

CERTIFICATION PROCESS
From Application to Grant, Surveillance, Recertification and Maintenance of Certification

1. Purpose

This document defines the public certification process of WAU Certification Private Limited for management system certification (e.g. **ISO 9001:2015**), from initial enquiry and application to certification decision, surveillance, recertification, maintenance, suspension, withdrawal, restoration, and scope change, in conformity with ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 and applicable accreditation requirements.

2. Scope

This document applies to:

- applicants seeking Management System Certification (e.g. ISO 9001) certification from WAU,
- certified clients of WAU,
- public information made available by WAU,
- all certification activities related to the Management System Certification Scheme (e.g. ISO 9001).

3. Reference Standards and Documents

- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015
- Management System Certification Standard (e.g. ISO 9001:2015)
- ISO 19011
- Applicable IAF Mandatory Documents
- Applicable accreditation board requirements
- WAU internal procedures and forms

4. Public Commitments of WAU

WAU is committed to:

- integrity
- impartiality,
- competence,
- confidentiality,
- consistency,
- transparency,
- non-discriminatory access to certification.

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WAU does not provide consultancy for the management systems it certifies, and certification decisions are made independently from audit activity.

5. Types of Management Systems / Certification Scheme in Which WAU Operates

At present, for the purpose of this document, WAU operates in the following accredited / applied scheme scope:

- **Management System Certification Standard (ISO 9001:2015 – Quality Management System (QMS))**

Where WAU expands to additional schemes, updated/separate public information and controlled documentation shall be issued accordingly.

6. Certification Process – Step by Step

6.1 Initial Enquiry and Information to Applicant

On receipt of an enquiry, WAU provides or makes available:

- certification process,
- application form,
- certification agreement / terms and conditions,
- use of mark requirements,
- complaint and appeal procedures,
- scope and limitations of certification,

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- fee structure / quotation basis,
- rules regarding suspension, withdrawal, reduction, extension of scope, and recertification.

The applicant is informed that certification is granted only after satisfactory completion of all required stages and an independent certification decision.

6.2 Application Submission

The applicant submits a formal application using the prescribed WAU form and provides relevant information including:

- legal identity and address,
- site addresses,
- scope of certification sought,
- organization size / effective number of personnel,
- activities, processes, and outsourced processes,
- applicable statutory/regulatory context,
- management system status and maturity,
- shift operations,
- multisite details, where applicable.

The application must be signed by authorized client personnel.

6.3 Application Review and Contract Review

WAU conducts an application review to determine whether:

- sufficient information has been received,
- the requested scope is within WAU capability and competence,
- audit duration can be determined,
- technical area competence is available,
- language, location, and logistical requirements can be met,
- impartiality/conflict issues exist,
- special risks exist,
- the scope and exclusions are clear.

This review includes determination of:

- audit objectives,
- audit duration,
- team competence requirements,
- stage 1 and stage 2 planning basis.

If acceptable, WAU issues quotation / certification agreement.

If not acceptable, WAU may seek clarification or refuse to proceed.

6.4 Certification Agreement

Before certification activities begin, the client enters into a legally enforceable certification agreement with WAU. The agreement includes:

- obligations of client,
- obligations of WAU,
- fees and payment conditions,
- right of access to records, sites, and personnel,
- right of access for accreditation body assessors/observers,
- confidentiality provisions,
- mark use conditions,
- complaint and appeal rights,
- suspension/withdrawal/reduction/restoration conditions.

6.5 Audit Programme Establishment

WAU establishes an audit programme for the full certification cycle, including:

- surveillance audits,
- recertification audit,
- special audits where necessary.

The audit programme considers:

- size and complexity,
- process risk,
- number of sites,
- previous performance,
- complaints,
- changes in system or organization,
- sector-specific considerations.

6.6 Audit Team Selection

WAU selects a competent audit team with collective competence relevant to:

- Management System Certification Standard (e.g. ISO 9001) requirements,
- technical area / sector,
- client processes,
- audit methods,
- language and communication needs.

Where needed, technical experts may be used.

The role of technical experts, if used, is communicated to the client in advance.

6.7 Stage 1 Audit

Stage 1 audit is conducted to:

- review documented information of the management system,
- assess site-specific conditions,
- evaluate understanding of applied Management System Certification Standard (e.g. ISO 9001) requirements,
- review scope, processes, and key aspects,
- assess internal audit and management review status,
- determine readiness for Stage 2,
- collect information for Stage 2 planning.

Outputs of Stage 1 include:

- findings,
- readiness conclusion,
- areas of concern,
- recommendation whether Stage 2 can proceed.

Stage 2 is not conducted until WAU is satisfied that the organization is adequately prepared.

6.8 Stage 2 Audit

Stage 2 audit is conducted on-site and/or by approved methods to evaluate:

- implementation and effectiveness of the management system,
- conformity with applied Management System Standard (e.g. ISO 9001),
- process performance and controls,
- compliance with applicable requirements identified by the organization,
- achievement of intended results,
- internal audit and management review effectiveness,
- corrective action system,
- customer focus and process management,

- improvement and risk-based thinking.

The audit team collects objective evidence and records findings.

6.9 Audit Findings and Nonconformities

Audit findings may include:

- conformity,
- nonconformity,
- observations.
- opportunities for improvement, if any

Nonconformities are communicated clearly and classified per WAU rules.

The client is required to provide:

- correction,
- root cause,
- corrective action,
- evidence of implementation / effectiveness as required.

Certification is not granted until relevant nonconformities are satisfactorily addressed in accordance with WAU requirements.

6.10 Audit Report

WAU prepares an audit report containing:

- audit scope,
- audit objectives,
- audit criteria,
- sites audited,
- audit team details,
- summary of evidence,
- findings / nonconformities,
- conclusion on conformity and effectiveness,
- recommendation for certification or otherwise.

6.11 Technical Review

A competent person, independent from the audit team as required, conducts technical review of the audit file to confirm:

- completeness of records,
- adequacy of evidence,
- proper classification of nonconformities,
- satisfactory closure / response where applicable,
- consistency with certification criteria.

6.12 Certification Decision

Certification decision is taken independently by competent authorized person(s) who have not participated in the audit of that client.

The decision may be:

- grant certification,
- refuse certification,
- defer decision pending additional information or closure,
- grant with revised scope where justified.

Certification is issued only after satisfactory completion of all required activities.

6.13 Grant of Certification and Certificate Issuance

When certification is granted, WAU issues a certificate containing, as applicable:

- name and address of certified client,
- sites covered,
- certified scope,
- standard reference (ISO 9001:2015),
- certificate number,
- issue date,
- validity / cycle details,
- WAU name/logo/mark as controlled,
- accreditation-related references where applicable.
- IAF Logo, where applicable.

Certification is valid subject to continued conformity and successful surveillance and recertification.

7. Maintaining Certification

Certification is maintained subject to:

- continued conformity of the management system,
- successful surveillance audits,
- timely closure of nonconformities,
- compliance with WAU terms and conditions,
- proper use of certification mark,
- payment of agreed fees,
- notification of significant changes,
- no unresolved issues affecting certification confidence.

The client must notify WAU without delay of significant changes such as:

- legal status,
- ownership,
- organization structure,
- key management,
- scope changes,
- site changes,
- significant process changes,
- major complaints or regulatory action,
- management system failure or serious incident relevant to certification.

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8. Surveillance Audits

Surveillance audits are conducted at planned intervals during the certification cycle to confirm that the certified management system continues to:

- conform to requirements,
- be effectively implemented,
- achieve intended results,
- support continuing confidence in certification.

Surveillance normally includes review of:

- internal audits and management review,
- complaints,
- corrective actions,
- progress on objectives,
- continuing operational control,
- changes,
- use of certification mark,
- selected key processes and clauses.

The first surveillance audit shall be completed within 12 months from the certification decision date in accordance with applicable accreditation standard requirements. Failure to meet first surveillance audit 12 months timeline, will result in suspension of certification.

9. Recertification

Recertification is conducted before expiry of the certification cycle to confirm:

- overall continuing conformity and effectiveness,
- continued relevance of the scope,
- commitment to maintain effectiveness and improvement,
- performance over the full cycle,
- management system ability to support objectives and policy.

Where recertification is successful and completed in time, certification may be renewed for a further cycle.

10. Special Audits

WAU may conduct special audits, including short-notice audits, where necessary, for example:

- investigation of complaints,
- follow-up of suspension conditions,
- significant changes,
- verification of corrective action,
- response to major issues affecting certification confidence.

Clients are required to cooperate with such audits.

11. Refusal of Certification

WAU may refuse to grant certification where:

- application information is inadequate,
- audit cannot be completed,
- major issues remain unresolved,
- nonconformities are not satisfactorily closed,
- the client prevents effective audit,
- impartiality/conflict concerns cannot be controlled,
- the scope is outside WAU capability,
- there is evidence of misleading or false information.

12. Suspension of Certification

Certification may be suspended when, for example:

- the client's certified management system persistently or seriously fails to meet certification requirements,
- surveillance/recertification audits are not conducted as required,
- misuse of certification mark occurs,
- serious complaints or unresolved nonconformities exist,
- client fails to permit audits,
- client fails to meet contractual obligations, including payment where contractually relevant and not affecting impartial decision logic,
- client voluntarily requests suspension.
- The first surveillance audit not completed within 12 months from the certification decision date.

During suspension:

- certification is temporarily invalid,
- client shall not claim certification as valid,
- mark use shall be stopped or controlled as instructed by WAU.

13. Withdrawal of Certification

Certification may be withdrawn when:

- suspension conditions are not resolved within the allowed period,
- the client no longer operates the certified management system,

- the client requests withdrawal,
- serious misuse, misrepresentation, or loss of confidence exists,
- the client refuses or repeatedly fails to comply with certification requirements.

Upon withdrawal, all claims to valid certification must cease.

14. Restoration of Certification

Certification may be restored after suspension when:

- the causes of suspension are eliminated,
- objective evidence is reviewed and found acceptable,
- special verification audit or review is completed where required,
- WAU is satisfied that confidence can be restored.

15. Expansion or Reduction of Scope

Expansion of Scope

A client may request extension of certification scope. WAU reviews the request and determines whether:

- additional audit activity is needed,
- competence requirements change,
- scope can be expanded.

Reduction of Scope

WAU may reduce scope where:

- parts of certified scope no longer comply,
- activities have ceased,
- client requests scope reduction,
- confidence cannot be maintained across full certified scope.

16. Use of WAU Name and Certification Mark / Logo

Certified clients may use WAU certification mark/logo only in accordance with WAU mark use procedure and subject to the following:

- only while certification is valid,
- only for certified scope,
- not in a misleading manner,
- not on product in a way implying product certification,
- not on primary product packaging or in misleading product conformity claims,
- not after suspension, withdrawal, or expiry.

Misuse may lead to corrective action, suspension, or withdrawal.

17. Requests for Information

WAU handles requests for information through designated communication channels. Public information is made available through website, brochure, email, and other controlled means.

18. Complaints

Anyone may submit a complaint regarding:

- WAU activities,
- WAU personnel,
- certified clients,
- misuse of certification claims,
- certification-related conduct.

WAU acknowledges, reviews, investigates, and responds to complaints in accordance with its complaint procedure. Complaint handling is impartial and documented.

19. Appeals

Applicants or certified clients may submit an appeal against certification-related decisions such as:

- refusal to proceed,
- refusal to grant certification,
- suspension,
- withdrawal,
- scope reduction,
- other certification decisions.

Appeals are handled independently from the persons involved in the original decision.

20. Policy on Impartiality

WAU is committed to safeguarding impartiality in all certification activities.

WAU identifies, analyses, evaluates, treats, monitors, and documents risks to impartiality arising from:

- self-interest,
- self-review,
- familiarity,
- intimidation,
- financial pressure,
- commercial pressure,
- outsourced activities,
- personnel relationships.

Certification decisions are independent of audit performance, sales, or financial interests.

21. Confidentiality

WAU protects confidentiality of all information obtained or created during certification activities except where:

- legally required to disclose,
- authorized by client,
- required by accreditation or regulatory bodies.

22. Contact

WAU shall provide updated contact details for:

- certification enquiries,
- complaints,
- appeals,
- mark use clarification,
- public information requests.