CERTIFICATION SCHEME

FOR AUDITORS AND LEAD AUDITORS

ISO 14001

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document aims to regulate the relationship between AUTENTICERT, operating as a personnel certification body, and individuals requesting voluntary third-party certification for their competencies as Auditor / Lead Auditor for international standards. Personnel certification applies to the individual who applies, or to the individual for whom their company applies, and is not applicable to companies/organizations.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

For the execution of certification activities, AUTENTICERT carries out the direct evaluation of the candidate or on behalf of other external bodies selected, qualified, and approved by them. The certification bodies must have the premises, equipment (if applicable), tools, and technical personnel to carry out the activity. AUTENTICERT.

AUTENTICERT can certify an unlimited number of individuals within an organization.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AUDITORS

The professional figure of the Lead Auditor / Auditor of Environmental Management Systems (EMS) is a person who plans, conducts, and reports audits of an environmental management system, in accordance with the requirements of the UNI EN ISO 14001:2015 standard and the ISO 19011:2018 guidelines. The Lead Auditor / Auditor must be independent, impartial, and free from conflicts of interest, capable of collecting objective evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine conformity with audit criteria (policies, procedures, and regulatory requirements). They are also responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of processes and the contribution of the management system to the continuous improvement of the organization's performance.

Knowledge

The Auditor / Lead Auditor must possess knowledge such as:

- Terminology, principles, good knowledge of management systems;
- Standards and normative documents, etc.;
- Customer business sectors/areas;
- Customer products, processes, and organizational methods;
- Conformity assessment systems;
- Types of audit processes;
- Role, responsibilities, and principles of professional ethics related to the figure of the Auditor and Lead Auditor;
- Effective audit management;

- Methodologies and techniques for developing all phases of audit activity and managing meetings and the audit team;
- Risk management and application methods in the audit process;
- Legal requirements regarding health and safety at work to be complied with during the assessment.
- Civil liabilities and punitive measures arising from the audit/assessment relationship

Competencies

The Auditor / Lead Auditor must be able to:

- Apply, in different audits, the fundamental principles, procedures, and audit methods to ensure that the audit is conducted correctly and in accordance with the rules.
- Understand the context and apply the audit criteria.
- Understand the structure and organization of the audited organization.
- Operate legally according to the rules established by the organization.
- Use language understandable to all intellectual levels present in the client's organization.
- Take notes and draft written reports.
- Give presentations and conduct interviews;
- Identify laws, regulations, directives, etc., related to the organization of the audited company.

Definitions

Knowledge: Result of assimilating information through learning

Competencies: Ability to apply knowledge to complete tasks and solve problems –

Adequate competence: Ability to put knowledge and skills into practice to achieve results

Personal Behavior Auditors must possess the necessary competencies to manage and act correctly according to the rules and principles of auditing.

The auditor must:

- respect ethical principles (fair, impartial, sincere, honest, and confidential)

- be open-minded (to consider different ideas and viewpoints)

- be diplomatic (have tact in dealing with people)

- be attentive to detail (active observer of activities and surroundings);

- be vigilant (aware of situations and able to understand them);

- be versatile/chameleon (able to adapt easily to any different type of situation);

- be persistent (convincing and focused on achieving objectives);

- be decisive (able to quickly reach conclusions based on analysis and logical reasoning);

- be self-confident (able to act and behave independently while interacting effectively);

- be capable of acting with determination (i.e., responsibly while maintaining ethics);

- be open to improvement (eager to improve from created situations and dedicated to achieving the best audit results);

- be sensitive to cultural diversity (attentive and respectful of different cultures within the audited organization);

- be collaborative (able to interact effectively with others, including audit team members and audited organization personnel).

3.1 AUTENTICERT'S COMMITMENTS

AUTENTICERT guarantees access to its services for candidates, without financial discrimination or other unnecessary conditions. AUTENTICERT recognizes the importance of impartiality in certification: for this reason, it carries out its activities objectively, avoiding any conflict of interest. In particular, AUTENTICERT undertakes not to use as examiners for the evaluation of candidates individuals who may have a potential conflict of interest. This condition also extends to examiners from any organization qualified for evaluation. All functions involved in the personnel certification process comply with the Code of Ethics. Certification is based on the positive evaluation of each candidate according to the results of written and oral tests.

3.2 CANDIDATE'S COMMITMENTS

By submitting the certification application to AUTENTICERT, the candidate adheres to the certification scheme and accepts it by signing the application form, agreeing to all phases of the evaluation, certification, and registration process described below. To obtain and maintain certification, the applicant must agree to comply with all requirements referring to the standards required by the certification, additional requirements established by AUTENTICERT and other conformity assessment bodies, as well as all requirements contained in this document. Candidates are obliged to comply with the code of ethics.

4. REFERENCES

All references to AUTENTICERT laws, standards, and documents that are not dated are understood to refer to the latest available revision. • References to regulations for audit evaluation: - ISO 19011 - ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems (EMS)

- ISO / IEC TS 17021-2 - IAF MD 5: Duration of QMS and Audit

AUTENTICERT references for personnel certification: • ISO / IEC 17024 "General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons"

• Certification schemes. Etc.

5. DEFINITIONS

Certification: Process Activity by which a certification body determines that a person meets the certification requirements, including application, evaluation, decision on certification/recertification, use of certificates and logo/symbols.

Certification Scheme: Further requirements related to the professional specification or competence categories of persons.

Knowledge: Result of the assimilation of information through learning

Skills: Ability to apply knowledge to complete tasks and solve problems

Competence: Proven ability to use knowledge, skills, and personal capabilities in work or study situations and in professional and personal development, which can be exercised with a certain degree of autonomy, e.g., responsibility.

Certification requirements: The set of specific requests, including requirements for methodology, that must be met to obtain or maintain certification.

Scheme owner: Organization responsible for developing and maintaining the certification scheme. (The organization can be the certification body itself, a governmental authority, or another entity.)

Certificate: Document issued by a certification body, according to the provisions of the International Standard, indicating that the designated person has met the certification requirements.

Qualification: Demonstration of education, training, and work experience, where applicable.

Assessment: Process that evaluates a person's fulfillment of the requirements of the certification scheme.

Examination: Mechanism that is part of the assessment, which measures the candidate's ability, the candidate's competence, by one or more methods; written, oral, practical, and observational, as defined in the certification scheme.

Examiner: Person competent to conduct and evaluate an examination, when the examination requires professional judgment.

Invigilator: Person authorized by the certification body who administers or supervises an examination, but who does not evaluate the candidate's competence.

6. CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

6.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION

Candidates who meet the minimum requirements specified in point 6.2 may access the exam,

6.2 BASIC REQUIREMENTS

✓ **Auditor**

Must hold a secondary education diploma or equivalent qualification or a preferential diploma in environmental, engineering, or scientific fields.

✓ **Lead Auditor**

Must hold a higher education diploma

Training

Specific Training and Courses

It is necessary to have attended a qualified course for Auditor/Lead Auditor of quality management systems (minimum 40 hours), in accordance with ISO 14001 and ISO 19011. -Have attended a qualified course for Auditor/Lead Auditor of environmental management systems (minimum 24 hours), in accordance with ISO 14001.

Work experience.

Documented experience (work book / contract / etc.) demonstrating continuous professional experience is required.

Auditor

-If you hold a secondary education diploma, 3 years of professional experience in the relevant role;

-If you hold a higher education diploma: 1 year of professional experience in the relevant role

Lead Auditor

- 3 years of professional experience in the reference role;

Audit experience

✓ Auditor

Must have participated in at least 3 complete audits carried out in the last 3 years.

✓ Lead Auditor

Must have participated in at least 5 complete audits, conducted in 4 different countries.

Training

If candidates require specific training courses, AUTENTICERT will support them, taking all measures to avoid partiality and conflicts of interest.

6.3 PARTICULAR REQUIREMENTS

The candidate may take the exam according to one of the following requirements.

6.3.1 A candidate who holds a valid auditor/lead auditor certification, issued by an accredited personnel certification body, and provides all documentation proving the certification, may be admitted to take only the oral exam.

6.3.2 A candidate who holds a valid Auditor/Lead Auditor certification, issued by a recognized personnel certification body, and provides all documentation proving the certification, may be admitted to take only the oral exam.

6.3.3 A candidate who is certified as a Lead Auditor and/or Auditor with a certificate issued by an accredited Personnel Certification Body, who documents the following requirements:

- Continuous experience of at least 2 years in the relevant sector.
- has attended a lead auditor course of at least 24 hours.
- has carried out at least 3 complete audits in the last 2 years, not all internal, performed in different companies, in the role of Auditor/Lead Auditor.

may be admitted to take both written tests: case study and general written exam + oral exam.

VALID AUDITS FOR CERTIFICATION PURPOSES:

For certification purposes, only audits are considered valid:

- carried out according to the requirements for the lead auditor, covering all phases described from 6.3 to 6.6 of ISO 19011, even if performed at different times, provided that the total duration of the on-site audit is not less than 8 hours (1 working day). For each valid audit, recognized as 1 working day, an additional day (for each audit day) will be added for document review and report preparation, including it in the total number of required days.

For certification purposes, the following audits are not valid:

- those that only concern the monitoring of the implementation of corrective actions and audits carried out according to standards not equivalent to the ISO 14001 standard.
- those carried out only by technical experts.

6.4 CERTIFICATION AGREEMENT

By signing the application form, the applicant accepts the general economic conditions of the contract, the conditions of the certification body, and those arising from the certification schemes.

In the event that the applicant does not personally pay the certification and maintenance fees, they must specify in the application form the person or entity responsible for payment (who will pay the invoices). The applicant must provide the company's VAT number. The certification contract defines a 3-year duration which also includes certification maintenance (at least once a year), detailed in paragraph 10 of this scheme.

7 EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of the candidate, from the beginning of the process until obtaining the AUTENTICERT certificate, occurs through phases/steps, defined both in terms of time and obligations for each of the following phases:

- candidate evaluation through documents, to verify compliance with the requirements of the Certification Scheme.
- Certification exam, conducted by the AUTENTICERT Examination Committee, as indicated in point 8 of this document;
- Re-evaluation of documents and exam results
- Approval of the certification proposal by the technical manager of the sector.
- Issuance of the certificate registered in the AUTENTICERT register and published on the official Autenticert website.
- Communication.

If during the evaluation of the phases one of the results is negative, the process is blocked, and the candidate is notified. To proceed with the certification process, it will be necessary for the non-conformities found to be resolved within the deadlines established by AUTENTICERT.

8. EXAMINATION PROCESS

8.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO THE CERTIFICATION EXAM

All those who, after submitting an application via the application form and documenting compliance with the minimum requirements, have been deemed eligible.

The assessment of competence according to the documentation and the correct completion of the file is carried out by the preliminary assessor for this process together with a sector/scheme technician. (the technical assessor does not necessarily have to be an AUTENTICERT employee but must work for it)

For candidates who do not speak the Albanian language, AUTENTICERT will provide an interpreter to help with correct understanding, both in the written and oral exams, and may request proof of recognized courses. The certification application indicates the Applicant / sector / IAF code of interest for which the requirements are met. The verification of technical competence takes place during the certification exam.

AUTENTICERT provides the following modules, which contain all the necessary information to verify compliance with the certification requirements:

- Audit registration form for the SMC to be validated by the committee.

Facsimile/reference letter or any other document demonstrating competence in the required field.

Audit registration form for audits conducted under the monitoring of lead auditors certified by accredited TCPs.

8.2 EXAMINATION

The purpose of the examination is to validate the candidate's skills and competencies as provided in this scheme.

The examination aims to practically recognize the candidate's competence by:

- delving into the information presented by the candidate, verifying the work experience acquired over the years, verifying the documentation presented and its conformity with the scope of application; - ascertaining the candidate's mastery of the skills indicated according to the required documentation presented by the candidate;

- evaluating the candidate's competence to conduct audits in accordance with ISO 19011 and CEI EN ISO / IEC 17021 (the applicable part);
- ascertaining the technical competence of the codes (IAF). Examiners are responsible for evaluating the candidate's exam tests and, for this reason, report to AUTENTICERT and to the mandatory bodies (where applicable) for all evaluation activities.

8.3 EXAMINATION PROCEDURE

Exam sessions are planned and managed by AUTENTICERT. To access the exam, the candidate must pay the fee specified in the registration/application form and present a valid identity document.

The list of candidates for the examination and their submitted documentation are checked by the examiners. The examination of candidates takes place at the venue, on the date, and following the agenda communicated by AUTENTICERT (or according to procedure). Before the start of the examination, candidates are required to: - present a valid identity document, - sign the attendance list, - sign the form by which they accept the "General Conditions" and the "Privacy Policy", - present the payment receipt for the fee required for participation in the examination.

8.4 EXAMINATION TOPICS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Candidate evaluation takes place according to one of the methods indicated below. The evaluation of the entire process aims to verify competence in the application of ISO 14001, ISO 19011, ISO 17024 / CEI / EN ISO / IEC 17021 and CEI ISO / IEC TS 17021-2 standards, etc.

8.4.1 Criteria for certification and first recertification The candidate must demonstrate:

For certification: possession of the required prerequisites (academic qualification, training, work, and field experience).

For recertification: verification of professional updating (minimum 24 hours in the last three years, see point 11).

The continuity of professional activity implies the need to demonstrate that the candidate continues to regularly and sustainably carry out their specific activity in the field of verification or conformity assessment of environmental management systems according to ISO 14001. The candidate must document and demonstrate this continuity through audit logs, audit reports, contracts or appointment letters, tasks performed for conducted audits, and continuous training certificates. This requirement ensures that the auditor maintains updated competencies and consolidated practical experience, guaranteeing the reliability of the assessments performed.

8.4.2 Evaluation methods for certification and first recertification

Passing the exam, which will be structured as follows:

30 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS TEST, CONSISTING OF 4 ANSWERS OF WHICH 1 IS CORRECT, TO BE COMPLETED IN 60 MINUTES

The topics covered by the written test will include:

- ISO 14001:2015 Standard
- Requirements and General Principles
- Environmental legislation and other applicable prescriptions for the Environmental Management System (EMS)
- Audit techniques and methods
- Auditor skills and behavior
- Improvement and performance evaluation

CASE STUDY WITH A MAXIMUM DURATION OF 45 MINUTES.

- Planning and preparation of an environmental management system audit;
- Execution of an audit and management of objective environmental evidence;

- Identification, classification, and management of environmental non-conformities;
- Evaluation of conformity with regulatory requirements and environmental compliance obligations;
- Analysis of significant environmental aspects and impacts and their operational management;
- Verification of environmental planning, objectives, and improvement programs;
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of operational controls and environmental performance (indicators and monitoring);
- Analysis of the organization's environmental context and associated risks and opportunities;
- Management of communication and relations with the auditee in the environmental field;
- Drafting of the audit report and management of follow-up corrective actions.

ORAL EXAM CONSISTING OF 4 QUESTIONS WITH A MINIMUM DURATION OF 20 MINUTES AND A MAXIMUM OF 30.

The oral questions cover the following areas:

- Requirements of the UNI EN ISO 14001:2015 standard and their application in environmental management systems;
- Identification of significant environmental aspects, compliance obligations, and environmental planning;
- Evaluation of environmental performance, monitoring, non-conformities, and corrective actions;

Execution of the environmental audit, communication with the auditee, and preparation of the audit report.

The candidate must pass the test, the case study, and the technical interview with a score of not less than 70/100;

After payment of the required fees, access will be granted to the relevant Autenticert personnel registers. Certification is valid for three years from the certificate issue date.

8.4.3 Evaluation method for particular requirements

Particular requirements - ref. 6.3.1-6.3.2

For candidates who meet the requirements of points 6.3.1-6.3.2, the oral exam aims to:

- allow the candidate to demonstrate and present their professional competence.
- evaluate suitability, the degree of updating of specific knowledge,
- verify how the candidate manages critical situations.

Duration: 60 minutes – Max score 20 points (min 14)

Particular requirements - ref. 6.3.3

For candidates who meet the requirements indicated in point 6.3.3, the exam is structured as follows:

Written exam:

1) "case/casus" referring to a Quality Management System audit

Duration: 60 minutes - Result: max 15 points.

2) 20 general multiple-choice questions, with only one correct answer.

Duration: 45 minutes - Result: max 30 points.

Minimum score to access the oral exam: 30.5 / 45

The oral exam aims to:

- Verify basic knowledge.
- Evaluate the information presented by the candidate regarding work experience,
- evaluate the update regarding the latest versions of technical standards, IAF codes,
- verify the way situations are managed,
- evaluate the management of situations/processes according to standard requirements (ISO 19011 and CEI EN ISO/IEC 17021 ISO 14001 according to applicable scopes) based on the role of auditor and lead auditor.
- Evaluate the degree of knowledge of IAF codes,
- evaluate the candidate's certification request (according to the required role) with the AUTENTICERT Certification Scheme.

Duration: 30 minutes - Result: maximum 20 points (min 12)

The examination board evaluates the candidate's suitability according to the specific requirements and criteria defined.

- For those taking the full exam, the maximum score is 100 points and is calculated by summing the scores obtained by the candidate in the various tests. The minimum threshold to pass the exam is 70% of the total possible points in the tests provided by the candidate, max (70 points), considering that they must obtain at least 55 points in the written exam. Therefore, if the candidate does not exceed the minimum threshold of 55 points in the written tests, they will not be admitted to the oral test. It will then be necessary to repeat the exams (both written and oral).

- For candidates subject to the reduced exam: (candidates who meet the conditions of par. 8.4.2), the minimum score is 70% of the oral exam (14 points). For candidates in par. 8.4.3, the oral exam can only be accepted if they exceed 70% of the points in the foreseen written exam.

The Examination Board, when deemed appropriate, may request a supplementary exam which may take place as an interview or written test, or integrated in such a way as to clearly understand the situation for the issuance / maintenance of certification. At the end of the exam, the Board communicates the result and any necessary improvements during the validity of the certification to the candidate.

8.4 GENERAL RULES

During the written exam, the candidate is allowed to consult legal documents / standards on which no notes have been taken with the examiner's authorization, but cannot use mobile phones or exchange information with other candidates. Non-compliance with the rules is grounds for terminating the exam.

8.5 EXAMINERS

The exam / evaluation is conducted by competent AUTENTICERT examiners who meet at least the minimum requirements described in AUTENTICERT's "Requirements for Resources" document.

They are obliged to:

- maintain the confidentiality of the examination.
- conduct the examination assessment objectively.
- declare any conflict or interest that might jeopardize the impartiality of their assessment.
- comply with this scheme.

The Examination Committee is composed of one or more examiners to cover all competencies required to perform the process. If the examination is conducted by external personnel, the Examination Committee may be supervised, even without prior notice, by personnel authorized by AUTENTICERT.

8.6 OBSERVER PRESENCE

During examination sessions, AUTENTICERT may request the presence of its own observers, the DPA, or other competent authorities.

8.7 EXAMINATION REPEAT

If the minimum threshold, equal to 70% of the maximum score obtainable in the tests taken by the candidate, is not met, the examination may be repeated. Each repetition is subject to a fee.

9 CERTIFICATE ISSUANCE

To the candidate who has successfully passed the examination and met all required conditions in accordance with administrative aspects, AUTENTICERT issues the certificate demonstrating the person's competence and completes the relevant register.

The certificate must contain:

- The name of the certifying body (AUTENTICERT)
- Name, surname, personal number, date and place of birth of the certified person
- Certificate number - Scheme for which it was certified and/or references to standards/procedures etc.
- Start date of validity
- End date of validity
- Signature of the authorized person

9.1 REGISTRATION IN REGISTERS AND PUBLICATION

Registration in the AUTENTICERT registers takes place after the certificate is issued; the registration can be accessed on the AUTENTICERT website.

9.2 COMPLETION OF THE REGISTER

The person certified by AUTENTICERT as an Auditor may request to be certified also as a Lead Auditor and/or for other IAF codes after obtaining the certificate.

This request involves the integration of the documentation completed for the previous certification, satisfying the requirements of the next level, and the payment of established fees.

The evaluation for candidate acceptance takes place through mandatory and timed phases, described in paragraph 7 (Assessment Process), with the exception of the certification examination.

At the end of the phases, AUTENTICERT will ensure the registers are updated with the new information. The new certificate will be issued after the previous certificate is returned, but the certification date will not change.

9.3 DATA INTEGRITY AND PRIVACY

AUTENTICERT, as the owner, guarantees that the processing of candidate data for certification complies with EU Regulation 2016/679 and LAW No. 9887, dated 10.3.2008 FOR THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA (amended by Law No. 48/2012, Official Gazette 53) (amended by Law No. 120/2014, Official Gazette 160) and other documents related to certification activities. Privacy is protected for all persons participating in the application. Information acquired by personnel working for AUTENTICERT, including decision-makers, is subject to confidentiality.

10. CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE (SURVEILLANCE)

The validity of the certification during the 5-year contractual period (starting from the certificate issuance date) depends on the positive outcome of the annual surveillance activities (period/date is defined), carried out by AUTENTICERT.

- To this end, the certified person must provide an annual self-declaration, made in accordance with the law/regulations/procedures (using specially prepared forms by AUTENTICERT), as follows: Acceptance of AUTENTICERT's policies, procedures, and documentation.
- a certification stating that they are still active in the field for which they were certified.
- a certification that they have no warnings at work and have a positively evaluated performance for the sector for which they were certified.

Certification maintenance is also subject to the payment of the foreseen annual fees.

11. RECERTIFICATION

Recertification occurs upon request from the person who renews the contract and proceeds with the process. Renewal takes place before the certification expires. Recertification requires, in addition to the documentation submitted for annual maintenance:

Updated CV, dated and signed by the candidate themselves. All other additional documents regarding activities (training...) carried out after the first application, as well as the list of audits performed during this period.

specific audit experience in the quality management sector:

- for Auditors: 2 complete audits or 3 surveillance audits (in at least 2 different systems).
- For Lead Auditors: 3 complete audits or 5 surveillance audits (in at least 3 different systems).
- professional update for at least 24 hours in 3 years.

12. CRITERIA FOR SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

Causes for suspension:

- Improper use of the certification mark.
- Violation of the Code of Conduct
- Failure to pay obligations
- Failure to comply with maintenance/renewal requests

Suspension procedures:

- Communication with reasons, conditions for revocation, and timelines.
- Maximum duration of suspension: 6 months

- In the absence of corrective actions: revocation

Effects of suspension:

- Use of the certificate and trademark is prohibited
- Obligation to inform clients if certification is decisive
- In case of violation: immediate revocation

Revocation of the certificate:

- Communicated to the Accreditation Body (for accredited registers) and published on the Autenticert website
- No refund of payments made or due
- Possibility of a new certification application after 3 months (dispute resolution)

Suspension of certification upon request:

- Possible for up to 1 year in case of voluntary cessation of activity
- Resumption of activity: communication and new verification

Exceptions:

- Possible with a reasoned request (e.g., maternity leave) for the periodicity of maintenance, subject to evaluation of the reasons for such request

The result of the evaluation is communicated in writing by Autenticert.