



Accreditation & QCS Management Pvt Ltd

Accreditation is the hall mark of approval given to certifying and inspection bodies by accreditation boards. It should be noted that QCS provides auditing and assessment services. Accreditation is a voluntary process and there is no requirement in law or government regulation for certification bodies to achieve accreditation. Auditing organisations do not come within the remit of accreditation.

For certification to have increased effectiveness in some instances it is sometimes desirable that the certifying body itself can demonstrate its competence. Accreditation is one way to do this. Accreditation is a voluntary process for auditing and assessment activities only, such as those provided by QCS, it is not a regulatory requirement.

QCS Management Pvt Ltd, at incorporation, embarked upon a programme of activities that actually demonstrated compliance with international standards for the operation of bodies performing management systems assessment and certification. These standards were previously ISO 17021-1 :2011 and are currently being superseded by what is known as ISO 17021- 1:2015. Our operations were therefore structured at the time of our incorporation and even now to fully meet the requirements of these international standards.

Within the United Kingdom, there are two relevant accreditation regimes dealing with certification bodies engaged with management system certification process such as ISO 9001 . One is called the **Accreditation Service for Certifying Bodies (Europe) ASCB(E)**, and the other is **United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS)**. Both these are limited companies and both are profit generating.

UKAS Background

UKAS stands for the United Kingdom Accreditation Service. UKAS has been appointed as the National Accreditation Body for the UK. This means they perform accreditation with authority derived from the State and represent the UK in the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). UKAS work in accordance with the requirements of the ISO Standards- ISO 17011 & ISO 17021

ASCB Background

Accreditation Service for Certifying Bodies Ltd is a private limited company registered in England and Wales registered number 3132143. The company is therefore registered as a trading concern with the appropriate United Kingdom authorities. Organisations are advised that ASCB Ltd provide accreditation services and are known to the U K Government Department of Trade and Industry as doing so. The authority vested in ASCB Ltd is that assigned to them by the certifying body and by the organisation in respect of the accreditation services contracted. No claim as to statutory, legislative, authority, prominence or right given by any other party unless specified by ASCB Ltd is claimed. ASCB belong to the Global Accreditation Forum (GAF), an international association for accreditation, which promotes best practices in quality assurance worldwide. To date ASCB has accredited over 90 Certification Bodies and registered over 3500 Assessors, Auditors and quality related personnel achievements. All certificated bodies, organizations and products are placed on the International Register (IRQAO) that has a live search function, providing the user with instant verification of the authenticity of any ASCB- and other accredited certificate holder. ASCB work in accordance with the requirements of the ISO Standards ISO 17011 & ISO 17021.

Commonalities between ASCB and UKAS are as follows:

- They have both been operating since 1995
- They operate with worldwide recognition
- They have issued over 25,000 certificates within their regime
- Their certificated clients satisfactorily provide products and services to all levels of local and national government regardless of local 'policies'
- They operate an ISO 17011 Quality System for Accreditation Bodies
- They assess Certification Bodies such as ourselves against the requirements of ISO 17021.

The key difference is that the ASCB is not a member of the IAF. Only one accreditation body per EU country may be a member of the IAF, responsible for representing the UK in international discussions concerning accreditation and certification. This enables UKAS and other parties to promote UKAS as “*the sole national accreditation body*” and “*the only government approved accreditation body*”. While both these statements are true, they are commonly used to imply that there cannot be any other Accrediting Bodies – which is simply not true.

For example: the UK Government has itself appointed non-UKAS bodies to accredit its Cyber Essentials certification scheme.

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QCS Management Pvt Ltd has no legal requirement to be accredited. QCS provides auditing services for itself under ASCB accreditation regime and also to certification bodies accredited by accreditation regimes under IAF similar to UKAS origin in the UK. Therefore our assessment works were adjudged under both the accreditation regimes. We accept both these accreditation regimes as technically outstanding and equals in every respects, even though there is no formal agreement of mutual recognition between both the accreditation regimes.

Whilst accreditation is intended to provide a tertiary level of confidence regarding certification it is often the case that the focus of accreditation regimes is more procedural rather than pragmatic. The relevance of their activities is extremely slight and has little meaning to the 'man in the street'. Nonetheless QCS does recognise the influence of accreditation within the Quality Assurance fraternity and for this reason its policy is to sub-contract its services and auditors to certification bodies operating within either ASCB(E) or other similar accreditation regimes of UKAS origin. Benefits of accreditation are the wider recognition and acceptance of certificates issued by certification bodies.




However by their nature, accreditation regimes, in the maintenance of standards, tend to cause some restriction in the way that certification bodies may conduct themselves. Management standards generally specify that systems shall be influenced by the needs of the assessed firm and the processes employed.

This means that for low-tech companies simple systems can be employed which do not compromise profitability but which do provide assurance at the desired quality level. The subsequent level of Certifying Body surveillance control can be appropriately set to a level commensurate to the risks involved.

Accreditation regimes can sometimes override this principle but the ASCB(E) approach imposes less of an administrative, and therefore financial burden, upon certifying bodies. The consequential cost benefits to firms wishing to become assessed are therefore significant.

Clients are further advised that comment on accreditation may be obtained from the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) or Accreditation Service for Certifying Bodies (Europe) Ltd. (ASCB(E)).

Accreditation Regime Comparison

<p>This chart has been compiled to assist organisations with understanding key elements of ISO Certification Bodies and the similarities of different types of accredited certification.</p>			
<p>Year of establishment</p>	<p>1995</p>	<p>1995</p>	<p>2000</p>
<p>Registered Head office</p>	<p>U.K.</p>	<p>U.K.</p>	<p>Australia</p>
<p>ISO 17011 Management System</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✗</p>
<p>ISO 17021 Accreditation</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>Unknown</p>
<p>Appointed as national Accreditation Body</p>	<p>✗</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✗</p>
<p>Affiliation with International Forum</p>	<p>Global Accreditation Forum</p>	<p>International Accreditation Forum</p>	<p>✗</p>
<p>On-Line Certificate Registration and Validation</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✗</p>	<p>✗</p>
<p>Registration and on-line verification of auditors</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✗</p>	<p>✗</p>

This article is compiled and Adapted from the following refereed Sources re:

1. **Business Assessment Services Ltd.(UK)**
2. **Association of Road Traffic Safety & Management (ARTSM), UK**
3. **Quay audit UK Ltd.**
4. **ASCB(E) UK**
5. **UKAS**