



Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION.....	2
2.REFERENCE.....	2
3.DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	2
4.ELIGIBILITY FOR ACCREDITATION	3
5.ACCREDITATION INFORMATION	4
6.APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION	4
7.ASSESSMENT.....	6
8.TIME PERIOD FOR ASSESSMENT/ACCREDITATION PROCESS	12
9.ACCREDITATION DECISION.....	12
10.ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS	13
11.SURVEILLANCE ASSESSMENT.....	13
12.RE-ASSESSMENT/RE-ACCREDITATION	15
13.EXTENSION/ REDUCTION OF SCOPE	16
14.NON CONFORMITIES AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS	16
15.CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION	17
16.CONDITION FOR ACCREDITATION	18
17.NOTIFICATION TO NABET.....	22
18.GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF FEE.....	22
ANNEXURE A.....	24
ANNEXURE B.....	25
ANNEXURE C.....	26



1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document defines the procedures to be followed by National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (*as per the requirements of ISO/ IEC 17011:2004*) for Conformity Assessment Bodies(CABs), operating for certification of persons (*based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 17024:2012*).
- 1.2. NABET will be accrediting organizations based on the assessment results, which demonstrate competence and are impartial for the services to be rendered for which they have been accredited.
- 1.3. Assessment plays a central part in providing the evidence on which the certificates of accreditation are awarded.

2. Reference

- 2.1. ISO 19011: Guidelines for Auditing Management Systems
- 2.2. ISO17000:Conformity Assessment – Vocabulary and general principles
- 2.3. ISO17011: Conformity Assessment- General Requirements for Accreditation bodies accrediting conformity Assessment bodies
- 2.4. ISO 17024: Conformity Assessment-General Requirements for bodies operating certification of persons.
- 2.5. ISO 9001: ISO 9000: Quality Management System – Fundamentals and vocabulary
- 2.6. ISO 9001: Quality management systems -- Requirements

3. Definitions and Acronyms

3.1. Definitions

- 3.1.1. Accreditation -Third party attestation related to conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment task
- 3.1.2. Accreditation Body- Authoritative body that performs accreditation
- 3.1.3. Accreditation Body Logo-Logo used by the NABET to identify itself
- 3.1.4. Accreditation Certificate- Formal document or a set of documents, stating that accreditation has been granted for the defined scope
- 3.1.5. Appeal- Request by a CAB for reconsideration of any adverse decision made by the accreditation body related to its desired accreditation status
- 3.1.6. Assessment- Process undertaken by an accreditation body to assess the competence of CAB, based on particular standard(s) and/or other normative documents and for a defined scope of accreditation
- 3.1.7. Assessor- A person assigned by the accreditation body to perform, alone or as part of an assessment team, an assessment of a CAB
- 3.1.8. Certification scheme - Competence and other requirements related to specific occupational or skilled categories of persons
- 3.1.9. Complaint - Expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by any person or organization, to an accreditation body, relating to the activities of that accreditation body or of an accredited CAB, where response is expected
- 3.1.10. Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)/Assessment Body- Body that performs conformity assessment services and that can be the object of accreditation
- 3.1.11. Consultancy- Participation in any of the activities of CAB subject to accreditation



- 3.1.12. Expert- Person assigned by an accreditation body to provide specific knowledge or expertise with respect to the scope of accreditation to be assessed
- 3.1.13. Extension Of Scope-Process of enlarging the scope of accreditation
- 3.1.14. ISO/IEC 17011:2004 Conformity assessment-General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies
- 3.1.15. ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Conformity assessment-General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons
- 3.1.16. Interested Parties- Parties with direct or indirect interest in accreditation
- 3.1.17. Lead Assessor- Assessor who is given the overall responsibility for specified assessment activities
- 3.1.18. NABET Accreditation Symbol/Accreditation Symbol- Symbol issued by NABET to be used by accredited CABs to indicate their accredited status
- 3.1.19. PACIFIC ACCREDITATION COOPERATION (PAC) - The Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC) is an association of accreditation bodies and other interested parties whose objective is to facilitate trade and commerce among economies in the Asia Pacific region
- 3.1.20. Reducing Accreditation- Process of cancelling accreditation for part of the scope of accreditation
- 3.1.21. Scope Of Accreditation- Specific conformity assessment services for which accreditation is sought or has been granted
- 3.1.22. Surveillance- Set of activities, except reassessment, to monitor the continued fulfilment by accredited CABs of requirements for accreditation
- 3.1.23. Suspending Accreditation- Process of temporarily making accreditation invalid, in full or for part of the scope of accreditation
- 3.1.24. Withdrawing Accreditation-Process of cancelling accreditation in full
- 3.1.25. Witnessing- Observation of the CAB carrying out conformity assessment services within its scope of accreditation

3.2. Acronyms

- 3.2.1. IAF- International Accreditation Forum (IAF)
- 3.2.2. IEC- International Electro-technical Commission
- 3.2.3. ISO- International Organization for Standardization
- 3.2.4. NABET- National Accreditation Board for Education and Training
- 3.2.5. QCI- Quality Council of India

4. Eligibility for Accreditation

- 4.1. NABET shall provide accreditation services to Conformity Assessment Bodies(CABs) in India /other nations which meet the following eligibility criteria:
 - 4.1.1. The Conformity Assessment Body shall be a Legal entity or a defined part of legal entity, such that it can be held legally responsible for its certification activities. Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) which are part of government, or are government departments will be deemed to be legal entities on the basis of their governmental status. Such bodies' status and structure shall be formally documented and the bodies shall comply with all the requirements of ISO/IEC 17024.
 - 4.1.2. The applicant CAB shall have completed at least one full assessment cycle including the certification decision making process. This is necessary to assess

- the ability of CAB to carry out the certification process as per the documented system.
- 4.1.3. The applicant CAB should have carried out minimum one internal audit against the applicable scheme of accreditation and one management review for the documented quality system prepared as per ISO/IEC 17024.
 - 4.1.4. All the other requirements for the accreditation of CAB must comply with the requirements specified in ISO/IEC17024:2012, "General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons".
 - 4.1.5. Any exception regarding legal status would be made only on a specific decision of NABET keeping in view the legal provisions in the economy in which the assessment body is established as a legal entity.
 - 4.1.6. Locations outside India would be included in the accreditation process depending upon the nature of activities carried out in those locations.
 - 4.1.7. NABET shall reserve the right to take the assistance of local IAF/PAC members for assessments at foreign locations. The fee for such assessments shall depend on the fee structure of the local accreditation body. The applicant assessment body shall have the normal right to appeal against a specific assessor for reasons of conflict of interest. If the assessment body does not prefer to involve such local accreditation body, then the reasons for the same should be clearly indicated in writing. NABET reserves the right to share such information with the concerned accreditation body / IAF or PAC.
 - 4.1.8. NABET shall follow IAF/PAC requirements/resolutions eg. IAF MD 7, IAF MD 12 etc. where ever applicable.

5. Accreditation Information

- 5.1. NABET shall make publically available and update at adequate intervals, the following:
 - a) Detailed information about NABET accreditation process, including arrangements for granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing accreditation
 - b) Eligibility criteria
 - c) General information about fees relating to the accreditation
 - d) Information of Accredited CABs
 - e) Description of the rights and obligations of CABs
 - f) Information on procedures for lodging and handling complaints and appeals
 - g) Information about the authority under which the accreditation program operates
 - h) Description of its rights and duties of NABET
 - i) General information about the means by which NABET obtain financial support
 - j) Information about NABET activities and stated limitations under which NABET operates
 - k) Information about the related bodies of NABET.

6. Application for Accreditation

- 6.1. Conformity Assessment Body willing to be accredited must first complete the NABET Application for Accreditation (NABET:SCD:FR:01). NABET Secretariat will check for the completeness of application. The Secretariat will inform the CAB with respect to the following –



- a) Acceptance of application or if applicable, rejection of application with the reasons for rejection
 - b) Provide further information and advice to the Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) if required and/or;
 - c) If required an additional information may be sought from the CAB in support of the application.
- 6.2. Application form should be complete in all respects. An incomplete Application form would result in delay of processing of application. The complete application form for accreditation has to be duly signed by the authorized representative/s of the Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) seeking accreditation and forward it to NABET along with the application fee.
- 6.3. NABET reserves the right to seek information on the antecedents of the owners / those managing certification activities before deciding to accept the application for further processing. Adverse decision of NABET would be communicated with reasons for rejecting the application. The applicant can appeal against such decision. The application fee is nonrefundable except when the application is rejected by NABET. Normally the acknowledgement of the application would be communicated within 15 working days after the receipt of application for accreditation.
- 6.4. The application form should include the following documents/information:
- a) General information about the applicant CAB like name, addresses, legal status, human & technical resources and corporate entity.
 - b) Copy of document demonstrating legal status
 - c) Human and technical resources
 - d) General information concerning CAB such as its activity, its relationship in larger corporate entity if any, address of all the physical location(s) to be covered in scope of accreditation
 - e) Clearly defined, requested scope of accreditation
 - f) Description of the conformity assessment services that CAB undertakes
 - g) List of standards, methods and procedures for which the CAB seeks accreditation, including limits of capability where ever applicable
 - h) Quality Manual QM-including all documents relating to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17024 and certification programs
 - i) Master list (s) of all quality documents (including version and / or expiration date)
 - j) Organization structure of the CAB
 - k) Sample - Certificate / copy of original certificate for each certification program
 - l) List of approved examiners/technical experts classified by skills and certification programs
 - m) List of certified persons
 - n) An agreement to fulfil the requirements for accreditation and other obligations of CAB, as described in clause 8.1 in ISO/IEC 17011.
- 6.5. NABET shall review for adequacy of the information supplied by the CAB.
- 6.6. The application is reviewed by the NABET secretariat for completeness, clarity of accreditation requirements and the capability of NABET to provide the services. Any mismatch is clarified and the outcome of the review is communicated to the applicant regarding acceptance of the application for further processing, or to complete any further requirements identified during the review.



- 6.7. As a general rule, an application for accreditation shall remain valid for one year. Some flexibility may be permitted on this policy, provided the application is being processed in a manner acceptable to NABET Secretariat.

7. Assessment

- 7.1. The assessment shall be for competence of the CAB, operating a certification system as per ISO 17024.

7.2. Preparation for the Assessment

- 7.2.1. The NABET Secretariat prepares a assessment program as mentioned below:

- a) Assessment of the documents
- b) Assessment of Central office, regional office or other offices
- c) Witness assessment of test/examination/assessment conducted by the applicant body, will be based on the scope of the accreditation applied for, the sites to be covered and the scale of the operation of the conformity assessment body.

- 7.2.2. The assessment program shall be prepared in stages depending on the information supplied by assessment body. The draft assessment program shall be discussed with authorized personnel of the CAB to ensure an effective assessment programme at each stage.

- 7.2.3. A preliminary visit may be conducted with the agreement of the CAB. The visit may result in identification of deficiencies in the system of the applicant CAB or its competencies. In any case no specific solutions shall be provided to CAB regarding deficiencies identified during assessment. The fee for the assessment will be charged according to the scope applied and prevailing fee structure.

- 7.2.4. The Assessment Body has to provide 3 months schedule of the test/examination/assessment being planned. NABET will plan the assessment of regional offices & other offices and witness of test/examination/assessment location at its own discretion.

- 7.2.5. NABET shall communicate the date and schedule for the assessment to CAB. If the body raises any objection against the schedule, NABET will evaluate the objection, if any, and decide whether to change the date of assessment.

7.3. Appointment of the Assessment Team

- 7.3.1. The assessment team, consisting of a lead assessor and the assessors or lead assessor alone, is identified by NABET from the pool of assessors and experts.

- 7.3.2. NABET shall ensure that the assessment team is provided with appropriate criteria documents, previous assessment records and relevant documents and records of the CAB whose assessment is being conducted.

- 7.3.3. The names of the members of NABET assessment team, shall be communicated to the CAB giving them a time of 5 Days to raise any objection. Any objection by the applicant body against any of the team members must be accompanied in writing with adequate grounds for the objection. NABET will evaluate the objection and decide whether to change the team member or to overrule the objection raised by the applicant body.

- 7.3.4. The decision of NABET on the number of assessors for the assessment shall be final.

- 7.3.5. The assessment team shall inform NABET, prior to the assessment, about any existing, former or envisaged link or conflict of interest between themselves or



their organization and the CAB to be assessed. The assessment team will be asked to commit that they do not have direct/ indirect relation with the applicant body or competitive position between themselves or their organization and the Assessment Body to be assessed that can affect the objectivity of the assessment. The assessment team is then formally constituted and appointed.

- 7.3.6. Efforts are made to ensure that the team is kept intact throughout the initial assessment process. If there is any change in the composition of the team members, the same shall be communicated to the conformity assessment body for their acceptance.
- 7.3.7. The assessment team is required to maintain confidentiality of the all the information about the operation of the applicant/accredited body obtained as part of the assessment process.
- 7.3.8. NABET may depute observer/trainees for learning of assessment process, in consent with CAB.
- 7.3.9. NABET may depute peer reviewer(s) to monitor the performance of assessment team after approval from CAB

7.4. Assessment Process

- 7.4.1. The initial assessment shall be carried out in three stages as per the assessment programme. Coverage of scope sought for accreditation, shall be ensured during initial assessment process.

Stage I: Document Assessment

Stage II: Office Assessment of the CAB

Stage III: Witness Assessment of CAB

7.4.2. Stage I: Document Assessment

- 7.4.2.1. NABET shall evaluate the document system including (but not limited to):
 - a) Document related to legal status
 - b) Accounts statements of last year
 - c) Previous Internal audit reports
 - d) Quality Manual in accordance with ISO 17024
 - e) Management review related to internal audits
 - f) Documents related to certification scheme
 - g) The criteria for selecting assessors/examiners/technical experts, procedures for assessing their performance and a current list of assessors/examiners/technical experts
 - h) Testing administration documents including policies for admission of participants, registration forms, fee schedules, and promotional material
 - i) Details of human and technical resources
 - j) Assessment method, standard and procedure for which CAB has seek accreditation
 - k) Any other document as an evidence required to establish implementation of ISO/IEC 17024.



- 7.4.2.2. After evaluation, NABET will inform the CAB in writing of all the findings including non-conformities. The conformity assessment body shall be required to close all non-conformities before the next stage of assessment.

7.4.3. Stage II: Office Assessment

- 7.4.3.1. Following the review and acceptance of the document assessment report NABET shall undertake one full assessment of the central office of assessment body and regional offices & other offices. On-site office assessment duration will be decided by NABET based on the scope of accreditation. Generally, the number of regional offices & other offices, included in the assessment would be \sqrt{x} where, x stands for the the total number of regional offices & other offices. However, all the key locations shall be covered during initial assessment.

- 7.4.3.2. The Assessment Team follows following steps

a) Opening Meeting:

The Lead assessor conducts the opening meeting and would cover the following agenda as a minimum –

- i. Introduction of the assessment team members and auditee
- ii. Objective, Criteria and Scope of the assessment
- iii. Provide a short summary of the assessment process
- iv. Establish the official communication links between the assessment team and the auditee
- v. Confirm that the resources and facilities needed by the assessment team are available
- vi. Confirm the date and time of the closing meeting and any interim meeting planned
- vii. Clarify any doubts about the assessment plan.

b) Assessment:

- i. The Assessment is carried out by the team members individually/jointly as per assessment plan. The checklists are used where applicable. The assessment is done in accordance with Guidelines of ISO 19011 and criteria of accreditation as per ISO/IEC 17024.
- ii. During the assessment or on demand (at any time), the applicant body shall provide complete access to the documents that pertain to the certification process and the scope applied for. Access shall also to be provided to the records of the complaints, appeals and disputes along with corrective action and the method of verifying the effectiveness of the corrective actions.



- iii. The non-conformities observed during the office assessment shall be explained to the applicant body and given in NABET designated format for corrections and corrective action at the closing meeting of the assessment.
- iv. The lead assessor shall send a report to NABET after the assessment and closure of non-conformities.

c) Interim Meetings:

The lead assessor may decide to have interim meetings between the assessors and also between the assessment team and the auditee.

d) Closing Meeting:

The closing meeting will be chaired by the Lead Assessor of the team. The objective of the closing meeting is to:

- i. Present the findings of the assessment, non-conformities in designed format for corrective action and conclusions to the CAB's management. Assessment team shall ensure that CAB clearly understands the result of the assessment and the perceived significance of the findings on the quality of the certification system being operated by the applicant body.
- ii. The Lead Assessor will also communicate the CAB of any situations encountered during the assessment that may decrease the reliance that can be placed on the assessment conclusions.
- iii. An opportunity shall be provided, for the CAB to ask questions about the findings, including nonconformities, if any and their basis.
- iv. The report shall contain the following information (but not limited to):
 - 1. Details of requirements fulfilled, competence and or re commendation (if any)
 - 2. Details on the, major non-conformities (if any), minor non-conformities (if any)
 - 3. Evidence for identified nonconformities
 - 4. Additional document(s)/data reviewed onsite
 - 5. The team may obtain any further clarification from the applicant as they may deem necessary for the finalization of the report.
- v. The assessment body is required to close all non- conformities before the next stage of assessment.

7.4.3.3. All types of non-conformities need to be closed within 120 days. Any deviation from it will result in reinitiating the whole assessment of that particular stage. The fee for the same shall be charged as per the fee structure.

7.4.4. Stage III: Witness Assessment



- 7.4.4.1. NABET shall conduct witness assessment of Assessment Body which will involve witnessing of test/assessment/examination conducted by CAB at different locations.
- 7.4.4.2. In case the Assessment Body has multiple locations, then witness assessment of test/examination/assessment will be conducted by NABET. The choice of location to witness the examination process will be at the discretion of NABET.

NOTE-Key locations are those, where key activities are performed. Key activities include-policy formulation, process and/or procedure development and, as appropriate, contract review, planning conformity assessments, review, approval and decision on the results of conformity assessments.

- 7.4.4.3. NABET shall evaluate all aspects of the conduct of Assessment for conformance to the NABET accredited scheme / based on ISO 17024 requirements.
- 7.4.4.4. The Assessment Body shall be informed of the findings and non-conformities if any in the closing meeting by NABET assessor. However the final report and the recommendation will be sent after the decision of NABET.
- 7.4.4.5. In case any corrective action is required, the Assessment Body shall make the necessary corrections & corrective actions, and submit the appropriate documentation within a defined time schedule.
- 7.4.4.6. An additional full or partial evaluation may be done by NABET to verify the compliance of corrections.

NOTE 1: Stage II and Stage III assessments may include interviews of staff including full time and/ or empaneled Assessors. During interview, relevant documents evidences of educational qualification and experiences are to be provided.

NOTE 2: Central office shall be assessed in each assessment i.e. Initial assessment, surveillance assessment and special assessment.

7.4.5. Assessment Report

- 7.4.5.1. After completion of various stages of assessments, the lead assessor shall prepare a report of respective stage.
- 7.4.5.2. The assessment report shall be covering the following parts:
 - a) The non-conformities observed during various stages of the assessment and actions taken by the assessment body on the non-conformities
 - b) A report indicating the level of conformity of the assessment body's management system and competencies against the NABET accreditation requirements
 - c) Recommendations of the NABET assessment team.



- 7.4.5.3. Wherever the assessment team cannot reach a conclusion about the finding, the team should refer back to NABET for clarification.
- 7.4.5.4. The NABET Secretariat shall review the report at each stage of assessment to ensure that the laid down criteria are addressed correctly and shall make changes in recommendations as needed based on the NABET accreditation scheme. Any revised report shall be sent to the applicant body along with reasons for any change.
- 7.4.5.5. In case the report sent to the applicant body contains any difference from the information presented to the applicant body by the assessment team at the closing meeting (of each stage of assessment), the same is highlighted and the explanation of the differences shall be enclosed.
- 7.4.5.6. The report at each stage of assessment shall be sent by the NABET secretariat within 30 working days to the applicant assessment body for their agreement. If no comments are received within a week then the report is considered to be acceptable to the assessment body and is deemed as final. The NABET shall try to resolve any comments received on the report within a period of 15 working days and shall submit the report at the end of this period along with any unresolved comments from the conformity assessment body. NABET Secretariat would coordinate, as needed.
- 7.4.5.7. NABET shall ensure that the response of the CAB to resolve non-conformities are reviewed to see if the actions appear to be sufficient and effective. If the CAB responses are found not to be sufficient, further information shall be requested. Additionally, evidence of effective implementation of actions taken may be requested, or a follow-up assessment may be carried out to verify effective implementation of corrective actions.
- 7.4.5.8. After verifying the documents and records submitted by the applicant body on all the non-conformities that have been closed by the applicant the lead assessor shall prepare the final report of the assessment including the details on the corrective actions taken by the applicant body and shall include the recommendation of the team. The report shall be verified for completeness by NABET with respect to guidelines on the subject and shall be presented to the accreditation committee for its decision on the applicant getting accreditation.
- 7.4.5.9. At any stage of the assessment process, if there is a need for a full or partial assessment or a written declaration of compliance in response to the non-conformities observed, the same shall be communicated to the applicant body by NABET obtaining the relevant supportive facts relating to assessment from the lead assessor of the assessment team.
- 7.4.5.10. The final report for the accreditation committee shall contain the following information, as minimum:



- a) Unique identification of the CAB
- b) Date(s) of the on-site assessment
- c) Name(s) of the assessor(s) and /or expert involved in the assessment
- d) Unique identification of all premises assessed
- e) Proposed scope of accreditation that was assessed
- f) The assessment report
- g) A statement on the adequacy of the internal organization structure and procedures adopted by the CAB to give confidence in its competence, as determined through its fulfilment of the requirements for accreditation
- h) Information on the resolution of all nonconformities
- i) Any other information that may assist in determining fulfillment of requirements and the competence of CAB
- j) Where appropriate, a recommendation as to grant, maintain, suspend, withdrawal, reduce or extend accreditation.

8. Time Period for Assessment/Accreditation Process

- 8.1. In the event, the assessment process is not completed within twelve months, due to delays / deficiencies on the part of the applicant, an extension of 6 months may be given depending on the results of past assessments. Applications pending over 2 years shall be reviewed by NABET for appropriate action including closure.
- 8.2. In the event of delay in getting witness of test/examination/assessment scheduled for different scopes that the applicant has applied for, the applicant shall apply in writing to NABET for partial assessment of available scopes. NABET shall have the right to accede to that request or differ. Grant of accreditation for part of the scopes shall be done after all the non-conformities observed during the earlier office assessment and part of the witness of stage III assessments have been completed and have been closed as per the laid down criteria of NABET.
- 8.3. After completion of stage III of assessment, the final report shall be presented to accreditation committee within 45 working days.

9. Accreditation Decision

- 9.1. The Accreditation Committee is responsible for taking decision on granting, maintaining, suspending, reducing, withdrawing or extending of Accreditation. NABET shall ensure that the members of the Accreditation Committee are not involved in the assessment and also have had no relationship for the last two years with the applicant body under consideration that can influence their decision on accreditation.
- 9.2. In case of any existing involvement within last two years, the member of the Accreditation Committee will abstain from all decision making process of the concerned application.



- 9.3. The reports are forwarded to the accreditation committee for the decision on accreditation only after receipt of the fee for the activities associated with the assessment process till date.
- 9.4. Where NABET uses the results of an assessment already performed by another accreditation body, NABET shall ensure that the accreditation body was operating in accordance with the requirements of ISO 17011.
- 9.5. Accreditation committee shall work on the principle of “unanimous decision”. The decision shall not be put on vote .The Head/Chairman of the Committee shall be responsible for coordinating and addressing the issues raised by the members. The Head of the committee shall have the right to call for any other assessor / experts / staff for clarifying any of the issue that is under discussion. The persons so called for clarification shall not take part in the decision of the accreditation.
- 9.6. The decisions of the accreditation committee shall be based on the assessment report.
- 9.7. Decision making shall not be outsourced in any case.

10. Accreditation Documents

- 10.1. The accreditation certificate in the standard template shall include the following:
 - a) NABET accreditation symbol
 - b) Name of the CAB
 - c) Address of the premises of the conformity assessment body from where key activities are performed
 - d) Accreditation number
 - e) Brief indication of, or reference to ,the scope of accreditation
 - f) Effective date of grant of accreditation and the date of expiry of the certificate
 - g) A statement of conformity and reference to the standard(s) or other normative document(s), including issue or revision used for assessment of the CAB.
- 10.2. May also include the following:
 - a) Type of certification
 - b) Personnel categories, where relevant.
- 10.3. The initial accreditation certificate shall be valid for three years and the date of issue and validity is indicated on the certificate.

11. Surveillance Assessment

- 11.1. To ensure that each of the CAB accredited by NABET continues to comply with the accreditation requirements, NABET shall conduct two annual surveillance assessments prior to reaccreditation/reassessment.
- 11.2. Three months prior to the annual surveillance, NABET secretariat shall send a communication to the assessment body regarding the due date.
- 11.3. The first surveillance shall be conducted within 12 months from the date of initial accreditation. However, for the subsequent surveillance the accredited assessment body, for valid reasons may seek a postponement of the assessment for maximum of 3 months. For deferring the surveillance, the assessment body shall give written justification and shall contain the consent of NABET.



- 11.4. In case additional surveillance visit is required the cost shall be borne by the accredited assessment body.
- 11.5. NABET reserves the right to carry out more frequent or longer surveillance as necessary in case of complaints/concerns against the delivery or administration of the certification process. Cost for the same shall be borne by the assessment body.
- 11.6. NABET may conduct surprise assessment, in case of any adverse feedback from stakeholders for which the stipulated assessment fee, including boarding and lodging charges shall be borne by the assessment body.
- 11.7. The surveillance assessment shall be consistent with the initial assessment, normally with lesser duration and it includes assessment of central office and regional office & other offices, locations performing key activities, including foreign locations and witness of test/examination/assessment at different locations of the accredited body.
- 11.8. Central office shall be covered in each surveillance, random sampling shall be done for regional offices & other offices. Generally, the number of regional offices & other offices, included in the surveillance would be the $0.6\sqrt{X}$ where, x stands for the total number of regional office & other offices. The selection of location for witness assessment of test/examination/assessment will be at the discretion of NABET. All the key locations shall be covered within the period of accreditation cycle.
- 11.9. The witness assessment of test/examination/assessment at different locations shall be based on certification resources available with the CAB, number of accredited certificates issued, spread of locations, the extent of control demonstrated by the conformity assessment body and findings of the central office assessment.
- 11.10. In the event of any major non-conformity that can affect the accreditation process, NABET shall inform the accredited CAB and shall call for a time bound corrective action plan. The decision for an additional surveillance visit to verify the implementation of the corrective action plan as committed by the accredited body shall be taken by NABET in consultation with the lead assessor of the assessment team. Such decision shall be binding on the accredited CAB. The cost of the additional visit shall be borne by the accredited assessment body. In the event accredited CAB has not shown evidence of completion of the corrective action agreed as per committed time period, NABET shall prepare a status report and submit it along with the assessment report to the accreditation committee for further decision on suspension or reduction or withdrawal of accreditation.
- 11.11. The surveillance assessment reports shall be presented to the accreditation committee for consideration and decision regarding maintenance or suspension (partial full) of accreditation of the accredited body.
- 11.12. The frequency of surveillance assessments shall be increased based on the type and nature of non-conformities observed, complaints received, market feedback etc. The accredited CAB shall be informed of the reasons for any change in the frequency.

11.13. Other Surveillance Activities



- 11.13.1. CAB has to give information on new certificates issued on a monthly basis to NABET. NABET may decide to seek assessment records on a random basis. The NABET Secretariat would review the reports and seek any clarification. If a clear deviation from the requirement of the standard is established then such findings would be raised as non-conformities requiring the accredited CAB to respond.
- 11.13.2. Based on concerns noticed during the assessment process / market feedback / complaints, NABET may decide to arrange visits to accredited assessment body or meet the certified persons. CABs shall be informed of any such validation visits and may join the NABET assessor on such visits if required. CABs would be informed of the duration of such visits and the information planned to be collected. Accredited assessment body would bear the cost related to such validation visits.

12. Re-assessment/Re-accreditation

- 12.1. Six months prior to completion of the accreditation term, the accredited assessment body shall be informed about the reassessment process and the relevant application format shall be forwarded to them.
- 12.2. NABET shall carry out re-assessment before the expiry of the current certificate. NABET shall carry reassessment just like initial assessment.
- 12.3. The CAB shall submit the renewal application along with prescribed fee at least three months in advance of the expiry of the current accreditation period.
- 12.4. In the event of any major non-conformity, NABET shall inform the accredited CAB and shall call for a time bound corrective action plan. The decision for an additional visit to verify the implementation of the corrective action plan as committed by the accredited body shall be taken by NABET in consultation with the lead assessor of the assessment team. Such decision shall be binding on the accredited CAB.
- 12.5. When all the non-conformities are closed the report will be presented to accreditation committee.
- 12.6. Renewal shall be based on the assessment of performance during the previous validity period and report of renewal assessment. Any complaints received during the period shall be duly considered.
- 12.7. If the decision of the accreditation committee is to continue the accreditation, a fresh set of accreditation documents shall be issued to the accredited assessment body.
- 12.8. The renewal shall be for a period of 3 years subject to satisfactory operation of accredited certification scheme of the body and reasonable number of NABET accredited certificates being issued by the assessment body.
- 12.9. If the decision of the accreditation committee is not favorable, it shall be communicated to the accredited assessment body and the accreditation shall be suspended for initiating the appropriate actions including any corrective action. NABET reserves the



right to withdraw accreditation without suspension based on the decision of the accreditation committee.

- 12.10. All reassessment activities shall be completed prior to the expiry of accreditation. In case there is a delay in decision-making, the accreditation shall continue, if the report of the assessment team is satisfactory. The decision of the accreditation committee shall be binding on the accredited CAB.

13. Extension/ Reduction of Scope

13.1. Extension of Scope

- 13.1.1. It is process of enlarging the scope. This process may cover, inclusion of new certification scheme along with the already accredited schemes.
- 13.1.2. The extension of the scope shall be carried out as part of the surveillance visit by increasing the number of assessor days necessary. Alternatively NABET or the applicant may ask for an additional assessment as deemed necessary.
- 13.1.3. Such extension visit shall be charged as per prevailing fee structure. The invoice for such visit shall be sent to the assessment body. Further action shall be initiated only on timely payment of fee for the extension visit .The procedure followed for the assessment and decision for extension of the scope is similar to the initial assessment as described in clause 7.

13.2. Reduction of Scope

- 13.2.1. The reduction of the scope is a process of cancelling accreditation for the part of scope accredited.
- 13.2.2. NABET shall take decision to reduce the scope of accreditation of CAB to exclude those parts where CAB has persistently failed to meet the requirements of accreditation including competencies.
- 13.2.3. CAB may also ask for reduction of its scope of accreditation.
- 13.3. The accredited body shall submit an application for extension/reduction of scope.
- 13.4. The requirement for extension and reduction of scope shall be submitted to the accreditation committee for taking final decision on the same.

14. Non Conformities and Corrective Actions

14.1. The Non Conformities observed shall be classified in two categories –

14.1.1. Major-

- a) Failure to address any clause of the standard or any element of assessment criteria
- b) Systemic failure to comply with a requirement
- c) Similar minor nonconformities across the processes
- d) If closure actions of minor non-conformities are not found effective within defined time frame.

14.1.2. Minor

- a) Isolated non-systemic deficiencies or implementation deviations which has no significant impact on the competence of CAB.



NOTE: Multiple Minor NCs with related impact on the assessment system shall result in a Major non-conformity based on the judgment of the assessment team.

- 14.2. Minor non-conformities can be closed on the basis of documentary evidences.
- 14.3. The time for corrective action shall be reckoned from the day the non-conformities are handed over to the assessment body.
- 14.4. Non-conformities of major nature may call for a follow-up visit either to central office/regional office or/and test centers as per recommendation of the assessment team. Such assessment visit shall be charged as per prevailing fee structure. Further steps would be taken only after the CAB settles any invoice raised for the assessment.
- 14.5. In case of minor non-conformities a declaration in respect of completion of the corrective action by the authorized person of the assessment body may be accepted.
- 14.6. During surveillance, if it is found that the minor non-conformity is not effectively addressed, the non-conformity shall be converted into major non-conformity and shall have to be treated as per the criteria laid down for major non conformity.
- 14.7. The assessment team may also identify opportunities for improvement and convey the same to the assessment body and include in the final report.
- 14.8. All the non-conformities need to be closed within 120 days. If not closed, assessment of that particular stage will be reinitiated. The extra cost shall be borne by the CAB.

15. Criteria for Accreditation

15.1. Adoption of Criteria

- 15.1.1. The NABET Board shall release the accreditation scheme and NABET shall adopt and document the accreditation scheme for assessment bodies based on international standard (ISO/IEC 17024 and ISO/IEC 17011) .
- 15.1.2. Definitions of various terms related to conformity assessment shall be as given in ISO9000, ISO 17000 and ISO 17011 and ISO 17024.
- 15.1.3. International standards which have been referred in NABET accreditation criteria shall not be provided to CAB. In case of need, the assessment bodies are to procure such documents from the National Standards Body, Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or through other authentic sources.

15.2. Amendment to the Criteria

- 15.2.1. The amendment to the criteria shall be based on the nature of change required. The accreditation criteria and the guidance documents shall be taken up for amendment based on following conditions individually or severally.
 - a) Any change in the International standards and guidelines
 - b) Significant feedback from the Peer Review assessment team that warrants amendment
 - c) Critical feedback on the implementation of the criteria



- d) Any other reason as deemed fit by the NABET Board or the Technical Committee.
- 15.2.2. The NABET Board shall approve the amended accreditation scheme after completion of any one or more of the following processes
- a) Seek the advice of the Technical Committee
 - b) A representation of assessment bodies before approval of the amendment
 - c) Seek public comments on the proposed changes through the Members of NABET Board and other representative bodies as NABET Board may deem fit.

15.3. Communication of changes to the criteria

- 15.3.1. Any change in the criteria shall be notified to the accredited / applicant CAB by registered post / courier/ email or other means and a suitable time frame shall be given for implementing the modified criteria.
- 15.3.2. Any transition policy announced by IAF would be adopted by NABET and communicated to the Conformity Assessment Bodies.
- 15.3.3. The accredited assessment bodies shall communicate their objection, if any, in writing by registered post / courier / email or other means within 30 days of the receipt of the amended scheme.
- 15.3.4. If the communication is not received within 30 days, it will be presumed that the accredited CAB is willing to adopt the changed scheme.
- 15.3.5. The implementation of the changed scheme shall be verified during the surveillance assessment of each assessment body.
- 15.3.6. In the event of any major change in the scheme, NABET reserves the right to carry out an additional assessment and the fee of such assessment visit shall be borne by assessment body and is required to be paid in advance.
- 15.3.7. In the event that an accredited CAB is not willing to adopt the changed scheme it is allowed to opt out of the accreditation scheme and the accreditation is withdrawn with effect from the date of the implementation of revised criteria.

15.4. Accreditation Criteria for ISO 17024 scheme includes-

- a) NABET:SCD:PR:01-Procedure for Accreditation
- b) NABET:SCD:PR:02-Procedure for Obligations of Conformity Assessment Bodies
- c) NABET:SCD:PR:03-Procedure for Complaints, Appeals and Disputes
- d) NABET:SCD:PR:04-Procedure for Reference to Accreditation and use of Accreditation Symbol
- e) NABET:SCD:PR:05-Procedure for Suspension and Withdrawal of Accreditation

16. Condition for Accreditation

16.1. Granting of Accreditation

- 16.1.1. The accreditation is granted to an applicant on completion of assessment as per the provisions of Clause 7 of this procedure and information provided in assessment report, along with the following conditions-



- a) The applicant has the formal certification system (activities including subcontracting the assessment process, assessment/examination/test planning and conduct of assessment/test/examination, decision making) in operation.
- b) The applicant meets the criteria of accreditation and all non-conformities found against the criteria of accreditation during assessment have been closed to the satisfaction of NABET in accordance with the guidelines on the subject.
- c) There are no adverse reports / information / complaints with NABET about the applicant regarding the quality and effectiveness of implementation of certification system as per the criteria of NABET.
- d) The certified persons of the applicant body are generally satisfied by the conduct of the applicant assessment body and its certification system. NABET may request feedback from selected clients of the conformity assessment body / publicize receipt of application and seek a feedback from stakeholders.
- e) The applicant body has paid all the outstanding dues.
- f) The Initial accreditation shall be for a period of 3 years. Subsequent renewals are for a period of 3 years subject to satisfactory operation of accredited certification scheme and reasonable number of NABET accredited certificates being issued by the CAB.

NOTE: If any adverse feedback being received by NABET the CAB shall be given an appropriate opportunity to explain its position in writing to NABET with respect to its position. CAB will also be given sufficient opportunity to explain its position in front of NABET Accreditation/ Technical Committee as the case may be. The final decision with respect to grant of accreditation will be taken on the basis of facts and results of such presentation.

- 16.1.2. NABET on regular basis will publish in its newsletter/ website with regard to grant of new accreditation, for information and feedback from the industry/ other stakeholders.

16.2. Maintaining of Accreditation

- 16.2.1. CAB shall have to comply with the following conditions for maintaining their accreditation for next 3 years:
 - a) The Accredited Assessment Bodies continues to meet the accreditation criteria and ensuring that annual surveillance assessments are conducted by NABET
 - b) All non –conformances raised during the surveillance assessment have been closed to the satisfaction of NABET
 - c) NABET does not have any adverse reports/ information or valid complaints with respect to implementation of certification system of assessment body as laid down by NABET
 - d) Persons certified by CAB are generally satisfied with the services being rendered by them
 - e) The CAB has cleared all pending dues.

16.3. Suspension of Accreditation (Partial or Full)

- 16.3.1. NABET may suspend accreditation of assessment body fully or for the part of scope of accreditation based on the following requirements:



- a) Noncompliance or violation of the NABET criteria
 - b) Non-conduct of annual surveillance
 - c) Providing insufficient or incorrect information to NABET
 - d) Improper use of NABET accreditation symbol
 - e) If a Conformity Assessment Body has failed to take effective corrective action in response to the non-conformities observed during surveillance assessment or re-assessment within defined time frame
 - f) Any major change has taken place in the legal status, ownership, impartiality etc.
 - g) Any willful misleading declaration in the application for accreditation
 - h) Willful non-compliance to the accreditation agreement
 - i) Evidence of lack of control over the certification process/ willful by-passing of certification procedure
 - j) Excessive and or serious complaints against the certification system of CAB
 - k) Evidence of unethical certification practices including providing incorrect information to NABET, faking of certification records
 - l) Non availability of resources in some of the technical areas covered under accreditation
 - m) Nonpayment of fees
 - n) At the request of CAB
 - o) Any other condition deemed appropriate by NABET.
- 16.3.2. A notice citing reasons and intention to suspend shall be sent to the CAB inviting response within 15 days.
- 16.3.3. The accredited assessment body shall be given an opportunity to explain its position in writing to NABET and present its case in person to the accreditation committee. The final decision shall be taken in respect of Suspension of Accreditation (Partial or full) on the basis or facts and the results of such presentation.
- 16.3.4. Notwithstanding the above provision for a representation by the CAB, the accreditation committee may decide to suspend accreditation if there is sufficient evidence of willful misrepresentation of facts or willful noncompliance to accreditation criteria. The period of suspension shall be formally communicated.
- 16.3.5. The fact that the accreditation of assessment body has been suspended (partially or full); would be published in newsletters / website for information and feedback from the industry / other stakeholders may be sought.
- 16.3.6. The period of suspension shall not be more than six months. NABET shall have the right to withdraw the accreditation if the accredited assessment body does not take suitable corrective action to the satisfaction of NABET and its assessment team within six months.
- 16.3.7. In the event of part / full suspension of the accreditation, the accredited conformity assessment body shall be informed and shall be barred from issuing accredited certificates/ using of accreditation symbol for the scopes for which the accreditation has been suspended.
- 16.3.8. For revoking suspension, the accredited assessment body shall formally apply to NABET. The suspension shall be revoked after an assessment has been carried out to verify that the corrective action has been implemented and is

effective in eliminating the reasons for suspension. Fee of this assessment shall be borne by CAB.

16.4. Withdrawal of Accreditation

- 16.4.1. The assessment body shall be subject to withdrawal of accreditation based on the following conditions individually or severally:
- a) If an accredited body willfully relinquishes its accredited status
 - b) If the non-conformities are not appropriately addressed in spite of suspension for a period not more than six months
 - c) If no action is taken by the accredited body in response to the suspension on any other grounds
 - d) Complaints are received about the assessment process / CAB and established to be based on facts
 - e) Filing of any voluntary or involuntary petition of bankruptcy
 - f) Liquidation of business or organization
 - g) Non-compliance to accreditation criteria.
- 16.4.2. The notice of the intention to withdraw accreditation, citing reasons shall be sent to the accredited Assessment Body. The CAB shall respond within 15 days.
- 16.4.3. The accredited assessment body shall be given an opportunity to explain its position in writing to NABET and present its case in person to the technical committee or accreditation committee. The final decision shall be taken in respect of Withdrawal of Accreditation on the basis of facts and the results of such presentation.
- 16.4.4. The withdrawal of accreditation shall be formally communicated.
- 16.4.5. NABET would publish information about withdrawal of accreditation in its newsletter / website / newspapers for information of the industry / other stakeholders.
- 16.4.6. In addition to the above, NABET may decide to withdraw accreditation based on market feedback, repeated complaints about the certification process.
- 16.4.7. In the event of the decision to withdraw the accreditation, the assessment body shall be asked to return the original accreditation certificate and the Enclosure of scopes to NABET and to stop using the accreditation symbol of NABET forthwith. NABET shall also notify the legal course for initiating any penalty of such misuses if it is reported and found supported by facts and evidences.
- 16.4.8. Withdrawal of an accreditation has consequences on the customers of the conformity assessment body. Accredited certificates issued shall be considered as unaccredited once the accreditation is withdrawn. The Assessment Body shall provide its customers with information on the withdrawal of its accreditation and on its consequences. The CAB may, in consultation with NABET arrange for the transfer of such accredited certificates to another accredited Conformity Assessment Body.
- 16.4.9. Following withdrawal of accreditation, the CAB would be eligible to seek fresh accreditation as a new applicant only after a lay off period of one year.

16.5. Public Information of Suspension or Withdrawal of Accreditation



- 16.5.1. The information about suspension or withdrawal shall be placed on the website in the register of the accredited bodies and NABET may make a public declaration in the newspapers. The charges for making the information public through newspapers shall be recovered from the CAB involved before revoking the suspension or renewal of the accreditation.

17. Notification to NABET

- 17.1. As part of the application for accreditation, the applicant body / accredited assessment body undertakes to inform NABET within 30 days if any change takes place in any of the aspects of its status or operation that affects its:
- a) Legal, commercial or organizational status, ownership
 - b) Organization and management, for example key managerial staff
 - c) Policies or procedures, where appropriate
 - d) Premises
 - e) Personnel, equipment, facilities, working environment or other resources, where significant
 - f) Scope of accreditation
 - g) Other such matters that may affect the ability of the CAB to fulfil requirements for accreditation.
- 17.2. On receipt of the information of change in any of the above parameters, NABET decides whether an extra surveillance visit is necessary or the change shall not affect the operation of the certification system within the accredited scope.
- 17.3. If NABET recommends a surveillance visit, such surveillance visit shall be charged as per prevailing fee structure. The invoice for such surveillance visit is sent to the CAB. Further action shall be initiated only on timely payment of fee for the surveillance visit. The procedure of surveillance assessment shall then be followed.
- 17.4. During regular surveillance the accredited CAB is asked to confirm that no change in the parameters mentioned above or any other aspect that will affect the certification has taken place since the last assessment.
- 17.5. In case an accredited Assessment body is found to have given a willful wrong declaration, NABET shall initiate suitable action and also shall reserves the right to suspend / withdraw the accreditation.

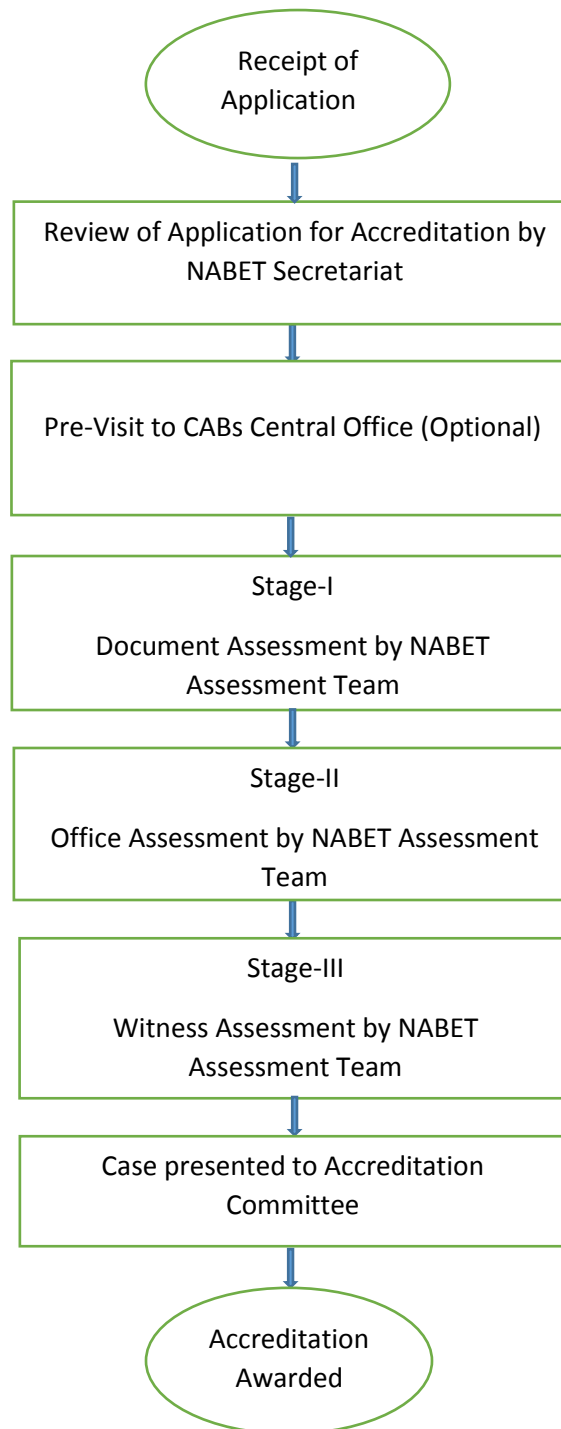
18. General Terms and Conditions of Fee

- 18.1. The Fee structure shall be approved by the QCI Governing Body. The Current fee structure approved by the QCI Governing Body shall be applicable to all Assessment Bodies.
- 18.2. The total fee shall depend on the actual assessment days and other parameter as specified in the fee structure.



- 18.3. NABET has all the rights to revise the fee structure at the end of every financial year.
- 18.4. Accreditation certificate will be issued on the receipt of complete fee.
- 18.5. NABET shall take the following actions if any applicant or accredited assessment body fails to pay the fee as invoiced:
 - a) Stop further processing of the application
 - b) Do not offer accreditation
 - c) Suspend and/or withdraw the accreditation.
- 18.6. If the applicant body fails to pay the invoiced fee within 180 days, the application for accreditation will be rejected. In the event of the rejection of the application, the fee paid till date will not be refunded.
- 18.7. Fees for any assessment on foreign locations carried out by the local accreditation body shall be charged as per the current rates of the local accreditation body.

APPLICATION STAGES



NOTE- Typically the accreditation cycle time will be 45 working days, subject to findings of each stage of assessment.



Annexure B

List of Records

Sr.No.	Document Number	Document Name	Persons Authorized to Access	Retention Period	Storage Location/Protection Method	Disposal	Remarks
1	NABET:SCD:FR:32	Master list of Documents	CEO and staff of Skill certification division (Sr. Director, Director, DD, AO, EO, EOT)	6 years	QCI server, Skill Certification folder and respective file in skill certification almira/Password protected	Soft copy will be deleted and hard copy will be shredded	
2	NABET:SCD:FR:33	Master list of Record	CEO and staff of Skill certification division (Sr. Director, Director, DD, AO, EO, EOT)	6 years	QCI server, Skill Certification folder and respective file in skill certification almira/Password protected	Soft copy will be deleted and hard copy will be shredded	



Annexure C

Amendment Record

S.No.	Authorized Person	Amendment	Date of Amendment
1	CEO	Refer Track changes in – Accreditation process	10/12/2015
2	CEO	Generally Editorial changes Refer Track changes-procedure for accreditation	04/01/2016
3	Director Skill certification	Editorial changes in NC Classification-refer clause 14.1.1 and 14.1.2	17/07/2017
4	CEO	Central Office has been replaced with Office assessment. Office assessment include assessment of central office, regional and other offices e:g refer clause 7.4.3	05/07/2018
5	CEO	Final Assessment has been replaced by witness assessment refer clause-7.4.4	05/07/2018
6	CEO	NOTE on page 17 has been changed to clause with clause number 14.7 and 14.8	05/07/2018
7	CEO	Note on page 9 has been changed to clause with clause number 7.4.3.3	05/07/2018
8	CEO	Closure time for Non-conformities from 180 days has been reduced to 120 days refer clause 14.8	05/07/2018
9	CEO	Clause 11.13.1 has been amended	05/07/2018