's premises to carry out surveillance activities, to investigate complaints, or as a consequence of changes (e.g., management system, revisions of norms, regulations, standards), to verify grounds for suspension, withdrawal, or restriction of the scope of certification, and to verify significant or minor nonconformities or their rectification. The certification body's expenses for this shall be reimbursed at the daily rate defined in the offer.

Notifications from the Client

1. The client shall inform the certification body in writing without delay of any matters that could impair the management system's ability to continue meeting the requirements of the standard used for certification. Such matters include, for example, changes regarding
    - the legal, economic, or organizational status or ownership;
    - organization and management (e.g., key personnel in management positions, decision-makers, or technical staff);
    - contact addresses and locations;
    - the scope covered by the certified management system;
    - significant changes to the management system and processes.
2. The client must notify PwC Certification Services GmbH in writing of any planned switch to another accredited certification body immediately after the internal decision has been made.
3. Complaints regarding certification requirements must be recorded by the client and made available to the certification body at any time. Depending on the requirements of the respective management system standard, the information must be submitted independently to the certification body.

5. Client’s Obligations to Cooperate

Obligations to Cooperate (4/4)

Notifications from the Client
4. The certification body of PwC Certification Services GmbH must be informed if audits are conducted in the accredited scope by other certification bodies, as these may cause interactions within the client’s management system.
5. All relevant information, including that concerning interested parties, such as direct and indirect environmental impacts, changes in occupational health and safety issues, and local and global topics, must be communicated to the certification body of PwC Certification Services GmbH in a timely manner.

6. Specific Obligations of the Certification Body

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 8.5.1, 8.5.2

Specific Responsibilities of the Certification Body (1/1)

1. During the term of a client's certification, the certification body must ensure the continuity of the relevant accreditation in this field at all times through appropriate qualification and must conduct all auditing and certification activities exclusively through competent personnel, in accordance with the rules of the accreditation body and the applicable norms, regulations, and standards. If the certification body's accreditation relevant to the client's certification is revoked, the certification body is obligated to withdraw the client's certification.
2. The certification body shall inform the client of any updates regarding the normative requirements for certification. The certification body shall notify the certified client in a timely manner of any changes to its certification requirements.
3. The certification body is comprehensively obligated under the Accreditation Body Act to cooperate in the DAkkS accreditation procedure. PwC Certification Services GmbH undertakes, and is irrevocably authorized by the client, to submit the application as well as the relevant records and results—including details of the audit and certification and regardless of whether certification is granted—to the accreditation body DAkkS and, if necessary, to other relevant governing bodies above the DAkkS hierarchy.

7. Performance Requirements

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 8.1.2, 8.4.2–8.4.3, 9.4.3.2, 9.4.8.1, 9.5.2, 9.5.3.2, 9.7.2, 9.7.6, 9.7.8

Terms of Service (1/2)

Audit and Certification Process

1. If the available audit evidence indicates that the audit objectives cannot be achieved (e.g., missing information regarding the planning and execution of the audit, lack of cooperation from process owners, lack of availability of personnel capable of providing information) or that an immediate and significant risk (e.g., security, natural disaster, industrial disaster, national disaster), the audit team leader must report this to the client and, if possible, to the certification body in order to determine the appropriate measures. These measures may include reconfirming or modifying the audit plan, changes to the audit objectives or scope, or even the termination of the audit.
2. Between the client, the audit team leader, the technical lead, and the head at the certification body, it can be agreed whether the resolution of the nonconformities should be tracked during the audit follow-up or whether, instead, the audit should be closed with a negative certification decision and a completely new initial certification process should be initiated at a later date, for which the management system will be improved accordingly so that the nonconformities are eliminated and do not recur.
3. Major nonconformities or multiple minor nonconformities that relate to the same requirement or the same problem and therefore constitute a system-related defect, resulting in a major nonconformity, can impair the management system's ability to achieve the intended results. In the case of such major nonconformities, a certification decision can only be made once the major nonconformity has been demonstrably corrected and the correction has been verified by the certification body. If necessary, verification is conducted as an on-site audit. If the certification body is unable to verify the implementation of corrections and corrective actions for any significant nonconformity within 6 months of the last day of the stage 2 audit, the certification body must conduct a repeat stage 2 audit before recommending certification.
4. Certificates are provided in digital form.

Public Information

1. Upon request or on its website, the certification body provides information on the status of an issued certification, as well as the name, the relevant normative document, the scope, and the geographic location (city and country) of a certified client.

Appeals and complaints

1. An appeal is a request by a client who is the subject of an audit and certification process for the certification body to review the decision regarding certification. Appeals must be submitted by the client to the director of the certification body no later than 2 weeks after the certification decision is announced. The certification body shall confirm receipt of the appeal to the client, provide the client with progress reports and the outcome of the appeal or the decision regarding it, and formally notify the client of the conclusion of the appeal process. The certification body shall ensure that the persons involved in the appeal process are different from those who conducted the audits and made the certification decisions.

7. Performance Requirements

Reference: DIN EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015-11 | 9.6.5.1–9.6.5.5, 9.7.5, 9.7.7, 9.8.4, 9.8.7, 9.8.9, 9.8.11

Terms and Conditions (2/2)

Appeals and Complaints

2. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by any person or organization directed at the certification body regarding the activities of that body. If a substantiated complaint regarding a certified client is submitted to the certification body, the certification body shall forward it to the client concerned within a reasonable period of time.
3. The certification body is responsible for collecting, recording, and verifying all necessary information to validate the appeal or complaint. To this end, it reviews its records regarding the client, obtains information and evidence from the client, conducts document reviews, or, if necessary, performs short-notice or unannounced audits at the client's premises.
4. The decision regarding the appeal or complaint is made, reviewed, and approved by individuals who were not previously involved in the facts underlying the appeal or the subject matter of the complaint.
5. The certification body, together with the certified client and the person or organization that filed the complaint, determines whether, and to what extent, the subject of the complaint and its resolution must be made publicly available.

Suspension, Withdrawal, or Restriction of the Scope of Certification

1. Certification may be suspended, withdrawn, or its scope restricted. The authority to make this decision rests with the head of the certification body.
2. The certification body must suspend the certification in the following cases:
    - The client's certified management system fails to meet the certification requirements, including the requirements for the effectiveness of the management system, on a permanent or serious basis.
    - The client does not permit the surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequency and within the required timeframe, or does not permit other surveillance activities to be carried out.
    - The client has voluntarily requested a suspension.
    - The client fails to pay the invoice for the audit and certification activities performed by the due date or fails to confirm the contractual terms by the due date.

    In the event of suspension, the client's management system certification is temporarily suspended (usually for a maximum of 12 weeks (90 calendar days)).
3. The certification body must reinstate the suspended certification once the issue that led to the suspension has been resolved. If the issue that led to the suspension is not resolved within the timeframe specified by the certification body, this must result in the withdrawal of the certification or a restriction of the scope of the certification. Decisions to restrict the scope of certification may also be made directly without setting a specific deadline for resolving the problem.

We look forward to a successful collaboration.

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