

Personnel Certification Body Accreditation Requirements

Applies to bodies operating certification schemes that assess and certify the competence of persons for defined jobs, roles or functions.

Primary standard	ISO/IEC 17024:2026
Document owner	International Services for Certification Bodies
Review trigger	Standard, scheme, regulatory or ISCB process change

Document status and use

This ISCB applicant guide states the evidence and operating controls normally expected for this programme. It does not reproduce or replace the applicable ISO or ISO/IEC standard. Applicants must hold an authorised current copy and comply with all applicable requirements, legislation, scheme rules and formally issued ISCB criteria.

References to IAF or ILAC publications identify technical criteria that may be relevant. They do not by themselves state or imply that ISCB is an IAF or ILAC arrangement signatory.

Applicable framework

The assessment hierarchy begins with the primary standard and includes applicable normative, regulatory, scheme-owner and ISCB documents. ISCB will identify the controlling criterion if requirements conflict.

- ISO/IEC 17024:2026 is the current primary certification-body standard and replaces the 2012 edition.
- ISO/IEC 17011:2017 governs ISCB's accreditation process and decisions.
- Scheme-owner rules, regulatory requirements and applicable IAF or regional documents form part of the criteria when relevant.

Core organisational requirements

Legal status and responsibility

Be a legally identifiable entity, or a defined part of one, that can be held responsible for conformity-assessment activities, contracts and decisions.

Impartiality and independence

Identify, analyse, treat, monitor and record threats from ownership, finance, relationships, consultancy, commercial pressure and self-review.

Confidentiality and information security

Protect confidential information, personal data, intellectual property and electronic records; control any legally required disclosure.

Organisation and governance

Define authority, responsibilities, reporting lines and safeguards; assign technical work, review and decisions to competent and appropriately independent functions.

Competence and resources

Set role-specific competence criteria; evaluate, authorise, monitor and re-evaluate personnel; control facilities, equipment, software and external resources.

Controlled operations

Accept work only after confirming capability; use controlled methods and records; handle deviations; review outputs; base decisions on sufficient objective evidence.

Management system

Maintain document and record control, risks and opportunities, complaints, appeals, nonconforming work, corrective action, internal audit, management review and improvement.

Accreditation claims

Limit certificates, symbols and claims to the granted scope and amend them immediately after suspension, reduction, withdrawal or expiry.

Service-specific technical requirements

1. Maintain a valid certification scheme with defined scope, competence requirements, prerequisites, assessment methods, certification criteria, surveillance where used and recertification arrangements.
2. Use appropriate subject-matter experts and balanced stakeholder input to develop, review and validate the scheme.
3. Separate training interests from certification decisions and manage threats created by related education, examination or commercial activities.
4. Develop valid, reliable, fair and secure examinations with controlled item banks, administration, scoring, pass marks, accommodations, appeals and breach response.
5. Establish competence and authorization for examiners, invigilators, assessors, reviewers and decision-makers.
6. Where artificial intelligence is used, validate outcomes, maintain human oversight, control bias and security, and retain accountable decisions.

Minimum application and readiness evidence

Submit current, approved documents and representative implementation records. Templates without operational evidence are not sufficient.

01	Legal identity, governance, finance and impartiality risk controls
02	Scheme document, job/practice analysis and validation evidence
03	Stakeholder involvement and periodic scheme-review records
04	Examination blueprint, item development, security and psychometric evidence
05	Personnel competence, conflicts and authorization records
06	Application, assessment, decision, surveillance and recertification files
07	Public register, certificate and mark-use controls
08	Internal audit, management review, complaints, appeals and corrective actions

Assessment, decision and continued accreditation

Application and scope review

ISCB reviews legal identity, requested scope, locations, resources, readiness and applicable criteria before quotation and assessment planning. Acceptance of an application is not a promise of accreditation.

Assessment

Assessment may include document review, office or remote assessment, on-site technical assessment, witnessing, interviews, record tracing and evaluation of representative activities. The mix depends on scope and risk.

Nonconformities and decision

The applicant must determine causes, correct the issue, implement proportionate corrective action and provide evidence of effectiveness within the notified period. Accreditation decisions are independent from assessment and limited to demonstrated competence.

Maintenance

Accredited bodies must remain competent, comply with surveillance and reassessment, notify significant changes without delay, cooperate with witnessing and record access, address complaints and nonconformities, and control all accreditation claims.

Principal references

- ISO/IEC 17024:2026
- ISO/IEC 17011:2017
- Applicable scheme-owner or regulatory requirements
- Relevant IAF mandatory or informative documents where formally applicable

External editions can change. The edition stated in the accreditation agreement, transition notice or other formal ISCB communication controls the assessment. Verify current editions before use.

Prepare	Complete the readiness assessment and organise objective evidence.
Apply	Submit the application and proposed scope for formal review.