



## UNITED STATES ACCREDITATION BOARD

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### SUMMARY PROCEDURE FOR ISO17021 ACCREDITATION

1. Make a formal application for accreditation. On form Application\_Form\_USAB.pdf. Applicants are expected to be familiar with this guide and also guide Competency\_Requirements\_USAB.pdf Competency Requirements.
2. If application and intermediate correspondence confirm appropriateness and invoice for administration fee for each standard in excess of two for which certification is desired to be conducted will be issued.
3. Upon payment of invoice the applicant will be sent a password so that key data about his business may be entered to the United States Accreditation Board (USAB) website at [www.usab-us.org](http://www.usab-us.org). Following satisfactory review the applicant will then be listed on USAB website as “APPLICANT BODY”.
4. The applicant certification body is required to comply with the requirements of ISO17021.
5. CVs and other information to indicate bonafide nature of the application process should be provided.
6. USAB will send key documents to the applicant that the applicant, if successful would need to comply with. These are:
  - Contract
  - Memorandum of understanding
  - Operating requirements for Certification Bodies
  - Accreditation marks and logos
  - Terms and conditions
  - Code of Conduct
  - International Affiliations
  - Wording of certificates
7. The applicant should send personnel details CVs/Profiles of key staff and complete an Assessor application form for each one. USAB will review and comment if necessary.
8. The applicant will have 120 days to achieve provisional accreditation. The next step is to submit the total package of ISO17021 documentation for USAB to conduct a stage one Document Review. This will require the applicant completing an Excel based form.
9. There may be a review and corrective action process to get the documentation to a satisfactory state.
10. When satisfied that the document review meets our criteria and that there are no technical Non-conformities the applicant will be ready to be granted provisional accreditation status by USAB.
11. USAB will require that internal certification body records be submitted such as Management Review, Impartiality Committee and Audits.



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12. The applicant will be required to print, sign and seal the contract and Memorandum of Understanding, scan it and send images to USAB. USAB will send final Contracts and Memorandum of Understanding to the applicant.
13. USAB shall issue a provisional accreditation certificate when satisfied that the document structure is adequate. The applicant is listed on USAB web site as "PROVISIONAL BODY" A formal letter to this effect shall be sent to the applicant.
14. USAB will issue an accreditation reference and will issue a block of accreditation reference numbers for assignment to clients together with a report form formatted specifically for the named certification body.
15. The applicant conducts the first assessment and certification activity. The applicant sends USAB photo copies or scanned or electronic records of all the documents related to that assessment and certification. These shall be in accordance with the documents that USAB had earlier reviewed.
16. The applicant conducts a further four assessments and send us copies of the paperwork.
17. USAB will conduct site witness of the applicant's activity as soon as is possible. The applicant is required to pay USAB travel and accommodation expenses. Applicants should take note that the site witness is not a foregone conclusion of success. Should the reality of operations not meet the indications of paperwork then full accredited status will be denied. This has happened so applicants are advised not to make extra vagant or misleading claims.
18. The applicant accreditation status will then become FULL. Applicant is listed on USAB website without caveat.
19. The applicant continues to assess and certificate but does not need to send paperwork.
20. The applicant must advise USAB at month end, on form, of all the certifications that the certification body has conducted.
21. USAB will monitor the level of the certification body activity and conduct accreditation reviews to suit.
22. The certification body must inform USAB of all certification activity.

### **NOTE**

It is most important that the applicant clients are given the opportunity to understand the relationship between USAB and government etc. The applicant is therefore instructed not to imply or cause to be inferred that USAB act with the approval of the government. That is why Terms and Conditions are so important. USAB guide is also useful and USAB has no objection to the applicant issuing one to each of the applicant clients.

Our revenue comes from a levy on each certificate the certification body issues. USAB deems that certification bodies pay the accreditation levy on behalf of the registered organization in whose interests USAB act. Failure to report certification is deemed actual or anticipatory breach of contract.

**END**



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### **Requirements For Certification Bodies: Summary Of Initial Processes**

This short guide is based upon ISO17021:2011. It shall be referenced for further guidance.

1. The CB should be a separate legal entity.
2. There shall be an organisation structure with a certification committee with responsibilities and authorities defined. Family links are discouraged. Records of internal QA activities and staff competencies will be submitted to USAB
3. The organization shall act impartially and there shall be no conflict of interests. Related bodies should be maintained at maximum distance.
4. Confidentiality of all information shall be assured.
5. There shall be adequate funding for certification activities and appropriate liability insurances.
6. There shall be procedures for:
  - Internal Auditing
  - Corrective action
  - Document Control
  - Appeals
  - Data & Records Control
  - Short Notice Visits
  - Preventive Action
  - Withdrawal, suspension and reduction of scope of certificates
  - Non-conformance Control
7. General information on the certification process (Including Terms & Conditions) shall be made available to registrants.
8. Personnel shall be skilled and competent in the functions assigned to them with particular emphasis on the skills of auditors as required by ISO 17021:2011. There shall be monitoring of personnel.
9. Provision shall be made for sub-contract auditors.
10. There shall be a registrant application review process with records.
11. Audit planning and conduct shall be in accordance with ISO 17021:2011.
12. Clients should be made aware of their right to decline a sub-contracted auditor.
13. Initial certification audits shall be in two stages (i) Document review plus other aspects as deemed necessary (ii) Evaluation of the implementation of the organization's management system.
14. There shall be audit reports and certificates in accordance with ISO17021:2011
15. The decision on the certification shall be by persons other than the auditor.
16. There shall be appropriate surveillance and re-certification activities.
17. There shall be a proper and full exchange of information between the certification body and its clients.
18. Records of certificated clients must be made available to the accreditation authority.
19. There shall be rules and regulations regarding the use of marks.
20. The Certifying Body shall operate a quality system that meets the requirements of ISO 9001:2008.

**END**