



LMQS-PRO-04

**Granting, Refusing, Suspending,
Withdrawing Certification or Expanding/ Reducing the Scope of
Certification Procedure**

1. PURPOSE

To document, establish, implement and maintain a system for granting, refusing, maintaining, extending, reducing, renewing, suspending or restoring suspension and withdrawal of certification against management system standards ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015.

2. SCOPE

This procedure is applicable to all audits carried out on the client during a certification cycle.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

Manager Certification is responsible for review and approval of certificates. He is responsible for issue of certificate to client. He is authorized to send suspension or withdrawal letters/e mails to client. He is supported by the support staff for all routine activities.

General Manager is responsible for approval of certificates. In the absence of GM, Manager Certification can sign the certificate.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 General

4.1.1 LMQS ensures that the person or the group of persons involved in the decision making for granting, refusing, maintaining, extending, reducing, renewing, suspending or restoring suspension and withdrawal of certification against management system standards have not participated in the audit.

4.1.2 LMQS ensures that the personnel involved in decision-making as stated above have the competence to evaluate the audit processes and the related recommendations of the audit team. The competence requirements are identified in the document Competence Requirements (Annexure T).

4.1.3 The certification decision will be as mentioned in the section 4.9 of (LMQS-PRO-07) Certification Procedure.

4.2 Granting Certificate

4.2.1 Granting certification means the state that the compliance to the Certification requirements has been confirmed by the LMQS as per its Certification Procedures (LMQS-PRO-07).

4.2.2 The certification is granted and recorded in List of Certified Clients (LMQS-FOR-17) and on the website after the following conditions have been met by the applicant organization:

- Customer has a documented management system that meets applicable standard or other normative documents.
- One internal audit and management review cycle has been completed and nonconformities, if any, have been corrected.
- The applicant meets the criteria of certification and all on-conformities, if any found during assessment have been closed.

- There are no adverse reports/ information/ complaints with the LMQS about the applicant regarding the quality and effectiveness of implementation of system as per LMQS certification criteria.
- The applicant has paid all the fees.

4.2.3 Certification Document

- After the decision to grant certification, arrangement is made for the issue of certificate.
- Initially a draft certificate is prepared and its correctness of entries is verified by the Manager Certification.
- The certificate is signed by General Manager and is issued to the client along with use of logo and the certification mark (Annexure D), rules for certification (Annexure K) and Obligation of certified clients (Annexure U).
- If the recommendation made by the assessment team is not accepted by the decision maker, the client and the audit team are accordingly informed with an explanation. LMQS will further interact with the client to initiate appropriate action to resolve the issue.

4.2.4 The Certification document include the following:

- a) Name and geographical location of the client
- b) Dates of granting, extending and renewing certification
- c) Expiry date or the re-certification due date
- d) A unique identification code/revision number, Certification standards, normative document and the scope of certification.
- e) The name, address and the certification mark of LMQS and the accreditation symbol as per guidelines of the accreditation body
- f) A means to identify the revised documents from any prior obsolete documents, in the vent of issue of revised certificate,
- g) Any other information required by the standard used for certification
- h) Revision number & date along with original certification number to distinguish the revised documents from any prior obsolete documents

4.2.5 Validity period of certification document:

The certificate issued against any specific management system standard is valid for three years from date of decision on certification

4.3 Maintaining Certificate

4.3.1 The Certification is maintained for a period of 3 years under the following conditions.

- a) The Surveillance Audits are conducted as planned and the client has demonstrated that it continues to satisfy the requirements of the management system standard as confirmed by LMQS.
- b) All the non-conformance raised during previous surveillance are closed within the time frame agreed and correction and corrective actions for the non-conformities raised during the current audit are identified and accepted by LMQS as described in (LMQS-PRO-11) Surveillance & Recertification procedure.
- c) The internal audit and the management reviews are conducted as scheduled and there are no issues pending.

- d) The client shall maintain suitable records of customer complaints and keep the records of investigation and remedial actions taken with respect to such complaints for verification by the LMQS auditors.
- e) All outstanding dues to LMQS are paid
- f) The technical reviewer and certification decision maker approves the audit

4.4 Expanding and Reducing scope of certification

- 4.4.1 LMQS, in response to an application (Application for Modification -LMQS-FOR-06) for expanding the scope of a certification already granted, undertake a review of the application and determine any audit activities necessary to decide whether or not the extension may be granted. This may be conducted in conjunction with a surveillance audit.
- 4.4.2 LMQS shall wherever applicable reduce the scope of certification if during the time of routine surveillance audits / re approval or renewal audits it finds that the certified client has continually / seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification. Such exclusions shall be consistent with the certification standard.
- 4.4.3 If the reduction in scope is requested by the client (Application for Modification -LMQS-FOR-06) it shall be dealt with. The expansion and reduction in scope will be approved by the Manager Certification.
- 4.4.4 LMQS issue a new certificate with amended scope without any change in the certification period as identified in the previous certification document. The new certificate shall contain revision number and date.

4.5 Suspension of certification

- 4.5.1 Suspension of certification may be done in the following cases:
 - The certified client's management system has persistently failed to meet certification requirements, including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system.
 - The certified client does not allow surveillance or recertification audit to be conducted at the required frequencies.
 - The certified client has voluntarily requested a suspension.
 - In case of not applying of new standards that changed due to certification system.
 - Wishful misuse of logo & reference to certification
 - Violate contract or agreement of certification.
 - In case of providing false information or document during audit.
 - Non-compliance to submission of corrective action as stated in procedure (LMQS-PRO-11)
 - Non-payment of dues to LMQS
- 4.5.2 The suspension shall be for a period of maximum 06 months and the suspended status of the client shall be publicly made available in the register of certified clients being maintained by LMQS at its registered office. During this period the client should discontinue the use of logo or any reference of certification in advertising matter, as directed by LMQS, at the time of giving notice of suspension and the same also addressed in and LMQS-FOR-08 (Certification Agreement).
- 4.5.3 The decision for suspending certification is taken by the Decision maker of LMQS.

4.6 Restoring of certification

4.6.1 LMQS shall restore the suspended certification if the issue that has resulted in the suspension has been resolved. Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension within six months shall result in withdrawal or reduction of the scope of certification.

4.7 Withdrawing certification

4.7.1 LMQS informs the customer through email notification about the withdrawal of certification, if the reasons of suspension are not removed. LMQS revises List of Certified customers and update the information on LMQS website to make it publicly accessible. List of Suspended & Withdrawn Clients (LMQS-FOR-38).

4.7.2 The termination of withdrawal of certification means that certification is no longer valid.

4.7.3 The customer may re-apply to LMQS for Initial Certification when all the reasons for the withdrawal have been removed and communicated to LMQS. Any application received from a withdrawn client is processed as for new client as per procedure LMQS-PRO-07.

4.7.4 LMQS shall withdraw the certificate under the following circumstances.

- Failure of the client to resolve the issues of suspension within six months shall result in withdrawal of certification
- Other reasons like major legal complaint; company involved in malpractices, LMQS loses accreditation etc.
- Client voluntarily requested for a withdrawal.

4.7.5 Upon withdrawal of certification the client ceases to enjoy the certification status and shall accordingly return the certificate as directed by LMQS at the time of withdrawal notice.

4.7.6 The decision for withdrawing certification is taken by the Decision Maker.

4.7.7 Upon request from any party LMQS shall correctly state the status of certification of a client's management system as being suspended, withdrawn or reduced.

4.8 Renew of certification or recertification

4.8.1 LMQS will renew the certification as per procedure LMQS-PRO-11.

4.8.2 LMQS makes decision on renewing certification based on the following,

- (a) The results of the re-certification audit
- (b) The results of the review of the system over the period of certification
- (c) Complaints received from customers of certified clients

4.8.3 The decision for re-certification is taken as described in sections 4.9 of (LMQS-PRO-07) Certification Procedure.

4.8.4 LMQS shall issue a new certificate as described in sections 4.2.3 of this procedure

4.9 Changes and Modification to Certification

- 4.9.1 When LMQS is informed that changes occur in the client's management system, MR provide the Application for Modification -LMQS-FOR-06 to the client. The client should complete the form and submit to LMQS.
- 4.9.2 After review of the Application for Modification -LMQS-FOR-06 submitted by the customer, MR in coordination with Manager Certification determines the necessary action.
- 4.9.3 When change is approved, LMQS shall retrieve the previous certificate and shall issue a new certificate. The list of customers is revised accordingly. Manager Certification shall report the changes to Accreditation body, if required.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Doc ID	Document Title	Retention Time
LMQS-FOR-06	Application for modification	6 Years
LMQS-FOR-17	List of certified clients	6 Years
LMQS-FOR-38	List of suspended & withdrawn clients	6 Years
Annexure D	Logo use and regulation	6 Years
Annexure K	Rules for certification	6 Years
Annexure U	Obligation of certified clients	6 Years