

TITLE REGULATION FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF CERTIFICATION BODIES OF PERSONS

REFERENCE RG-01-02

REVISION 02

DATE 03-05-2022

NOTE *The present document represents the English version of the document under reference at the specified revision. In case of conflict, the Italian version will prevail. To identify the revised parts reference must be made to the Italian version only.*

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APPLICATION DATE

01-01-2023

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0.1 SCOPE AND FILED OF APPLICATION

The present Regulation is applicable to the accreditation of Certification Bodies of persons (hereafter referred to as CBs) establishing the conditions and procedures for the granting, surveillance, extension, renewal, reduction/voluntary reduction, suspension/voluntary suspension, restoration, renunciation and withdrawal of accreditation of the CB in accordance with the applicable standards and guides, with the relevant specifications and details in cases where the reference standards for the scheme provide only general requirements which are not covered by the General Regulation, RG-01.

The present regulation shall not be applied separately from the application of the General Regulation RG-01.

0.2 NORMATIVE REFERENCES

The normative references to be considered for the application of the present Regulation are specified/referred to in the version in force of the ACCREDIA LS-02 document: *"Reference standards and documents for the accreditation of certification bodies"* in the current revision.

It follows that – within the framework of a given accreditation, certification or sector scheme the present Regulation is integrated by specific technical regulations/documents (RT and DT) as well as technical circulars, where such exist.

0.3 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The terms and definitions contained in General Regulation RG-01 and in the relevant standards are applicable, as well as the following scheme specific definitions:

- **Candidate:** applicant who has fulfilled specified prerequisites and has been admitted to the certification process.
- **Examiner:** person competent to conduct and grade an examination in cases where it requires professional judgement.
- **Pre-examination:** examination which takes place before the principal one.
- **Examination:** mechanism that is part of the assessment, which measures a candidate's competence by one or more means, such as written, oral, practical and observational, as defined in the certification schemes.
- **Exam Center/Assessment Body:** organization qualified by the CB receiving subcontracted exam management activities and which must operate under the control of and in compliance with the specifics/procedures issued by the CB, ensuring impartiality with respect to every candidate applying for certification, drawing the attention of the CB to all the real or potential threats to impartiality. In addition to the management of the exams, these organizations may receive subcontracting from the CB of the commercial activities (e.g. procurement), review of the application, planning, feedbacks from examiners, etc. but they cannot receive subcontracting of the decision-taking activity.
- **Exam site or exam facility** means the qualified site (physical or virtual, temporary or permanent) that hosts the exam session. This site may coincide with the location/s of the CB

and/or of the Examination Centre/Assessment Body and/or other organization that has entered into specific agreements with the CB without necessarily appearing as a subcontract.

- **Certification Requirements:** set of specific requirements, including the requirements of the scheme to be fulfilled in order to issue and maintain certification.

For further definitions see the standard UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 in the current version.

0.4 ACRONYMS

- ACCREDIA-DC: ACCREDIA Department of Certification and Inspection Bodies;
- CSA: Sector Accreditation Committee;
- DDC: Director of the Department of Certification and Inspection;
- VDDC: Vice Director of the Department of Certification and Inspection;
- FT: Technical Officer.

PART 1 – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

1. CRITERIA AND INFORMATION FOR ACCREDITATION

1.1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Accreditation and subsequent inclusion on the database, are granted to Bodies that perform the certification of persons in accordance with the applicable reference standards and documents specified/referred to in the ACCREDIA document LS-02.

Within the framework of the scheme, ACCREDIA-DC may define appropriate homogeneous groups of accreditation.

It is specified that, if the request for accreditation is presented against a European para-normative document (CWA, IWA, PAS, etc.), by virtue of the provisions of Law no. 4/2013, ACCREDIA-DC will be able to accredit, in Italy, with respect to this document exclusively for areas that are not already covered by UNI standards. As regards requests for accreditation from abroad, however, it will be possible to proceed for all the areas provided for by the European para-regulatory document.

In cases where accreditation has been granted in Italy against owner schemes, it shall migrate to the UNI standard that should be subsequently issued, provided that the scope of application is the same. However, this requirement is not applicable for accreditations and certifications issued abroad.

Note 1: If a Body defines additional profiles compared to those already reported in a UNI standard, these new profiles shall be considered as a new owner scheme. The certificate issued by the Body against this owner scheme shall not refer to the UNI standard, to avoid confusion in the market.

1.2. PRESENTATION AND EXPLANATION REGARDING THE APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that a CB's application shall be presented to ACCREDIA-DC using the modules DA-00 and DA-01 or DA-04 which are available on ACCREDIA's website, together with all the requested documents.

1.3. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

1.3.1 DOCUMENT REVIEW

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that during the document review compliance with par. 8 of UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 in the current version must be verified.

1.3.2 ASSESSMENTS

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the following specification:

The duration of the witness assessments varies depending on the number of professional persons/competences to be verified according to their similarity.

Note: ACCREDIA-DC may perform assessments of professional persons/competences which are not the object of assessments but which come within the scope of accreditation.

1.4. DECISION-TAKING PROCESS AND GRANTING OF ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5. SURVEILLANCE AND RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

1.5.1 SURVEILLANCE OF ACCREDITATION

1.5.1.1. GENERAL

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.1.2. PROGRAMMED SURVEILLANCE OF THE ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the following specifications:

- the on-site and assessment visits and those performed during the exam sessions are planned in such a way as to permit a representative sampling of the scope of accreditation in the entire cycle of accreditation. Surveillance visits regarding the CBs of persons may include direct interviews with the examiners;
- the duration of the verifications carried out during the exam session varies according to the number of professional persons to assess (it is necessary to be present at, at least, one exam).

1.5.1.3. UNPROGRAMMED ACCREDITATION SURVEILLANCE

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.1.4. PROGRAMMED AND UNPROGRAMMED SURVEILLANCE OF THE ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.1.5. DECISION-TAKING PROCESS AND GRANTING OF MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.1.6. VARIATION OF THE FIELD OF ACCREDITATION AND OF THE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.1.7. TRANSFER OF ACCREDITATION BETWEEN ACCREDITATION BODIES

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.1.8. TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.2 RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

1.5.2.1. PROCESS OF RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.5.2.2. DECISION-TAKING PROCESS AND GRANTING OF RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.6. EXTENSION OF ACCREDITATION

1.6.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

For the presentation of the application for extension it is not necessary for the CB to have already issued certificates in the object scheme of the extension. If, however, presence at an exam is necessary, observation of the exam of candidates in the object scheme of the extension shall be ensured to ACCREDIA-DC.

1.6.2 PRESENTATION OF THE APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable, with the specification that the application for extension of accreditation of a CB shall be presented to ACCREDIA-DC, using the modules DA-00 and DA-01 or DA-04, available on ACCREDIA's website, together with all the necessary documents.

If the extension of accreditation is required for professional persons not yet accredited by ACCREDIA-DC, refer to what has already been reported for the accreditation phase in § 1.2.3.

1.6.2.1 FLEXIBLE SCOPE

For the extension of accreditation to flexible scope, the requirements set out in the General Regulation RG-01 and in the Technical Regulation RT-37 in current revision apply.

Unless specifically authorized by the competent administration authorities, flexible scope accreditation is not applicable in regulated areas, in cases where the ACCREDIA-DC certificates refer to the Directive, the regulation or standard or the pertinent national law.

1.6.3 DOCUMENT REVIEW

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that the document review shall take into consideration any document reviews already conducted during the year for the same accreditation standard.

During the document review, it is necessary to verify conformity with par. 8 of UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 in the current revision.

1.6.4 ASSESSMENTS

Following the positive outcome of the document review, the extension process is developed with the participation at an examination session for the professional persons in extension, after evaluating the relative necessity and any requirements contained in ACCREDIA-DC circulars.

1.7. DECISION-TAKING PROCESS AND THE GRANTING OF EXTENSION OF ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.8. SUSPENSION, WITHDRAWAL AND REDUCTION OF ACCREDITATION

1.8.1. MINOR SANCTIONS MEASURES

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.8.2. MAJOR SANCTIONS MEASURES (SUSPENSION, REDUCTION, WITHDRAWAL)

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable with the specification that if a CB loses accreditation (for its own reasons or for a sanctions measure) the certificates already issued remain valid until their natural expiry or the first surveillance (if applicable).

In such cases another CB accredited for the same scheme, with evidence of possession of a valid accredited certificate, may perform renewal or surveillance activities by transferring the certificate and respecting the rules for renewal/surveillance as set out in the specific certification scheme, also in the absence of the documentation previously possessed by the previous CB.

1.8.3. SUSPENSION REQUESTED BY THE CB

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.8.4. PROCEDURAL REDUCTION OF THE SCOPE AND RENUNCIATION OF ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.8.5. RESTORATION OF ACCREDITATION

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.9. COMPLAINTS, RESERVATIONS AND APPEALS

1.9.1. COMPLAINTS

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.9.2. RESERVATIONS

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.9.3. APPEALS

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.10. OBLIGATIONS OF THE CB

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

1.11. OBLIGATIONS OF ACCREDIA-DC

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 are applicable.

2 PART 2 – REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES OF PERSONS

Part 2 contains a series of requirements regarding the organization and proceedings of the Certification Bodies of persons, with which the CBs are required to comply in the context of conformity with the applicable normative references.

It should be noted that the EA / IAF documents and guidelines are mandatory.

2.1. ORGANIZATION AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE CERTIFICATION BODY

To conduct its certification activities concerning all the areas in which it operates, the CB shall be able to demonstrate that it has:

- conducted a risk analysis regarding these activities;
- taken adequate measures (e.g. insurance or reserve funds included in the balance sheet) to cover professional risks for internal staff and collaborators such as examiners deriving from their activities, also with regard to the activities of its clients.

2.1.1. EXAM CENTRES

If the CB uses an external examination center, possibly located on the premises of an association or a professional order, this constitutes a possible threat to the principle of impartiality, which the CB must manage properly.

The examination shall be communicated in advance to the CB, so that it can plan monitoring and audits, also if they are unannounced or mystery audits.

The audits at the examination center shall be included in the contract between the examination center and the CB. It is the responsibility of the CB to determine, based on the identified risk, the frequency and modalities of the audits.

The CB shall also have available the statistics of the results of the exams delivered in the various examination centers, so that any anomalies can be assessed.

The qualification of the examiners shall be managed by the CB.

2.1.2. EXAM

The elements for the evaluation of the results of the learning activities (oral and written exams, document analysis, practical tests, document evaluation etc.) as described in the ACCREDIA documents (e.g. circulars), in the certification standards (with particular reference to the UNI standards issued after the publication of Law n. 4 of 14.01.2013) must be intended by the CB as methodologies to be referred to for structuring the certification exam.

In particular, the CB shall set out as follows for each certification scheme for persons:

- the requirements for access to the exams through a clear definition of the training needs, where necessary, for access to the person to be certified;
- preparation of the exam according to tasks, knowledge, abilities and competences under evaluation;
- the exams shall have a maximum duration time;
- the mandatory requirements concerning the certification scheme, where such exist, shall be evaluated in every exam session;
- knowledge of the mandatory issues, without which certification is not possible or must be postponed.

- the procedures for validating the exams, including the repetition intervals of these validations; all supported by the validation records;
- an adequate set of questions/samples in order to avoid the repeated use of the same exam materials;
- every exam must be accompanied by a checklist of expected answers to ensure an objective and uniform evaluation by the various examiners;

When a certification scheme is based on a standard, it is allowed to make a simple reference to the applicable standard, without mentioning in the public scheme documents the requirements of point 8 of the standard UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 (in the case of UNI standards, it is not necessary to copy in the CB's documents the requirements as regards knowledge, skills and competences associated with the professional activity) and of the 2016 ISO Guide¹.

The CB shall specify if the failure to pass one test prevents performance of the next one and if this remains valid for a defined period of time after which it is necessary to repeat the entire exam.

The CB shall prepare blocking questions, where required by a scheme, in order to avoid issuance to the person in question of the certificate in cases of lack of cultural basis.

The CB shall ensure recorded evidence of training for examiners and staff involved in the certification process of professional persons, regarding the accreditation standard, and the reference documents for certification, as well as the CB's reference procedures.

The CB shall define in the scheme where applicable, the modalities of access in the exam to a greater number of professional profiles and the modalities of extension to another professional profile when the standard provides for a number of profiles;

Remote exams are possible:

A. if they are written or oral only if:

- they are conducted, with supervision, also in remote mode, by an impartial person appointed by the CB (examiner or "proctor");

If the oral exam is performed using remote technology (e.g. Skype) it shall be done in real time and by video conference so as to guarantee the identity of the candidate and the absence of persons offering suggestions.

Prior to the exam, the CB shall inform the candidate about the appropriate technologies to be used in order to guarantee the absence of fraudulent practices (e.g. access to teaching material, consultation of websites, interference by external personnel, etc.)

During the exam, the candidate must place her/himself in a position that guarantees correct and continuous monitoring and keeps the microphone active.

The exam is invalid if the candidate leaves her/his position.

The CB shall prepare a remote examination management procedure that also includes the action modalities in the event of connection problems.

¹ Useful guidance can be found in the 2016 ISO CASCO Guide "How to develop schemes for the certification of person".

In all cases, it is necessary to comply with specific provisions contained in the relevant circulars issued by ACCREDIA-DC.

- B. In the case of a practical test aimed at evaluating specific manual skills and use of instruments/equipment, remote exams are not admissible because a direct visual check by the examiner of the operations that the candidate performs is required (for example: installation/laying of materials/welding, etc.). Situations such as case studies, role plays, practical tests with the use of IT technologies, are excluded.

In these cases, however, it is the CB's responsibility to determine and document the feasibility of the remote exam by ensuring the equivalence of the effectiveness of the exam performed in presence.

A scheme owner CB shall structure the certification exams, if they are not already modulated by standards in obligatory form (with regard especially to UNI standards for professions), using as reference for the tests – where available – the contents given in “Case file” and “Assessment resource operative level” related to the areas of activity (ADA) included in the national repertory of qualifications and published in the national compendium of work and qualifications: http://nrpitalia.isfol.it/sito_standard/sito_demo/atlante_lavoro_dettagli.php). If, therefore, in the same area of activities for the certification of competences, for regional level qualification if foreseen, to give a practical example, for certification to UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024, it is necessary to include in the exam a practical case, with contents and complexity of a similar or higher level.

This is reproduced by way of analogy in point 15⁽²⁾ of Annex 2 of the Law Decree of 30.06.2015 – Definition of an operative professional level for recognition at national level regarding regional qualifications and related competences in the ambit of the national repertory of educational and training qualifications, as well as professional qualifications according to article 8 of Law Decree n.13 dated 16.01.2013 (15A05469) (Official Gazette General Series n.166 dated 20.07.2015).

The CB shall define, for each certification scheme, the duration of the certification and the requirements for annual maintenance (where applicable) and renewal of certification in line with the typology of professional profile.

For the certification schemes of persons, it is however possible to apply allowances in the periodicity of the certification cycle, for some justified reasons (e.g. maternity), on the basis of which the certified person, in the year in question, may not be able to demonstrate continuity in the job for which s/he has been certified.

The CB shall specify in the certificate, as well as the certification scheme, the reference to the applicable standards (if such exist) and to the documents containing the details of the requirements of the certification scheme (rules and requirements).

If a certification is subject to compliance with a legislative requirement which constitutes an essential element for carrying out the activities of the profession, it is required to state in the certificate the reference to the relevant qualification (referring to this for verification of its validity). For example: state the license number for the certification of driving instructor for professional use of 4x4 vehicles - UNI/PdR 114.2:2021, the license of the province for the certification of professionals working on civilian gas systems powered by distribution networks in accordance with UNI/PdR 11:2014, registration in the order of doctors for the diabetologist certified according to UNI/PdR 64.5: 2019.

The CB shall specify the requirements regarding the examination centres and the methods used to ensure the relative control.

The CB shall ensure respect of the requirements of confidentiality and security in conformity with the standard UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 (§ 7.3 and § 7.4), also with regard to information concerning the identification of the candidates of the exams for certification. If a CB, in order to ensure the correct identity of a person to be certified, keeps a copy of his/her identity card or similar document, it shall be managed respecting the privacy laws, taking all responsibility for any illegal use. In all cases, ACCREDIA-DC is not responsible for compliance with legal requirements concerning privacy other than for aspects covered by the standard UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024. CBs retain full responsibility for any breach. of the law.

2.1.3 TRANSFER OF CERTIFICATE FROM ONE CB TO ANOTHER CB

Unless otherwise prescribed by the certification scheme applied, the transfer of the certification between accredited CBs of a valid certificate issued to a professional person, can be completed at any time, by submitting a request to the receiving CB, with the currently valid certificate attached and, where applicable, the last declaration of maintenance. The receiving CB shall, however, formalize, and make available to ACCREDIA, the outcome of the review of the requirements - points 7.1.1 and 9.2.6 of UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024, including a declaration by the issuing CB regarding the "absence of technical and economic issues or, in the absence of this, (giving evidence of having requested it in any case), a declaration in accordance with Presidential Decree 445/2000 of the candidate. The issuing CB will have 5 work days to respond if there are unresolved economic/technical issues. Upon successful completion of this investigation, the receiving CB shall approve the issuance of its certificate of conformity, which will maintain the expiry date of the previous one and specify that the certificate was previously issued by another CB.

The receiving CB shall inform the issuing CB of the completion of the transfer. The latter will not be able to annul the certificate before receiving this communication in compliance with the mandatory requirements applicable to the scheme being transferred.

(2) 15. Typological areas of operation are described from activities, or aggregations of activities, through the identification of an expected outcome, described in terms of a product or service. In cases where there are multiple correlation groups in the ADA, at least one expected outcome is identified for each group. The typical areas of operation are made explicit through the following indicators: a) context of operation, in terms of the professional and working conditions within which an activity or sequence of activities is carried out, and possibly the tools and technologies used; b) complexity of functions, through the identification of levels of autonomy and responsibility, including for the purpose of EQF level assignment.

The typological scopes of practice constitute reference for assessments carried out in the services of identification and validation and certification of competencies regardless of learning contexts.

2.2. SEPARATION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF CERTIFICATION ACTIVITIES AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

The provisions of § 5.2 of the standard UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 are applicable.

As required by point a) of § 5.2.3 of the above Regulation, the CB shall conduct an analysis of the associated risks in order to issue certifications, guaranteeing the principles of competence, consistency and impartiality, documenting the results and justifying the conclusions drawn and the solutions adopted.

CBs should define risk indicators to be monitored/verified periodically in order to ensure that the risk level is eliminated or minimized.

To this end, a useful guide is represented by the Recommendations expressed by the ACCREDIA Steering and Guarantee Committee in relation to the definition of consistent criteria for the verification of some requirements of the standard UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 during the assessment and surveillance of the accredited CBs. It is recommended to use the document issued by the Steering and Guarantee Committee as a basis for developing the risk analysis document, or as a checklist for conducting internal or external audits.

The ascertained violation of the above provisions entails the adoption of the sanctions set out in § 1.8.