

SQAPL	Procedure Manual
Section Name	Procedure for Transfer of Certification

1.0. Purpose:

To document, establish, implement and maintain the system for transfer of ISO quality management system certificates from other certification bodies to SQAPL as per requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015, ISO 17021-2:2016, ISO 17021-3:2017, ISO 17021-10: 2018, ISO 17021-9:2016, ISO 22003-1:2022, ISO 27006:2015, ISO 50003:2021 and the IAF mandatory document for the transfer of accredited certification of management systems; IAF MD 2:2023. This is to assure that the integrity of the accredited management system certificates issued by one certification body is maintained if subsequently transferred to SQAPL.

2.0. Scope:

2.1. This procedure is applicable to transfer of management system certifications between certification bodies i.e. from other certification bodies to SQAPL.

2.2. This procedure is also applicable in case of acquisitions of certification bodies accredited by an IAF MLA signatory.

3.0. Responsibility:

Managing Director

4.0. Procedure:

4.1. General.

4.1.1. SQAPL Only certification which is covered by an accreditation of an IAF or Regional MLA signatory at level 3 and where applicable level 4 and 5 shall be eligible for transfer. Organizations holding certification that is not covered by such accreditations shall be treated as new clients.

4.1.2. Only valid accredited certification shall be transferred. Certification which is known to be suspended shall not be accepted for transfer

4.1.3. In cases where certification has been granted by a certification body which has ceased trading or whose accreditation has expired, been suspended or withdrawn, the transfer shall be completed within 6 months or on expiration of the certification whichever is sooner. In such cases, the accepting certification body shall inform the accreditation body, under whose accreditation it intends to issue the certification, prior to the transfer.

4.2. Pre transfer review

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4.2.1. SQAPL shall have a process for obtaining sufficient information in order to take a decision on certification and inform the transferring client of the process. This information shall as a minimum include arrangements regarding the certification cycle.

4.2.2 SQAPL shall carry out a review of the certification of the transferring client. This review shall be conducted by means of a documentation review and where identified as needed by this review, for example there are outstanding major nonconformities, shall include a pre-transfer visit to the transferring client to confirm the validity of the certification.

Note: The pre-transfer visit is not an audit

4.2.3 SQAPL shall determine the competence criteria for personnel involved in pre-transfer review. The review may be conducted by one or more persons. The individual or group conducting the pre-transfer visit shall have the same competence that is required for an audit team appropriate for the scope of certification being reviewed.

4.2.4. The review shall cover the following aspects as a minimum and the review and its findings shall be fully documented:

- (a) confirmation that the client's certification falls within the accredited scope of the issuing and accepting certification body;
- (b) confirmation that the issuing certification body's accredited scope falls within its accreditation body's MLA scope;
- (c) the reasons for seeking a transfer;
- (d) that the site or sites wishing to transfer certification hold a valid accredited certification;
- (e) The initial certification or most recent recertification audit reports, and the latest surveillance report; the status of all outstanding nonconformities that may arise from them and any other available, relevant documentation regarding the certification process. If these audit reports are not made available or if the surveillance audit or recertification audit has not been completed as required by the issuing certification body's audit programme, then the organization shall be treated as a new client;
- (f) complaints received and action taken;
- (g) Considerations relevant to establishing an audit plan and an audit programme. The audit programme established by the issuing certification body should be reviewed if available. See Clause 2.3.4 of this document; and

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- (h) Any current engagement by the transferring client with regulatory bodies relevant to the scope of the certification in respect of legal compliance.

4.2.5. The auditor shall submit a review report in the prescribed format SQAPL- 03

4.2.6. The certification panel shall review the reports and based on the findings shall take a decision whether to accept or not to accept the client for granting certification.

4.3. Transfer of Certification

4.3.1 In accordance with clause 9.5.2 of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015, SQAPL shall not issue certification to the transferring client until:

- a) It has verified the implementation of corrections and corrective actions in respect of all outstanding major nonconformities; and
- b) It has accepted the transferring client's plans for correction and corrective action for all outstanding minor nonconformities.

4.3.2 Where the pre-transfer review (document review and/or pre-transfer visit) identifies issues that prevent the completion of transfer, the accepting certification body shall treat the transferring client as a new client.

The justification for this action shall be explained to the transferring client and shall be documented by the accepting certification body and the records maintained.

4.3.3 The normal certification decision making process in accordance with clause 9.5 of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 shall be followed including that the personnel making the certification decision be different from those carrying out the pre-transfer review.

4.3.4 If no problems are identified by the pre-transfer review, the certification cycle shall be based on the previous certification cycle and the accepting certification body shall establish the audit programme for the remainder of the certification cycle.

NOTE: The accepting certification body can quote the organization's initial certification date on the certification documents with the indication that the organization was certified by a different certification body before a certain date.

Where the accepting certification body has had to treat the client as a new client as a result of the pre-transfer review, the certification cycle shall begin with the certification decision.

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4.3.5 The accepting certification body shall take the decision on certification before any surveillance or recertification audits are initiated.

4.4 Cooperation between the Issuing Certification Bodies and SQAPL

4.3.1. The cooperation between the issuing and SQAPL is essential for the effective process for transfer and the integrity of certification. When requested, the issuing certification body shall provide to SQAPL all the documents and information required by this document. Where it has not been possible to communicate with the issuing certification body, SQAPL shall record the reasons and make every effort to obtain necessary information from other sources.

4.3.2. The transferring client shall authorize that the issuing certification body provides the information sought by SQAPL. The issuing certification body shall not suspend or withdraw the organization's certification following the notification that the organization is transferring to SQAPL if the client continues to satisfy the requirements of certification.

4.3.3. SQAPL and/or the transferring client shall contact the accreditation body which accredits the issuing certification body where the issuing certification body

(i) Has not provided the requested information to SQAPL,
Or

(ii) Suspends or withdraws the transferring client's certification without cause

4.3.4. The accreditation body shall have a process for addressing the situation, including the suspension or withdrawal of the accreditation, where the issuing certification body does not cooperate with the accepting certification body or suspends or withdraws the transferring client's certification without cause.

4.3.5. Once SQAPL has issued the certification it shall inform the issuing CB.

5.0 Records:

(a) SQAPL-03 – Pre-transfer Review Report

(b) Declaration For Accepting Transfer of Certification, Annexure 1, QP-24

(c) Acknowledgement & Undertaking by Transferee Annexure 2, QP-24

6.0 References

(a) SQAPL-QP-17- Procedure for Granting, Maintaining, Renewing, Extending, Reducing, Suspending and withdrawing Of Certification

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