

VQT CERTIFICATION SERVICES

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR CERTIFICATION SERVICES

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1. Scope

1.1 These Terms and Conditions govern all certification, surveillance, recertification, and related services provided by **VQT Certification Services** (hereinafter referred to as "VQT" or the "Certification Body") to its clients (hereinafter referred to as the "Client").

1.2 This document applies to all management system certification schemes operated by VQT, including but not limited to:

- ISO 9001 — Quality Management System
- ISO 14001 — Environmental Management System
- ISO 45001 — Occupational Health & Safety Management System
- ISO 22000 / FSSC 22000 — Food Safety Management System
- ISO/IEC 27001 — Information Security Management System
- ISO 22301 — Business Continuity Management System
- ISO 50001 — Energy Management System
- ISO 7101 - Healthcare Management System
- Integrated Management Systems (IMS) incorporating two or more standards.

1.3 These Terms are issued in compliance with **ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015, IAF Mandatory Documents (MD1, MD5, and MD 11)**, and the **Egyptian Accreditation Council (EGAC)** accreditation requirements.

2. Normative References

- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 — Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems.
- IAF MD 1:2023 — Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling.
- IAF MD 5:2019 — Determination of Audit Time.
- IAF MD 11:2013 — Application of ISO/IEC 17021 for Audits of Integrated Management Systems.
- Complaints and Appeals Procedure.
- Rules for Use of Certification Marks and Logos.

3. Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this document, the definitions of ISO/IEC 17000 and ISO/IEC 17021-1 apply, as well as the following:

- **Client:** The organization applying for or holding certification from VQT.
- **Certificate:** Document issued confirming conformity with specified management system standard(s).
- **Integrated Audit:** A single audit covering multiple management systems in an integrated framework.
- **Scope of Certification:** Range of activities, sites, and services covered by the certification.
- **Suspension/Withdrawal:** Temporary or permanent invalidation of certification status.

4. Application and Contractual Agreement

- 4.1 The Client shall submit a complete and accurate application form to VQT.
- 4.2 VQT will evaluate the application for scope, complexity, and competency requirements.
- 4.3 A formal **Certification Agreement** will be signed prior to any audit activity.
- 4.4 By applying for certification or signing the agreement, the Client accepts these Terms and Conditions in full.

5. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- 5.1 All information obtained during certification activities will be treated as confidential.
- 5.2 Information may be disclosed to **EGAC** or legal authorities when required by law.
- 5.3 VQT complies with Egyptian data protection regulations.
- 5.4 Client information may appear in VQT's public directory of certified clients.

6. Fees and Payment Terms

- 6.1 Certification fees are detailed in **Annex C — Fee Schedule and Payment Terms**.
- 6.2 All fees are confirmed in writing prior to engagement.
- 6.3 Invoices must be settled within **30 days** of the issue date.
- 6.4 VQT reserves the right to suspend or withdraw certification for non-payment.
- 6.5 All fees are exclusive of applicable taxes and are non-refundable once audits have commenced.

7. Conduct of Audits

- 7.1 All audits shall be conducted in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021-1, IAF MD series, and EGAC requirements.
- 7.2 VQT shall assign qualified auditors and technical experts with relevant competence.
- 7.3 The Client shall ensure unrestricted access to facilities, records, and personnel.
- 7.4 Integrated audits shall follow the requirements of IAF MD 11.
- 7.5 Audit findings shall be presented in a closing meeting and confirmed in the audit report.

8. Certification Decision and Validity

- 8.1 Certification decisions shall be made independently of audit activities.
- 8.2 Certificates issued by VQT are valid for **three (3) years**, subject to successful surveillance audits.
- 8.3 All major nonconformities must be closed before certification is granted.
- 8.4 Certification remains valid provided that the Client continues to meet certification and contractual requirements.

9. Surveillance, Recertification, and Special Audits

- 9.1 Surveillance audits are conducted annually.
- 9.2 Recertification audits are performed prior to certificate expiry.
- 9.3 VQT may conduct special audits to investigate complaints, verify changes, or upon request of EGAC.
- 9.4 Audit frequency may increase based on risk, performance, or regulatory requirements.

10. Use of Certificates, Marks, and Logos

10.1 The Client may use VQT and EGAC marks as per **Annex A — Rules for Use of Certification Marks and Logos**.

10.2 Marks may not be used in any way that implies product certification.

10.3 Upon suspension, withdrawal, or expiry, all use of marks and claims must cease immediately.

11. Changes Affecting Certification

11.1 The Client shall inform VQT of any significant changes including:

- Legal, ownership, or organizational changes.
- Process, site, or personnel changes affecting scope.
- Major system modifications.

11.2 VQT shall evaluate the impact and determine whether additional audits are required.

12. Suspension, Reduction, or Withdrawal of Certification

12.1 Certification may be suspended, reduced, or withdrawn if:

- Requirements are not maintained.
- Scheduled audits are not permitted.
- Fees remain unpaid.
- Misuse of marks or misrepresentation occurs.

12.2 During suspension, certification claims must cease.

12.3 In case of withdrawal, certificates must be returned to VQT.

13. Complaints and Appeals

13.1 Complaints and appeals shall be handled in accordance with **Annex B — Complaints and Appeals Procedure**.

13.2 VQT shall acknowledge complaints within 10 working days and investigate promptly.

13.3 Appeals shall be reviewed by personnel independent of the original decision.

13.4 Clients may escalate unresolved issues to **EGAC** if unsatisfied with VQT's response.

14. Liability and Indemnity

14.1 VQT shall not be liable for any consequential or indirect loss arising from certification decisions.

14.2 The Client shall indemnify VQT against all third-party claims arising from misuse of certification.

14.3 VQT's liability shall be limited to the total fees paid for the certification service in question.

15. Force Majeure

Neither VQT nor the Client shall be liable for failure to perform obligations due to force majeure, including natural disasters, wars, pandemics, or government restrictions.

16. Governing Law and Jurisdiction

This Agreement is governed by the laws of the **Arab Republic of Egypt**.

All disputes shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the **Cairo Economic Court**.

17. Amendment and Interpretation

17.1 VQT reserves the right to revise these Terms to reflect changes in EGAC, IAF, or legal requirements.

17.2 Updates will be communicated via official correspondence or publication on VQT's website.

17.3 Continued use of certification implies acceptance of amendments.

18. Acceptance and Legal Effect

By signing the Certification Agreement or submitting an application, the Client acknowledges having read, understood, and accepted these Terms and Conditions.

Authorized Signatures

For VQT Certification Services

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For the Client:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Annexes

- ✓ **Annex A** — Rules for Use of Certification Marks and Logos
- ✓ **Annex B** — Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- ✓ **Annex C** — Fee Schedule and Payment Terms
- ✓ **Annex D** — Multi-Site and Integrated Audit Policy

ANNEX A — RULES FOR USE OF CERTIFICATION MARKS AND LOGOS

Document No.: VQT-F-*

Title: Rules for Use of Certification Marks and Logos

Revision: 01

Effective Date:

A.1 Purpose

This Annex defines the conditions for the use of the Certification Body's certification mark(s) and reference to certification by certified Clients.

A.2 General Rules

A.2.1 The certification mark and any reference to certification shall only be used by Clients holding a valid certificate issued by the Certification Body.

A.2.2 Use of the mark implies that the Client's management system (not products or services) is certified.

A.2.3 The mark may only be used in association with the organization's name and address listed on the certificate.

A.3 Restrictions on Use

A.3.1 The certification mark shall **not** be used:

- On products, packaging, labels, or promotional materials suggesting product certification.
- In any way that implies the CB or Accreditation Body has certified a product, process, or service.
- On laboratory test reports, calibration certificates, or inspection reports.

- In a misleading, ambiguous, or unauthorized manner.

A.3.2 The Client shall not use certification in a way that implies the CB has approved or endorsed its products.

A.4 Use of Accreditation Body Logo

- A.4.1 The Accreditation Body's logo may only be used in combination with the CB's certification mark and in accordance with the Accreditation Body's published logo rules.
- A.4.2 The CB shall provide artwork and usage instructions for the combined mark.

A.5 Suspension, Withdrawal, or Expiry

Upon suspension, withdrawal, or expiry of certification:

- The Client shall immediately cease all use of marks and logos.
- All promotional materials, websites, and documents must be updated accordingly.

A.6 Enforcement

Unauthorized or misleading use of the certification mark may result in:

- Corrective action or suspension of certification, and/or
- Legal action to prevent further misuse.

A.7 Ownership

All certification marks and logos remain the property of the Certification Body and/or the Accreditation Body.

ANNEX B — COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

Document No.: VQT

Title: Complaints and Appeals Procedure

Revision: 01

Effective Date:

B.1 Purpose

To ensure that all complaints and appeals relating to the Certification Body's activities are handled impartially, effectively, and transparently.

B.2 Definitions

- **Complaint:** Expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, by any person or organization regarding the CB's activities.
- **Appeal:** A request by the Client for reconsideration of a certification decision (e.g., suspension, withdrawal, or refusal).

B.3 Submission of Complaints and Appeals

B.3.1 All complaints and appeals shall be submitted in writing (email, letter, or online form) to the CB's designated contact.

B.3.2 The complaint or appeal shall include the name, contact details, and description of the issue.

B.3.3 Anonymous complaints are recorded but investigated at the CB's discretion.

B.4 Process for Complaints

B.4.1 The CB shall acknowledge receipt of a complaint within **10 working days**.

B.4.2 The CB shall investigate the complaint objectively and impartially.

B.4.3 The CB shall communicate the outcome to the complainant and record actions taken.

B.4.4 The CB may share findings with the Accreditation Body if required.

B.5 Process for Appeals

B.5.1 Appeals must be submitted within **30 calendar days** of the disputed decision.

B.5.2 The appeal shall be reviewed by a competent person(s) not involved in the original decision.

B.5.3 The outcome of the appeal shall be communicated in writing to the appellant.

B.5.4 The CB's decision after appeal review is final.

B.6 Confidentiality and Records

All complaint and appeal records are confidential and retained according to CB's record retention policy.

B.7 Escalation

If the complainant or appellant is dissatisfied with the CB's handling, they may escalate the matter to the **Accreditation Body** (EGAC)

ANNEX C — FEE SCHEDULE AND PAYMENT TERMS

Document No.: (VQT-PR-*)

Title: Fee Schedule and Payment Terms

Revision: 01

Effective Date:

C.1 Scope

This Annex details the structure of fees applicable to certification and related services.

C.2 Fee Structure

The following fees typically apply (actual amounts to be defined by the CB):

Activity	Description	Billing Basis
Application Fee	Review and processing of application	Fixed
Stage 1 Audit	Document review and readiness assessment	Per audit day
Stage 2 Audit	On-site audit for certification	Per audit day
Surveillance Audit	Periodic audit (Year 1 & 2)	Per audit day
Recertification Audit	Audit before certificate expiry	Per audit day
Special Audit	Unplanned audit for changes or complaints	Per audit day
Certificate Issue Fee	Issuance and administration of certificate	Fixed
Travel & Accommodation	As applicable	Actual cost

C.3 Payment Terms

C.3.1 Payment is due within **30 days** of invoice date.

C.3.2 The CB reserves the right to suspend certification for unpaid fees.

C.3.3 Fees are subject to change with **30 days' prior notice**.

C.3.4 All fees are exclusive of applicable taxes and duties.

C.4 Refund Policy

No refund will be issued once audit activities have begun, except under exceptional circumstances approved by top management.

C.5 Currency and Method

All payments shall be made in **Egyptian Pounds or USD** via bank transfer or other approved methods.

ANNEX D — MULTI-SITE AND INTEGRATED AUDIT PROCEDURE

Document No.: VQT-FR-*

Title: Multi-Site and Integrated Audit Procedure

Revision: 01

Effective Date:

D.1 Purpose

This Annex outlines the Certification Body's policy for managing certification of clients with multiple sites and/or integrated management systems.

D.2 Multi-Site Certification

D.2.1 A multi-site organization operates under a single management system across multiple sites.

D.2.2 The organization must demonstrate centralized management, internal audit, and management review.

D.2.3 Sampling of sites shall be performed in accordance with **IAF MD1** (Certification of Multiple Sites).

D.2.4 The number of sites sampled during each audit cycle will depend on the total number of sites and the risk profile.

D.3 Integrated Management System (IMS) Audits

D.3.1 Integrated audits shall be planned and conducted according to **IAF MD11**.

D.3.2 Integration may include common documentation, shared processes, and unified management review.

D.3.3 The audit plan will consider overlapping requirements and shared processes across standards.

D.3.4 Audit duration reductions (for integration) shall be justified and recorded per IAF MD11 Annex A.

D.4 Certification and Decision

D.4.1 A single certificate may be issued for integrated systems, identifying all standards covered.

D.4.2 If nonconformities relate to one standard only, certification may be limited to other compliant standards.

D.4.3 Recertification and surveillance will follow a combined or integrated audit program.

D.5 Changes and Scope Adjustments

Clients must notify the CB of:

- Addition or removal of sites;
- Changes in processes or integration level;
- Organizational restructuring affecting certification.

D.6 References

- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015
- IAF MD1:2023 — *Certification of Multiple Sites*
- IAF MD11:2013 — *Application of ISO/IEC 17021 for Audits of Integrated Management Systems*