



## **Certification Procedure**

**PR-04**

**Issue date 01-10-2025**

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**Purpose**

This procedure defines the certification process at TUV United Certification Body, ensuring compliance with ISO/IEC 17021-1 and applicable accreditation requirements.

**Scope**

This procedure applies to the certification of management systems across various standards.

**Responsibilities and authorities**

<b>All employees and external collaborators</b>	Responsible for following this procedure.
<b>Specific responsibilities</b>	Defined within each phase of the certification process.

**References**

- MS-M-01: Management system Manual for Certification Schemes
- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015
- ISO 22003-1:2022
- ISO/IEC 27006-1:2024
- ISO/IEC 20000-6:2017
- ISO 50003:2021
- ISO 21030:2023
- ISO-IEC-42006 : 2025
- ISO/IEC 27706: 2025

**Definitions**

<b>Audit</b>	A systematic, independent, and documented process for obtaining evidence and evaluating it to determine conformity with audit criteria
Nonconformity (NC)	A failure to meet a specified requirement, which may be classified as major or minor.
Corrective Action	A process undertaken to eliminate the cause of a detected nonconformity and prevent recurrence.
Audit Criteria	set of policies, procedures, or requirements used as a reference against which conformity is evaluated.

Audit Finding	Results of an evaluation of collected evidence compared against audit criteria, which can be conformity, nonconformity, or opportunities for improvement.
Client	The organization or individual applying for certification.

## Procedure

### 1. Pre-certification activities

#### 1.1 Client Submits an Application for Initial Certification

The client submits a completed Application Form (F-01/PR-04) according to the applicable standard through email, online portal, or in person to TUV United.

#### 1.2 Exchange of Information Between the Client and TUV United

After receiving the application, TUV United exchanges information with the client regarding the certification process, applicable standards, accreditation requirements, and scope limitations.

#### 1.3 Review of the Application for Certification

- TUV United competent person conducts a review of the application and supplementary information for certification to ensure completeness and compliance with certification requirements using Application Form (F-01/PR-04).
- If any concerns or missing information are identified, TUV United shall request additional information from the client to ensure a complete and accurate application review.
- Following the review of the application, the certification body shall either accept or decline an application for certification.
  - If the application is declined, the reasons shall be documented and made clear to the client.
- Based on the review, TUV United shall determine the competences required in the audit team and for the certification decision.

#### 1.4 Development of the Audit Programme

- TUV United develop an audit programme for the full certification cycle to clearly identify the audit activities required to demonstrate that the client's management system fulfils the requirements for certification to the selected standard(s) or other normative document(s).
- The audit programme for the certification cycle shall cover the complete management system requirements.
- The audit programme for the initial certification shall include:
  - A two-stage initial audit.
  - Surveillance audits in the first and second years following the certification decision.
  - A recertification audit in the third year prior to the expiration of certification
- The first three-year certification cycle begins with the certification decision. Subsequent cycles begin with the recertification decision.
- The audit programme shall be documented using the Audit Programme Form (F-02/PR-04).
- Where TUV United considers existing certifications or audits conducted by another certification body, it shall follow (Annex-15 Transfer of Certification).

#### 1.5 Proposal for Certification and Confirmation of the Audit Programme

- TUV United provides the client with a formal proposal for certification using Proposal Form

(F-03/PR-04), including scope, applicable standards, process, and financial terms.

### **1.6 Client and TUV United Engage in Formal Arrangements for Certification**

- Upon client acceptance of the Proposal Form (F-03/PR-04), TUV United and the client enter into a formal agreement.
- TUV United and the client enter into a formal agreement, documented using the Certification Agreement Form (F-04/PR-04).

### **1.7 Determination of Audit Time**

- TUV United determine the audit time required to conduct a complete and effective audit of the client's management system in accordance with procedures for Determination of audit time (PR-05).
- The calculated audit time is documented in the Audit Time Determination Form (F-01/PR-05).

### **1.8 Multi-Site Sampling is referred to (Annex-11)**

### **1.9 Multiple Management System Standards Auditing is referred to (Annex-12)**

## **2.Planning and conducting audits**

### **2.1 Determining Audit Objectives, Scope, and Criteria**

TUV United determine the audit objectives, scope, and criteria as part of the certification planning process.

- The audit scope and criteria, including any changes, are established by TUV United after discussion with the client.
- The determined audit objectives, scope, and criteria shall be documented in the Audit Plan.

### **2.2 Selection and Appointment of a Competent Stage 1 Audit Team**

- TUV United select and appoint a competent audit team for Stage 1 in accordance with Annex-17 (Process for Selecting and Appointing the Audit Team)
- The audit team have the necessary competence for the client's industry, management system, and audit scope.
- The appointed audit team shall be documented in the Audit Team Appointment Form (F-05/PR-04)

### **2.3 Planning for Stage 1 Audit**

- TUV United audit team prepares the Stage 1 audit plan prior to each audit identified in the audit programme to provide the basis for agreement regarding the conduct and scheduling of the audit activities., document it in the Stage 1 Audit Plan Form (F-06/PR-04), and communicate it to the client.
- TUV United send it to the client at least 48 hours before the audit. The names and background information of audit team members are provided upon request.
- The tasks assigned to the audit team are documented in the audit plan.

### **2.4 Conduct Stage 1 Audit**

- TUV United conduct the Stage 1 audit as per the established Stage 1 audit plan (F-06/PR-

04)

- Documented conclusions on the fulfilment of Stage 1 objectives and readiness for Stage 2 are communicated to the client, including any areas of concern that could be classified as a nonconformity in Stage 2.
- The findings of the Stage 1 audit shall be recorded in the Stage 1 Audit Report (F-07/PR-04) and communicated to the client.

### **2.5 Resolution of Stage 1 Areas of Concern**

- If areas of concern are identified during Stage 1, the client shall take necessary actions to address them before proceeding to Stage 2.
- The interval between Stage 1 and Stage 2 considers the client's need to resolve identified areas of concern.
- TUV United may revise arrangements for Stage 2 if necessary. If significant changes impacting the management system occur, Stage 1 may need to be partially or fully repeated.
- The client shall be informed that the Stage 1 results may lead to postponement or cancellation of Stage 2.

### **3. Selection and Appointment of a Competent Stage 2 Audit Team**

- TUV United select and appoint a competent audit team for Stage 2 in accordance with Annex-17 (Process for Selecting and Appointing the Audit Team).
- The audit team shall have the necessary competence for the client's industry, management system, and audit scope.
- The appointed audit team shall be documented in the Audit Team Appointment Form (F-05/PR-04).

#### **3.1 Planning for Stage 2 Audit**

- TUV United prepare the Stage 2 audit plan, document it in the on site Audit Plan Form (F-08/PR-04), and communicate it to the client.
- TUV United send it to the client at least 48 hours before the audit. The names and background information of audit team members shall be provided upon request.
- The tasks assigned to the audit team are documented in the audit plan.

#### **3.2 Conduct Stage 2 Audit**

- TUV United conduct the Stage 2 audit on-site to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the client's management system.
- Any nonconformities or areas for improvement shall be documented and communicated to the client.
- The findings of the Stage 2 audit shall be recorded in the onsite Audit Report (F-09/PR-04) and shared with the client.

#### **3.3. Resolution of Stage 2 Areas of Concern**

- If nonconformities or areas of concern are identified during Stage 2, the client shall take necessary corrective actions before certification is granted.
- TUV United review the corrective actions to verify their effectiveness in addressing the identified issues.

#### **3.4. Initial Certification Audit Conclusions**

- The audit team analyse all information and evidence gathered during Stage 1 and Stage 2 to review audit findings and agree on audit conclusions.
- Recommended, subject to acceptance of minor nonconformities – Minor nonconformities have been raised, and the client's plan for correction and corrective actions has been reviewed and accepted.
- Not Recommended, until all major nonconformities have been reviewed, accepted, and verified with effective correction and corrective actions.
- Not Recommended – Re-audit Required – The management system has not been effectively implemented, requiring a re-audit.

**Note: TUV UNITED established a process for Conducting on site audits (Annex-13)**

## 5.Initial Certification Decision

### Process for Conducting a Review Before Making Certification Decisions

#### 5.1. Receipt and Compilation of Audit Documentation

Before making a certification decision, TUV ensure it has received the following minimum required information from the audit team:

##### For Initial Certification:

- The audit report with a detailed assessment of the client's management system.
- Comments on nonconformities, including:
  - A summary of all identified nonconformities.
  - Evidence of correction and corrective actions taken by the client (if applicable).
- Confirmation of the information used in the application review, ensuring it remains valid.
- Confirmation that the audit objectives have been achieved, verifying that all planned audit activities were completed and provided sufficient evidence to determine compliance.
- A clear recommendation on whether to grant certification, including:
  - Any conditions that must be met before certification is issued.
  - Any observations that should be considered in future audits.
- **For Recertification:**
  - The results of the recertification audit, ensuring that the client continues to meet certification requirements.
  - A review of the system's performance over the certification period, including:
    - Surveillance audit findings.
    - Nonconformities raised in previous audits and their resolution.
    - Corrective action effectiveness over time.
  - A review of complaints received from users of certification, assessing the organization's ability to address and resolve complaints effectively.
  - Confirmation of continual energy performance improvement

#### 5.2 Initial Review of the Audit Report

The reviewer reviews the audit documentation to ensure:

- Completeness and compliance with certification requirements.

- The scope of certification is correctly defined.
- Nonconformities are adequately addressed:
  - For major nonconformities: TUV United review, accept, and verify that correction and corrective actions have been implemented effectively.
  - For minor nonconformities: TUV United review and accept the client's plan for correction and corrective action.
- **For Recertification Audits:**
  - Ensure that the system has been consistently implemented and improved over the certification cycle.
  - Verify that previous audit findings and complaints have been addressed effectively.

### 5.3 Independent Review Process

An independent, competent reviewer (not involved in the audit) shall verify:

- The sufficiency and accuracy of the information provided by the audit team.
- The audit objectives have been met, and the conclusions are justified.
- The recommendation provided by the audit team aligns with the certification requirements.
- The organization's long-term compliance and continuous improvement are evident.

### 5.4 Independence and Competence in Certification Decision-Making

- Separation of Roles:
  - The individuals or committees responsible for making certification decisions shall be different from those who conducted the audits to ensure impartiality.
  - No auditor involved in the audit process shall participate in the final decision-making for the same client.
- Competency of Decision-Makers:
  - Personnel assigned to make certification decisions shall have the appropriate competence according to Annex-08.

### 6. Special Considerations

- If the certification body is unable to verify the implementation of corrections and corrective actions for a major nonconformity within 6 months after the last day of Stage 2, then:
  - A new Stage 2 audit shall be conducted before recommending certification.
- When a transfer of certification from another certification body is requested:
  - TUV UNITED has a defined processor obtaining sufficient information to make an informed certification decision.
- **For Recertification Audits:**
  - The decision shall consider audit findings over the entire certification cycle, not just the recertification audit.
  - Complaints and feedback from stakeholders must be factored into the decision.

### 7. Final Decision

The certification decision-maker shall:

- 7.1 Assess the review findings and the audit team's recommendations.

7.2 Determine whether to:

7.3 Grant, refuse, maintain, suspend, restore, withdraw, expand, or reduce certification.

7.4 for any major nonconformities, it has reviewed, accepted and verified the correction and corrective actions;

7.5 for any minor nonconformities it has reviewed and accepted the client's plan for correction and corrective action.

7.6 Document the decision using (Technical Review And Certification Decision form F-10/PR-04)

## 8. Formally document the decision

Once the certification is granted, TUV United proceeds with issuing the certification documents to the client (F-11/PR-04).

## 9. Maintaining Certification

TUV United maintains a client's certification only if the client continues to comply with the management system standard. Certification maintenance may be based on the audit team leader's positive conclusion, provided that:

- Major nonconformities or potential suspension/withdrawal cases are escalated for independent review by competent personnel (not involved in the audit).
- Competent personnel monitor surveillance activities to ensure audit reporting and certification processes are operating effectively.
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## 10. Surveillance Audit Process

TUV United maintain ongoing communication with certified clients regarding any changes that may impact their certification such as change in scope so TUV united determines whether adjustments to the audit programme are necessary.

Surveillance audits shall be conducted at least once per calendar year for each certified client.

The first surveillance audit following initial certification shall be conducted within 12 months from the certification decision date.

### 10.1 Confirm Audit Programme and Communicate with Client

- Ensure the surveillance audit is scheduled as per the certification cycle.
- Notify the client about the audit scope, objectives, and timeline.

### 10.2 Appoint a Competent Audit Team

- Select qualified auditors based on competence requirements.
- Ensure impartiality and no conflict of interest.

### 10.3 Plan for Surveillance Audit at (on site audit plan F-08/PR-04)

- Define audit scope, criteria, and objectives.
- Prepare the audit plan and confirm logistics.

### 10.4 Conduct Surveillance Audit

- Perform an on-site audit to assess ongoing compliance.
- Gather objective evidence through interviews, document reviews, and observations.

### 10.5 Resolve Surveillance Audit Areas of Concern (If Applicable)

- Identify nonconformities and request corrective actions from the client.
- Review submitted corrective actions and verify effectiveness.

### **10.6 Surveillance Audit Conclusions**

- Summarize findings at onsite Audit Report (F-09/PR-04), including compliance status and any remaining concerns.
- Provide recommendations based on audit results.

### **10.7 Independent Review of Certification (If Required)**

- If major nonconformities or potential suspension/withdrawal cases are found, an independent review by competent personnel is required.

## **11. Recertification Process**

### **11.1 Confirm Audit Programme and Communicate to Client**

- TUV United confirm the audit programme for recertification and communicate the details to the client, including audit scope and schedule.

### **11.2 Confirm and Appoint a Competent Audit Team**

- TUV United appoint a qualified audit team for the recertification audit, ensuring the required competence and impartiality.

### **11.3 Plan for Recertification Audit**

- The audit team develop a recertification audit plan (on site audit plan F-08/PR-04) considering the full scope of the certified management system and any significant changes and conducted in due time to enable for timely renewal before the certificate expiry date.

### **11.4 Conduct Recertification Audit**

TUV United perform an on-site recertification audit to assess the continued conformity, effectiveness, and implementation of the management system.

### **11.5 Resolve Recertification Audit Areas of Concern (if applicable)**

- If any nonconformities or concerns are identified, the client must implement corrective actions with time limits and These actions shall be implemented and verified prior to the expiration of certification

### **11.6 Recertification Audit Conclusions**

- The audit team review all findings at onsite Audit Report (F-09/PR-04) and determine whether the management system meets recertification requirements.

### **11.7 Recertification Decision**

- TUV United review the audit results and make a recertification decision, ensuring an impartial and independent review.

### **11.8 Granting of Recertification and Issuance of Certification Documents**

- If the decision is positive, TUV United grant recertification and issue updated certification documents.
- When recertification activities are successfully completed prior to the expiry date of the existing certification, the expiry date of the new certification can be based on the expiry date of the existing certification. The issue date on a new certificate shall be on or after the recertification decision.
- If TUV United has not completed the recertification audit or the certification body is unable to verify the implementation of corrections and corrective actions for any major nonconformity (prior to the expiry date of the certification, then recertification shall not be

recommended and the validity of the certification shall not be extended. The client shall be informed and the consequences shall be explained

## 12 Special Audits Process

### 12.1 Expanding Scope Audits

TUV United conduct scope expansion audits when a certified client applies to extend the scope of their certification.

#### 12.1.1 Application Review

- The client shall submit a formal application(F-01/PR-04) for scope expansion.
- TUV United review the application to assess:
  - The feasibility of scope expansion.
  - Additional audit activities required to verify conformity.
  - Whether the audit can be conducted in conjunction with a scheduled surveillance audit.

#### 12.1.2 Determining Audit Activities

- If the extension is minor, a document review or additional audit activities during the next surveillance audit may be sufficient.
- If the extension involves significant changes, a separate on-site audit may be required.
- The decision to grant scope expansion shall follow an independent review and approval process.

### 12.2 Short-Notice Audits

TUV United may conduct short-notice or unannounced audits in the following cases:

- Investigation of complaints against the certified client.
- Significant changes affecting the management system.
- Follow-up on suspended clients to verify corrective actions.
- TUV UNITED becomes aware that there has been a serious incident related to occupational health and safety, for example, a serious accident, or a serious breach of regulation

#### 12.2.1 Notification & Transparency

- TUV United inform certified clients in advance (e.g., in certification agreements or contractual documents) of the conditions under which short-notice audits may occur.

#### 12.2.2 Audit Planning & Execution

- The audit shall be planned based on:
  - The nature of the issue requiring investigation.
  - The urgency of verification activities.
  - The impact on certification status.
- The audit scope shall focus on the specific concern but may be extended if needed.

#### 12.2.3 Auditor Assignment & Impartiality

- TUV United exercise additional care in assigning auditors for short-notice audits due to the lack of opportunity for the client to object.
- Auditors shall be selected based on:
  - Competency and expertise in the relevant area.
  - Impartiality, ensuring no conflict of interest.

### 12.3 Certification Decision & Follow-Up

- After a scope expansion audit, the TUV United decide whether to grant or deny the scope extension.
- After a short-notice audit, necessary actions may include:
  - Maintaining certification if no issues are found.
  - Requiring corrective actions for minor nonconformities.
  - Suspending or withdrawing certification for major nonconformities or unresolved issues.

### 13. Customer Satisfaction Feedback

TUV United shall obtain customer feedback on satisfaction after each audit through Customer Satisfaction Feedback form (F-12/PR-04) or other appropriate methods. This feedback is reviewed during management review meetings to ensure continuous improvement of certification services.

### Records

1. Application Form (F-01/PR-04)
2. Audit Programme Form (F-02/PR-04).
3. Proposal Form (F-03/PR-04)
4. Certification Agreement Form (F-04/PR-04).
5. Audit Time Determination Form (F-01/PR-05).
6. Audit Team Appointment Form (F-05/PR-04).
7. Stage 1 Audit Plan Form (F-06/PR-04)
8. Stage 1 Audit Report (F-07/PR-04)
9. Audit Team Appointment Form (F-05/PR-04).
10. On site Audit Plan Form (F-08/PR-04)
11. on site Audit Report (F-09/PR-04)
12. Technical Review and Certification Decision (F-10/PR-04)
13. Certificate Template form (F-11/PR-04)
14. Customer Satisfaction Feedback (F-12/PR-04)
15. CAR form (F-13/PR-04) .

### Related Documents

TUV United Policy P-01  
 Annex-08 Competency Criteria  
 Annex-10 Rules for Using the Certification Mark  
 Annex-11 Multisite Sampling  
 Annex-12 Multiple Management System Standards Auditing  
 Annex-13 Conducting On site audit Process  
 Annex-15 Transfer of Certification  
 Annex-16 Remote audit guideline  
 Annex-17 Process for Selecting and Appointing the Audit Team

Annex-18 Handling of Non-Compliance with Regulatory Requirements

**Review and Revision**

This procedure is reviewed annually by the Quality Manager and updated as necessary to reflect changes in the management system or organizational structure.