

Certification and Inspection Department

Regulation for the accreditation of Certification Bodies of Persons

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TITLE **Regulation for the accreditation of Certification Bodies of Persons**

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NOTE 1 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.

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The Director of Certification and Inspection Department

APPROVAL

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0. Foreword

0.1. Scope and field 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/self-reduction, suspension/self-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 applicable standards shall apply, as well as the following scheme specific definitions:

- **Candidate:** applicant who has fulfilled specified prerequisites and has been admitted to the certification process.
- **Examiner:** a person who is competent to conduct an examination where such examination requires professional judgement.
- **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.
- **Examination Centre/Assessment Body:** an organisation qualified by the CB to which the management of examinations is subcontracted, which shall operate under the CB's control and in accordance with the CB's specifications/procedures, and shall ensure its impartiality towards any candidate applying for certification, bringing to the attention of the CB any actual or potential threats to its impartiality. In addition to examination management, such organisations may be subcontracted by the CB for commercial

activities (e.g. prospecting), application review, planning, and nomination of examiners, etc., but they shall not be subcontracted the certification decision-making activity.

- **Examination site** means the qualified site (physical or virtual, temporary or permanent) that hosts the examination session. This site may coincide with the location/s of the CB and/or of the Examination Centre 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.

Reference is made to UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 in its current revision for further definitions.

0.4. Acronyms

- ACCREDIA–DC: ACCREDIA Department of Certification and Inspection Bodies;
- CSA: Sectoral 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 accreditation families.

It is specified that, if the request for accreditation is presented against European standardisation products (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 standardisation products.

Note 1: If a Certification Body defines additional profiles beyond those already specified in a UNI standard, such new profiles shall be considered as a proprietary scheme. The certificate issued by the CB under such proprietary scheme shall not make reference to the UNI standard, in order to avoid market confusion.

1.2. Submission and processing of the application for accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply, with the clarification that an application for accreditation of a CB must be submitted to ACCREDIA-DC using the relevant forms DA-00 and DA-01 or DA-04, available on the ACCREDIA website, together with all the documentation required therein.

Where a CB requests accreditation with a flexible scope in accordance with Technical Regulation RT-37, the application shall be submitted to ACCREDIA-DC using form DA-10, also available on the ACCREDIA website. ACCREDIA-DC shall assess whether the acceptability requirements are met in accordance with the provisions set out in the aforementioned Technical Regulation.

Finally, where the CB intends to introduce additional requirements beyond those of the certification standard included within the scope of accreditation (see EA CC FAQ No. 46.6), the provisions of document PG 13-01 shall apply.

1.3. Accreditation process

1.3.1. Document review

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply, with the clarification that, during the document review stage, compliance with clause 8 of UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024 in its current revision shall be verified through the completion of a specific form (references Annex 01 to forms MD-08-01-DC and MD-08-02-DC, in their current versions).

1.3.2. Assessments

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply, with the following clarification:

- The duration of the witness assessments is influenced by the number of candidates, the composition of the examination committee, and the profiles under examination.

Note: ACCREDIA-DC reserves the right to carry out additional assessments for profiles/competences not subject to witness assessment but falling within the scope of accreditation.

In specific cases (e.g. notifications), witness assessments may be carried out after the granting of accreditation and the relevant ministerial authorisation. In such cases, the CB shall inform ACCREDIA-DC of the first audit activity, during which the witness assessment shall be arranged.

For accreditation scopes for notification purposes, this activity shall be carried out within 18 months from the granting of the specific accreditation. Where this is not possible, the provisions of Technical Document DT-01-DC in its current revision shall apply (see § 1.9.2 below).

The 18-month timeframe is also applicable to other possible accreditation areas where it has not been possible to carry out the Witness Assessment prior to the accreditation decision, without prejudice to cases in which different timeframes have been agreed with the relevant Authority and/or established through specific circulars and/or set out in applicable EA/Global documents.

1.4. Decision-making process and granting of accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

Furthermore, the provisions of Technical Document DT-01-DC, in its current revision, shall apply to the maintenance of accreditations for notification purposes relating to CE marking.

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 shall apply.

1.5.1.2. Scheduled surveillance of the accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply with the following clarifications:

- the office and witness assessments, i.e. those carried out during examination sessions are planned so as to allow a representative sampling of the scope of accreditation over the entire cycle of accreditation. Surveillance of CBs during the conduct of witness assessments may include direct interviews with examiners;
- the duration of the Witness assessment is influenced by the number of candidates, the composition of the examination committee, and the profiles under examination (it is necessary to observe at least one complete examination).

1.5.1.3. Unscheduled accreditation surveillance

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.5.1.4. Scheduled and unscheduled surveillance of the accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.5.1.5. Decision-taking process and granting of maintenance of accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply, as well as those of Technical Document DT-01-DC, in its current revision, for the maintenance of accreditations for notification purposes relating to CE marking.

1.5.1.6. Variation of the accreditation scope and accreditation standards

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.5.1.7. Transfer of accreditation between accreditation bodies

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.5.1.8. Transfer of ownership of accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.5.2. Renewal of accreditation

1.5.2.1. Process of renewal of accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.5.2.2. Decision-making process and granting of renewal of accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply, as well as those of Technical Document DT-01-DC, in its current revision, for the maintenance of accreditations for notification purposes relating to CE marking.

1.6. Extension of accreditation

1.6.1. General information

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

To submit an application for extension, it is not necessary for the CB to have already issued certificates under the scheme for which the extension is requested. Where a witness assessment is required for the purposes of the extension, ACCREDIA-DC shall be guaranteed the observation of at least one complete examination under the scheme subject to extension.

1.6.2. Submission of the application for extension

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply, with the clarification that an application for extension of a CB's accreditation must be submitted to ACCREDIA-DC using the relevant forms DA-00 and DA-01 or DA-04, available on the ACCREDIA website, together with all the documentation required therein.

If the extension of accreditation is required for professional profiles not yet accredited by ACCREDIA-DC, reference is made to General Regulation RG-01, § 1.2.3.

Where a CB requests an extension with a flexible scope in accordance with Technical Regulation RT-37, the application shall be submitted to ACCREDIA-DC using form DA-10, also available on the ACCREDIA website.

Finally, where the CB intends to introduce additional requirements beyond those of the certification standard included within the scope of accreditation (see EA CC FAQ No. 46.6), the provisions of document PG 13-01 shall apply.

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 shall apply.

1.6.3. Document review

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply, with the clarification that the document review shall take into account any document reviews already carried out 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 by completing a specific form (references Annex 01 to forms MD-08-01-DC and MD-08-02-DC, in their current versions).

1.6.4 Assessments

Following the positive outcome of the above document review, the extension process shall proceed, where applicable, with the witness assessment, i.e. participation in a complete examination session for the profiles included in the extension, taking into account any requirements set out in ACCREDIA-DC circulars.

In specific cases (e.g., notifications), witness assessments may be carried out after the granting of the accreditation extension and the corresponding Ministerial authorization. In such cases, the CB shall inform ACCREDIA-DC of the execution of the first conformity assessment activity, during which the witness assessment will be organized.

For accreditation areas intended for notification purposes, this activity must be carried out within 18 months from the issuance of the specific accreditation. If this is not possible, the provisions of the current revision of document DT-01-DC will apply (see § 1.9.2 below).

The 18-month timeframe is also applicable to other possible accreditation areas where it has not been possible to conduct the Witness Assessment prior to the accreditation decision, without prejudice to cases in which different timeframes have been agreed with the relevant Authority and/or established through specific circulars and/or defined in applicable EA/Global documents.

1.7. Decision-making process and the granting of extension of accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

Furthermore, the provisions of Technical Document DT-01-DC, in its current revision, shall also apply to the maintenance of accreditations for notification purposes relating to CE marking.

1.8. Additional provisions

The provisions of the General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.9. Suspension, withdrawal and reduction of accreditation

1.9.1. Minor sanctioning measures

The provisions of the General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.9.2. Major sanctioning measures (suspension, reduction, withdrawal)

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply with the clarification that if a CB loses accreditation (for its own reasons or for a sanctions measure) the certificates already issued remain valid for six months and available in the ACCREDIA database (where applicable), unless the relevant sector authorities provide specific instructions or their opinion must be obtained in order to determine the validity status of the issued certifications.

In such cases, a different CB for the same scheme, having evidence of a valid accredited certificate, may carry out the renewal or surveillance activity by transferring the certificate, applying the rules set out in the specific certification scheme for renewal/surveillance, even in the absence of the historical documentation held by the previous CB.

For CBs operating in mandatory/regulatory areas, the decisions of the CSA, where applicable, must be forwarded by ACCREDIA-DC to the competent Authorities (e.g., Ministries) for their information and any subsequent determinations.

In cases where the Certification Body requests accreditation for the purpose of subsequent initial Authorization for notification purposes or other forms of public authorisation in regulated areas, ACCREDIA shall carry out at least one witness assessment among those planned during the initial assessment activity performed by the Body.

This witness assessment must be carried out within a maximum period of 18 months from the granting of the accreditation/extension. If the assessment is not conducted within this period, the accreditation for that conformity assessment activity shall be revoked.

Once the accreditation has been revoked, the CAB may submit a new application. With regard to notification scopes, the option to be accredited with the deferral of the witness assessment activity (i.e., after receiving the first client requests) will no longer be applicable. In such cases, the normal accreditation procedure shall be followed, including the execution of the witness activity (obviously simulated) prior to the accreditation/extension decision.

It is specified that the market effects of a suspension/withdrawal of accreditation do not depend on ACCREDIA-DC, but on the competent Authorities, where they make use of the accreditation for notification or authorisation purposes.

1.9.3. Suspension requested by the CB

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.9.4. Procedural reduction of the scope, withdrawal and renunciation of accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

Furthermore, the provisions of Technical Document DT-01-DC, in its current revision, shall also apply to the maintenance of accreditations for notification purposes relating to CE marking.

1.9.5. Restoration of accreditation

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.10. Complaints/reports, reservations and appeals

1.10.1. Complaints

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.10.2. Reservations

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.10.3. Appeals

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.11. Obligations of the CB

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

1.12. Obligations of ACCREDIA-DC

The provisions of General Regulation RG-01 shall apply.

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 operation of the Certification Body

The CB shall ensure that objective evidence is available to ACCREDIA-DC demonstrating that certification activities are carried out in an impartial and independent manner and are not influenced by any training activities provided by related entities (natural or legal persons) affiliated with it.

To this end, the CB shall identify, analyse and document risks to impartiality arising from the coexistence of training and certification activities, and shall adopt appropriate measures to eliminate or mitigate such risks.

Such measures shall ensure, throughout the entire certification process (from policy definition through to certification issuance, maintenance and renewal), the absence of conflicts of interest, the independence of decision-making, and that no advantage is granted to candidates who have undertaken specific training pathways.

For this purpose, useful guidance is provided by the recommendations issued by the Steering and Guarantee Committee (CIG) of ACCREDIA concerning the definition of homogeneous criteria for the verification of certain requirements of ISO/IEC 17024 in the context of the assessment and surveillance of accredited CBs. It is recommended that the document issued by the CIG be used either as a basis for developing the risk analysis document or as a checklist for conducting internal or external assessments.

2.1.1. Examination centres

The outsourcing of assessment activities to an examination centre constitutes a potential threat to the principle of impartiality, which the Body shall appropriately manage.

The CB and the Examination Centre must enter into a legally valid contract covering the subcontracted activities.

In particular, the contract shall provide that:

- the CB carries out scheduled qualification and monitoring audits, at a frequency and according to arrangements established on the basis of an assessment taking into account the risks associated with the professional profile and the activities performed by the Examination Centre. As part of the qualification and monitoring activities, the CB shall pay particular attention to the communication and

marketing activities carried out by the Examination Centre (websites, social networks, etc.), including, where applicable, commercial policies;

- examination dates are communicated to the CB in good time to enable it to plan unscheduled monitoring activities, including unannounced or covert audits.
- the qualification and monitoring of Examiners, Invigilators and any technical experts remain the sole responsibility of the CB;
- the arrangements for handling the application review are defined.

2.1.2. Certification Scheme

The CB shall define a certification scheme for each certification category. In defining the requirements of the certification scheme, in addition to those established by ISO/IEC 17024, the CB shall take into account:

- the entry requirements for access to the examination, where applicable, including a clear definition of training requirements and/or prior experience;
- the arrangements for accessing multiple profiles/levels within the same examination session;
- the conduct of examination activities in accordance with the tasks, knowledge, skills and competences to be assessed, with appropriate records being maintained;
- that, for each examination, a maximum duration shall be defined and, where necessary/appropriate, a minimum duration (e.g. oral examinations) and a pass threshold;
- any eligibility barriers for progression to a subsequent examination stage, specifying whether a failed test remains valid for a defined period, after which the entire examination must be retaken;
- the procedures for modifying the scope of certification (e.g. extension to other profiles/levels covered by the same standard);
- the procedures for validating examination tests, including the intervals for repeating such validations of the competence of the personnel involved, and their independence from the process of developing or updating examination materials;
- the examination material developed by the CB, which shall be designed to minimise threats arising from its repeated use. The CB shall therefore prepare a number of questions (for written and oral examinations) and case studies at least twice the number required by the scheme for each profile. Where a practical examination is also included, it is the responsibility of the CB to prepare an appropriate set of questions/samples/mock-ups, where applicable
- that each examination assessment shall be accompanied by a checklist of expected answers and evaluation grids, in order to ensure objective and consistent assessment by different examiners.

The CB shall specify whether a failed test prevents progression to the next examination stage and whether it remains valid for a defined period, after which the entire examination must be retaken.

For persons certification schemes, tolerances may be applied to the periodicity of the certification cycle in certain justified cases (e.g. maternity leave), under which the certified person may not be able, during the relevant year, to demonstrate continuity in the role for which they are certified, while maintaining appropriate objective evidence.

The CB shall complete the recertification process before the certificate expires. If the certificate expires before the renewal process is completed, the CB shall apply an initial certification process, unless any exceptions are expressly provided for by the certification standard.

2.1.2.1. Conduct of remote examinations

It is the responsibility of the CB to determine and document the feasibility of remote examination, ensuring equivalence of effectiveness with examinations conducted in person. The CB shall inform candidates of the appropriate technologies to be used and ensure the absence of fraudulent practices (e.g. access to training materials, consultation of websites, interference by external persons, use of AI software, etc.).

With reference to appropriate technologies, the CB shall use examination platforms equipped with validated proctoring tools for their intended use, integrated with anti-cheating modules designed to prevent the use of AI agents, in compliance with applicable data protection legislation.

The CB shall also define the minimum system requirements for the digital infrastructure used for candidate admission to remote examinations.

The CB shall establish a remote examination management procedure, including the candidate's obligations, and make it available to candidates for review and acceptance prior to the examination.

Except where remote examination is precluded by specific requirements set out in the certification scheme, remote examinations are permitted in accordance with the provisions set out below:

CASE A Certification scheme comprising written and/or oral examinations:

- In this case, examinations shall be conducted under the supervision of an impartial person appointed by the CB (Examiner or Invigilator).

The oral examination shall be conducted in real time via videoconference to ensure the identity of the candidate and the absence of any external assistance. The oral examination shall be conducted in compliance with confidentiality principles, with candidates admitted to the examination individually.

During the exam, the candidate must place her/himself in a position that guarantees correct and continuous monitoring and shall keep the webcam (without filters) and microphone active throughout the entire duration of the examination.

The examination shall be invalidated if the candidate leaves the workstation, in the event of an unauthorised disconnection, or in the event of confirmed fraudulent practices.

In any case, specific provisions contained in circulars issued by ACCREDIA DC shall also be complied with.

CASE B: Certification scheme comprising a practical examination

In the case of a practical examination aimed at evaluating specific manual skills and use of instruments/equipment, remote examinations are not permitted, as direct visual control by the examiner of the candidate's operations is required (non-exhaustive example: installation/laying of materials/welding, etc.). Situations such as, for example, case studies, role-play, or practical tests involving the use of IT technologies shall be excluded.

2.1.3 Transfer of certificates 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 person, can be completed at any time, by submitting a request to the incoming CB, with the currently valid certificate attached and, where applicable, the last declaration of maintenance. The incoming CB shall, however, formalize, and make available to ACCREDIA, the outcome of the review of the requirements concerning the records and application process of ISO/IEC 17024, including a declaration by the issuing CB regarding the "absence of technical and economic pending 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 working days to respond if there are unresolved economic/technical issues. Upon successful completion of this investigation, the incoming CB shall decide on 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. In any event, the decision-making process must be completed before the expiry of the certificate subject to transfer.

The incoming 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.

2.1.4 Procedures for Changes to the Scope of Certification

The following provisions apply in the case of modification of the certification application field distinguishing in the cases:

- **Case A** *Extension to a new specialization with issuance of new certificate:*

it applies in cases where the professional profile being extended provides for different competences, abilities and knowledge - or in any case referring to other fields/sectors - with respect to the certificate already in force but relating to the same standard and certification scheme. Following successful completion of the examination, the CB issues a new certificate, which may be retained together with the previous one. Some (non-exhaustive) examples of the application of this type of extension are BIM profiles (Specialist, Coordinator, Manager, etc.), EGE, PND technicians, etc.

- **Case B** *Extension to a new specialization with update of the existing certificate:*

it applies in cases where the additional professional profile provides for competences, abilities and knowledge superior to those already verified for the initial issuance of the certificate. In this case, the CB must perform an additional examination for the evaluation of the competences, abilities and knowledge required by the higher

profile as established by the standard and by the certification scheme. Following the successful outcome of the verification, the CB updates the certificate already in force, maintaining the initial issuance and expiry dates, changing the scope (profile) and the current issuance date. Some (non-exhaustive) examples of the application of this type of extension include the profiles of window/door installers, ETICS system installers, parquet flooring installers, tile installers, etc.

NOTE: If the activities for renewal are also performed during the extension phase, the CB will be able to carry out the extension and renewal examination at the same time, thus ensuring the full validity of the certificate for a new certification cycle (new expiry date).

2.1.5 European and International References for Proprietary Certification Schemes

For proprietary certification schemes, the Certification Body (CB) and/or the certification scheme owner shall mandatorily refer to the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF), by identifying and documenting the applicable EQF level, based on the expected learning outcomes, and shall explicitly include in the scheme documentation a clear reference to the relevant EQF/ECF level.

For professions operating in the ICT sector, the CB and/or the scheme owner shall also refer to EN 16234-1 – the e-Competence Framework (ECF), as the European framework for the description of professional competences.

It is also mandatory to take into account, where applicable, the documents and methodological guidelines developed at European level by CEN/TC 14 – Services, as references for the design of certification schemes and related assessment examinations, with particular reference to CEN Guide 14 – “Common policy guidance for addressing standardisation on qualification of professions and personnel”, or any subsequent versions.

The Certification Body (CB) shall also take into account the general principles for the certification of persons set out in the ISO/CASCO publication “Certification of persons — Principles and general requirements for certification” (ISO/CASCO), as an international system reference for the design, implementation, and governance of personnel certification processes, in support of ISO/IEC 17024.

The adoption of the Areas of Activity (ADA) and the related case sheets from the National Register of Education and Training Qualifications and Professional Qualifications, published in the Labour and Qualifications Atlas (INAPP), constitutes a voluntary reference that may be used to support the design of examination tests and the description of the competences subject to certification.

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