	Suspension, withdrawal, Reduction or Termination of Certification Procedure		Proc QP 11 Rev: 02 Eff date: 20 Dec 2024
Developed by	Certification Manager	Approved by	Managing Director

1 Purpose

This procedure describes the sanctions when there is a non-compliance and violation of the terms and conditions for certification, including suspension, withdrawal, scope reduction and/or termination of certification in order to safeguard the integrity of the certification issued by NST TC.

2 Scope


This procedure applies to the management systems certification clients of NST TC.

3 Explanations:


- Suspension means that the certification is temporarily invalid.
- Voluntary suspension, where the organization applies to the certification manager indicating the effective date to be placed under suspension.
- Withdrawal means the cancellation of the permit or registration.

4 Process


Function	Process	
Suspension of Certification	<p>4.1 Suspensions may result from:</p> <p>a) Change of physical location of the facility(ies) where production and service provision are undertaken or where the management system(s) was being implemented.</p> <p>b) Restructuring within the organization that may affect their ability to effectively deliver on the certified mandate, e.g., loss of key staff.</p> <p>c) The realization of a breakdown of the management system.</p> <p>d) If it is discovered during an evaluation that the organization no longer complies with certification requirements.</p> <p>e) When production and service provision is to be halted for a period of time.</p> <p>f) NST Total Compliance (Pty) Ltd remains the right to suspend certification with immediate effect should non-conformances be observed on site that might cause serious injuries and/or fatalities or in cases where serious injuries and/or fatalities have occurred. The same apply for repeat reportable environmental incidents.</p> <p>4.2 NST TC may at their discretion suspend an organization's certification</p>	Information from the client about changes Recommendation from the audit team Non-conformance that was not cleared after the due date

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	<p>by means of written notification if satisfied that the client:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Cannot consistently produce products and services that conforms to standard requirements b) Fails to comply with the certification requirements and the terms and conditions spelt out in the certification contract. c) Fails to comply with the mandatory legal or regulatory requirements, statutory requirements which apply to the client's production processes or services. d) Cannot provide evidence that non-conformances were adequately addressed, and corrective action implemented within prescribed timeframes. e) Fails to meet financial obligations like payment of applicable certification fees within the specified time frame. f) Conceals any changes which may potentially affect the compliance with certification requirements. g) Fails to address any compliance against NST TC the products or services of the client brought to the attention of NST TC. h) Denies reasonable access to auditors during surveillance and recertification audits without reasonable justification. i) Misuses certificate or the mark (e.g., misleading publications or advertisement) and appropriate corrective actions not taken in a timely manner. j) If the client's certified management system has persistently failed to meet certification requirements. k) If the surveillance shows nonconformity with the requirements of such a nature, immediate withdrawal is not necessary. l) If corrective actions have not been effectively implemented within the agreed time period. m) If there has been any other contravention of the certification scheme requirements n) If the certified client does not allow surveillance recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies, as planned. 	

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Withdrawal or Cancellation of certification	<p>4.3 The permit shall be withdrawn or cancelled by NST TC on the basis of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) If the permit holder does not wish to maintain the permit and voluntarily requests, e.g. If they go out of business. b) Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension in the established time (in any case not exceeding six months). c) If the surveillance shows that the nonconformity is of a serious nature. d) If the permit holder fails to settle their financial obligations. e) If there is any contravention of the certification contract/agreement. f) If the client uses the certification in such a manner as to undermine the reputation of NST TC. g) Continued use of the certificate for promotion following suspension. h) If the normative standard or rules are changed and the permit holder either will not or cannot ensure conformity with the new requirements. i) If the permit validity period expires, the permit is automatically withdrawn. A notice to withdraw the permit shall be sent to the client within 48 hours of expiry by the Manager Certification Manager. j) If no application is received within a period of 14 days from the date of the notice, then the status of the certificate will be changed to cancelled. 	Existing permit Certification Notice, Frm-QP 09.9
Reduction of Scope of Certification	<p>4.4 Scope reductions shall be situated under the following conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) NST TC shall reduce the scope of certification to exclude the parts not meeting the requirements when the certified client has persistently or seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification. b) The decision to reduce the scope may be made following a surveillance, recertification, or special audit. c) Any scope reduction shall be in line with the requirements of the 	Certification Application Frm- QP 08.1 Certification Notice, Frm-QP 09.9

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	<p>standard(s) used for certification.</p> <p>d) When a decision to reduce the scope of certification is made as a condition of reinstatement, NST TC shall make all necessary modifications to certification documents and public information in order to ensure the reduced scope of certification is clearly communicated. The client may also voluntarily request a reduction in scope due to changes in the organisation. Any scope reduction shall be in line with the requirements of the standard used for certification.</p> <p>e) The decision to reduce the scope shall be communicated in writing. NST TC shall withdraw the certification documents for the original certification and issue new documents for the reduced scope.</p>	
Sanctions	<p>4.5 Process for Implementing sanction:</p> <p>a) A permit to use any certification mark may be suspended for such a period as NST TC may determine, in any case not exceeding six months.</p> <p>b) The audit team leader shall report any situation (in 4.2 above) that may necessitate the suspension or withdrawal of certification to the Certification Manager and certification decision will be made.</p> <p>c) Decisions involving suspension and withdrawal certification permits shall be taken by the certification decision committee where the sanction is NST TC imposed and formally communicated by the Certification Manager.</p> <p>d) NST TC shall serve the client with a notice of suspension or withdrawal of the permit stating the grounds therein.</p> <p>e) The permit holder shall submit a written explanation and be given the opportunity to be heard within fourteen days (14) from the date the notice is received.</p> <p>f) If, in the opinion of NST TC the explanation submitted is satisfactory, the permit may not be suspended or withdrawn.</p> <p>g) Where no explanation is submitted by the permit holder, or in the</p>	<p>Certification Notice, Frm-QP 09.9</p>

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	<p>opinion of NST TC the explanation submitted is unsatisfactory, on the expiry of the notice, NST TC shall issue a letter of suspension or withdrawal detailing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The effective date of the suspension/withdrawal. ○ The reasons for suspension/withdrawal. ○ The conditions during the suspension/withdrawal period ○ The actions needed for lifting the suspension or restore certification. 	
Conditions while under suspension, withdrawal, scope reduction and termination	<p>4.6 While under suspension, withdrawal, scope reductions and termination the following shall happen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Under suspension, the client’s certification is temporality invalid. A permit which has been suspended shall immediately be surrendered/returned by the permit holder to the certification manager. b) During the period of suspension, the terms and conditions set out in the Certification contract/agreement remain valid. c) The permit holder shall upon suspension, withdrawal, scope reduction or termination immediately discontinue use and withdraw of all promotional and advertising matter which contains any reference to the certification. d) Organizations placed in suspension shall give an undertaking to adequately address the circumstances that caused the suspension within six months of the effective date of suspension. e) The client shall remain liable for all fees whilst under suspension. The client shall be responsible for all costs associated with the suspension or withdrawal, such as any on-site or re-instatement visits, testing fees, etc. f) The certificate database shall be amended to reflect the status. 	
Re-instatement of certification after suspension,	<p>4.7 Re-instatement of certification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Where a suspension has been imposed, the client shall take appropriate corrective action prior to the expiry of the period of suspension. 	Corrective action Request Frm- QP 09.8

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withdrawal and scope reduction	<p>Evidence of such corrective action taken shall be submitted to the certification manager who shall assign an auditor/will handle the evaluation.</p> <p>b) An evaluation shall be undertaken to determine whether the conditions for re-instatement of certification have been satisfactorily fulfilled and recommendation shall be submitted to the certification decision makers.</p> <p>c) The decision to re-instate shall be granted by the certification decision makers</p> <p>d) The client shall then be notified in writing that the suspension has been lifted and that the permit is re-instated. The permit shall also be given back to the holder.</p> <p>e) For organizations suspended over non-payment of certification fees, the certification shall be reinstated immediately upon receipt of payment of the outstanding amount due.</p> <p>f) When certification is reinstated after suspension, NST TC shall make all necessary modifications to certification documents and public information to ensure all appropriate indications exist that the p management system continues to be certified.</p> <p>g) The certificate database shall be amended to reflect the certification status upon reinstatement.</p> <p>4.7.1 Re-instatement of withdrawn certification</p> <p>A withdrawn permit will be maintained in the database with only the status changed to 'Withdrawn'. Where the organization wishes to re-in state certification after it has been withdrawn, the client will need to re-apply and will have to go through the full certification process (Stages 1 and 2) to be certified again</p> <p>Scope reduction</p> <p>a) The process in 10.1 and 10.2 shall apply.</p> <p>b) The decision to re-instate the scope may be made following a surveillance, recertification, or special audit.</p>	Certification Notice, Frm-QP 09.9

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Termination of Certification	a) Certification shall be terminated upon request of the client, for example when the company winds up or liquidates or the production of certain products or provision of services is stopped. b) The client shall be given a formal notification of acceptance on termination and accordingly informed of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To immediately pay any fees due to NST TC until the date of termination. ○ To discontinue the use of all advertising material that contains any reference thereto. ○ The permit previously issued in favor of the client is invalid. c) The certificate database shall be amended to reflect the certification status upon reinstatement.	Certification Notice, Frm-QP 09.9
Appeals	An organization aggrieved by any decision above may follow the appeals process (Proc- QP 07 – Customer and Stakeholder management process)	Customer And Stakeholder Management Procedure, Proc- QP 07

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 the suspension of certification section	20 Dec 2024	02	MD



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Procedure**

**Proc QP 11
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Developed by

Certification Manager

Approved by

Managing Director