

# General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the general knowledge and skills required for personnel involved in certification activities, as per Annex A, Section A1, of ISO 17021. This policy ensures that all individuals conducting or supporting certification activities possess the necessary competencies to maintain the integrity and quality of the certification process.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all personnel within ICB International Certification Body LLC involved in the audit and certification of management systems, including auditors, technical experts, and support staff. It outlines the required knowledge and skills necessary for performing certification activities in accordance with ISO 17021.

## 3. General Knowledge and Skills

Table A.1 of ISO 17021 specifies the knowledge and skills that we need to define for specific certification functions. Within this policy we define the criteria and depth of knowledge and skills.

All personnel involved in certification activities must possess a combination of general knowledge, industry-specific expertise, and technical skills, allowing them to fulfill their specific tasks. The general knowledge and skills required may include:

### 3.1 Knowledge of Management System Standards

Our personnel must be familiar with the management system standards we are accredited to certify, for example with:

- **ISO 9001** - Quality Management System
- **ISO 14001** - Environmental Management System
- **ISO 22000** - Food Safety Management System
- **ISO 22301** - Business Continuity Management System
- **ISO 27001** - Information Security Management System
- **ISO 27701** - Privacy Information Management System
- **ISO 37001** - Anti-Bribery Management System
- **ISO 37301** - Compliance Management System
- **ISO 42001** - AI Management System
- **ISO 45001** - Occupational Health and Safety Management System
- **ISO 50001** - Energy Management System

### 3.2 Knowledge of Audit Principles and Techniques

Personnel involved in audits must be proficient in auditing principles and techniques. This includes:

**Understanding of Audit Processes:** Knowledge of the entire audit process, from planning and execution to reporting and follow-up.

**Risk-Based Auditing:** The ability to assess risks and prioritize areas of concern during an audit.

**Interviewing Techniques:** Proficiency in conducting interviews with auditees to gather relevant information.

**Observation and Reporting:** Skills in observing processes and documenting findings clearly and accurately.

### 3.3 Knowledge of Legal and Regulatory Requirements

Personnel must have a working knowledge of legal and regulatory requirements relevant to the industry being audited. This includes:

**Local and International Laws:** Awareness of applicable laws, regulations, and industry standards.

**Regulatory Compliance:** Understanding how management systems must align with regulatory requirements.

### 3.4 Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Personnel must possess strong communication and interpersonal skills, enabling them to interact effectively with clients and stakeholders. This includes:

**Clear and Effective Communication:** The ability to convey audit findings and recommendations in a clear, concise, and professional manner.

**Conflict Resolution:** Skills in managing disputes and resolving issues that arise during the audit process.

**Cultural Awareness:** Sensitivity to cultural differences when auditing organizations in different regions or sectors.

### 3.5 Industry-Specific Knowledge, Knowledge of Client Products, Processes and Organization

Personnel must have relevant industry-specific knowledge to perform audits effectively. This includes:

**Technical Expertise:** Understanding the specific processes, risks, and challenges within the client's industry.

**Sector-Specific Standards:** Knowledge of industry-specific standards and guidelines that may apply to the client's operations.

## 4. Competence Assessment and Maintenance

ICB International Certification Body LLC ensures that personnel involved in certification activities are competent to perform their roles. Competence is assessed and maintained through:

**Initial Competence Assessment:** Before being assigned to certification activities, personnel undergo an assessment to verify their knowledge and skills, including a review of their education, training, and professional experience.

**Ongoing Training:** Personnel receive regular training to update their knowledge and skills in line with changes in certification standards, industry practices, and audit techniques.

**Performance Evaluation:** The performance of personnel is monitored through regular evaluations, feedback from clients, and internal reviews to ensure that they continue to meet competence requirements.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles within ICB International Certification Body LLC are required to meet the general knowledge and skills outlined in Table A.1:

### 5.1 Auditors

**Role:** Conduct audits of clients' management systems to verify compliance with certification standards.

**Required Knowledge and Skills:** Auditors must possess in-depth knowledge of the relevant management system standards, audit processes, and industry-specific requirements.

### 5.2 Technical Experts

**Role:** Provide specialized knowledge during audits where specific technical expertise is required.

**Required Knowledge and Skills:** Technical experts must have industry-specific knowledge and expertise, along with a basic understanding of the audit process.

### 5.3 Certification Decision Makers

**Role:** Review audit findings and make decisions regarding certification, including granting, maintaining, suspending, or withdrawing certification.

**Required Knowledge and Skills:** Decision makers must have a comprehensive understanding of management system standards and the ability to evaluate audit reports and findings impartially.

### 5.4 Support Staff:

**Role:** Plan and organize client communication, audits and appointments, and support the certification process.

**Required Knowledge and Skills:** Support staff needs the required knowledge of our internal processes.

## 6. Criteria Table - Table of Knowledge and Skills (Clause A.1 and Table A.1)

<p style="text-align: center;">Certification functions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Knowledge and skills</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Conducting the application review to determine audit team competence required, to select the audit team members, and to determine the audit time</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reviewing audit reports and making certification decisions</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Auditing and leading the audit team</b></p>
<p>Knowledge of business management practices</p>			<p>Knowledge of general organization types, size, governance, structure and workplace practices, information and data systems, documentation systems, and information technology.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Knowledge of audit principles, practices and techniques</p>		<p>Knowledge of generic management systems audit principles, practices and techniques, as specified in ISO 17021 sufficient to understand a certification audit report.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>	<p>Knowledge of generic management systems audit principles, practices and techniques, as specified in ISO 17021 sufficient to conduct certification audits and to evaluate internal audit processes.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Knowledge of specific management system standards/normative documents</p>	<p>Knowledge of what management system standard or other normative documents is being specified for certification.</p> <p><b>At least six months of experience.</b></p>	<p>Knowledge of the management system standard or other normative documents being specified for certification sufficient to make a decision on the basis of a certification audit report.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>	<p>Knowledge of the management system standard or other normative documents being specified for certification sufficient to determine if it has been effectively implemented and conforms to requirements.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Knowledge of our processes</p>	<p>Knowledge of our processes sufficient to assign competent audit team members and accurately determine audit time.</p> <p><b>At least six months of experience.</b></p>	<p>Knowledge of our processes sufficient to determine if our expectations of us have been fulfilled on the basis of the information submitted for review.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>	<p>Knowledge sufficient to perform in accordance with our procedures and processes.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Knowledge of client's business sector</p>	<p>Knowledge of the terminology, practices and processes common to a client's business sector sufficient to assign competent audit team members and accurately determine audit time.</p> <p><b>At least six months of experience.</b></p>	<p>Knowledge of the terminology, practices and processes common to a client's business sector sufficient to understand an audit report in the context of the management system standard or other normative document.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>	<p>Knowledge of the terminology, practices and processes common to a client's business sector sufficient to understand the sector's expectations in the context of the management system standard or other normative document.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Certification functions</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Knowledge and skills</b></p>	<p><b>Conducting the application review to determine audit team competence required, to select the audit team members, and to determine the audit time</b></p>	<p><b>Reviewing audit reports and making certification decisions</b></p>	<p><b>Auditing and leading the audit team</b></p>
<p>Knowledge of client products, processes and organization</p>	<p>Knowledge related to the types of products or processes of a client sufficient to assign competent audit team members and accurately determine audit time.</p> <p><b>At least six months of experience.</b></p>		<p>Knowledge related to the types of products or processes of a client sufficient to understand how such an organization can operate, and how the organization can apply the requirements of the management system standard or other relevant normative document.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Language skills appropriate to all levels within the client organization</p>			<p>Capable of communicating effectively to persons at any level of an organization using appropriate terms, expressions and speech.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Note-taking and report-writing skills</p>			<p>Capable of reading and writing with sufficient speed, accuracy and comprehension to record, take notes, and effectively communicate audit findings and conclusions.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Presentation skills</p>			<p>Capable of presenting audit findings and conclusions to be easily understood. For the team leader, presenting in a public forum (e.g. closing meeting) audit findings, conclusions, and recommendations appropriate to the audience.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Interviewing skills</p>			<p>Capable of interviewing to obtain relevant information by asking open-ended, well formulated questions and listening to understand and evaluate the answers.</p> <p><b>At least one year of experience.</b></p>
<p>Audit-management skills</p>			<p>Capable of conducting and managing an audit to achieve the audit objectives within the agreed timeframe. For the team leader, capable of facilitating meetings for the effective exchange of information and capable of</p>

		making assignments or reassignments where necessary. <b>At least one year of experience.</b>
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## 7. Documentation and Record Keeping

ICB International Certification Body LLC maintains records of the qualifications and training for all personnel involved in certification activities. This includes:

**Training Records:** Documentation of all training completed by personnel, including initial and ongoing training.

**Evaluations:** Records of evaluations conducted to ensure ongoing competence.

## 8. Supervision

Overall Supervision is carried out by the following person:

Prof. Dr. iur. Tinatin Erkvania, LL.M., Managing Director, [info@cert-authority.com](mailto:info@cert-authority.com)

## 9. Review and Updates

This policy is reviewed annually by top management to ensure compliance with ISO 17021 and to reflect any updates in required knowledge and skills for certification personnel. Any changes to the policy are communicated to relevant personnel.

## 10. References

ISO 17021 – Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

ISO 17021 - Clause A.1 and Table A.1 Criteria Table - Table of knowledge and skills