



OVERVIEW OF
COAE
CERTIFICATION
PROCESS



GENERAL

Centre of Assessments for Excellence (COAE) is an accredited education sector specific third-party conformity assessment body.

We provide world-class Assessments, Audits and Certification services to all the key segments of the education sector.

The system certification of the client organization shall be always limited to the scope of client's management system, and according to the relevant standard (e.g. ISO 21001:2018).

The client shall establish the system and ensure an ongoing compliance, improvement in order to achieve and maintain the certification.

COAE team shall have unconditional access to client premises during the audits and verifications of the compliance. The Accreditation body also may join the audit or may ask for verification as and when required.

VARIOUS STAGES/ STEPS INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS CERTIFICATION PROCESS



1. CLIENT INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE AND PROPOSAL

The prospective client needs to give complete information required for the techno-commercial proposal in the Client Information Questionnaire. COAE shall review the same and prepare the proposal for the client for the desired certification on the basis of the information provided by client and COAE procedure and governing rules.

COAE reserves the right to amend the proposal in case the information is found to be different than that provided by client.

The proposal shall be accompanied by terms and conditions and the contract. Upon the acceptance of proposal, a contract/ agreement shall be signed by both – COAE & the client

The contract specifies the terms and conditions to be followed by client for the use of Certification mark (logo), certificate.



2. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Following steps are followed:-

PRE AUDIT:

This is an optional activity. The audit is broad based, and covers the same scope as certification and aimed at giving system insights and basic preparedness indication to client. COAE issues a report of findings upon the completion. This is a stand-alone activity and the results have no impact on the certification decision which happens at the later stage.

STAGE 1

The purpose of the audit is to assess the understanding of the system requirements, preparedness of client for the certification audit, collecting & review of system documents. The audit also includes the review of scope statement, planning for stage 2, understanding of processes, locations.

COAE can consider back to back audit or the audit with a few days gap between stages 1 and stage 2 audits. In case the client preparedness is not evident during stage 1, COAE may decide to postpone the audit.



STAGE 2



PLANNING:

Stage 2 is planned based on review of preparedness of client. The detailed plan is sent to the client in advance to ensure smooth roll out.



EXECUTION:

The possible outcome, evaluation process and essential audit requirements are communicated before the start of audit. The audit is executed as planned and essentially covers scope, and evaluates the compliance to the system requirements by taking suitable samples. The effectiveness of system established by client is reviewed and verified in a detailed manner.

The team leader communicates the findings and the result at the end of the audit and the formal audit report is then shared with the client.



EVALUATION:

The report states the findings which are categorized as Nonconformities (major/ minor), Strengths and Opportunities for improvements.

Certificate is recommended when Corrective actions against Nonconformities issued are reviewed and accepted. The certification committee decides to grant/reject the certification based on the terms of reference which also include the lead auditor's recommendation.

For major Nonconformities, COAE may undertake on site verification at chargeable basis after client implements corrective action. For minor nonconformities, the corrective action plan may be sufficient to recommend and effectiveness shall be verified in subsequent audit.



3. CERTIFICATE ISSUE/REFUSE DECISION:

The audit documentation gets reviewed by the team which is independent of audit. The certificate shall be issued giving details of scope, standard and client details for the period of 3 years. subject to successful completion of Surveillance Audits.

In case COAE determines the client's inability to comply with COAE processes related to certification, the certificate will be refused.

CERTIFICATION CYCLE:

During the certification cycle, COAE conducts the surveillance audits.

4. SURVEILLANCE AUDIT:

In order to ensure the ongoing compliance, the surveillance audits are carried out as per the contract and the audit program drawn initially. As per IAF requirement, the first surveillance shall be carried out within 12 months from the last day of stage 2 audit.

The surveillance frequency may vary according to the requirement of governing standard.



5. RECERTIFICATION AUDIT:

This audit is carried out at the frequency of 3 years after initial certification. The audit including certification decision is carried out before the expiry of valid certificate. The audit covers the performance review of client's management system during the certification period as per the scope in line with certification audit requirements.

AMENDMENTS IN THE CERTIFICATES:

The changes (increase/ reduction in employees and/ or name of the entity, location etc.) which can result in significant changes in the system need to be informed by client to COAE. The changes in number of sites and the scope, may result in Reducing or Expanding the scope. These changes shall be informed by the client to COAE.

COAE shall evaluate the changes and decide on planning along with surveillance audit or execute special audit to accommodate the changes according to the prevalent procedure. This may include charges as per special/ additional audit and may result in amendment in certificate accordingly.

REQUIREMENTS OF ACCREDITATION BODY:

Accreditation body is the authority to ensure that certification body (COAE) is performing certification work as per stated norms and requirements of governing standards.

Accreditation body audits are performed to assess the performance of auditors of COAE as part of Accreditation requirements.

Accreditation body auditors assess the performance of COAE audit team during the audit at client's premises by witnessing the audits.

COAE audit team and accreditation body auditors shall have free access to client premises during audit.

Upon request by accreditation body, COAE shares the audit documents as a part of accreditation requirement.



USE OF CERTIFICATE, AND CERTIFICATION MARK:

Upon certification, the client can use the certification mark as per the instructions specified in contract as well as the instructions issued along with certificate.

The certification mark and certificate is a property of COAE International Pvt. Ltd.

The certification mark shall not be used on product, or packaging to create an impression of product certification. COAE shall take appropriate actions in such cases.

SUSPENSION:

Suspension is a temporary hold of the certificate. During the suspension period, the client is advised not to use certificate, and certification mark.

COAE reserves the right to suspend the certificate on non-fulfillment of requirements as mentioned in the terms and conditions of contract during certification period.

In case of any other specific reason, the client is informed in advance on the information received by COAE.

In such cases related to suspensions, the client is always given the time bound opportunity to explain the case. COAE reserves the right to take suitable actions on receipt of explanation, actions received from client.

Restoration

Reinstatement of certification shall be deliberated and passed through the Certification decision committee.

WITHDRAWAL / CANCELLATION:

Based on information available, noncompliance to contractual requirements; COAE may ask client to clarify the points which are critical deviations (surveillance not taken, non-response to repeat complaints, legal non compliances, non-payment of dues etc.).

Sufficient notice is given to the client to submit corrective actions, and if the response is found to be not satisfactory, COAE shall decide to withdraw the certificate and may make the information available publicly.



APPEAL:

Client may appeal against a decision of COAE. The appeal may be forwarded to COAE on the contact mentioned on web site or may forward directly to Head-Certifications. COAE responds to the appeal according to internal procedure.

COMPLAINTS:

In case of any complaint against the service of COAE, or against the client certified by COAE, the interested party/client shall communicate on contact mentioned on the web site or may email us at crm@coaeint.com , or forward to:

Centre of Assessments for Excellence,
23/1701, 7th floor, Tower-1,
Express Trade Tower - 2, B-36, Sector-132,
Noida 201301, India

COAE shall respond appropriately as per the approved procedures.

CERTIFICATE INFORMATION:

Upon receipt of request on the web site or any other means, COAE shall provide details of validity of certificate.