

<b>Developed by</b>	<b>Certification Manager</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Managing Director</b>
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**1 Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to outline the process for consistently complying with accreditation and certification requirements during decision-making processes.

**2 Scope**

This process describes NST Certification’s authority and responsibility for the granting, refusing, maintaining, amending, renewing, suspending, withdrawing, or restoring of certification.

**3 Responsibility**

The specific responsibilities are assigned throughout the document. The top management of NST is responsible for ensuring that decisions are made based on objective evidence without compromising impartiality and confidence in certification activities.

**4 Abbreviations**

- IC – Impartiality Committee
- MS – Management System
- CA – Corrective actions
- IAF – International Accreditation Forum
- AB – Accreditation body
- CC – Certification Committee

**5 Process**

<b>Function</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
Top Management Commitment	<p>NST Certification shall ensure that the persons or committees that make the decisions for granting or refusing, expanding, or reducing the scope, suspending, or restoring, withdrawing, or renewing certification are different from those who carried out the audit and that the individual appointed to the certification decision shall have the appropriate competence.</p> <p>Top management of NST is responsible for ensuring both NST and the relevant accreditation rules are adhered to.</p> <p><i>Note: The person/committee involved in the certification decision making process shall not be involved in the evaluation activities (i.e., conducting the audit or</i></p>	<p>Sourcing and providing resources.</p> <p>Making appointments</p> <p>Remuneration where applicable.</p> <p>Developing, Implementing and the management system</p>

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<b>Function</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
	<i>verification of corrective actions and supporting evidence for NCRs raised to enable closure). This ensures independence of the certification decision making process.</i>	
Rules appointment of CC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All decision makers will be appointed by NST Management. Personnel (excluding members of committees) making certification decisions will be employed by, or under contract with NST Certification or an entity under their organizational control.</li> <li>Certification decisions will not be outsourced.</li> <li>NST organisational control is either (i) a whole or majority ownership of another entity or (ii) majority participation by NST Certification on the board of directors of another entity.</li> <li>The Certification Committee consists of several individuals, with specific technical competency in a scheme and are managed and report directly to the Certification Manager.</li> <li>Competencies required for the certification decision-maker are documented in Roles, <b>Responsibilities &amp; Competence Criteria Frm- QP 06.1</b></li> </ul>	Selection and Appointment of Personnel Proc- QP 06 Roles, Responsibilities & Competence Criteria Frm- QP 06.1
Responsibilities	<p>Making certification decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing technical input into certification decision making</li> <li>Reviewing certification and surveillance documents and to authorise certificate issue, amendments, suspension, and withdrawal in conjunction with the Managing Member.</li> <li>Maintaining the company’s policy of impartiality and confidentiality.</li> <li>Reviewing and deciding on appeals, complaints, and disputes in conjunction with the Managing Member.</li> </ul>	Roles, Responsibilities & Competence Criteria Frm- QP 06.1
Operation of the CC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The certification decision shall be recorded on the certification <b>Technical Review &amp; Certification Decision Record</b>, including any conditions or other observations, the name of the certification decision maker and the date the decision was made. A copy of this record shall be kept on the client’s file. (Decision Report will be issued when new certificates are issued, after recertification audit and when certificates are withdrawn). The certification decision process will be conducted after completion of stage 2, transfer,</li> </ul>	Technical Review & Certification Decision Record Frm- QP 10.1

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<b>Function</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
	<p>transition, reduction and extension of scopes as well as recertification audits. Decision making will also be made after suspensions or cancellations of certifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The maximum certificate validity period is 3 years from the date of initial certification decision, with subsequent 3-year cycles from recertification decision making. The certificates will convey the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The name, address, and logo of NST.</li> <li>○ the date certification/recertification is granted (the date shall not precede the date on which the certification decision was completed).</li> <li>○ the name and address of the client (and logo if require by the client).</li> <li>○ the scope of certification</li> <li>○ the term or expiry date of certification if certification expires after an established period.</li> <li>○ any other information required by the certification scheme.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The formal certification documentation shall include the signature of personnel authorised by the accreditation body (SANAS R04).</li> <li>• For a certification decision to be made, there must be at least one technically competent individual from the approved list of certification decision makers, or someone with the technical expertise plus the Certification Manager.</li> </ul>	
<p>Actions prior to making a decision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NST Certification will conduct a technical review for all audits to agree with the audit report content and outcome, NC's (objective evidence and grading) and effectiveness of corrections and corrective action plans.</li> <li>• Following each technical review, NST Certification shall decide on the certification status of the organization (e.g., certify, continue certification, suspend, withdraw). Records shall be maintained for all the activities.</li> <li>• A review will be done on the close out of non-conformances (document) prior the report being send close report being send out to the client. Where required the auditor will send the report back to the relevant auditor for correction.</li> <li>• The Certification Administrator shall ensure that all relevant initial audit documentation up to stage 2 or recertification is filed, including the audit</li> </ul>	<p>Technical Review &amp; Certification Decision Record Frm- QP 10.1</p>

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Function	Process	Measurement
	<p>report(s) and nonconformity report(s) in the relevant client file in preparation for granting of certification, reducing the scope, renewing, suspending, restoring or withdrawing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The administrator will compile all the documents for the review process, and these will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Company data (application)</li> <li>○ Stage 1 &amp; Stage 2 audit reports.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ All nonconformity reports including Nonconformity clearance report (major nonconformities) as well as action plans for minor non- conformities.</li> <li>○ Certification decision document</li> <li>○ Any additional scheme specific documentation</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The index to the client file and certification decision report shall be used as a guideline for the preparation of the file.</li> <li>● The technical reviewer shall document the certification decision recommendation and submit the pack to the administrator for administrative review and drafting of the certificate.</li> <li>● The Administrator will submit the draft certificate to the Certification Manager prior submission to the Certification committee.</li> <li>● The review for granting certification will be conducted on an on-going basis. The certification decisions will be made on-line (via workflow) when one process is complete the file will be released to the next person or returned to the previous person for corrections.</li> <li>● The Certification decision maker must meet all technical competencies for the scheme and be approved by NST Certification to perform this role (the decision maker and technical reviewer can be the same person provided they meet all required competencies or the technical reviewer from the Certification Committee as well as the Certification Manager (or delegate) can make the certification decision.</li> </ul>	

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<b>Function</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Measurement</b>
Information for granting initial certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information obtained from the audit reports should be used in the decision for granting certification. The decision shall be based on the criteria as described in the paragraph above including Confirmation that audit objectives have been met, Recommendation whether to grant certification together with any conditions or observations.</li> <li>• The NST Certification Manager shall forward the approval of certification decision to the Certification Administrator who shall issue the certification certificate.</li> <li>• The certificate shall only be issued after, or concurrent with, the following conditions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The decision to grant or extend the scope of certification has been made.</li> <li>○ Certification requirements have been fulfilled.</li> <li>○ The certification agreement has been completed and signed.</li> <li>○ When evidence of the close out of nonconformities have not been submitted within the required scheme time frame after the last day of the relevant audit another stage 2 audit will be conducted before recommending certification.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NST Certification shall notify the client of a decision not to grant certification and shall identify the reasons for the decision.</li> </ul>	Technical Review & Certification Decision Record Frm- QP 10.1. Certification notice Frm- QP 09.9
Certification decision to be taken for transfer of certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certification decision to be taken on transfer of existing certificate from another CB will only be granted if:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is evidence that there are no outstanding major nonconformities from the CB at which the client is holding certification.</li> <li>• corrective action for minor nonconformities has been approved.</li> <li>• they have current certification in the same scope.</li> <li>• New certificate to be issued on approval based on the information from the issuing CB.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	IAF MD 2 Technical Review & Certification Decision Record Frm- QP 10.1
Information for granting recertification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NST shall make decisions on renewing certification based on the results of the recertification audit, as well as the results of the review of the system over the period of certification and complaints received from users of certification.</li> </ul>	Technical Review & Certification Decision Record Frm- QP 10.1



### Certification Decision Procedure

Proc QP 10  
Rev: 02  
Eff date: 20 Dec 2024

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Function	Process	Measurement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Information obtained from the audit reports should be used in the decision for granting certification.</li><li>The decision shall be based on the criteria as described in paragraph on actions prior to making a decision as well as Confirmation of information provided to the certification body during the application review, recommendation whether to grant certification together with any conditions or observations.</li><li>NST Certification shall provide the client with formal certification documentation after granting or extending the scope.</li></ul>	

#### Revision History

Proposed by	Section	Description of amendment	Date	Revision status	Approved By
CM		Full review of the procedure	01 June 2023	01	MD
CM		Full review of transfer section	20 Dec 2024	02	MD