



GAS.G-01:2025

Code of Ethics for Experts, Assessors and GAS Staff

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0. FOREWORD

This Code of Ethics establishes the principles of conduct, professional integrity, and responsibility for all individuals involved in the activities of the GAS Accreditation Agency, including experts, assessors, committee members, technical experts, surveillance auditors, as well as administrative personnel (hereinafter – GAS Personnel).

The purpose of the Code is to:

- ensure a high level of confidence in the activities of the GAS Accreditation Agency and in GAS accreditation as a mechanism for guaranteeing competence and impartiality;
- prevent bias and unethical behavior;
- foster a culture of professional ethics, responsibility, and transparency.

The Code is mandatory for all individuals to whom it applies, regardless of the form of cooperation (staff employees, external experts, consultants, or temporarily engaged personnel).

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1. This Code defines:

- the core ethical principles governing the activities of GAS Personnel;
- requirements for professional behavior, impartiality, integrity, and confidentiality;
- standards of interaction with clients, partners, and among personnel.

1.2. The Code applies to:

- all individuals involved in conformity assessment, accreditation, decision-making, and related processes;
- any activity that may affect the impartiality, trust, or reputation of GAS.

1.3. The provisions of this Code complement but do not replace the requirements of the following policies:

- GAS.G-03 Policy on Conflict of Interest and Impartiality;
- GAS.G-05 Policy on Sustainable Development and Climate Responsibility;
- other GAS regulatory documents and international standards.

In case of inconsistencies between this Code and other GAS documents, the document establishing stricter requirements shall take precedence.

2. NORMATIVE AND REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

This Code of Ethics has been developed taking into account the requirements and recommendations of the following documents:

International standards:

- **ISO/IEC 17021-1:2023** Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1: Requirements.

Internal GAS documents:

- **GAS.MCB-01:2025** — Accreditation criteria for management system certification bodies;
- **GAS.G-03:2025** — Policy on conflict of interest and impartiality;
- **GAS.G-04:2025** — Appeals and complaints procedure;
- **GAS.G-05:2025** — Policy on sustainable development and climate responsibility of GAS.

This list is not exhaustive. The GAS Accreditation Agency may apply additional standards, guidelines, or internal documents if necessary to fully verify the conformity of a body with the requirements established in its field of activity.

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Code, the following terms are used:

GAS (Global Accreditation System) – an international accreditation system that establishes requirements, policies, procedures, and recognition mechanisms for conformity assessment bodies.

GAS Accreditation Agency – the body that conducts accreditation, makes decisions, performs assessments and surveillance, and issues accreditation certificates.

GAS Assessor – an individual authorized by the GAS Accreditation Agency to conduct accreditation assessments of conformity assessment bodies (including certification bodies, laboratories, inspection bodies, and other types of CABs) through on-site audits, witness assessments, document review, and preparation of a professional conclusion.

GAS Technical Expert – a specialist engaged to evaluate specific technical aspects of the activities of conformity assessment bodies (certification bodies, laboratories, inspection bodies, etc.), who provides an expert opinion to the assessor but does not make independent decisions.

GAS Accreditation Committee – a collegial body that makes decisions on granting, refusing, suspending, or withdrawing accreditation based on assessor and expert reports.

GAS Personnel – the employees of the Agency engaged in organizational, administrative, and technical processes related to accreditation.

Impartiality – a principle of GAS activities that implies decision-making based solely on objective evidence, without the influence of personal, commercial, or political interests.

Conflict of interest – a situation in which the personal interests of an expert, assessor, or any other involved person may influence, or may be perceived as influencing, the objectivity and impartiality of their actions. A conflict of interest also exists when the person involved (assessor, technical expert) is an employee, contractor, or related party of another conformity assessment body/laboratory/company group that is competing with the body/laboratory being assessed (in the same scope/region/supply chain).

Affiliation by employer/contractor – the fact of current employment, contracting, or business relationship with a conformity assessment body, laboratory, or their parent/subsidiary organization, including any such relationships within the past 24 months (look-back period).

Confidential information – any data obtained in the course of performing duties that are not publicly available and must be protected from unauthorized disclosure.

Ethical behavior – adherence to the principles of honesty, integrity, professional responsibility, and respect for the rights of all interested parties.

4. PRINCIPLES

All experts, assessors, and GAS personnel are required to act in accordance with the following fundamental principles:

4.1 Impartiality

- Decisions are based solely on objective evidence.
- Any external or internal influence (political, commercial, personal) is prohibited.
- Any potential conflicts of interest must be identified and mitigated before involvement in the accreditation process.
- Individuals engaged from other bodies/laboratories may not participate in the assessment of entities with which their employer/contractor has direct competition or a commercial interest.

4.2 Independence

- Experts and assessors must not engage in consulting services or activities that could compromise their independence.
- All decisions are made strictly within the competence of GAS, without influence from other organizations or individuals.
- Independence includes the absence of organizational dependence or financial interest on the part of the involved person's employer/contractor in relation to the body being assessed.

4.3 Confidentiality

- All information obtained during the performance of duties is treated as confidential.
- Disclosure to third parties is prohibited, except where explicitly required by law or GAS procedures (policies).
- Use of information for personal benefit is strictly prohibited.

4.4 Competence and professionalism

- All involved individuals must maintain a high level of professional knowledge and regularly upgrade their qualification.
- Decisions must be based on verified facts, technical knowledge, and internationally recognized standards.
- The conduct of experts and personnel must reflect the status of GAS as a body of international trust.

4.5 Objectivity and evidence-based approach

- Every conclusion or recommendation must be supported by documented evidence.
- Personal beliefs must not influence professional judgment.
- Reproducibility of assessment results is ensured.

4.6 Ethical Responsibility and Integrity

- Any form of corruption, solicitation, offering of gifts, rewards, or services is prohibited.
- An expert must immediately report any attempts at undue influence or violations of ethical norms.
- Any person representing GAS must demonstrate exemplary behavior and adherence to international integrity standards.

4.7 Respect for the Rights of Interested Parties

- All clients and conformity assessment bodies must have equal access to accreditation.
- Discrimination on any grounds is prohibited.
- GAS acts in the public interest, protecting consumers, government authorities, and businesses from unreliable certification.

5. ETHICAL CONDUCT IN PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

This section establishes mandatory standards of conduct for all categories of GAS personnel involved in accreditation processes, decision-making, technical evaluation, or administrative support. The requirements of this section are binding and complement the principles defined in Section 4 of this Code.

5.1 Assessors

Assessors conducting accreditation evaluations (on-site audits, witness assessments, document reviews) are required to observe the following:

Professional conduct

- Act respectfully, courteously, and without displays of aggression or superiority.
- Show respect toward the personnel of the assessed body and avoid any form of discrimination.

Impartiality and independence

- Refrain from any statements or actions that may be perceived as favoring one side.
- Not participate in the assessment of bodies that are direct competitors of the assessor's employer or current/recent (within 24 months) contractor.
- Declare any conflict of interest and withdraw from participation if such conflict arises.

Prohibition of consulting

- Do not provide recommendations on how to eliminate nonconformities or improve the client's system.
- Do not use the assessment process to promote third-party services.

Confidentiality

- Do not disclose any information obtained during the assessment.
- Ensure the secure storage of documents and records in accordance with GAS procedures.

5.2 Technical Experts

Technical experts engaged for the evaluation of specialized fields are required to observe the following:

Professional role

- Act strictly within the defined technical assignment.
- Provide objective conclusions without giving recommendations on how to eliminate nonconformities.

Impartiality

- Refrain from comments that may be interpreted as advice on system improvement.
- Do not influence the final decision or assessment made by the assessor or the Committee.

Conflict of interest

- If previously involved with the client (as an employee, consultant, or auditor), the expert must disclose this before the evaluation begins.

- Do not participate in the assessment of any organization whose activities are connected to personal, financial, or professional interests.
- Do not take part in the work for a body that is a direct competitor of the expert's employer/contractor.
- Declare any conflict of interest and withdraw if such conflict arises.

Confidentiality

- Maintain confidentiality of all data obtained during the accreditation assessment.

5.3 Members of the Accreditation Committee

Independence in decision-making

- Make decisions solely based on evidence, assessor conclusions, and GAS standards.
- Refrain from any political, commercial, or personal influence.

Conflict of interest

- Declare any conflict of interest and abstain from voting.
- Do not accept gifts, rewards, or benefits from the assessed bodies.

Confidentiality

- Ensure non-disclosure of information discussed during closed Committee meetings.

5.4 GAS Administrative Personnel

Ethical responsibility

- Collect, process, and transmit information accurately and without distortion or bias.
- Ensure transparency and accuracy in documenting accreditation processes.

Confidentiality

- Do not disclose internal information, correspondence, decisions, or working materials.
- Handle client inquiries impartially.

Prohibition of influence

- Do not interfere with the activities of assessors or committee members with the intent to alter conclusions or accreditation results.

5.5 Declarations of Impartiality and GAS Screening

- Before each assignment, the GAS Accreditation Agency requires assessors and technical experts to sign a Declaration of Impartiality indicating their employer, corporate group, and key contractors for the past 24 months.
- The GAS Accreditation Agency conducts an independent screening to identify potential overlaps in scopes, regions, supply chains, or commercial competition; if risks are

identified, the team composition is adjusted, or confidentiality barriers (information barriers) are implemented.

6. RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPONSE TO CODE VIOLATIONS

6.1 Obligation to Report Violations

Every expert, assessor, or employee of GAS is required to:

- immediately report to the Agency any facts or suspicions of violations of ethical norms, conflicts of interest, corruption risks, or impartiality issues;
- use the established reporting channels (electronic form, confidential hotline, written notice);
- ensure the accuracy and validity of the information provided.

A whistleblower is protected from any form of retaliation or discrimination.

6.2 Review and Investigation of Reports

- All reports are analyzed by the Ethics Committee or an authorized GAS representative.
- If necessary, an internal investigation is conducted with documented facts, evidence, and conclusions.
- Individuals under investigation have the right to be heard and to provide explanations.

6.3 Types of Disciplinary Actions

If a violation of the Code of Ethics is confirmed, the following actions may be applied:

1. Verbal or written warning.
2. Temporary suspension from participation in accreditation processes.
3. Revocation of the status of assessor, technical expert, or Commission member.
4. Referral of materials to competent authorities in cases of legal violations (e.g., corruption, disclosure of confidential information).

6.4 Personal Responsibility

- Each person who signs this Code assumes personal responsibility for its observance.
- Lack of knowledge of the Code's provisions does not exempt from responsibility.

6.5 Right to Appeal

A person subject to disciplinary action has the right to file an appeal in accordance with the "GAS Appeals and Complaints Procedure (GAS.G-04:2025)".

6.6 Principle of Fairness

All cases are reviewed objectively, impartially, and with consideration of:

- the nature of the violation;

- intent or negligence;
- impact on trust in the GAS system.

6.7 Protection of the Honor and Reputation of GAS

All assessors, experts, Commission members, and GAS employees must:

- refrain from any actions or statements that may harm the reputation or credibility of GAS as an international accreditation body;
- not make public statements on behalf of GAS without official authorization;
- not disseminate unverified, defamatory, or distorted information regarding GAS decisions or activities;
- promote a positive image of GAS through professional behavior, responsible representation, and adherence to international principles of integrity.

Any attempts to discredit GAS or knowingly spread false information are considered serious violations of the Code and may result in revocation of the person's status within GAS.

7. MECHANISM FOR ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

7.1 Reporting Violations

Any GAS employee, assessor, expert, or external interested party has the right to report a potential violation of this Code.

Reports may be submitted:

- via the official GAS email address;
- through a secure form on the GAS portal.

7.2 Protection of Whistleblowers

- A person who reports a violation in good faith is protected from retaliation, discrimination, or any adverse treatment.
- Information about the whistleblower is confidential and cannot be disclosed without their consent.

7.3 Review of Ethical Violations

All reports are reviewed by the Ethics Committee or a specially authorized GAS commission.

The procedure includes:

- registration of the report;
- verification of facts;
- requesting explanations from the relevant persons;
- preparation of conclusions and recommendations.

7.4 Consequences of Code Violations

Depending on the severity of the violation, the following measures may be applied:

1. Verbal or written warning.
2. Temporary suspension from participation in accreditation processes.
3. Revocation of the status of expert, assessor, or GAS employee.
4. Referral of the information to the relevant authorities in case of a breach of legislation.

7.5 Appeal

- A person subject to disciplinary measures has the right to file an appeal in accordance with the GAS.G-04 “Appeals and Complaints Procedure.”

8. FINAL PROVISIONS

8.1 This Code is mandatory for all categories of personnel involved in GAS activities, regardless of the form of cooperation (staff members, assessors, technical experts, members of commissions, advisory bodies, or external specialists).

8.2 Compliance with this Code is a condition for maintaining the authority and status of a GAS representative. Violation of the Code’s requirements may result in disciplinary measures, including temporary suspension, revocation of authority, or termination of cooperation.

8.3 All individuals who sign the Declaration of Compliance with this Code confirm their understanding of GAS’s ethical principles and commit to immediately reporting any attempts of undue influence, corrupt practices, conflicts of interest, or violations that could affect the objectivity of accreditation decisions.

8.4 The interpretation of the provisions of this Code is carried out by the GAS Accreditation Agency. In case of disputes, the final decision is made by the GAS Ethics Commission.

8.5 The current version of this document is published on the official website — [**gas.international**](https://gas.international).