

INFORMATIVE GUIDE

1. Introduction

The sections of this Code of Practice have been formulated to provide a comprehensive guidance to the applicant to know ZQAPL policies and deal in accordance with the policies.

These policies are in accordance with our accreditation body/s requirements, published to date.

2. Scope

Zenith Quality Assessors Pvt. Ltd. provides independent certification service for organizations operating various Management Systems complying with the requirements of the International Standards mentioned below:

ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System
ISO 14001:2004 Environment Management System
OHSAS 18001:1999 Occupation, Health Safety Management System
ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety Management System
ISO 27001:2005 Information Security Management System

3. Legal Status

Zenith Quality Assessors Pvt. Ltd. (ZQAPL) is a Private Limited Company incorporated and registered in Pune, Maharashtra (India).

4. Confidentiality

ZQAPL will maintain complete confidentiality regarding all information with which it becomes acquainted as a result of contact with the organization.

5. General conditions for certification

- The applicant shall make available to the Assessment team all information required to establish the status of the management system.
- ZQAPL approves the certification as per the applicant defined scope only if the applicant's documented management system confirms to applicable standards.
- The approval is also subject to, that there is no major discrepancy arising out of the assessment and/or suitable corrective action has been applied and evidenced.
- Where the applicant cannot show that effective corrective action has occurred within the specified time limit, it may be necessary for ZQAPL to conduct a further full Assessment of the management system. The re-assessment will be at extra cost to the applicant.
- In case of multi site assessments and subject to successful verification of compliance, a certificate clearly defining the activities and locations will be issued. The applicant shall not claim or otherwise imply that the certification applies to other locations or activities not covered by the issued certificate.
- Certification will be valid for a period of three years w.e.f the date of approval, on a condition that the surveillance Assessments are conducted as per the planned schedule and reveal no deterioration in the management system.

6. APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION

The applicant shall submit a duly filled application form to ZQAPL office. ZQAPL submits the proposal to the applicant subjected to acceptance of application.

The application fee should be duly enclosed with the acceptance of proposal. In case of clarifications required, please contact us at ZQAPL office.

When acceptance has been received along with the application fee, a File Number will be allotted and a letter acknowledging that applicant has joined the ZQAPL Quality System Certification Program will be issued. This letter and File no. can be used to show customers that applicant intends to achieve certification, and have entered into an agreement with ZQAPL. It must not be used in any way to imply that Certification / Registration have been awarded.

Our Administration Manager will manage and liaise with applicant's Authorized Representative from the application stage to certification stage.

Our Administration Manager will help applicant with any questions about our services and will explain the requirements of the relevant standard and the progression of the Assessment according to ZQAPL procedures.

7. Stage 1 Assessment

The purpose of the Stage 1 Assessment is to obtain information about the applicant company related to the size, complexity of operations and capabilities for which registration is sought. The auditor will establish whether further development of the management system is necessary before the Stage 2 Assessment takes place.

8. Stage 2 assessment

The stage 2 assessment is carried out to ascertain that whether the of the applicant company's Management System can be certified based on the objective evidences found during the course of assessment.

The assessment team compares 'what you say you do' i.e. your documented management system, against 'what you actually do'.

The assessor will be looking for objective evidence (records, documents, etc) to verify that the activities of the organization are in accordance with the documentation and the requirements of the relevant management system standard.

All records resulting from the implementation and operation of the Management System must be made available to the Assessment team for evaluation.

9. CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUEST

If a non-conformance is detected during the system Assessment, a Corrective Action Request (CAR) will be issued and a corrective action process will commence. The assessor will discuss with you the reason for the CAR in order to explain the type of action that will be required to correct the situation and will also explain how ZQAPL will follow-up and clear the CAR.

10. REGISTRATION

After successful verification of the system and no major deficiencies (or has subsequently rectified the deficiencies) is observed, then a recommendation will be made to the ZQAPL certification authority that your organization be certified. Upon approval and subsequent acceptance, client is awarded a "Certificate of approval" confirming registration.

The "Certificate of Approval" will be valid, initially for a period of three years from the date on which the Client is notified of its successful Assessment, on condition that the surveillance Assessments have revealed no deterioration in the Management System.

11. SURVEILLANCE

Periodic surveillance Assessments will be carried out to ensure that the management system is not only being maintained, but is being reviewed and developed further to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the business processes. These Assessments, generally at six /nine /twelve monthly intervals will always cover certain key elements crucial to the success of your business. These would include internal Assessments, management reviews, continuing operational control and corrective actions. Your Customer Complaints Register would also be examined to see how quickly and effectively you handle customer complaints.

Other aspects of the Management System will be covered selectively, over the period of certification, depending on their importance of their scope of certification.

ZQAPL shall be granted the right of access for surveillance purposes whenever deemed necessary and shall reserve the right to make short notice visits as required.

A assessment report will provide the client with feedback regarding the results of the Assessment.

12. RENEWAL

Every three years after certification, client will be given another comprehensive Assessment similar to that of the Initial Assessment. The same effort will be applied to ensure the entire management system is cohesive and continues to effectively comply with your selected certification standard.

13. CHANGE OF ADDRESS / EXTENSION OF REGISTRATION

In order to extend the scope of registration to cover additional products, processes or services, a fresh application form will be required to be completed. The application procedure previously outlined will be followed and an Assessment will be carried out on those areas not previously covered. The cost of extending the scope of registration will be based on the nature and programme of work. Following a successful Assessment, an amended certificate of registration will be issued covering the aspects.

The original Certificate of Approval will be maintained for the remainder of the three year period. In some instances it may be necessary to issue a new Certificate which will then be valid for a full three year period.

The certificate is issued to cover the place(s) where the Assessment was conducted. If client intends to change your address or addition of sites, the client informs ZQAPL and a similar process as indicated above is carried out.

The client shall inform ZQAPL of any intended modification to the product, process or Management System that may affect compliance with the relevant part of international standard. ZQAPL will then determine whether the notified changes require additional Assessment.

Failure to notify ZQAPL may result in suspension of the Certificate.

14. PUBLICITY BY CERTIFICATE HOLDERS

A Certificate Holder has the right to publish that the management system has been successfully audited and registered. The relevant 'Prestige mark' may be applied to most stationery and promotional material relating to the scope of registration, as detailed in the Certificate of Approval. ZQAPL will provide specific guidelines on the use of Certification and Accreditation Marks valid at the time of issuing a Certificate.

In every case, the client must ensure that in its publications and advertising, no misleading information or confusion arises between registered and non-registered scope.

The client must ensure that the prestige mark affixed does not indicate product certification or conformity.

ZQAPL Mark of Prestige

An organization whose management system has been certified by ZQAPL may use the "Prestige Mark" along with Accreditation Mark, in promotional and corporate publications. Certification by ZQAPL will give public recognition that your company is a supplier of quality goods and / or services.

15. MISUSE OF A CERTIFICATE

ZQAPL takes reasonable precautions to control the use of its Certificates. Incorrect references to registration, or misleading use of Certificates found in advertisements, catalogues, etc., will be dealt with by suitable actions which could include suspension or withdrawal of Certificate, legal action and / or public notice.

16. SUSPENSION OF A CERTIFICATE

A Certificate may be suspended for a limited period (Not exceeding six months) in cases, such as the following:

- If Corrective Action Requests have not been closed out within the designated time limit;
- If a case of improper use of the Certificate or misleading prints or advertising, is not solved by suitable interactions or other appropriate remedial measures by the registrant;
- Surveillance Audits are not conducted as planned after sending three written notifications at a gap of 1 month.
- Client fails to comply with due settlement of financial obligation of ZQAPL.
- Client goes out of business

The client shall not identify as registered the scope that has been offered under a suspended Certificate.

An official suspension of a Certificate will be confirmed in writing by ZQAPL to the client. The conditions under which the suspension will be removed will also be included.

At the end of the suspension period, an investigation will be carried out to determine whether the conditions for reinstating the Certificate have been fulfilled. On fulfilment of these conditions, the suspension shall be lifted and the company notified of the Certificate reinstatement. If the conditions are not fulfilled, the Certificate will be withdrawn.

All costs incurred by ZQAPL in suspending and reinstating the certificate will be charged to the client.

17. WITHDRAWAL OF A CERTIFICATE

A Certificate may be withdrawn in the following cases:

- If inadequate measures are taken by the company in the case of suspension;
- If the company fails to comply with the due settlement of its financial obligation.
- Client goes out of business
- Client does not wish to continue / renew the certificate.

If either of the above applies, ZQAPL has the right to withdraw the Certificate and will inform the company accordingly.

The company may give notice of appeal (refer section on Appeals).

No reimbursement of Assessment fees will be given. Withdrawal of a Certificate may be published by ZQAPL

18. FEES

Fees will be detailed in the proposal submitted to applicants. As costs are based on the rate applicable at the time of submitting a proposal, ZQAPL reserves the right to increase charges during the certification period. Clients will be notified of any increase in fees.

Additional fees shall be charged for all additional work that is not included in the agreed proposal and for extra, unscheduled surveillance Assessments required due to non-compliances being identified in the Management System.

This will include, but is not restricted to, the costs resulting from:

- Repeats of all, or any part, of the Assessment program due to the initial registration requirements not being met;
- Additional work due to suspension, withdrawal and / or reinstatement of a Certificate;
- Re-Assessment due to any changes in the Management System.

19. APPEALS

A ZQAPL Applicant, Certified Client or Other Parties, can appeal against any ZQAPL in the following aspects

- Audit or Certification Decision
- Notification against suspension or withdrawal
- Any other matters subject to procedures of ZQAPL.

This is preferred that the complainant makes the complaint in writing instead of verbal communication, within 15 days on any of the above aspects addressed to Managing Director – ZQAPL, which is logged by Administration Manager, who in turn immediately forwards it to the Managing Director

- The Managing Director will unless involved directly, try to resolve the appeal in a fair and justified manner. In the absence of Managing Director, Executive Director handles the appeal.
- Unresolved appeals shall be put before the ZQAPL "Committee for safeguarding impartiality", which holds the enquiry in private.
- Managing Director ZQAPL submits evidence in support to the decisions to ZQAPL "Committee for safeguarding impartiality", who in turns takes independent decision.
- The decision of ZQAPL "Committee for safeguarding impartiality (CFSI) " shall be final and binding on both the parties i.e. the complainant and ZQAPL.
- Once the decision has been resolved either by Managing Director or by ZQAPL CFSI, no counter claim by either party in dispute can be made to amend or change the decision.
- In instances where the appeal has been successful and the Certificate reinstated, no claim can be made against ZQAPL for reimbursement of costs or any losses incurred as a result of the initial withdrawal notification.

20. COMPLAINTS / Client Feedback

ZQAPL would be grateful to anyone who takes the time and initiative to express a complaint about any aspect of ZQAPL activities. In doing so the client provides us with the opportunity to make an improvement. In the event of a complaint, it should be made in writing and addressed to the Managing Director ZQAPL.