

# Competence Requirements for Management Systems Auditors Policy

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the competence requirements for management systems auditors in accordance with Annex A, Section A2, Clauses A.2.1, A.2.2, A.2.3, A.2.4, A.2.5, A.2.6, A.2.7, A.2.8, A.2.9, A.2.10 and A.2.11 of ISO 17021. This policy ensures that auditors possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience to conduct audits effectively and to maintain the credibility of the certification process.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all auditors working for ICB International Certification Body LLC who are involved in auditing management systems for certification purposes. It outlines the required competencies for auditors to perform their duties in compliance with ISO 17021.

## 3. Knowledge, and Competence Requirements for Management Systems Auditors

### 3.1 Knowledge of Business Management Practices and Knowledge of Audit Principles and Techniques

Knowledge of business management practices means knowledge of general organization types, size, governance, structure and workplace practices, information and data systems, documentation systems, and information technology. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must possess a thorough understanding of audit principles, procedures, and techniques. This includes:

**Audit Planning:** The ability to develop an effective audit plan that defines the scope, objectives, and methods of the audit.

**Audit Execution:** Proficiency in conducting audits in accordance with the plan, ensuring that evidence is collected through interviews, observations, and document review.

**Audit Reporting:** Competence in documenting audit findings clearly, accurately, and objectively.

### 3.2 Knowledge of Business Management Practices and Knowledge of Management System Standards

Knowledge of audit principles, practices and techniques means 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. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must have detailed knowledge of the management system standards they are auditing against.

This may include, for example:

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

### **3.3 Knowledge of Specific Management System Standards/Normative Documents and Knowledge of Client's Business Sector**

Knowledge of specific management system standards/normative documents means 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. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must have a working understanding of the business sector in which the client operates, including:

**Industry-Specific Processes:** Familiarity with the key processes, risks, and challenges faced by the industry.

**Regulatory and Legal Requirements:** Knowledge of the relevant regulations and legal requirements that apply to the client's operations.

### **3.4 Knowledge of our Processes and Skills in Risk-Based Auditing**

Knowledge of certification body's processes means knowledge of our processes sufficient to perform in accordance with our procedures and processes. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must be proficient in risk-based auditing. This includes:

**Risk Identification:** The ability to identify areas of higher risk within the client's management system and to prioritize these areas during the audit.

**Risk Assessment:** The ability to evaluate the likelihood and impact of identified risks, ensuring that the audit focuses on significant aspects of the management system.

### **3.5 Knowledge of Client's Business Sector and Communication Skills**

Knowledge of client's business sector means 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. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must possess strong communication skills, including:

**Oral Communication:** The ability to conduct interviews, explain audit findings, and facilitate discussions with auditees.

**Written Communication:** The ability to prepare clear, concise, and well-organized audit reports.

### **3.6 Knowledge of Client Products, Processes and Organization and Ethical Behavior**

Knowledge of client products, processes and organization means 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. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical manner at all times. This includes:

**Integrity:** Acting with honesty, transparency, and impartiality during the audit process.

**Confidentiality:** Ensuring that all information obtained during the audit is treated confidentially and is not disclosed to unauthorized parties.

### **3.7 Language Skills Appropriate to all Levels within the Client Organization and Analytical and Critical Thinking**

Language skills appropriate to all levels within the client organization means to be capable of communicating effectively to people at any level of an organization using appropriate terms, expressions and speech. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must demonstrate strong analytical and critical thinking skills. This includes:

**Evidence-Based Decision Making:** The ability to analyze audit evidence, draw conclusions, and make decisions based on objective evidence.

**Problem-Solving Skills:** The ability to identify nonconformities and recommend practical corrective actions.

### **3.8 Note-Taking and Report-Writing Skills and Independence and Impartiality**

Note-taking and report-writing skills means to be capable of reading and writing with sufficient speed, accuracy and comprehension to record, take notes, and effectively communicate audit findings and conclusions. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must maintain independence and impartiality throughout the audit process. This includes:

**Avoiding Conflicts of Interest:** Auditors must not have any personal, financial, or professional interests that could influence their judgment during the audit.

**Objectivity:** Auditors must remain unbiased and ensure that their audit conclusions are based solely on the evidence collected.

### 3.9 Presentation Skills and Teamwork, and Collaboration

Having presentation skills means to be 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. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must be able to work effectively as part of an audit team. This includes:

**Collaboration with Other Auditors:** The ability to coordinate with other members of the audit team, sharing information and insights to ensure a comprehensive audit.

**Respectful Interactions:** Auditors must interact respectfully with both the audit team and the client's personnel, fostering a collaborative and professional audit environment.

### 3.10 Interviewing Skills and Continual Professional Development

To have interviewing skills means to be capable of interviewing to obtain relevant information by asking open-ended, well formulated questions and listening to understand and evaluate the answers. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors are required to engage in continual professional development to maintain their competence. This includes:

**Ongoing Training:** Participation in training programs that update auditors on changes to management system standards, audit techniques, and industry practices.

**Learning from Experience:** Auditors are encouraged to reflect on their audit experiences and use feedback from clients and colleagues to improve their performance.

### 3.11 Audit-Management Skills and Knowledge of Certification Processes

Having audit-management skills means to be 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 making assignments or reassignments where necessary. Auditors must have the knowledge in accordance with our specified criteria from Table A1 of our General Required Knowledge and Skills Policy.

Auditors must have a comprehensive understanding of the certification process, including:

**Certification Requirements:** Familiarity with the procedures for granting, maintaining, suspending, and withdrawing certification.

**Policies:** Knowledge of ICB International Certification Body LLC's internal policies and procedures related to certification activities.

#### 4. Competence Assessment and Maintenance

ICB International Certification Body LLC ensures that auditors meet the required competencies through a structured competence assessment process. This includes:

**Initial Competence Assessment:** Auditors undergo an initial assessment of their knowledge, skills, and experience before being assigned to audits.

**Ongoing Competence Development:** Auditors participate in regular training and professional development activities to maintain and enhance their skills.

**Performance Monitoring:** The performance of auditors is monitored through client feedback, peer reviews, and evaluations of audit reports.

#### 5. Roles and Responsibilities

##### 5.1 Auditors

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

**Responsibilities:** Ensure that audits are conducted in accordance with ISO 17021 requirements and maintain objectivity throughout the audit process.

#### 6. Documentation and Record Keeping

ICB International Certification Body LLC maintains records of the qualifications, competence assessments, and professional development activities for all auditors. This may include:

**Training Records:** Documentation of all training programs attended by auditors.

**Competence Assessment Forms:** Records of initial and ongoing competence assessments.

**Evaluations:** Regular evaluations of auditor performance, including feedback from clients and internal reviews.

#### 7. 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)

#### 8. Review and Updates

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

## 9. References

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