



GAS.MCB-02:2025

GAS Policy on Accreditation of Management System Certification Bodies

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0. FOREWORD

This document establishes the policy of the Global Accreditation System (GAS) regarding the accreditation of management system certification bodies and defines the principles on which the GAS accreditation system operates.

The policy is mandatory for all bodies applying for the granting, maintenance, or extension of GAS accreditation in the field of management system certification, in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and the internal documents of GAS.

This document aims to:

- ensure confidence in the results of certification conducted under GAS accreditation;
- establish uniform principles and rules of interaction between the GAS Accreditation Agency and management system certification bodies;
- maintain impartiality, competence, transparency, and accountability throughout the accreditation processes;
- ensure that the activities of accredited bodies comply with the requirements of sustainable development, information security, and international conformity assessment practices.

The GAS Policy defines the framework approaches within which the accreditation criteria (GAS.MCB-01:2025) and other supplementary GAS documents are applied. It serves as a fundamental normative document for the establishment, implementation, and continual improvement of the accreditation system.

1. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all management system certification bodies that:

- apply for initial GAS accreditation;
- undergo surveillance or reassessment procedures;
- request renewal or extension of the scope of accreditation;
- operate under GAS accreditation and are required to maintain ongoing compliance with applicable requirements.

The Policy defines:

- the objectives, principles, and core mechanisms of accreditation for management system certification bodies;
- the requirements for such bodies regarding compliance with accreditation criteria, ethical standards, environmental and climate responsibility, sustainable development, and information security;
- the role of the GAS Accreditation Agency in ensuring trust, impartiality, and the harmonization of accreditation practices;

- the conditions for the use of GAS accreditation status and its recognition in national and international contexts.

This Policy is mandatory for all bodies conducting, or intending to conduct, management system certification under the GAS accreditation status.

2. NORMATIVE AND REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

This section lists the international and internal documents whose provisions apply during the accreditation of management system certification bodies.

The documents referenced herein were valid at the time of this Policy's publication. In the event of their revision or replacement, the latest editions, including all amendments and addenda, shall be used.

International Standards:

- **ISO/IEC 17021-1:2023** Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1: Requirements;
- **ISO/IEC 17011:2017** Conformity assessment — Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

Internal GAS Documents

- **GAS.MCB-01:2025** — Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies;
- **GAS.MCB-03:2025** — Additional Criteria for Certification Bodies of Quality;
- **GAS.MCB-04:2025** — Requirements for the Audit and Certification of Management Systems of Organizations with Multiple Sites;
- **GAS.MCB-05:2025** — Regulations on the Transfer of Management System Certifications Issued by GAS-Accredited Bodies;
- **GAS.MCB-06:2025** — Accreditation Assessment of Management System Certification Bodies Operating in Multiple Countries;
- **GAS.G-01:2025** — Code of Ethics for GAS Experts, Assessors, and Personnel;
- **GAS.G-02:2025** — Policy on the Use of GAS Accreditation Marks and References;
- **GAS.G-03:2025** — Policy on Conflict of Interest and Impartiality;
- **GAS.G-04:2025** — Procedure for Appeals and Complaints;
- **GAS.G-05:2025** — GAS Policy on Sustainable Development and Climate Responsibility.

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 General Provisions

The terms presented in GAS.MCB-01:2025 — Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies apply in full to this document.

All terms shall be interpreted in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC 17011, ISO 9000, and ISO/IEC 17000, unless otherwise specified in this section.

3.2 TERMS SPECIFIC TO THIS POLICY

GAS Accreditation Policy — a document that defines the strategic foundations, principles, mechanisms, and conditions for the accreditation of management system certification bodies within the framework of GAS.

GAS Accreditation — the official recognition of a certification body's competence to perform specific conformity assessment activities in accordance with GAS requirements.

Applicant body — a certification body that has submitted an application for accreditation, reaccreditation, or extension of its scope of accreditation.

Accredited body — a certification body that has been officially granted accredited status by GAS and is listed in the GAS registry.

Scope of accreditation — the defined list of standards, programs, and sectors within which a certification body is authorized to operate under GAS accreditation.

Accreditation maintenance — the process of continuously confirming an accredited body's compliance with established requirements through surveillance assessments and other GAS measures.

Principle of impartiality — a mandatory requirement stipulating that all accreditation decisions must be made objectively, without influence from commercial or personal interests.

Suspension — a temporary restriction of accreditation, which may apply to all or part of the scope of accreditation.

Withdrawal — the official cancellation of a body's accreditation due to nonconformity with GAS requirements or violation of accreditation conditions.

4. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE POLICY

4.1 Purpose of the Documents

The purpose of this Policy is to establish uniform principles and approaches that all management system certification bodies are required to follow when applying for and maintaining GAS accreditation.

The Policy defines the framework conditions under which accreditation, surveillance, renewal, suspension, or withdrawal of accreditation is carried out.

4.2 Objectives of the Policy

This Policy is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- to define uniform accreditation rules for management system certification bodies;
- to ensure confidence in accredited bodies by guaranteeing their competence, independence, and impartiality;
- to establish a transparent and coherent accreditation process, covering application, assessment, surveillance, and decision-making;
- to promote the harmonization of accreditation practices within GAS, taking into account international trends and best practices;
- to align accreditation activities with GAS's sustainable development policy, ethical principles, and climate responsibility;
- to ensure feedback and continual improvement of accreditation processes and procedures.

5. PRINCIPLES OF GAS ACCREDITATION

GAS accreditation is founded on fundamental principles that ensure confidence in certification activities, objectivity in decision-making, and transparency in all processes.

The GAS Accreditation Agency applies these principles in its operations, and all management system certification bodies seeking to obtain or maintain accreditation are required to act in accordance with them.

5.1 Impartiality

The GAS Accreditation Agency guarantees that all accreditation decisions are made solely based on objective evidence of competence.

Certification bodies shall establish and maintain a management system for impartiality, eliminating any commercial, financial, or administrative influence on certification decision-making processes.

5.2 Competence

The GAS Accreditation Agency grants accreditation only to bodies that have demonstrated compliance with international competence requirements, particularly ISO/IEC 17021-1.

Certification bodies must maintain and document the competence of their personnel, auditors, and experts within their respective areas of activity.

5.3 Transparency and Traceability

The GAS Accreditation Agency conducts accreditation activities according to documented, reproducible, and verifiable procedures.

Certification bodies shall ensure transparent and documented certification processes, including the maintenance of a certificate register, traceability of audit activities and decisions, and clear documentation of the basis for each certification decision.

5.4 Confidentiality

The GAS Accreditation Agency safeguards all information received from certification bodies and uses it exclusively for accreditation purposes.

Certification bodies must protect all personal, commercial, and technical client data and shall not disclose such information without legal grounds or the client's consent.

5.5 Independence and Integrity

Accreditation decisions are made by an independent GAS Accreditation Commission, which does not engage in consulting or commercial activities related to the bodies it assesses.

Certification bodies must ensure their independence from consulting entities, clients, and financial interests that may compromise impartiality.

5.6 Risk-Based Approach

The GAS Accreditation Agency applies a risk-based model in planning accreditation, surveillance, and reassessment activities.

Certification bodies shall implement risk-based audit planning, evaluate risks related to impartiality, technical competence, and environmental or climate factors, and document the measures taken to mitigate such risks.

5.7 Ethical Standards

The GAS Accreditation Agency adheres to high standards of integrity and corporate ethics, as established in the **GAS Code of Ethics** (GAS.G-01:2025).

Certification bodies must implement their own ethical policies and ensure that all personnel, auditors, and external experts comply with ethical principles and professional conduct standards.

5.8 Accountability and Continual Improvement

The GAS Accreditation Agency conducts ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of its accreditation processes and implements measures for continual improvement.

Certification bodies shall maintain the effectiveness of their management systems, ensure continuous improvement of certification processes and outcomes, and provide feedback to GAS for system enhancement.

6. ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE FOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CERTIFICATION BODIES

6.1 General Provisions

The accreditation of management system certification bodies is carried out by the GAS Accreditation Agency in accordance with the requirements of document GAS.MCB-01:2025 “*Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies*”, the ISO/IEC 17011 standard, and the internal procedures of GAS.

This document (GAS.MCB-02) establishes the GAS policy regarding the application of the accreditation procedure without duplicating the technical stages defined in GAS.MCB-01:2025.

6.2 Policy Principles of the Accreditation Procedure

Bodies applying for or maintaining accreditation are obliged to:

- operate strictly within the procedures defined in GAS.MCB-01:2025;
- ensure the provision of complete and accurate information at all stages of accreditation;
- maintain readiness for surveillance by the GAS Accreditation Agency, including witness audits;
- comply with the decisions of the GAS Accreditation Agency concerning the elimination of nonconformities, changes in the scope of accreditation, suspension, or withdrawal;
- inform the GAS Accreditation Agency of any changes that may affect accreditation (structural, legal, technical, or personnel-related).

7. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF ACCREDITED BODIES

7.1 General Provisions

The rights and obligations of accredited certification bodies are defined in document GAS.MCB-01:2025 “*Accreditation Criteria for Management System Certification Bodies*” and are mandatory for compliance. This section establishes the policy principles that accredited bodies must adhere to in order to maintain their GAS accreditation status.

7.2 Rights of Accredited Bodies

Accredited bodies have the right to:

- use the GAS accreditation status strictly within the granted scope;
- contact GAS with requests for clarification regarding policies and procedures;
- apply for the extension or renewal of accreditation;
- appeal decisions in accordance with procedure GAS.G-04. A detailed list of rights is provided in Section 6.2 of document GAS.MCB-01:2025.

7.3 Obligations of Accredited Bodies

Accredited bodies are required to:

- comply with all requirements on the basis of which accreditation was granted;
- ensure the competence and impartiality of their personnel;
- promptly inform GAS of any changes that may affect accreditation;

provide the necessary reports and facilitate surveillance assessments. The detailed requirements are outlined in Sections 6.3–6.7 GAS.MCB-01:2025.

7.4 Policy Principle of Accountability

Violation of the requirements of this Policy may result in the suspension or withdrawal of accreditation in accordance with the procedure established in GAS.MCB-01:2025.

8. FINAL PROVISIONS

8.1. This Policy is mandatory for all management system certification bodies that apply for or hold accreditation granted by the GAS Accreditation Agency (Global Accreditation System).

8.2. Compliance with this Policy is a prerequisite for obtaining, maintaining, and renewing accreditation. Deviations from the requirements of this Policy are not permitted, except in cases expressly approved in writing by the GAS Accreditation Agency.

8.3. Compliance with the Policy is monitored through initial assessments, surveillance and reassessment activities, as well as during the review of complaints and appeals.

8.4. The Policy is subject to review by the GAS Accreditation Agency in the event of changes to international standards, regulatory requirements, or GAS strategic directions, but not less than once every three years.

9.5. The official current version of this document is published on the GAS website (gas.international) and enters into force on the date of its approval.