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General

TÜV UK Ltd. is a wholly owned subsidiary of the TÜV NORD Group and operates as a Certification Body. It offers Certification as a non discriminatory and impartial service, accredited by UKAS and may do so via an Agency. It also acts as an auditing office and/or agency for other Certification Bodies in the group.

TÜV UK Ltd is accountable for all phases of any Certification for which it contracts and in which it is involved. It may however delegate activities “upwards” to another Certification Body or “downwards” to an agency. Nevertheless all certification decisions for granting, maintaining, renewing, extending reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification are TÜV UK Ltd responsibility and shall not be delegated.

In all cases TÜV UK Ltd shall confine its requirements, assessments and certification decisions to those matters specifically related to the scope of the certification being considered.

The services provided are open to all applicants and are not impeded or given priority due to financial or any other influences.

In turn, it holds all those involved responsible for adherence to this Policy and its associated documented processes. It therefore retains the right to take all reasonable actions, including internal audits and assessments, as are necessary to assure that this is the case.

All processes and persons involved shall operate to the current version of:

- ISO /IEC 17021, "Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems"
- ISO 19011 "Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management system assessment"
- Regulations for use of TÜV Logos
- Use of the Accredited Registration Marks

Definitions

The definitions below are in addition to those in ISO 9000:2005 “Fundamentals and Vocabulary” and ISO 8402, "Quality Vocabulary".

Company / Organisation: These terms are used interchangeably and indicate the entity that operates the management system.

Applicable Scopes: TÜV UK Ltd certifies its clients by reference to the EA code list. The list of accredited scopes that we offer directly or indirectly are maintained on the Matrix of Approval, also used for our approved Assessment personnel.

Certification Authority: The person or persons appointed by the Certification Body with the authority to make certification decisions, approve and sign certificates.

Confidentiality, Impartiality and Integrity

TÜV UK Ltd. recognises that integrity is an essential element of the services we offer. In order to ensure this, a Code of Conduct is signed by an executive of all legal entities involved, a declaration of confidentiality is signed by each person involved and each Assessor signs to indicate this commitment and his/her lack of commercial interest in the client organisation.

The management of TÜV UK Ltd understand the importance of impartiality in carrying out its management system activities, management of any conflict of interests and ensuring objectivity of all our management system certification activities.

TÜV UK Ltd are committed to providing a non discriminatory and impartial management system certification service. This service is open to all applicants and successful applications shall neither be impeded nor given priority due to financial or any other influence. Regular reviews of threats to TÜV UK Ltd's impartiality are conducted to maintain the high standard of our services.



TUV UK Ltd are responsible for ensuring that confidentiality is maintained by all involved in applying this Policy and its associated processes. The only exception is where required by the law and specifically requested by the appropriate, duly appointed enforcement officers. It is the responsibility of those who to carry out actions and keep records (as indicated in the documented processes) to also ensure strict control such that only authorised persons have access.

Contracting

Client Agreement

Prior to quotation, TÜV UK Ltd or its agency shall obtain sufficient understanding of the organisation and its requirements to enable a quotation to be prepared; including certification requested, proposed scope, major products or services provided, key activities, organisational or geographical boundaries to the scope, number of locations, staff and shifts and any other special requirements e.g. translation.

If a company is interested in Certification for which we do not currently offer Accreditation, the enquiry shall be referred to the Certification Authority for the relevant Certification Body for decision and consideration of extension of the accredited scope.

Initial contract review, formal presentation and agreement of the offer shall be undertaken by an authorised staff member. Assessor man-days shall be calculated by reference to 17021 requirements and Work Instruction No 2, Site Sampling. Any significant deviation from these guidelines shall be justified and recorded.

The organisation's details shall be examined and a Scope and EA code assigned to their activities. Where ISO 9001:2000 certification is requested and it is proposed that a Part 7 Requirement is to be excluded, this shall be justified at this stage. The proposed scope, with exclusions as appropriate shall be recorded.

The scope and EA code, our capability to offer a competent assessment team and certification to a specified Accredited EA scope, the number of man-days required, the charges for our services, the Scheme Regulations, Certification Body's Terms and Conditions shall be confirmed to the client in writing. Where the company's activities fall outside our current accreditation, the decision of the Certification Authority shall be included with this documentation.

Recorded evidence of pre-agreement shall be maintained by the authorised staff member and shall now be made available to the Certification Manager. As part of this stage of the Contract Review, they shall approve the proposal as meeting this policy, as a pre-requisite to Assessment taking place.

Client acceptance shall be received in writing; either as a signed copy of our quotation or by letter referring to it; and in turn acceptance or rejection of an application shall be acknowledged in writing. In case of rejection, reasons shall be provided to the applicant. The organisation may appeal, initially to the authorised Certification Authority and then, if necessary, to the Managing Director of the Certification Body.

Other Elements of the Contract

The following conditions shall be included in any Certification contract:

Publicity: Certificated organisations are encouraged to display the Certificate; inform potential customers, purchasers or purchasing authorities of their registration and to make use of TÜV logos as specifically authorised:

Use of TÜV Logos and the Accreditation marks: The regulations for using these logos and marks shall be sent to the company after issue of the certificate and they shall be authorised to use them only in accordance with these regulations. These logos and marks shall not be used in such a way as may be interpreted as indicating product conformity and specifically shall not be used on the product.

Changes to Policy: In the event of any changes to this Policy or its associated documented processes TÜV UK Ltd shall:

- give those affected the opportunity to comment on the intended change
- after consultation, specify an effective date for the change
- formally confirm the change, the effective date and any specific action they are required to take.

Changes to the management system: The certificated organisation shall promptly notify TÜV UK Ltd of:

- addition /removal of the types of service or product offered by the organisation or the processes which support them
- addition of more sites
- change in the way that tasks, authorities or responsibilities are managed

Corrective Action: The organisation shall maintain records of any non-conformance, particularly any complaints, in its management system. They shall take prompt and adequate corrective action in order to contain and correct the deficiency and shall implement full, recorded corrective action.

In the event that Improvement Reports are raised by our Assessors, the organisation shall agree to undertake corrective action and submit records to that effect within the agreed time period – as agreed and signed for during the Assessment.

Temporary Withdrawal of the Certificate:

This is sometimes referred to as suspension of the certificate:

This shall be implemented, on the express and written authorisation of the Certification Authority, in the event of there being evidence that:

- non-compliance against the requirements of the certificated standard have failed to be addressed after the agreed time limit for corrective action has lapsed by more than four weeks
- there has been improper use of the registration, certificate, logo or accreditation marks and these have not been remedied to TÜV UK Ltd's satisfaction
- there has been any other contravention of the rules of the certification scheme
- fees have not been paid

The temporary withdrawal shall be confirmed in a registered letter to the certificated company and shall indicate the conditions under which the temporary withdrawal may be removed. TÜV UK Ltd will make it clear that cancellation and the attendant publication of cancellation will be the next step in the event that corrective action still has not been taken within the 3 months of delivery of the letter of notice of Temporary Withdrawal.

Upon fulfilment of the indicated conditions within the specified period, the Certification Authority may remove the withdrawal and TÜV UK Ltd shall notify the certificated organisation accordingly.

Voluntary suspension of the certificate.

Clients may decide to suspend their certification due to a change of circumstances on their premises. Examples may be temporary closure of a site, a reduction in their workload or a temporary lack of resources to deal with non-compliances.

Clients may request a temporary suspension for up to 6 months maximum.

When a client requests that a suspension be lifted then a site visit shall be carried out. The site visit shall be a 1 day special visit unless a surveillance or reassessment is due, in which case a surveillance or reassessment shall be carried out. This may be extended to cover the time required to clear the suspension requirements.

During a suspension period clients may not claim they are certified and must remove all such references from their documentation, publicity material, web sites etc.

Should a period of suspension be between 6 and 12 months then a reassessment shall be carried out once the suspension is lifted.

Should the period of suspension exceed 12 months then a new initial assessment shall be carried out and will result in a new certificate being issued with a new expiry date.

Suspensions that are up to 12 months shall have no effect on the current expiry date of their certificate.

Temporary suspension shall be confirmed in writing to the client with a statement that suspension shall not be lifted until written notification is received from the client. The letter shall indicate the conditions that will occur should the period exceed 6 months.

Cancellation of Certificate: TÜV UK Ltd reserves the right to withdraw and cancel Certificates in the following circumstances:

- the measures taken under Temporary Withdrawal did not lead to a satisfactory resolution
- the company formally requests it
- the management system standards change and the company fails to comply with the new requirements
- the company ceases operate to the certificated scope e.g. to supply the product or service for an extended period of time
- if the registered company fails to meet financial obligations to TÜV UK Ltd.
- The company does not allow assessment visits to take place at required frequencies.
- on any other reasons specifically provided for under the system rules or formally agreed between TÜV UK Ltd. and the company
- complaints as mentioned under Section 20.1 of this procedure, Proc. 1 called "Complaints about a certified company".

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Reduction in certificated scope. TÜV UK Ltd reserves the right to reduce the scope wording on Certificates in the following circumstance:

- Where clients have persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for parts of the scope of certification. Any such reduction shall be in line with the requirements of the standard used for the certification.
- The client has advised TUV of a change in their product or service

Misuse of Registration: In any case, a Certificated company may be called upon and shall immediately cease using the Certificate, TÜV UK Ltd logos and Accreditation marks as a result of:

- a lapse of registration, suspension or cancellation
- changes to the management system which are not been accepted by TÜV UK Ltd
- failure to implement a change to the system rules issued by TÜV UK Ltd
- any other circumstances which adversely affect the company's certificated management system.

Assessment

After the contract has been accepted, arrangements shall be made with the company for the Assessment and TÜV UK Ltd or its agency shall obtain copies of all manuals or other such information as is necessary to support the application.

Assessors shall be appointed and required to undertake the Assessment (initial or surveillance) under the authority of the Certification Body. They shall remain accountable for all actions carried out under that authority, but may delegate responsibility for control to their agency as agreed.

Assessment is planned and a Site Visit plan is created and may be forwarded to the client as required.

Stage 1. System Review: This is a review of the clients quality Manual, documentation and the client's readiness for the stage 2 assessment. The review shall be carried out on the client's premises although some assessors may wish to have sight of the Quality Manual prior to their visit. The Assessor shall establish the degree to which the organisation is ready for a stage 2 site visit and subsequent Certification. The assessor shall check that the client appears to be operating to the requirements of the applicable standard, internal audits and management review have been conducted and the Manual and other documentation comply. A tour of the client's premises to be certified shall also be conducted. Sufficient information shall be gathered to enable a stage 2 site visit plan to be produced based on facts and not assumptions.

At Stage 1. The client's representative shall be notified of any non-compliance with the requirements of the applicable standard. This shall be by the issue of a written report and improvement reports. The improvement reports shall be classed as observations at this stage. It shall be required to correct these non-compliances prior to the Stage 2. Assessment. Any such reports not addressed before commencement of a stage 2 assessment shall be reclassified as non compliances

In cases where the assessor deems the client to be unprepared for a stage two visit or where the observations are of such severity then a second stage 1 visit may be necessary. In such cases the assessor shall inform the certification Manager

The assessor may provisionally book a date(s) for the stage 2 visit for clients that are ready. Duration of the visit shall be as per the information on the client visit details form.

Should the findings of a stage 1 visit require an amendment to the duration of the stage 2 assessment then the Certification Manager shall be informed. In such cases the client shall be advised and a revised quotation be issued..

A copy of the Stage 1. Report, the Manual and any records of corrective actions shall be available to the Lead Assessor for the stage 2 site visit.

Stage 2. On-site Verification:

Planning: A team leader (Lead Assessor) and team, with sufficient resources; including management seniority, competency in assessment, knowledge of the business activities and technical knowledge of the industrial sector shall be appointed.

The visit shall be conducted to the stage 2 visit plan, a copy of which shall be sent to the client by the team leader.

Team members shall undertake in writing that they have no conflict of interest in conducting the assessment, but in any case the organisation has the right to object to inclusion of any of those proposed to be on the team. These objections must be addressed to TÜV UK Ltd in writing, stating the reasons.

On-site: On arrival, the Assessment Team shall conduct an opening meeting with the organisation's management to establish how the assessment is to be conducted; including lines of communication, re-emphasis of rules of confidentiality and statement of the timelines and roles involved – for the assessment team, agency, Certification Body and Accreditation Body.

On-site assessment shall be conducted using the appropriate processes and forms, as defined by our controlled management system.

Having reviewed their findings the Assessment Team shall present a summary of their observations to the organisation's management (verbally and in writing) for the company to question and understand. This shall describe the status of the system, with strengths and areas for improvement highlighted. Any Non-compliance shall be reported and recorded on an Improvement Report which shall then be signed by the Lead Assessor, handed over to the company's representative for signature and left with the company at the end of the assessment.

The Lead Assessor shall advise the organisation of his/her recommendations and remind them of the contribution made by the Certification Body in authorising Certification and the time required to do so. The Lead Assessor shall obtain a signature, indicating receipt of the Assessment Summary and a detailed Assessment Report may either be sent to or left with the organisation and the full report and supporting evidence shall be forwarded immediately to TÜV UK Ltd.

Transfer Assessment: These are undertaken for companies that are currently certificated with another Accredited Certification Body. Such contracts shall be undertaken and carried out according to this Policy, with the exception that Assessment may comprise:

Stage 1. Review of the Manual, most recent assessment report from their previous certification body and any NCR's.

Stage 2. Resembling a surveillance assessment in its detailed implementation.

Surveillance Assessment: TÜV UK Ltd or its agency shall contact the client and agree upon the conditions and a date for re-certification (not later than 30 days prior to expiry of the Certificate. Fees shall be received in advance at the rates applying at the time of the assessment.

Re-Certification Assessment: Re-certification assessment shall be referenced in any agreement and shall require the same man-days as initial certification assessment; except where it is decided that no problems have been observed, no significant changes have occurred in the company's activities and no other reasons is found to indicate the need for this level of resource.

Modification or Extension to Scope: If an organisation applies for its certification to be modified or extended, TÜV UK Ltd shall review the application and on acceptance decide whether sufficient evidence may be obtained during surveillance, a Special Assessment is necessary or a new application is required. The client shall be advised accordingly and the extended contract treated according to this overall Policy.

Contract review shall continue throughout the Assessment process. Any amendments shall be agreed with the client and passed to TÜV UK Ltd for our records to be up-dated accordingly.

Withdrawal of Certification: The Company shall be informed; by registered letter or equivalent means; that it shall return all issued Certificates, that it must cease using the TÜV logo and accreditation marks and that TÜV UK Ltd shall publish notification of the cancellation.

Temporary withdrawal or suspension: This may be requested by TUV UK or by the client and covers situations where a temporary breakdown of compliance to to the TUV Scheme Regulations or compliance to the management system standard. Confirmation shall be given to the client as to the reason for the suspension and the actions to be taken when the suspension is lifted. The client shall be advised that they cannot claim to be certified during the suspension period and all such references, use of logo publicity, web sites etc shall be removed or amended.

Certification and Issue of Registration Documents

Initial Assessment: Certificates shall be issued to all clients who comply with the ISO 9001 requirements.

On receipt of the full Assessment Report including stage 1 and stage 2 reports, a favourable recommendation from the team leader and proof that all identified NCR's have been satisfactorily addressed, TÜV UK Ltd shall:

- Review the evidence, make recommendation and supply all necessary evidence to the Certification Authority of the controlling Certification Body.
- Obtain a decision in a timely way, following the documented process.

The Certified Body shall:

- Register the company as operating a system in accordance with the applicable standard for defined scope.
- Authorise the company to use the relevant TÜV certificate, logo and accreditation mark

TÜV UK shall then notify the company of its decision providing feedback to the agency and client as appropriate. At this point, all documents not necessary for on-going surveillance shall be returned to the client.

TÜV UK shall provide the company (sometimes via its agency) with their certificate and appendices. The Date of Issue shall be the date when the Certification Authority signs the registration document. The Expiry Date is the last day of a successful initial assessment plus three years, minus a day. All certificates issued after a re-certification assessment shall be valid for three years from the expiry date of the previous certificate.

Surveillance Assessment and Re-Certification: Surveillance assessments and re-certification assessments shall be arranged to support and maintain continuing Certification and system improvement.

Surveillance Assessment: To ensure that the management system is continuously operated in accordance with the applicable standard, TÜV UK Ltd or its agency shall perform surveillance assessments annually or biennially as defined below:

- The client's management shall be informed at least four weeks in advance of the surveillance assessment to be performed.
- The date of the surveillance assessment shall be agreed.
- The client shall be asked to have available its Manual for the assessors
- The surveillance assessment shall be carried out by approved assessors, preferably one who has assessed them before and know how they operate.
- The Assessment Report shall be made available to the client and a copy to the Certification Body for monitoring and/ or review similar to a stage 2 initial Certification Assessment,
- The proper use of logo and marks shall be verified.

Re-certification: The assessment shall be carried out prior to the date of expiry, in accordance with the documented process for Re-certification Assessment. An extension period of not more than 6 months may be authorised only by prior written permission of the Certification Authority

Based on all available evidence, including the results of Surveillance Assessments, it shall include a review of:

- the manual and associated documentation of the organisation
- the compliance of the system with the Requirements of the Standard
- the effective interaction between all elements of the system
- the overall effectiveness of the system in its entirety
- customer complaints
- significant changes to the organisation; its activities, personnel and processes

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- the policies and demonstrated commitment of the organisation to maintaining the effectiveness of the system
- The client's management shall be informed at least four weeks in advance of the reassessment to be performed.
- The date of the reassessment shall be agreed.
- The client shall be asked to have available its Manual for the assessors
- The reassessment shall be carried out by approved assessors, preferably one who has assessed them before and know how they operate.
- The Reassessment Report shall be made available to the client and a copy to the Certification Body for monitoring and/ or review similar to a stage 2 initial Certification Assessment,
- The proper use of logo and marks shall be verified.