



D03-04

ASSESSORS

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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to lay down the requirements to be fulfilled by assessors and technical experts in SA's accreditation system as well as all the procedures carried out by SA with the purpose of provision of competent assessors and technical experts.

The provisions herein comply with the document *Generic Competence for AB Assessors: Application to ISO/IEC 17011* (IAF MD 20).

2 GENERAL

2.1 Assessor categories

Lead assessor (VOC) shall be a person qualified to independently perform assessment of the integrity and efficiency of management system for individual field of accreditation; to lead assessment and to co-ordinate the work of assessor team during assessment.

Technical assessor (SOC) shall be a person qualified to independently perform assessment in a specified technical field for individual field of accreditation.

Technical expert (STR) shall be a specialist in a specific technical field, who, however, is not qualified to independently perform assessment procedures. SA may engage him/her as technical assistance to lead and/or technical assessor in any phase of accreditation procedure. Technical expert shall not perform an assessment independently; he/she shall work in cooperation with and follow the instructions of lead or technical assessor. The technical expert shall carry out assessment together with the assessor; they may, however, agree to perform a particular task by himself/herself, provided that the assessor gives him/her the relevant instructions and is available for consultation where necessary. The expert shall report to the assessor and shall cooperate with the same in drawing-up the reports.

2.2 Classification

Classification of an assessor applies to the field in which his/her competence has been recognised. For lead assessors, classification is specified by the field of accreditation, while for technical assessors or experts, it is additionally specified by the relevant technical field.

Fields of accreditation

	<i>Field code</i>
– testing laboratories	LP
– medical laboratories	LM
– calibration laboratories	LK
– inspection bodies	K
– certification bodies for persons	CO
– certification bodies for products, processes and services	CP
– certification bodies for management systems	CS
– verifiers of greenhouse gas emission reports	P
– environmental verifiers	SI-V

Technical fields

Classification in D05-11 shall be employed for identification of technical fields. Further detailed classification shall be provided where required. For assessors and technical experts in the field of management system certification, the technical fields in which they can also perform witnessing of assessments shall be specifically identified.

2.3 Status

SA shall define an assessor's status with reference to the current stage of training of the assessor, as follows:

a) for lead and technical assessors

- candidate
- observer
- trainee
- assessor

b) for technical experts

- candidate
- technical expert

3 REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSESSORS

3.1 Requirements for competence

Lead Assessor

	Description of requirements	Method of identification – registration	Method of identification – maintenance
Education	University or professional college education of the relevant course of studies or other relevant qualification	Statement (OB03-09, CV)	/
Work experience	4 years of work experience, of which at least 2 years related to quality assurance in the field of conformity assessment	Statement (OB03-09, CV)	Updated data (OB03-09, CV)
Knowledge of languages	Capability of written and oral communication in Slovene or in a language in which assessment may be performed (languages related to Slovenian, e.g. Croatian) and in English	Statement (OB03-09)	/
Management system	Knowledge and practical experience in the	Data on work experience and trainings (OB03-09, CV)	Updated data (OB03-09, CV)



	performance of management systems		Attendance at meetings/trainings
Requirements for accreditation	Knowing and understanding the standards containing requirements for competence for the field of registration, and guides or interpretation documents, respectively	Witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Monitoring Attendance at meetings/trainings
Additional requirements	Knowing and understanding of additional requirements for schemes and the EU and Slovenian legislation which governs the activity to be accredited	Data on work experience and trainings (OB03-09, CV)	Updated data (OB03-09, CV, other data on trainings and attendance at trainings)
Performance of assessments	Competence for independent assessment of management system's integrity and efficiency for the respective field of accreditation, for conducting assessment and coordinating the work of the assessor team during assessment To maintain registration: 4 assessor days per year	Training course attendance certificate, witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Monitoring Data on the number of assessments carried out Attendance at meetings/trainings
Knowledge of accreditation procedure	Understanding of the concept, the role of assessor team and the role of lead assessor; knowledge of the course of the procedure	Training course attendance certificate, witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Monitoring Attendance at meetings/trainings
Personal characteristics	Ethics (fairness, truthfulness, sincerity, integrity) in working with people Openness for differing views, prudence Perseverance, focusing on reaching the goals, determination Faculty of clear judgement and making distinction between the key and the less relevant or irrelevant issues Autonomy and independence in collaboration with others, and teamwork capability	Impression gained from first communications with the candidate Trainers' opinion Opinion from witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Monitoring

	Adaptability to various or changing situations		
General skills	Ability to communicate and to express views, orally and in writing Baseline digital competence Knowledge of and compliance with the general social rules and codes of conduct	Impression gained from first communications with the candidate Trainers' opinion Opinion from witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Monitoring

Technical Assessor

	Description of requirements	Method of identification – registration	Method of identification – maintenance
Education	University or professional college education of the relevant course of studies or other relevant qualification	Statement (OB03-09, CV)	/
Work experience	4 years of work experience, of which at least 2 years related to the technical field covered by registration	Statement (OB03-09, CV)	Updated data (OB03-09, CV)
Knowledge of languages	Capability of written and oral communication in Slovene or in a language in which assessment may be performed (languages related to Slovenian, e.g. Croatian) and in English	Statement (OB03-09)	/
Management system	Knowledge of general principles and tools of management systems and their use in the activity covered by registration	Data on work experience and trainings (OB03-09, CV) Witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Updated data (OB03-09, CV) Monitoring Attendance at meetings/trainings
Requirements for accreditation	Knowing and understanding the standards containing requirements for competence for the field of registration and guides, or interpretation documents, respectively	Witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Monitoring Attendance at meetings/trainings
Expertise	Knowing the activity under assessment (familiarity with the work procedures, practical experience in performing those or similar activities, ability to identify critical influence factors, familiarity with approaches for ensuring the validity and quality of results in the respective activity field, familiarity with good	Data on work experience and trainings (OB03-09, CV) Witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Updated data (OB03-09, CV), conditionally monitoring



	professional practice in the respective field, familiarity with the state of the art and the industry guides in the respective field, education and updating the respective expertise ...)		
Additional requirements	<p>Knowing and understanding of additional requirements for schemes and the EU and Slovenian legislation which governs the activity to be accredited</p> <p>Industry specific requirements</p> <p>For registration in the field of CP (certification of organic production/processing), additional requirements from EA-3/12 M shall be considered</p> <p>For registration in the field of P (verifiers), additional requirements from Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2067, Articles 58–60, shall be considered</p>	Data on work experience and trainings (OB03-09, CV)	Updated data (OB03-09, CV, other data on trainings and attendance at trainings)
Performance of assessments	<p>Competence for independent assessment in the respective technical field for individual field of accreditation</p> <p>To maintain registration: 6 assessor days in 3 years</p>	Training course attendance certificate, witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	<p>Monitoring</p> <p>Data on the number of assessments carried out</p> <p>Attendance at meetings/trainings</p>
Knowledge of accreditation procedure	Basic knowledge of the course of the procedure, understanding the purpose and concept of assessment, and the role of assessor	Training course attendance certificate, witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	<p>Monitoring</p> <p>Attendance at meetings/trainings</p>
Personal characteristics	<p>Ethics (fairness, truthfulness, sincerity, integrity), discretion and tact in working with people</p> <p>Openness for differing views, prudence</p> <p>Perseverance, focusing on reaching the goals, determination</p> <p>Faculty of clear judgement and making distinction between the key and the less relevant or irrelevant issues</p> <p>Autonomy and independence in collaboration with others, and teamwork capability</p> <p>Adaptability to various or changing situations</p>	<p>Impression gained from first communications with the candidate</p> <p>Trainers' opinion</p> <p>Opinion from witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB</p>	<p>Monitoring</p>

General skills	Ability to communicate and to express views, orally and in writing Baseline digital competence Knowledge of and compliance with the general social rules and codes of conduct	Impression gained from first communications with the candidate Trainers' opinion Opinion from witnessing the work of assessor during training, or assessor status in another MLA AB	Monitoring
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Technical expert

	<i>Description of requirements</i>	<i>Method of identification – registration</i>	<i>Method of identification – maintenance</i>
Education	University or professional college education of the relevant course of studies or other relevant qualification	Statement (OB03-09, CV)	/
Work experience	4 years of work experience, of which at least 2 years related to the technical field covered by registration	Statement (OB03-09, CV)	Updated data (OB03-09, CV)
Knowledge of languages	Capability of written and oral communication in Slovene or in a language in which assessment may be performed (languages related to Slovenian, e.g. Croatian) and in English	Statement (OB03-09)	/
Requirements for accreditation	Knowing and understanding the basics on which the requirements for competence for the field of registration are founded	Data on work experience and trainings (OB03-09, CV) Initial communication (interview)	/
Expertise	Knowing the activity under assessment (familiarity with the work procedures in conformity assessment, practical experience in performing those or similar activities, ability to identify critical influence factors, familiarity with approaches for ensuring the validity and quality of results in the respective activity field, familiarity with good professional practice in the respective field, familiarity with the state of the art in the respective field, education and updating the respective expertise ...)	Data on work experience and trainings (OB03-09, CV)	Updated data (OB03-09, CV)
Additional requirements	Knowing and understanding of additional requirements for schemes and the relevant EU	Data on work experience and trainings (OB03-09, CV)	Updated data (OB03-09, CV, other data on

	<p>and Slovenian legislation which governs the activity to be accredited</p> <p>Industry specific requirements</p> <p>For registration in the field of CP (certification of organic production/processing), additional requirements from EA-3/12 M shall be considered</p> <p>For registration in the field of P (verifiers), additional requirements from Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2067, Articles 58–60, shall be considered</p>		<p>trainings and attendance at trainings)</p>
Performance of assessments	Competence for the performance of individual assessment tasks in agreement with the assessor with whom he/she cooperates	Impression gained in initial communications	Feedback from the assessors with whom he/she cooperated

Data evaluation method in assessing the fulfilment of requirements

Assessor training courses considered as suitable by SA shall be those organised in compliance with the EA, ILAC and IAF Guides. In addition to assessor courses organised by SA, also the courses organised by the accreditation services who are members of EA and at the same time signatories to MRA, shall be recognised as suitable, provided that a MRA in the relevant field exists. Derogations from these requirements shall be approved by the Director, when based on reasonable grounds. If the assessor has taken part in a course which fails to correspond fully to the role that he/she is being trained for (e.g. he/she is being trained for a lead assessor and has taken part in a course for technical assessors; if he/she is being trained for inspection assessor and has taken part in a course for laboratory assessor), additional skills shall be provided by supplemental individual or group training, unless it is evident from the supporting instruments proving completion of prior training courses and/or experience that he/she has already acquired such skills. Should SA-specific contents (information on SA's performance, on SA's accreditation system, presentation of internal procedures relevant to assessors and assessment, use of SA forms, ...) not be included in an assessor training course, they shall be provided as additional training (see 5.4).

Expertise shall be identified on the basis of information on work experience (area of employment and functions), on participation in projects, on scientific publications and achievements that have to reflect the activities of the assessor in the respective technical field or subfield. For technical assessors, the general competence shall also be identified from the opinion of their work under supervision, or for the assessors who are active in other MLA ABs, from the information on the scope of their qualification with that particular AB. In maintaining registration, any opinions of other team members and the accreditation sector manager deriving from their cooperation with SA to the date (especially from cases of solving particular issues) shall also be considered. In certain cases, also the findings of monitoring the performance of the assessor through witnessing shall be taken into account.

Specific skills or competencies in individual activities assessed by the assessor shall be identified within the framework of conducting accreditation procedures on the basis of his/her statement.

Evaluation of Assessor Statements

SA normally considers the candidate or assessor Statements to be credible, and does generally not require evidence of, e.g., technical education, experience, etc. Their trust is based on the fact that SA establishes contact with potential assessors through some other person or institution (other AB, assessors with whom SA is already cooperating, professional institutions or other experts in the respective field ...). For candidates who apply themselves and for whom SA does not have any information from other sources, opinions or other suitable information shall be obtained prior to starting cooperation.

Prior to a comprehensive review of documentation for maintenance of registration, it is recommended to obtain as up-to-date information as possible. Within a three-year period, at least one witnessing of the assessor's work shall be performed along with a review of records according to the rules. In exceptional cases, the registration may also be maintained without performing the witnessing in the period since previous review of information for maintenance of registration, provided that other information on the performance of the assessor is favourable. In such a case the extension of the witnessing interval shall be explained, and the witnessing of the work of the assessor shall normally be carried out during the first assessment carried out by the assessor following the comprehensive review of information for maintenance of registration.

3.2 Additional aspects when performing a comprehensive review of information for maintenance of registration

The following shall also be considered when performing a comprehensive review of information for maintenance of registration:

- assessor's responsiveness in communication, capacity, compliance with agreed dates and deadlines,
- notification of changes in assessor's data, responsiveness to the requests for update,
- obstacles to joining in the assessment (relations with accredited CABs that may affect assessor's impartiality),
- attendance at meetings or assessor trainings.

4 ACQUIRING NEW ASSESSORS

SA shall select its assessors on the basis of identified needs. In this context, it shall take into consideration the development of new fields of accreditation, or the number of clients in a particular field of SA's activity. As a rule, SA shall train its own assessors. When introducing accreditation in new technical fields, and for carrying out procedures in fields where the training of own assessors would not be expedient, SA shall involve foreign assessors, who have the status of assessor with accreditation services – signatories to MLA for a particular field of accreditation.

When the need for new technical assessors is identified, SA shall formally (by advertising an invitation for cooperation in public media or on SA's website) or informally (invitation at technical team meetings) invite professional institutions to propose their experts, whom SA could include in its accreditation system as technical assessors.

When there is need for a new foreign assessor, the Assessors Sector Manager shall provide for contacting a foreign accreditation service, or obtain information about a competent assessor from other sources (from competent assessors who already collaborate with SA, from members of professional associations such as EA, IAF, ILAC, etc. ...). Sector Managers shall also take part in obtaining information and establishing contacts with foreign assessors.

4.1 First contact with an assessor/expert candidate

Candidates shall complete the form OB03-09 and attach as much evidence as possible of their professional competence and fulfilment of other requirements.

The information obtained on the assessor/expert candidate shall be examined by the sector manager of the respective field of accreditation in which the candidate is to take part. When we decide, based on the information obtained from OB03-09, that the candidate for assessor/expert has qualified in the respective field, he/she is provided information on our rates for assessor day and the expenses that we reimburse (pursuant to the provisions in the documents S13 and D03-05).

Candidates coming from an EU Member State who decide to cooperate with SA as natural persons shall obtain a tax number in Slovenia, and SA can provide help to them in this respect. We will give them instructions as to the documents they need to send to us, so that we can obtain the tax number on their behalf. In addition, they have to obtain the A1 form. Legal persons do not need the Slovenian tax number and A1 form.

Prior to engaging an assessor/expert candidate in first assessment, they shall be sent for signing an Assessment Agreement (OB03-05), which shall apply throughout their cooperation with SA.

The candidates will be registered as assessors or technical experts. For this purpose, the Assessors Sector Manager shall take care of drawing up an Assessor Registration Record (OB03-13), into which the manager of the respective accreditation sector for which the assessor will be registered shall note his/her opinion, and the Director shall approve registration by his signature. The registration of the assessor/expert shall be valid until revoked. The registration shall be revoked when, based on information obtained about the candidate and his/her performance in assessments, we have concluded that he/she is no longer suitable for these tasks, or when he/she cancels cooperation with SA him/herself, or when SA no longer needs to cooperate with him/her.

To a newly registered assessor/expert who has not been trained by SA, we explain the assessment procedure and the use of the assessment forms. The related record is saved in i4. In addition, upon the assessor's/expert's first participation in an SA assessment, the lead assessor or another assigned assessor provides the necessary help to them in carrying out the assessment, all by observing their performance. When the assessor has an expert status, he/she shall always work together with the lead assessor, or another assigned assessor. The assessor's performance when taking part in first assessment will be monitored. Based on the feedback, a decision will be made together with the relevant accreditation sector manager, on further cooperation with the assessor/expert and on any changes to the registration.

5 TRAINING OF ASSESSOR CANDIDATES

5.1 Assessor candidate application

Candidates wishing to collaborate with SA as assessors shall complete the form OB03-09 "Assessor Details" and attach as much evidence as possible of their professional competence and fulfilment of other requirements. In their applications, candidates shall specify the technical field in which they wish to perform as assessors.

5.2 Initial selection of candidates

On the basis of the information and evidence provided, the Assessors Sector Manager, together with the manager of the relevant sector of accreditation to which the technical field of the candidate belongs, shall check the suitability of the assessor candidate. When possible, an interview should be conducted with the candidate.

Furthermore, an assessor's personal folder shall be opened in which the records on individual activities of selection, training and work, as well as supervision of the assessor's work shall be kept, including records of meetings.

The candidates for assessors selected by the Assessors Sector Manager in agreement with the accreditation sector managers, shall attend a course for lead or technical assessors organised by SA. Any individual candidate may also attend a course organised abroad by a foreign AB who is a signatory to EA MLA.

In the case of several candidates with comparable knowledge and competencies, SA shall give priority to local candidates, or candidates who master several fields of accreditation or a wider technical field.

5.3 Selection of candidates for follow-up training

The selection of candidates who have passed the course and whom SA intends to include in follow-up training to acquire experience in accreditation procedures, shall be made by the Assessors Sector Manager together with the manager of the relevant sector of accreditation to which the technical field of the candidate belongs. The needs of SA for assessors shall likewise be taken into account in selection.

5.4 Acquiring experience in assessment procedures

After a successfully completed assessor training course, the candidate shall first be familiarized with SA's accreditation system, internal procedures relevant to assessors and assessment, and the use of SA forms. (This is not necessary if this information was presented during the training course.)

Then the acquiring of hands-on experience shall follow by involving the candidate in assessment procedures. In exceptional cases, the candidate may participate in assessment as observer even before the training course.

A candidate acquires hands-on experience by examining CAB's documents, witnessing assessments, and performing post-assessment activities (reviewing corrective actions, drafting reports/recommendations).

Involvement of a candidate in assessment shall proceed in steps.

The candidate shall first participate as a "silent observer" who shall only observe the assessment and not take any active part in it. In subsequent assessments, the candidate may already take an active part as a trainee assessor, i.e. in agreement with the lead or technical assessor, he/she may take over a part of the assessment ("partial work under supervision"), which he/she shall carry out under the supervision of a qualified assessor (supervisor).

The training shall be concluded by "work under supervision" (see 7.1.2). The trainee assessor shall participate in the planning of the assessment, independently assess, report at the assessment, assess the implementation of corrective actions, and draft a recommendation. All this shall be done under the supervision of a qualified and experienced lead or technical assessor (supervisor).

A candidate for lead assessor without experience in activities related to assessments should be involved in different roles ("silent observer", "partial work under supervision", "work under supervision") in at least 5 assessments (of different type and size of organization and of different types of the assessment, if possible), and a candidate for technical assessor in at least 3 assessments. How often a candidate is actually involved in assessments, and what his/her role in a particular involvement, shall be determined separately for each case. It shall depend primarily on the candidate's previous experience in accreditation procedures (e.g., whether he/she is already cooperating with SA as expert), and also on the duration of assessments in which he/she has taken part as an observer or trainee, and on SA's findings while monitoring their work.

The Assessors Sector Manager shall, in co-operation with the manager of the accreditation sector in which the assessor is to take part, prepare a hands-on training plan for individual candidate, which is conditioned by earlier experience of the candidate in carrying out assessments, or in activities that are similar to assessment. The Assessors Sector Manager shall familiarize the candidate with the plan and explain his/her role in individual stages of training, as appropriate. The coaching plan for assessor candidates shall be taken into consideration when planning assessments.

The Assessors Sector Manager shall monitor the implementation of the plan. Upon the initiative of the SA staff or the candidate, the plan can be adjusted (shortening or extending the training, repeating individual steps, or terminating the training), as appropriate. Records shall be kept of a change and the rationale behind it.

When an assessor collaborates with SA for the first time as a supervisor, or after a longer period of time, or in special circumstances, the Assessors Sector Manager shall familiarize him/her with their tasks.

5.5 Appraisal of competence

The assessor who monitors and evaluates the work of a trainee (supervisor) shall complete the OB03-08 report form of performance of the trainee assessor, which is used in supervision of assessors, giving his/her opinion of the candidate's work as well as any particularities or suggested restrictions. He/she shall also examine the records produced during and after the assessment, and note his/her opinion on the OB03-07 form.

6 ASSESSOR REGISTRATION

Fulfilment of requirements for registration shall be established on the basis of data that are presented by the candidate regarding his/her education, training courses and experience (OB03-09, CV, references, evidence of training courses, ...), data on training courses organized by SA as well as findings and opinions of supervisors. The scope of registration shall be evident from the Protocol of assessor registration (OB03-13), which summarizes the data on fulfilment of the requirements for assessors, on review of implementation of the candidate's coaching period, and on the relevant accreditation sector manager's opinion. The SA Director shall decide on registration based on the information provided in the Protocol of assessor registration, or in the documents referenced by the Protocol.

With regard to the conclusions made in the reports of training and supervision, registration may also be granted with restrictions (e.g. restriction to a field of activity which the assessor masters best, restriction to technically or organisationally less complex CABs, time limit), which shall later be taken into consideration when appointing the assessor to assessment procedures.

The registration of a technical expert shall follow the same procedure.

7 MONITORING OF ASSESSOR'S PERFORMANCE

7.1 Methods and frequency of assessor performance monitoring

7.1.1 General on assessor performance monitoring

Monitoring of the assessor's performance shall include witnessing of the assessment (OB03-08), review of records (OB03-07), other information obtained through communication with the assessor, opinions of other assessors from the team, the feedback provided in post-assessment questionnaires (OB11-01), and other feedback from clients.

Within a period of three years, the lead assessor's and technical assessor's performance of assessment shall normally be witnessed, and one evaluation of the records made during the assessment shall be made. If an assessor is registered for more than one field of accreditation his/her performance should be witnessed when performing a more complex assessment (covering more fields of accreditation), if possible; if not, witnessing should be planned, insofar as possible, for different fields of accreditation alternatively (e.g. in the first three-year period, the assessment of a testing laboratory should be witnessed; in the second period the assessment of a certification body, etc.). The person monitoring the assessor shall draw up a report using the OB03-08 form. Evaluation of the assessment records for assessors registered for several fields of accreditation shall normally be made for the field of accreditation where no witnessing of the assessor has been carried out.

The Assessors Sector Manager, in co-operation with the manager of the accreditation sector to which the technical field of the assessor belongs, shall define the method and scope of monitoring individual assessor.

The performance of a lead and technical assessor shall normally be monitored by a person having the status of registered assessor in the relevant field of accreditation and possessing appropriate experience in assessments. Evidence to that effect shall be kept in the assessor's personal folder.

The requirements for witnessing the performance and evaluation of the report do not apply to technical experts, since they always perform assessments accompanied by a competent lead or technical assessor, who each time also examines their records.

7.1.2 Announced witnessing of assessment performance

The assessor shall be notified in advance that his/her performance will be witnessed.

The person designated for witnessing the assessor's performance shall only observe the assessor's work during the assessment, without interfering in his/her work.

The person witnessing shall focus on the assessor's:

- personal attributes (behaviour, manner of communication, reactions in stress situations),
- understanding of accreditation requirements, following SA's procedures, following the assessment programme,
- readiness for assessment, use of assessment methods, and adequate sampling,
- capability of making impartial judgements,
- capability of formulating in an understandable way the nonconformities found and other conclusions,
- correct procedure in determining proposals for actions and deadlines (ensuring adequacy with respect to finding),
- communicating and coordinating work with other members of the assessor team,
- performance at the introductory and closing meetings (capability of communication),

and additionally, in the case of witnessing the lead assessors, their:

- leading of the assessor team and coordinating their work.

The witnessing person may, in order to clarify any possible confusions, ask the assessor additional questions at an internal meeting of the assessor team, but not during the assessment.

The witnessing person shall summarize both the negative and positive findings on the form OB03-08. The summary of findings shall be presented to the witnessed assessor.

7.1.3 Evaluation of assessment records

In evaluating assessment records, the evaluator shall focus on whether the contents of the report, its transparency and comprehensibility are adequate, whether the reports have been written in compliance with the relevant SA document (forms used correctly, non-conformities and measure suitably identified, etc.), and whether it is evident from the records that the assessment programme has been adequately identified and carried out.

The evaluator shall fill in the form OB03-07. Both negative and positive findings shall be stated in the report. SA shall provide feedback to the assessor. SA shall also provide to the assessor instructions on further work, when necessary.

7.1.4 Unannounced witnessing of assessment

SA may, in exceptional cases (e.g. in the case of complaint), also carry out unannounced witnessing of the assessor's performance. The procedure shall be the same as in announced witnessing, except that the assessor to be witnessed has not been notified in advance. Unannounced witnessing is typically restricted to the assessment of certain skills and/or personal qualities of the assessor. The form OB03-

08, shall be used, *mutatis mutandis*, for reporting of unannounced witnessing, and the findings shall be presented to the assessor.

7.1.5 Feedback from assessed body

SA shall collect, record retain all feedback on the performance of assessors and technical experts coming from the assessed body (talking to customers, complaints, questionnaires, ...) and activities of SA relating to analysis of such data.

The Assessors Sector Manager shall examine and process the information received. Should there be any relevant remarks as to the performance of the assessor or expert, the Assessors Sector Manager shall acquire additional information by the assessed body, where necessary. In such a case, after consulting those participating in the assessment of the respective body, he/she shall also respond to the assessed body and impose further actions, where required (e.g. interview with the assessor, surveillance of assessor's work, changes in registration).

7.2 Planning of assessor performance monitoring

The Assessors Sector Manager shall draw up and maintain a plan for monitoring the performance of assessors who take part in SA's assessments. The plan shall define when and how an assessor will be monitored.

The Assessors Sector Manager shall revise the assessor monitoring plan when new assessors are involved, or when any nonconformities in the work of the assessor are identified, as appropriate.

The planned activities shall be considered when planning assessments.

7.3 Review of surveillance records and taking action

The reports shall be reviewed by the Assessors Sector Manager whereupon he/she shall, in cooperation with the accreditation sector manager, as appropriate, act as follows:

- **Further activities not necessary:** The assessor possesses adequate competence and demonstrates suitable personal qualities for further collaboration with SA as an assessor, until next monitoring of his/her performance.
- **Repeated monitoring necessary:** Before next independent assessment is started, or after a period of time to be determined.
- **A meeting with the assessor** shall be required in order to advise him/her of deficiencies and provide guidelines for further work.
- **Additional training needed:** The scope of additional training and mode of its implementation shall be determined,

or propose to the Director:

- **Limitation of the scope of performance:** The scope of the assessor's performance shall be limited.
- **Termination of co-operation:** The assessor is not suitable for work as an assessor and shall be removed from the Register of Assessors in i4.

The decisions shall be documented and kept in the assessor's personal folder. The Assessors Sector Manager shall familiarize the assessor with the relevant findings and the instructions and actions that correspond to the extent and content of derogations from the SA rules.

If derogation from rules is serious, the actions shall be implemented as soon as possible or prior to the next inclusion of the assessor in the assessment process at the latest.

In the event of minor derogations and where similar derogations appear in a larger number of assessors, the assessors shall be made aware of the same at the first regular meeting with the assessors.

Records shall be kept of assessor performance monitoring, of implementation of any corrective actions and their effectiveness.

8 ACTIVITIES FOR MAINTAINING ASSESSOR'S/EXPERT'S COMPETENCE

8.1 Self-training

Assessors/experts shall continuously maintain their competence (professional as well as in accreditation system).

The requirements for maintaining competence include studying of technical literature in their relevant field of competence as assessors/experts, as well as following the development and changes in SA's activity and policy.

8.2 Additional training organised by SA

With the purpose of additional training of its assessors/experts and sharing experiences, SA shall organise assessor meetings. They may be intended for all the assessors and experts or merely for particular groups. At the meetings, assessors shall be provided information on the activities of SA and on the new or changed SA documents, the performance of accreditation procedure, in particular assessment, and individual technical topics shall also be discussed.

The Assessors Sector Manager shall be responsible for organising and carrying out the meetings, with the participation of other SA associates. Topics for discussion at the future meetings shall be collected on the basis of feedback on the work of assessors, changes in the accreditation system and experience in conducting accreditation procedures.

Assessors who did not attend a meeting shall be familiarized by the Assessors Sector Manager in some other appropriate manner with the topics discussed and the adopted standpoints or resolutions.

Records shall be kept of the above activities in conformity with D07-01.

8.3 Training of assessors who occasionally perform assessments

Normally, an assessor shall carry out a certain number of assessments as defined under 3.1; this shall be checked during comprehensive review of information for maintenance of registration.

Information on the number of assessments performed by lead assessors within a calendar year, is being additionally reviewed once a year through management review. For assessors who have not carried out the minimum defined number of assessor days, measures needed for maintaining the competence and validity of registration are defined.

8.4 Termination of work in a technical field

Should an assessor abandon the work in the technical field in which he/she has been qualified as technical assessor (change of job, retirement), he/she shall inform SA thereof. From an assessor, who is willing to continue participating in SA's accreditation procedures, SA shall obtain information as to the manner, field and frequency of his/her meeting with the profession. Based on the information obtained, SA will arrange with the assessor about his/her further involvement in assessment procedures, and also decide on possible changes to their registration.

9 REGISTRATION OF ASSESSOR FOR AN ADDITIONAL FIELD OR CATEGORY

When we wish to register an assessor for an additional field or category (e.g., for another field of accreditation, or registering a technical assessor for a lead assessor – see 2.2), the fulfilment of requirements for a new field or category shall be checked and the assessor shall undergo training according to a plan set up by the Assessors Sector Manager in cooperation with the accreditation sector manager, as appropriate. The scope and activities of training shall be adapted to the previous experience of the assessor. The training for an additional field of accreditation or for an additional category may also include carrying out of assessment under supervision of a qualified lead or technical assessor. The procedure shall be concluded by updating the registration of the assessor.

10 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF INFORMATION FOR MAINTENANCE OF REGISTRATION

Before a comprehensive review of information for maintenance of registration, the assessor's data shall be verified, when possible, for accuracy and up-to-datedness, and shall be updated, where necessary. The procedure shall be done approximately every three years (normally within a half-year period before and after the expiry of the three-year period), in the same way as for registration, whereby additional requirements for maintenance of registration shall be taken into consideration (see 3.1).

11 SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR COOPERATION WITH EA MLA ASSESSORS

11.1 General

This part of the procedure is applicable to the assessors from EA MLA accreditation bodies who provide to SA sufficient supporting evidence from their parent accreditation body on their actual competence (e.g. confirmation statement about the assessor's category, field of accreditation and technical field).

11.2 Assessor candidate application

EA MLA assessors shall send in a completed form OB03-09, Assessors Details, and the relevant evidence.

11.3 Appraisal of competence

EA MLA assessors' competence and suitability for co-operation with SA shall be assessed on the basis of evidence provided by the assessors themselves, or obtained by SA.

11.4 Assessor registration

The provisions of sections 6 and 10 shall be complied with.

11.5 Introducing an assessor to the SA system

The Assessors Sector Manager shall familiarize the foreign assessor with the relevant SA documents and procedures referring to the accreditation system and the assessment procedure.

Prior to first assessment in the SA system, the foreign assessor is made familiar with special SA rules concerning the assessment procedure, in particular as regards recording of findings, using of forms, reporting after assessment, deadlines for post-assessment activities, and similar.

The record of the activities that have been carried out shall be saved in the assessor's case or in i4.

11.6 Monitoring the performance

Foreign assessors shall inform SA upon request of their activities and of the results of their performance monitoring by the parent accreditation body, which SA shall consider in preparing the assessor performance monitoring plan (e.g. less frequent witnessing in certain circumstances). SA may also obtain information on the results of monitoring the assessor's performance directly from the parent accreditation body.

When such information is not available, SA shall ensure the control over foreign assessor's performance in the manner described in Clause 7.

12 INFORMING ASSESSORS

Assessors shall be informed by SA of matters of topical interest on a periodic basis. Foreign assessors shall receive information translated into English.

The Assessors Sector Manager shall be in charge of informing the assessors.

13 COOPERATION AGREEMENT, CONTRACTS AND CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENTS

Assessors and technical experts, who are not SA's employees, and whose work entails financial liabilities for SA (contractual payment), shall sign with SA a general cooperation agreement and a separate contract for each assessment. Both documents shall establish the tasks and obligations of the assessor, including a confidentiality clause, and determination of financial liabilities. The assessors who perform assessments on behalf of SA, and are not paid for their work by SA (joint accreditations, projects), as well as trainee assessors, shall sign a Confidentiality Statement (OB03-11) prior to the assessment. This Statement shall establish their tasks and obligations, including confidentiality and independence issues. This Statement shall also be signed by observers who witness or perform an assessment on site with the intention of training, and other observers. The agreement and the contracts shall be kept in assessors' personal files, while the statements shall be kept in the case of the client to whom they refer.

14 TERMINATION OF REGISTRATION

Registration of an assessor/expert shall terminate in the following cases:

- when an assessor/expert no longer meets the requirements for maintaining registration,
- as an action after an assessor performance monitoring,
- on written request by the assessor/expert,
- when there has been no cooperation with the assessor/expert for more than 3 years.

Even after the termination of registration, all the requirements on safeguarding the confidentiality of information obtained by the assessor/expert during the performance of activities in accreditation system shall remain in force.

15 MAINTAINING ASSESSOR'S/EXPERT'S DATA

The Assessors Sector Manager shall be in charge of acquisition and maintenance of data in the personal folder of the assessor/expert.

The following data shall be kept in personal folders and in i4 Information System:

- personal details,
- employment and job position,
- formal and professional education,
- knowledge of foreign languages,
- work experience in the relevant technical field and in quality management,
- experience as assessor in accreditation procedures or as auditor,
- references related to competencies in the field of accreditation and quality management systems as well as professional references,
- reports and other records of monitoring assessor performance,
- assessor's/expert's classification,
- information received from the assessor/expert and other sources regarding his/her independence and impartiality with respect to individual CABs.

The information regarding assessor's/expert's independence and impartiality is first checked with the assessor/expert and then kept, together with any records of analysis of data and decisions, in his/her personal folder. It is used exclusively for the appropriate choice of the assessor/expert for a certain assessment.

Assessors'/experts' data shall be managed and retained in accordance with D07-01.

Pursuant to the Personal Data Protection Act, the records of assessors shall be considered as a collection of data, which shall be kept subject to assessors'/experts' written consent. SA shall process these data with the purpose of determining compliance with the requirements for assessors/experts. Each assessor/expert shall have access to his/her respective data. Prior to assessment, SA shall inform the auditee of the assessor's/expert's/candidate's name, of his/her employment, of his/her field of work and of his/her role in the assessor team, while all other data shall be treated as safeguarded or confidential.

The personal folders of assessors employed by SA shall be kept in the same way as those of other assessors, with the exception of some records retained in the SA personnel records (see the provisions of D03-01).

16 CHANGES WITH REGARD TO PREVIOUS REVISION OF THE DOCUMENT

This new edition of the procedure includes improvements to the process of working with assessors, as can be seen from the text. The concept “comprehensive review of information on maintenance of registration” has been introduced instead of “renewal or registration”.

17 TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

N/A.

18 CONTROL OF THE DOCUMENT

A valid document shall be located in i4 Information System. A clean copy shall be published on SA's website, and available in printed form at SA's head office.

Individual copies may be controlled in physical form. The recipients or places of storage shall be shown in records on issuance of the document.

Other printouts and copies of the document shall have informative nature and shall not be considered as controlled copies. The validity of these documents should be checked in i4 Information System, or on SA's website.