

To all certification bodies accredited to ISO/IEC 17021-1

To the associations of Conformity Assessment Bodies

**Object: ACCREDIA – Technical circular DC N° 15/2020
Provisions for the accreditation of bodies operating “Oil & Gas” certifications
in conformity with ISO 29001:2020**

Introduction

The standard ISO 29001:2020, “Petroleum, petrochemical and natural gas industries — Sector-specific quality management systems — Requirements for product and service” was published on 14.05.2020 with the objective of establishing a common approach and of becoming the only reference for the quality management system of organizations providing goods and services for the petroleum, petrochemical and natural gas industry.

The standard was published for the first time in 2003 as ISO/TS 29001, resulting from a collaboration between the [American Petroleum Institute](#) (API) and the ISO, ISO/TC 67 technical committee (Materials, equipment and offshore structures for petroleum, petrochemical and natural gas industries), subsequently further revised in order to conform with the requirements of the various editions of ISO 9001. The last revision was issued in May 2020 following the structure set out in the Annex SL.

The situation in Italy

The standard ISO 29001:2020 aims at developing a quality management system based on continuous improvement and on the satisfaction of clients and of the interested parties through meeting expectations, concentrating on the prevention of defects, the reduction of product and supply chain waste also by service providers, as well as the more precise, effective, systematic and documented management of risks.

In addition, the creation of a single standard for the Oil & Gas sector helps to avoid multiple evaluations, thereby reducing commercial delays, administrative procedures and the relative costs.

The organizations operating in the supply chain of the petroleum, petrochemical and natural gas industry will be able to use ISO 29001 certification to demonstrate their commitment to quality in the more general sense, including the conformity of the product/service provided with the mandatory and technical requirements of the client, contributing to ensuring the growing credibility of quality management system certification.

Normative context

The standard ISO 29001:2020 is intended for all organizations operating in the production chain of the petroleum, petrochemical and natural gas industry.

The organizations which can benefit from this standard are those which:

- carry out research, production, transport and refining of petroleum and natural gas products;
- are involved in project design, manufacture, installation and O&M;

- supply components, assistance and repairs of equipment used in research, operative and supporting technical services for these sectors.

The international Oil & Gas industry has requested more rigorous conformity with the requirements regarding the engineering and with the mandatory requirements, due to the critical necessities. The industry frequently manages high pressure liquid and gaseous fluids by means of a multiplicity of products and processes; in addition, considerations regarding the safety of personnel and of all the interested parties are of vital importance.

The suppliers of products and services are of very variable sizes, distributed throughout the world in both industrialized and in developing countries, with completely different cultural approaches.

The industry has therefore developed additional requirements for quality management systems for suppliers of products and services which must ensure respect for specific high levels of quality.

The necessity for requirements to be clear and verifiable derives from the needs of these industrial sectors, and the standard contains all the requirements of ISO 9001:2015, with the introduction of additional specific requirements relating to the petroleum, petrochemical and natural gas industry.

Specific elements of the scheme ISO 29001 with respect to other management systems

An essential element of the certification process is the information which the organization submits to the CAB for verification. In fact, the first certification audit is performed at organizations of which the CAB has no estimated data, other than data obtained from the declarations made by the organization in question, or information obtained from the media.

1) Rules of certification

Accreditation standard	UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015
Certification standard	ISO 29001:2020
Competence criteria of the audit team	<p>Refer to ISO/IEC 17021-3, <i>Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Competence requirement for auditing and certification of quality management system - table A.1.</i></p> <p>In addition, the audit team [possibly including technical experts with the same requirements to cover points from a) to e)] will have to demonstrate that it possesses additional applicable competences in the country in question, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) At least 3 years work experience in the sector, or 5 in the case of consultancy. This experience and/or consultancy shall be sufficient to demonstrate knowledge of the production processes relating to the Oil & Gas sector, with particular reference (but not only) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project design methods and criteria - Principal mechanical work processes - Brazing and welding processes - Non-destructive control processes - Assembly, construction and installation processes - Inspection and testing processes (hydrostatic tests, function tests, FAT etc)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Documented knowledge of the terminology, processes and general risks of the Oil & Gas sector, of the relative context and of the potential consequences/impacts related to the activities; c) In-depth and documented knowledge of the main technical and project design technical sector standards (ASME, ASTM, API, AWS, ISO); d) Training: 8-hour course on ISO 29001, for persons who have already completed a 40-hour course on management systems.
Competence criteria of the decision maker and of the contract reviewer	<p>Refer to ISO/IEC 17021-3, <i>Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Competence requirement for auditing and certification of quality management system</i> - table A.1.</p> <p>For the decision maker (possibly in conjunction with a technical expert with the same requirements) it is also necessary to possess general knowledge of the sector acquired through work experience (at least 1 year) or audit experience (at least 10 certification audits)</p>
Typology of organization which can request certification and applicability of requirements	<p>ISO 29001 certification can be applied for by any type of organization, including supply chain, of any size or nature, both product and service.</p> <p>It is acceptable that some requirements of the standard are not applicable, provided justification is given; the record of such justification shall be kept by the CAB and made available to ACCREDIA during the assessment.</p> <p>No exclusions are acceptable for processes / functions carried out in the same country.</p>
Responsibilities of the CAB	<p>An organization which is certified or undergoing certification shall promptly inform its CAB if it becomes involved in any critical situation which could compromise the guarantee of the certification of the management system.</p> <p>The CAB shall perform a risk assessment with regard to any necessary actions to be undertaken as a consequence.</p>
Audit times and periodicity	<p>The requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1 are applicable.</p> <p>The document IAF MD 05 with regard to the QMS scheme is applicable.</p> <p>The Stage 1 audit shall be performed by the organization also if it is of a small size.</p> <p><u>Evaluation of equivalent personnel</u></p> <p>The same factors and requirements defined in the document IAF MD 05 are applicable for the QMS scheme, including those concerning work shifts and outsourcing.</p> <p><u>Audit Time</u></p> <p>Given the structure of ISO 29001, the additional requirements with respect to ISO 9001:2015 and the nature of the product / service provided, the risk category shall always be considered high.</p> <p>The table for the QMS scheme is applicable (IAF MD 05 Annex A, Table QMS 1 and Table QMS 2) to which an additional factor is applied of at least +20% depending on the risk related to the organization's activities. For organizations whose process is very simple. This may be reduced below 20% with relative justification.</p>

Scope of the certificate	<p>The criteria for the formulation of the scope of the certificate are the same as those applied for ISO 9001, with particular attention to the determination of the productive processes (e.g. project design, processing, assembly and testing).</p> <p>It is not necessary to specify the IAF sector in the certificate.</p>
IAF documents	<p>All the IAF documents relating to management systems are applicable except as specified above regarding the document IAF MD 05.</p> <p>For Multisite CABs, the IAF documents in force are applicable. It is not possible to exclude from the sampling base sites where processes/activities which are considered critical are carried out.</p>
Audit modalities and records	<p>The audit team shall evaluate with greater frequency, commitment and thoroughness, the processes/functions identified by the organization and/or by the audit team as being of higher risk, giving an explanation in the audit documents, and the team shall establish methods ensuring representative sampling according to the risks, also by means of interviews with personnel.</p>

2) Accreditation process

There are various possibilities, on the basis of the ACCREDIA accreditations already possessed by the CAB applying for accreditation or extension.

The requirements of ACCREDIA Regulations RG-01 and RG-01-01 for granting and extending accreditation are applicable.

CABs already holding ISO/IEC 17021-1 accreditation do not need to have issued certificates in this scheme in order to apply for extension to accreditation.

The certificate of accreditation does not state the sectors of accreditation.

If the CAB already possesses accreditation granted by another Accreditation Body, a case-by-case evaluation shall be made on the basis of the applicable EA / IAF MLA agreements.

A	CAB already accredited to ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015	<p>Document review of 0.5 day (to be performed where possible at the CAB).</p> <p>1 witness assessment, the duration of which shall be in line with size of the client's organization. ACCREDIA reserves the right to assess on a case-by-case basis the suitability of the organization and of the audit team proposed for the accreditation and for the subsequent surveillance activities.</p>
B	CAB not yet accredited to ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015, but with accreditation for other schemes	<p>Document review of 1 day.</p> <p>Assessment at the CAB's head office of 2 days.</p> <p>1 witness assessment, the duration of which shall be in line with size of the client's organization. ACCREDIA reserves the right to assess on a case-by-case basis the suitability of the organization and of the audit team proposed for the accreditation and for the subsequent surveillance activities.</p>

C	CAB not yet accredited in any scheme	<p>Document review of 1 day.</p> <p>Assessment at the CAB's head office of 4 days.</p> <p>1 witness assessment, the duration of which shall be in line with size of the client's organization. ACCREDIA reserves the right to assess on a case-by-case basis the suitability of the organization and of the audit team proposed for the accreditation and for the subsequent surveillance activities.</p>
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Documentation to be presented to ACCREDIA for the document review:

- a) Criteria of qualification of persons performing the contract review, of the auditors and of the decision makers;
- b) CVs of the auditors and the decision makers and justification for the individual qualification;
- c) Procedure for setting up and managing the audit team;
- d) Attestation/certificate issued by the CAB;
- e) List of certificates already issued, if available, and of the upcoming audit activities (necessary data for planning witness assessments);
- f) Applicable contractual procedures and regulations for performing audits and internal procedures for the management of certifications (from the offer to the certification);
- g) For CABs NOT accredited to ISO/IEC 17021-1, as well as the documents listed above, it is necessary to send the documentation specified in the application for accreditation.

Maintenance of accreditation

For the maintenance of accreditation throughout the cycle of accreditation, apart from particular situations (e.g. handling of complaints and remarks, modifications to the certification scheme or changes to the CAB's structure), the following assessments are performed:

- if the CAB has issued less than 50 certificates in the certification scheme, 1 witness assessment and 1 on-site assessment shall be performed;
- if the CAB has issued between 51 and 200 certificates in the certification scheme, 2 witness assessments and 1 on-site assessment shall be performed;
- if the CAB has issued more than 201 certificates in the certification scheme, 2 witness assessments and 2 on-site assessments shall be performed.

We are available for any clarifications.

Kind regards.

Emanuele Riva
Director of the Department of
Certification and Inspection