

## AC 6.0 Assessment

---

### 1 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to explain the process for undertaking assessments.

The assessment must be organized by mutual consent to suit the convenience of the applicant, GAC and its assessors (except in case of unannounced assessment or another legible situation).

### 2 Scope

This procedure covers all type of assessments (whether conducted onsite or remotely) carried out by GAC for all accreditation schemes, ref. to AC 11.0 assessment techniques.

### 3 Responsibilities

The Team leader, with the support of GAC File manager, is responsible for the organisation and conduct of the assessment, including logistics and ensuring that the assessment team is well prepared for the assessment.

Technical assessors are to be encouraged to follow through their lines of investigation (unless they run counter to a GAC policy, in which case the Team leader shall diplomatically tell the technical assessor so, preferably in private).

GAC Accreditation Services Manager is responsible of affording the needed administrative support to the assessment team and CABs for the good conducting of the assessments. Wherever the Accreditation Services Manager is mentioned in this document, it refers as well to the file managers appointed for specific files.

### 4 Procedure

The description illustrates the normal assessment of activities, some of which will be concurrent depending on size and complexity. All types of assessment techniques have been defined within AC 11.0 procedure. Depending on the accreditation scheme, normally AC 4.2 Nonconformity Sheet and Assessment report is customized and prepared prior to the assessment which includes information and data received from the CAB about PT, calibrations, checklist etc. (other individual documents may be used in specific situation such as in case of joint assessment where some assessment documents of the other AB are used that don't cover GAC requirements, these documents includes such as AC 6.1 assessment plan, checklists e.g., AC 4.7 for 17025 scheme,..

The assigned File Manager ensures to:

- Set the date for assessment (usually by phone or email) with CAB and the assessment team,
- Confirms availability of assessment team for agreed dates,
- Send a confirmation email to the CAB on the provisional dates and assessment team members and request if there is any conflict of interest or objection on team members (normally AC 4.2 sheet is used for documenting the assessment dates and team acceptance by the CAB),
- Once acceptance of the team and confirmation of no conflict of interest is declared, give the team access to the CAB file documents,
- Book travel, accommodation and visas for assessment team if not taken in charge by the CAB,
- Confirm timetable with client and team, including client staff availability, document availability and arranging demonstrations. This must fit within normal client hours and minimise disruption.
- Keep following the realisation of the assessment by phone, emails and when needed presence with the team.

The opening & closing meeting generally consists of requirements stated in AC 11.0 assessment technique procedure.

A general tour (live or recorded tour is possible when conducting remote assessment) of facilities may be made by the team to gain an overall understanding of the physical layout and introductions to key staff. Depending on the size of the facility and complexity of its work, the team may disperse to examine specialist areas of work or may stay together for various elements of the assessment.

## AC 6.0 Assessment

### Management system issues:

There will be discussions held with appropriate CAB staff on:

- review of management system documentation;
- effectiveness of the quality management system; and
- staff qualification and training and the records of these.

### Technical Issues

❖ For assessment of testing and calibration laboratories, the discussion should cover but not limited to, the accreditation scheme requirements to be followed:

- products tested and range of tests;
- methods used, their selection and control;
- equipment available, calibration and its management;
- witnessing of testing procedures (where appropriate);
- performance in proficiency testing programs;
- sampling and testing processes, assessment of uncertainty, checking of calculations and data transfers and record keeping;
- reporting of test results.

❖ For assessment of inspection bodies, the discussion then extends to:

- staff competence and knowledge of the regulatory environment of the scope of accreditation;
- contract formation, scoping and planning of inspection activities;
- inspection procedures;
- where possible, field witnessing of inspection activities, including sampling;
- when assessing an inspection body, the inspectors to be witnessed shall be selected by the GAC (or its appointed assessors). Moreover, seen the critical contribution of inspectors in inspection decision, more details should be given, in the assessment report, how the assessment team does determine suitably the competence of the witnessed inspectors;
- where measurement equipment is used, its calibration and management;
- analysis of inspection findings;
- record keeping and report creation and content.

❖ For assessment of management system certification bodies:

There will then be a number audits by the certification body witnessed in the field. These may take several days and extend to different geographic locations, extending to branch offices of the certification body.

❖ In the case of product certification bodies and halal certification bodies:

Subsequent discussion will focus on the experience of the professional staff in the product sectors to be covered by the accreditation, and on the selection of laboratories that carryout the tests upon which the certification is based. There is also consideration of evaluation and surveillance of manufacturers and their production, including any market surveillance activities (depending on the type of certification scheme).

Particularly, for Halal Product Certification, the fulfilment of Islamic Rules and the staff commitment to Islamic Values are among the main topics of the assessment.

In all the types of CAB the requirements of the scheme shall be followed and focused.

### Administrative issues include:

- compliance with the requirements for use of the GAC emblem including endorsements, advertising/promotional material (where possible). The review must evaluate whether the use of the emblem could misrepresent the scope or nature of the accreditation; this is also covered thru TN-6.

- clarification of any outstanding matters with CAB management.

The team may elect to hold a short private meeting to arrive at consensus findings for their report and presentation to the CAB.

In all fields, the assessment concludes with a meeting, often termed the “exit interview” or “closing meeting”. The team leader gives feedback to CAB management and indicates the findings of the assessment team, including non-conformances against the accreditation criteria and other observations and suggesting where improvements can be made (AC 11.0 also provides insights about closing meeting).

The assessment team can neither provide direct assistance to solve problems nor indicate the decision of the GAC other than the nature of its accreditation recommendations to CAB & GAC. The CAB management is provided with opportunity to seek clarification and ask any question about the findings but conflict should be avoided at this time however CABs have rights to dispute the findings and decisions of GAC later in the process.

In case of dispute on finding QM 4.0 procedure for complaints to be followed, in case of dispute related to accreditation decision AC14.0 procedure for appeals to be followed

A copy of nonconformity Excel file (AC 4.2) shall be left with the CAB unless the assessment team is unable to reach a conclusion. In that case, the team leader should refer back to GAC (Accreditation Services manager or File Manager or Division Manager or TQM) for clarification during the assessment or after, the CAB should be made aware about the potential NC to be raised.

The Team leader shall ensure that CAB understands precisely what further action is required before accreditation will be granted or continued.

The Team leader shall ensure appropriate notes of the activities covered by the assessment are recorded and retained on file to support the outcome of the assessment.

The timeframe for the CAB to provide a proposal of the corrective actions plan to GAC team is normally within 5 working days from the date of the final closing meeting. However, the assessment team may agree to allow additional or more time needed by the CAB. The proposed time frames for corrective actions to close the findings is given in AC 8.0 and also indicated in the AC 4.2 sheet.

The File Manager makes sure that Corrective actions and the opinions of the assessors are communicated between two parties until closure of findings. AC 9.0 assessment report procedure to be followed.

The file is submitted for decision only once the Final report and supporting documentation proving that the technical and administrative requirements for accreditation have been fulfilled.

### 5 Associated Documents

- AC 2.0 Applications for Accreditation
- AC 5.0 Assessment preparation and team selection
- AC 8.0 Corrective Action
- AC 9.0 Assessment Report
- AC 11.0 Assessment techniques
- AC 14.0 Appeals
- QM 4.0 Complaints
- AC 4.2 Nonconformity Sheet and Assessment report
- AC 2.1 Application form and Accreditation Agreement
- ISO/IEC 17011