

## **EFNDT/CEC/P/05-002 R03**

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# **PROCEDURE FOR THE EFNDT ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL OF CERTIFICATION BODIES**

### **SCOPE**

This document describes the detailed procedure for approval by EFNDT of NDT personnel Certification Bodies.

### **ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

EFNDT/CEC/P/05-001: EFNDT Assessment and Approval of certification bodies

EFNDT/CEC/P/05-005: Excel process map for audit and approval of certification bodies (for internal use)

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### **COMPLIANCE CRITERIA**

EN ISO 9712:2012 Non-destructive testing – qualification and certification of personnel

ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This document provides guidance to EFNDT involved persons (CEC Chairman and assessors) and to applicant certification bodies prior to audit by representatives of EFNDT. Audits will be carried out for compliance with ISO/IEC 17024:2012, and EN ISO 9712:2012. It is recommended that the applicable standard(s) and this document are read carefully by applicant organisations in order to avoid unnecessary effort and delay in the approval process.

1.2 A Certification Body may apply to be approved in as many different NDT methods and sectors as it wishes, but only those for which it is judged to be satisfactory will be included in its EFNDT approved scope.

1.3 The current fees and audit expenses will be payable by an applicant organisation after the Final Meeting and, in any case, after completion of all requested corrective actions. No approval can be issued without prior receipt of all outstanding payments.

## **2. THE APPLICATION OR RENEWAL**

2.1 The completed application form, the related documents and the application fee (see Annexes A and B to EFNDT/CEC/P/05-001) shall be sent to the CEC Chairman. These documents will enable the CEC Chairman to confirm eligibility for approval.

2.2 No eligibility can be pronounced and audit can be commenced unless the application fee has been paid in full and the CEC Chairman has verified that the applicant is fully aware of the applicable EFNDT documents.

2.3 In case the CEC Chairman does not confirm eligibility, this will be announced to the applicant together with the reasons. The applicant will liaise with the CEC Chairman in order to solve the pending issues. In case these issues cannot be solved, the application fee, which has been set to cover the costs associated with the review and processing of the application, will not be refunded.

2.4 When a certification body intends to renew its approval, the process to be followed is the same as for the initial approval.

## **3. PREPARATION FOR AUDIT**

3.1 Audit checklists addressing the applicable criteria are available to certification bodies for use in conducting internal audits prior to the EFNDT formal audit taking place.

3.2 On confirmation of the eligibility the EFNDT CEC Chairman or an authorised deputy will appoint a Managing Assessor, send him the quality system documentation and inform the applicant of this nomination. The Certification Body shall have the right to reject either the managing or Support Assessor as assigned by the CEC Chairman. Any second nomination shall be accepted.

Note: When selecting the Managing (and eventually the Supporting) Assessor, the following criteria should be taken into account:

- knowledge of the language of the applicant
- absence of possible interest of the assessor in business related to the applicant

3.3 The Managing Assessor is fully responsible for liaison with the applicant certification body, including all documents relating to the audit procedure. On the basis of the quality system documentation, the Managing assessor will form an initial opinion as to the extent that the proposed systems and procedures meet the requirements. The Managing Assessor will review the documents notify the Applicant of any ambiguities or required elements that are not addressed or addressed incorrectly. The application will not be processed further until these matters have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Managing Assessor.

3.1 The Managing Assessor shall contact the applicant to establish a mutually agreeable date for the mandatory on-site audit, ensuring that the current quality documentation is on-hand, and publish an audit agenda not later than 14 days prior to the agreed date (to be sent to the applicant, the Support Assessor if applicable and the CEC Chairman).

A Support Assessor, selected by the Managing Assessor from the EFNDT list of approved auditors and having qualifications appropriate to the assessment in hand, may, if necessary, be appointed by the CEC Chairman to work under the direction of the Managing Assessor for assessing specific areas as detailed in the audit agenda.

## **4. THE AUDIT PROCEDURE**

### **4.1** The purpose of the audit is twofold:

- To determine the suitability of the general administration of the organisation in respect of the quality management system, procedures, records, security arrangements, impartiality, facilities and staff structure.
- To technically assess the organisation with regard to examination procedures, examination specimens, examination questions, equipment and examination staff qualifications in the particular qualification examination(s) which are the subject(s) of the application.

**4.2** The audit will begin with an introductory meeting between the audit team and representatives of the Certification Body. At this meeting the EFNDT Managing Assessor will stress that any and all materials and facilities reviewed will remain confidential to the EFNDT and the applicant. He will then introduce the audit team and confirm pre-arranged details of the audit programme, including the details of reporting. He shall emphasize the fact that recorded observations are only categorised as non-compliances where there is a clear non-conformity with the applicable standard. Arrangements will be made for a member of the Certification Body staff to accompany the assessor(s) during the audit to confirm the correctness of observations.

**4.3** Each assessor will review the activities of the Certification Body to which he is assigned and his appraisal will consist of on the spot written observations of the organisation, documentation and examination activities as defined by the quality system and the requirements of the applicable standard(s). If an assessor observes an apparent non-compliance with requirements he will record the facts on a Detail Report form (see Appendix 1A).

**4.4** The audit shall include witnessing the conduct of an examination (real or mock).

## **5. RECORDING NON-COMPLIANCES WITH REQUIREMENTS**

**5.1** The Detail Reports record apparent failure of arrangements to comply with the Certification Body's quality management system, or with the requirements of applicable standards. These shall be the objective evidence upon which the EFNDT Managing Assessor bases his recommendations to the EFNDT.

**5.2** A detail report form will be completed by the assessor at the time of the observation and witnessed by the accompanying Certification Body representative. The signature by the Certification Body representative is required to signify the factual nature of the observation or apparent non-compliance. There will be no attempt to designate the category of any non-compliance at this time; this will be done by the Audit Team (Managing and Support Assessor) prior to the team presenting its findings to the Certification Body.

**5.3** The information recorded on the detail report form will contain the following:

- reference to the criterion or criteria against which the report is raised;
- the particular activity or area of operation concerned;
- any documents or records involved, including serial numbers etc.;
- a record of the observation (usually phrased in the words of the requirements of the applicable standard);
- the name of the person with whom the matter was discussed;
- the signatures of the assessor and the accompanying Certification Body representative.

## **6. CATEGORISATION OF NON-COMPLIANCES**

**6.1** Non-compliances are categorised as major or minor.

**6.1.1** A major non-compliance is allocated for a major system failure. Examples would be:-

- lack of a documented internal audit or management review procedure;
- inadequate stock of suitable practical test specimens;
- absence of a satisfactory system for security of written questions.

6.1.2 A minor non-compliance is allocated for an isolated failure to comply with the requirements. Examples would be:-

- a test specimen not identified;
- a single occurrence of the examination questions taken by a candidate not recorded;
- failure to correct a non-compliance revealed by the Certification Body's internal review.

**6.2** Categorisation is not an end in itself but a means of helping the audit team decide on the relative importance of the non-compliances either alone or collectively when compiling the Summary Report (see below).

**6.3** The assignment of a major non-compliance may be judged sufficient for the EFNDT CEC to withhold approval until it can be verified that the problem has been satisfactorily addressed. Similarly, a proliferation of minor non-compliances may lead to the same conclusion.

**6.4** The EFNDT Assessor may also raise a Detail Report for an observation only. This would indicate that, although there is no evidence that a non-compliance has been observed, the Certification Body should review the area indicated on the report form.

## **7. THE SUMMARY REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

**7.1** After the assessors have completed their individual assignments they will hold a private meeting to co-ordinate the team results.

**7.2** The Managing Assessor will complete the Summary Report form (see appendix 1B), taking into account the audit team's findings. The Managing Assessor, in consultation with the Support Assessor, will then categorise the non-compliances which have been identified. The summary report will not reiterate the statements on the detail reports but should present an overall impression of the Certification Body

## **8. THE FINAL MEETING**

**8.1** At the final meeting the Managing Assessor and the audit team will present their findings to the Certification Body representatives, after which the Certification Body quality representative will indicate the intended corrective actions for each non-compliance, and propose the latest date for completion on of such actions on the detail report forms.

**8.2** The Managing Assessor and the Certification Body quality representative will then agree on a time scale for correction of all non-compliances, if applicable, and both will be signatories to the Summary Report.

**8.3** The Certification Body is provided with copies of the detail reports and the summary report.

**8.4** It should be emphasised that the audit has not necessarily covered every aspect of the requirements and, therefore, where no non-compliances were reported it does not follow that none exist.

**8.5** The Managing Assessor will complete the Recommendation to EFNDT (see appendix 1C). Recommendation may be for:-

- A) Unconditional approval;
- B) Conditionally approval provided corrective actions to clear non-compliances are satisfactorily implemented within an agreed period. Evidence of implementation may be submitted to the Managing Assessor by post or e-mail.
- C) Conditionally approved provided corrective actions to clear non-compliances are satisfactorily implemented within an agreed period. Implementation will be confirmed during a follow-up audit at a date to be decided by EFNDT.
- D) Approval withheld, suspended or withdrawn. The audited organisation will not be approved without a further full audit.

## **9. CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

**9.1** Following an EFNDT audit, it may be that there are non-compliances that cannot be cleared at the time, and the Managing Assessor may have agreed to accept evidence of corrective action by post or e-mail (see 8.5.b). in this case, the Managing Assessor will retain all audit documentation until such time as he has received and accepted corrective action, but shall send a copy of the Summary Report to the CEC Chairman.

**9.2** If the managing Assessor has recommended that a further or follow-up audit is required before approval is issued (this would be normal if the certification scheme is not yet actively conducting examinations and issuing certificates), he shall also retain all audit documentation pending the further audit on-site. He shall nevertheless send a Summary report to the CEC Secretary.

## **10. APPROVAL PROCEDURE**

10.1 The Managing Assessor will submit his final report and recommendation to the CEC Chairman, for the attention of the Certification Executive Committee, and offer the following support documentation depending on the applicable recommendation identified in clause 8.5:

- A) Submit Detail and Summary reports, Assessment Visit Report (see appendix 1D), plus audit programme and checklists to the CEC Chairman.
- B) Submit a copy of the Summary report to the CEC Chairman. Retain the original Detail Reports and checklists until the Certification Body provides satisfactory evidence of correction of the non-compliances, upon receipt of which the Managing Assessor will submit original Summary Report, Assessment Visit Report, the signed-off Detail Reports and checklists to the CEC Chairman.
- C) Submit a copy of the Summary Report to the CEC Chairman. A follow-up audit will be arranged by the Managing Assessor, with the help of the Support Assessor when required., Upon satisfactory completion of this audit, the Managing Assessor will submit a further Summary Report together with completed Detail Reports, Assessment Visit Report and checklists to the CEC Chairman.
- D) Submit all documents to the CEC Chairman.

10.2 Upon receipt of the managing Assessor's recommendation, the CEC Chairman will review the documentation supplied for compliance with the applicable requirements and, if all is in order, the final report and recommendation (together with the full audit documentation) shall be submitted to the Certification Executive Committee at its next ordinary meeting. After due examination of these documents, the Committee shall finally decide of the EFNDT approval of the Certification Body concerned (cases A, B and C) or non-approval (case D).

10.3 In the case of an existing EFNDT approved Certification Body which has undergone a three yearly reassessment or extension of scope audit, the CEC Chairman will use his discretion in implementing the recommendations of the Managing Assessor.

10.4 The formal notification of the approval is subject to payment in full of any fees due.

10.5 All audit documentation will be retained by the EFNDT CEC Chairman for a minimum period of seven years.