



## **Procedure for Certification Decisions: Granting, Refusing, Maintaining, Renewing, Suspending, Restoring, Withdrawing, Expanding, or Reducing Certification Scope**

### *2. Scope*

This procedure applies to all certification activities carried out by NOICE Academy Private Limited for ISO 9001 and other management system certifications. It includes the criteria and steps for handling certification decisions in a structured and impartial manner.

### *3. Responsibility*

- **Certification Manager:** Responsible for overseeing all certification decisions.
- **Audit Team Leader:** Responsible for providing audit reports and recommendations.
- **Certification Decision Committee (CDC):** Responsible for reviewing audit reports and making independent certification decisions.

### *4. Definitions*

- **Granting Certification:** Issuance of a certificate when the organization meets all certification criteria.
- **Refusing Certification:** Denial of certification due to non-fulfillment of requirements.
- **Maintaining Certification:** Ensuring ongoing compliance with certification standards.
- **Renewing Certification:** Extending the validity of certification after periodic re-evaluation.
- **Suspending Certification:** Temporarily halting certification status due to non-compliance or failure to meet requirements.
- **Restoring Certification:** Reinstating suspended certification when compliance is demonstrated.
- **Withdrawing Certification:** Permanently revoking certification due to significant non-compliance.
- **Expanding Certification Scope:** Extending the scope of certification to cover additional areas or processes.
- **Reducing Certification Scope:** Limiting the scope of certification due to partial non-compliance or client request.

### **5. General**

- a) NOICE Academy Private Limited shall ensure that the individuals or committees responsible for making decisions regarding granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending or restoring certification, withdrawing certification, or renewing certification are different from those who conducted the audits. The individuals appointed to make certification decisions shall have the appropriate competence.
- b) The person(s) assigned by NOICE Academy Private Limited to make certification decisions shall either be employed by or under a legally enforceable arrangement with NOICE Academy Private Limited or an entity under its organizational control. The organizational control of NOICE Academy Private Limited over an entity shall be demonstrated through one of the following:



- i. whole or majority ownership of the entity by NOICE Academy Private Limited;
- ii. majority participation by NOICE Academy Private Limited on the entity's board of directors;
- iii. documented authority by NOICE Academy Private Limited over the entity in a network of legal entities linked by ownership or board of director control.

**NOTE:** For governmental certification bodies, other parts of the same government can be considered “linked by ownership” to the certification body.

- c) Individuals employed by, or under contract with, entities under NOICE Academy Private Limited’s organizational control shall meet the same requirements outlined in ISO/IEC 17021 as those employed by or contracted directly with NOICE Academy Private Limited.
- d) NOICE Academy Private Limited shall record every certification decision, including any additional information or clarifications sought from the audit team or other sources.

#### **6. Actions Prior to Making a Decision**

NOICE Academy Private Limited shall conduct an effective review before making any decision to grant certification, expand or reduce the scope of certification, renew, suspend, restore, or withdraw certification.

This process shall ensure the following:

- a) The information provided by the audit team is adequate concerning the certification requirements and the scope of certification.
- b) For any major nonconformities, NOICE Academy Private Limited has reviewed, accepted, and verified the corrections and corrective actions.
- c) For any minor nonconformities, NOICE Academy Private Limited has reviewed and accepted the client’s correction and corrective action plan.

#### **7. Information for Granting Initial Certification**

The information provided by the audit team to NOICE Academy Private Limited for certification decisions shall include, at a minimum:

- a) the audit report;
- b) comments on nonconformities and, where applicable, the corrections and corrective actions taken by the client;
- c) confirmation of the information provided during the application review;
- d) confirmation that the audit objectives have been achieved;
- e) a recommendation regarding certification, along with any conditions or observations.

If NOICE Academy Private Limited is unable to verify the implementation of corrections and corrective actions for any major nonconformity within six months of the last day of stage 2, a new stage 2 audit shall be conducted before recommending certification.

When certification transfer from one certification body to another is considered, NOICE Academy Private Limited shall have a process to obtain sufficient information for making a certification decision.

**NOTE:** Certification schemes may have specific rules regarding certification transfers.



## 8. Procedure

### 8.1 Granting Certification

1. **Audit Completion**
  - The certification audit is conducted in line with the audit program.
  - The audit team evaluates the client's management system against the relevant standard (e.g., ISO 9001).
2. **Audit Report Submission**
  - The Audit Team Leader submits the final audit report, including any non-conformities, observations, and a recommendation for or against certification.
3. **Certification Decision Review**
  - The Certification Decision Committee (CDC) reviews the audit report, including any corrective actions taken by the client.
  - The CDC ensures impartiality and adherence to certification criteria.
4. **Decision to Grant Certification**
  - If all requirements are met and non-conformities are addressed, the CDC grants certification.
  - The certificate is issued, including the scope of certification and the validity period (usually 3 years).
5. **Records and Communication**
  - The decision is communicated to the client, and certification records are updated.

### 8.2 Refusing Certification

1. **Non-Compliance**
  - If the client fails to address major non-conformities within the agreed timeframe, the Audit Team Leader may recommend refusal.
2. **Review and Decision**
  - The CDC reviews the audit findings and corrective actions taken. If requirements are not met, the CDC may decide to refuse certification.
3. **Communication**
  - The decision is communicated to the client in writing, with reasons for refusal and guidance for re-application.
4. **Records**
  - All documentation related to the refusal of certification is retained.

### 8.3 Maintaining Certification

#### Surveillance Audits

1. Surveillance audits are conducted periodically (annually or semi-annually) to ensure ongoing compliance.
2. Surveillance activities shall include on-site auditing of the certified client's management system's fulfilment of specified requirements with respect to the standard to which the certification is granted. Other surveillance activities may include:
  - a) enquiries from the certification body to the certified client on aspects of certification;



- b) reviewing any certified client's statements with respect to its operations (e.g. promotional material, website);
  - c) requests to the certified client to provide documented information (on paper or electronic media);
  - d) other means of monitoring the certified client's performance.
3. Surveillance audits are on-site audits, but are not necessarily full system audits, and shall be planned together with the other surveillance activities so that the certification body can maintain confidence that the client's certified management system continues to fulfil requirements between recertification audits. Each surveillance for the relevant management system standard shall include:
- a) internal audits and management review;
  - b) a review of actions taken on nonconformities identified during the previous audit;
  - c) complaints handling;
  - d) effectiveness of the management system with regard to achieving the certified client's objectives and the intended results of the respective management system (s);
  - e) progress of planned activities aimed at continual improvement;
  - f) continuing operational control;
  - g) review of any changes;
  - h) use of marks and/or any other reference to certification.

## 8.4 Renewing Certification

### 8.4.1 Re-Certification Audit

1. The purpose of the recertification audit at NOICE Academy Private Limited is to confirm the continued conformity and effectiveness of the client's management system as a whole, as well as its ongoing relevance and applicability to the defined scope of certification. A recertification audit shall be planned and conducted to evaluate the continued fulfillment of all requirements outlined in the relevant management system standard or other normative documents. This activity shall be conducted in a timely manner to ensure renewal before the certificate's expiry date.
  2. The recertification activity shall include a review of previous surveillance audit reports and take into account the performance of the management system throughout the most recent certification cycle.
  3. Recertification audit activities may require a stage 1 audit in situations where significant changes have occurred in the management system, the organization, or the context in which the management system operates (e.g., changes in legislation).
- **NOTE:** Such changes can occur at any time during the certification cycle, and NOICE Academy Private Limited may need to perform a special audit, which could be a single-stage or two-stage audit.
4. The recertification audit shall include an on-site audit addressing the following:
    - a) The effectiveness of the management system as a whole, considering internal and external changes, and its continued relevance and applicability to the defined scope of certification.
    - b) Demonstrated commitment to maintaining the effectiveness and continual improvement



- of the management system to enhance overall performance.
- c) The effectiveness of the management system in achieving the client's objectives and the intended results of the respective management system(s).
5. For any major nonconformity identified during the recertification audit, NOICE Academy Private Limited shall define time limits for the client to implement correction and corrective actions. These actions shall be completed and verified before the certification expires.
  6. When recertification activities are successfully completed prior to the expiry date of the existing certification, the new certification's expiry date can align with the previous certification cycle's expiry date. The issue date on the new certificate shall be on or after the recertification decision date.
  7. If the recertification audit is not completed or if corrections and corrective actions for any major nonconformity cannot be verified prior to the certification's expiry date, recertification shall not be recommended, and the certification's validity shall not be extended. The client shall be informed, and the associated consequences shall be explained.
  8. After certification expiry, NOICE Academy Private Limited may restore certification within six months, provided the outstanding recertification activities are completed. If the certification is restored, the effective date on the certificate shall be on or after the recertification decision date, and the expiry date shall be based on the prior certification cycle. If the outstanding recertification activities are not completed within six months, at least a stage 2 audit shall be conducted to regain certification.

#### 8.4.2 Special Audits

a) **Expanding Scope**

NOICE Academy Private Limited shall, upon receiving an application to expand the scope of an already granted certification, conduct a review of the application and determine the necessary audit activities to decide whether the scope extension can be granted. These activities may be carried out in conjunction with a surveillance audit.

b) **Occupational health and safety:**

Independently of the involvement of the competent regulatory authority, a special audit may be required if NOICE Academy Private Limited becomes aware of a serious incident related to occupational health and safety, such as a major accident or a significant breach of regulation. This audit is conducted to investigate whether the management system has been compromised and to verify its effective functioning. NOICE Academy Private Limited shall document the outcome of this investigation.

#### 8.4.3 Short-Notice Audits

- a) In certain situations, NOICE Academy Private Limited may need to conduct audits of certified clients at short notice or without prior notification. These audits may be required to investigate complaints, respond to changes, or follow up on suspended clients.

In such cases:

- a) NOICE Academy Private Limited shall describe in advance and make known to certified clients (e.g., through documented information as specified in 8.5.1) the conditions under which short-notice or unannounced audits will be conducted.
- b) NOICE Academy Private Limited shall exercise additional care in selecting and assigning



the audit team due to the lack of opportunity for clients to raise objections to the audit team members.

## 8.5 Suspending Certification

### 1. Grounds for Suspension

NOICE Academy Private Limited shall suspend a client's certification in situations such as:

- a) The client's certified management system has persistently or seriously failed to meet certification requirements, including requirements related to the effectiveness of the management system.
- b) The certified client does not allow surveillance or recertification audits to be conducted at the required frequencies.
- c) The certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension.

During suspension, the client's management system certification shall be considered temporarily invalid.

NOICE Academy Private Limited shall restore the suspended certification if the issue(s) leading to the suspension are resolved within the time frame established by NOICE Academy Private Limited. If the issues are not resolved within the established time frame, suspension shall lead to withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification.

**NOTE:** In most cases, the period of suspension shall not exceed six months.

## 8.6 Restoring Certification

### 1. Corrective Actions

- The client must demonstrate that corrective actions have been effectively implemented.

### 2. Review and Decision

- The CDC reviews the corrective actions and audit results. If the issues are resolved, the CDC decides to restore certification.

### 3. Communication

- The client is informed of the restoration, and records are updated.

## 8.7 Withdrawing Certification

### 1. Grounds for Withdrawal

- Certification may be withdrawn if:
  - Major non-conformities are not addressed within the suspension period.
  - The client is involved in fraudulent activities or severe non-compliance.

### 2. Review and Decision

- The CDC reviews the reasons for withdrawal and makes a final decision.

### 3. Communication

- The client is notified of the decision, and the certification is formally withdrawn.



**4. Records**

- The withdrawal is recorded, and the client must cease the use of certification marks immediately.

**8.8 Expanding Certification Scope**

**1. Client Request**

- The client submits a request to expand the scope of certification to include additional processes or areas.

**2. Audit and Review**

- An additional audit may be conducted to evaluate the new scope. The audit team submits findings to the CDC.

**3. Decision to Expand Scope**

- If the new scope meets the certification requirements, the CDC approves the expansion, and a revised certificate is issued.

**8.9 Reducing Certification Scope**

**1. Grounds for Reduction**

- NOICE Academy Private Limited shall reduce the scope of certification to exclude the parts that do not meet certification requirements in cases where the certified client has persistently or seriously failed to fulfill the certification requirements for those parts. Any reduction in scope shall comply with the requirements of the relevant standard used for certification.

**2. Review and Decision**

- The CDC reviews the request or audit findings and makes a decision to reduce the scope.

**3. Communication and Documentation**

- The revised scope is communicated to the client, and a new certificate is issued.

(CEO)

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