

## AC 10.0 Accreditation Decision

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to explain the process for reviewing final Assessment Deliverables and making an accreditation decision.

### 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all accreditation assessments undertaken by the GAC and outsourced assessments carried out by competent Accreditation Bodies.

### 3. Responsibilities

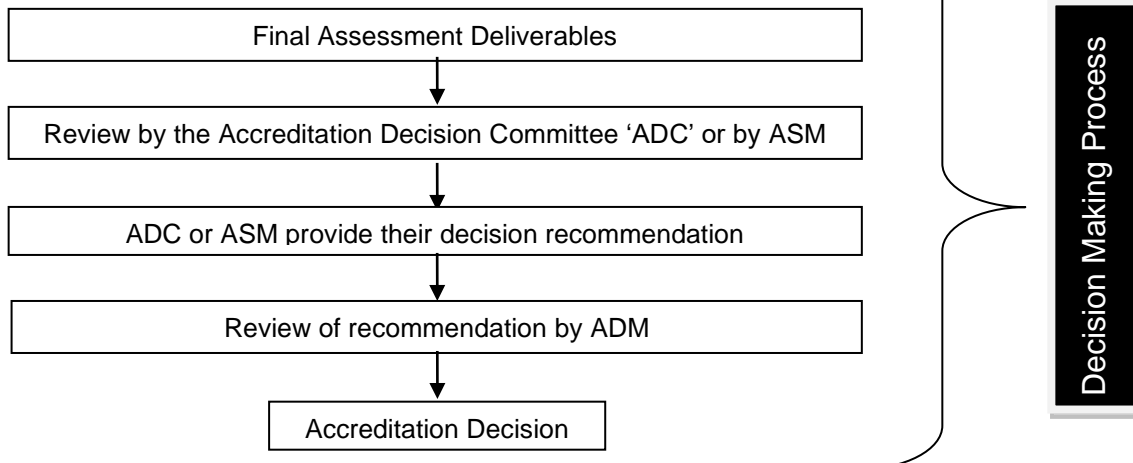
The Accreditation Decision Manager (ADM) shall be responsible for ensuring that all final Assessment Deliverables are reviewed by relevant supporting personnel those include Accreditation Decision Committees (ADC) or Accreditation Services Manager.

The Accreditation Decision Manager makes accreditation decisions for the GAC. This decision-making power can be delegated to the Accreditation Service Manager by the Director General from time to time as necessary.

The Accreditation Decision Manager cannot make accreditation decisions based on final Assessment report whereby he has a conflict of interest or was part of the assessment team. In that case, the Accreditation Service Manager (ASM) or assigned deputy down the line makes the decision instead of the ADM.

### 4. Procedure

The following steps shall be followed:



To ensure the technical integrity of the reports and recommendations, an ADC (See description hereafter), composed by relevant experts is appointed after each assessment, taking into account possible concerns regarding conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

After the review, the ADC makes a final Review Recommendation to the ADM for an accreditation decision.

For some types of assessments (e.g., surveillance), the functioning and the composition of ADC is simpler than initial/renewal assessments or in those assessment where the scope has been amended (e.g., extension - see paragraph §5.2/b): the ASM or deputy is acting alone as ADC chair in such cases.

In case of updating the accreditation scope where accredited standard(s) needs to be specified or described further (cosmetic update) e.g., activity title elaboration or for the sub-methodologies/categories which were actually covered but were not described after confirmation with assessor where necessary or if there were any corrections needed – those can be updated in the accreditation scope without formal decision making as the method/technique or activity was already accredited but not described. Other aspects can be treated likewise such as when there's version/edition/year update to a standard/method/procedure where there hasn't been any change to technique/process/requirements.

The Accreditation Decision Manager (ADM) must review the final recommendations provided by the ADC. The ADM must also be satisfied that the assessment process was undertaken according to the requirements. The

## AC 10.0 Accreditation Decision

ADM has to trust the technical judgement of the ADC and he cannot modify it. However, he can require additional clarifications about the fulfilment of the accreditation process, payment status and other financial and administrative issues.

The Notification Letter for accreditation (AC 10.2) is sent to the applicant or accredited conformity assessment body (CAB) conveying the formal decision of the GAC that also specifies conditions in accreditation being granted, renewed, extended, reduced, maintained, reinstated or others. The accreditation certificate and scope of accreditation are published on the GAC website and can also be sent to the CAB via email or courier service.

Another notification letter AC 10.3 is sent to the CAB in conveying the formal decision of the GAC that also specifies certain conditions in relation to the accreditation being declined, (not granted), suspended, forced withdrawn, voluntary withdrawn, this notification letter contains the reasons for the decision including references to specific clauses in relevant standard, the GAC criteria documents or other requirements. The notification may also include recommendations and suggestions as to actions necessary for the application to be reconsidered or a new application accepted by GAC or to have an existing accreditation reinstated. The committee may also request an additional assessment to be conducted to assess specific areas of the requested scope. Accreditation Certificates are signed by the Director General.

Copies of the final Assessment deliverables, Decision Review document, Notification Letter, accreditation scope, and Accreditation Certificate shall be placed on the CAB's file and a copy of the Accreditation Certificate & scope shall be made publicly available as part of the GAC online register.

### 5. Accreditation Decision Committee

Accreditation decision committee (ADC) is composed of person(s) that makes decision on accreditation, the process of decision making can involve personnel such as accreditation decision manager (ADM), internal/external personnel that are specialist or knowledgeable in specific scope/fields that are members to the accreditation decision committee and as needed the accreditation services manager (ASM).

**Notification Decision Committee:** when a CAB's recognition includes accreditation + notification, the ADC is constituted in such a way that it also has knowledge and skills for the part of notification as well whereas when the assessment was conducted only for the purpose of notification (and not for accreditation), the constitution of notification decision committee is followed on the same lines as described above and the role described below in the context of notification. However, in cases where there are no changes to the notification scope, the decision recommendation can be made by the ASM or his deputy alone (ref. to 5.2b).

#### 5.1. Role

The functions of the Accreditation Decision Committees (ADC) are as follows:

1. To provide technical advice on accreditation policy matters to the ADM, as required,
2. To provide technical advice on specific accreditation files to the ADM,
3. To review assessment outputs of applicant CAB and accreditation recommendation (positive or negative as adjudged).
4. Give feedback and recommendations on the performance of assessment teams,
5. Give feedback on the accreditation process and performance of GAC (if any),
6. Give recommendations for the improvement of the GAC processes (if any),
7. The Chairperson shall provide the final accreditation recommendation for applicant organisations following the review and recommendation by consensus, as much as possible, of the committee members.

#### 5.2 Membership

##### a. Initial assessment / Renewal / Extension:

The ADC is a committee normally composed of GAC assessors / experts, *minimum of two members* one of them is ideally an assessor, appointed by GAC to support the Accreditation Decision Manager in his tasks.

The number of members of the ADC depending on diversity of the accreditation scope, in some cases a committee member may be covering more than one scope domain based on his/her qualification with GAC

## AC 10.0 Accreditation Decision

thus leading to appointment of *fewer committee members* however regardless of how small is the accreditation scope there will always be *at minimum two committee members* one of them chair.

In certain cases, an appointee to the DC can be selected related to scope discipline based on its subject knowledge or expertise attained either from experience or educational background however not necessarily having approved qualification to extent of as for assessor/expert.

Also, expertise when relevant can be added from one scheme to another scheme and it doesn't necessarily have subject scheme qualification e.g., expertise under 17025 (Electrical testing) to be used in the DC for 17065 Product certification for similar product domain.

**Note:** Meetings of the ADC can be attended by management staff of GAC – particularly the file manager who can conduct supervision activities of the committees. When GAC staffs are not members of the ADC, they do not have voting rights nor contribute to meeting quorum rules.

b. Other assessments:

For other assessments where there is no significant change to the scope activities such as in case of surveillance, unannounced assessment, special assessment, follow-up, office assessment, types of assessment for notification etc. the ADC can be limited to only ASM or his deputy (but ASM can have other members if he deems required) who is in charge to prepare, in the light of the assessment outcome, a recommendation to the ADM. If the ASM was involved in such assessment, the TQM can make the decision recommendation, if both ASM & TQM were involved in the same assessment the ADC can be carried out by independent ADC as stated in 5.2a above or by other GAC division manager who was not part of the assessment team, the same form AC 10.1 or AC 4.2 (as applicable) is used to record the recommendation. For Office assessment (survey) and informal CAB visits no specific decision is needed, unless if there's change in the scope of accreditation and or is to be suspended, reduced, extended or withdrawn, and the ADC will be set forth based on above guidance.

**Note:** In case during any type of assessment if the assessment team recommends for suspension of accreditation, GAC doesn't need to wait for assessment deliverables completion like in normal routine instead on the basis of the assessment team recommendation GAC can make internal decision via ASM/deputy as stated above or even external decision committee to take the decision on suspension.

### 5.3. Meeting Rules

- a. The ADCs shall meet for each task they are asked to conduct at least once, meeting can be done electronically (videoconference, chat, email ...)
- b. The chair of the committee manages the meetings and distributes the tasks,
- c. The chair reports recommendations of the committee in the GAC forms AC10.1 or AC 4.2 as applicable.
- d. A quorum for meetings shall be no less than 2/3 of the committee members (in case the members are 3 and above). In case of 2 member ADC not in consensus a third member can be added by GAC to reach the quorum for vote.
- e. The ADC shall attempt to reach decisions by consensus. Where a vote on a proposed motion is required, at least 2/3 of the members must cast a vote for the motion vote to be valid, with abstention votes considered valid votes. For the motion to be passed, no less than 66% of the total of the 'yes' votes and 'no' votes (abstention votes not included) must be votes in favour ('yes' votes). Motions may be voted on in meetings of the ADC or, where required, by (electronic) ballots,
- f. The decision committee members have the right to directly contact the assessment team for explanations and clarifications,
- g. Contact with the CABs should be through the accreditation file manager,
- h. The recommendations of the committee should be reported as soon as possible, and indicative timeframe is 10 working days starting from the date of granting access to the accreditation file, due to valid reason similar timeframe can be extended on discretion of GAC.

## AC 10.0 Accreditation Decision

---

*Note: When the ADC is limited to ASM only the rules a, b, d and e are not applicable.*

### 6. Accreditation Decision Monitoring

The monitoring of the decision of accreditation covers the recommendation issued by the ADC and its approval by the ADM; hence the performance of all individuals involved in the process is evaluated.

The technical & quality manager ensures that the relevant monitoring records are maintained whereas GAC personnel (TQM, ASM, Div managers, file managers or appointed assessors) can select randomly an appointed Accreditation Decision Committee and ensure its monitoring in the form AC 10.9.

Depending on accreditation activity, GAC aims ideally to monitor 9 ADCs in 3 years.

The ADC monitoring is also taken as opportunity to perform especially the monitoring of the ADC chair and the ADM; and decide whether maintain or not their qualifications.

In the case of poor performance of the monitored ADC, a corrective action has to be undertaken, this will be arranged between the TQM, the ASM, and where appropriate, the Director General.

GAC ensures that the Muslim personnel are involved in the halal accreditation process including decision making process.

### 7. Associated forms and documents

AC 10.1 Review Recommendation and Decision

AC 10.2 Notification Letter for Accreditation

AC 10.3 Notification for accreditation withdrawal, suspension, decline

Accreditation Certificates (e.g., AC 10.10, 10.11)

ADC Performance Monitoring (AC 10.9)

AC 4.2 Nonconformity Sheet and Assessment report

AC 12.1 Request for voluntary withdrawal or suspension of accreditation

IAF MD-7 Harmonization of Sanctions to be applied to Conformity Assessment Bodies