

Certification

Why leave your
certification to
chance?



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By choosing a UKAS accredited certification body, not only can you be assured that you are receiving the most appropriate service for your needs but you will also discover that the UKAS 'symbol' on your documentation brings with it national and international recognition to your business.

If you are responsible for ensuring your business is certified make sure the certification body you select is accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). UKAS is the only accreditation body recognised by the UK government to assess certification bodies against internationally recognised standards that ensure the certification body is fit for purpose.

UKAS combines technical knowledge and expertise with commercial impartiality and a requirement to serve the public interest first. UKAS accreditation provides assurance in the market that UKAS accredited certification bodies operate to recognised standards.

Accredited certification standards

UKAS accredited certification bodies are accredited to the international standards ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC 17065 and ISO/IEC 17024 to organisations providing certification of management systems products, services and personnel, which provides consumers with the confidence that the quality of the service they procure is of a consistently high standard.



Competence and impartiality

The competence of a certification body you appoint may be crucial to maintaining your reputation as a responsible organisation. It is therefore surprising that organisations are still tempted to use the service of certification bodies whose competence has not been confirmed by an independent, authoritative third party.

UKAS is the sole UK accreditation body recognised by government to assess, against internationally recognised standards, organisations that provide certification services. UKAS combines a depth of technical knowledge and expertise built up over many years with scientific and technical specialists operating across a range of certification activities.



What are your certification needs?

There are thousands of certification providers operating within the UK. Accredited certification demonstrates that a certification body is technically competent to audit and certify activities within its scope of accreditation in accordance with the requirements of national and international standards and schemes.

Accredited certification is available to ISO/IEC 17021-1 (Management Systems); ISO/IEC 17024 (Persons) or ISO/IEC 17065 (Products, Processes and Services). These types of certification are widely used to enhance confidence in a wide range of sectors including health and safety, construction, food safety and data security.



What our customers say



The UK Certification Authority for Reinforcing Steels (CARES)

“ Maintaining this accreditation is pivotal to the future of CARES. UKAS accreditation forms a key part of our broader business plan and helps open up markets in different regions. CARES currently provides certification services to clients in more than 40 countries; the recognition that UKAS provides has been essential to that international expansion. ”

Matthew Northcott, Assurance & Compliance Engineer



NQA Certification

“ We see accreditation as a key pillar in upholding standards and improving trust in a rapidly changing world. Being accredited by UKAS gives confidence to our customers that we are a competent, professional and reputable company, allowing us to be a valuable partner to them. ”

Laura Fletcher, Commercial & Customer Experience Director



TEC Quality

“ UKAS accreditation has been the backbone of our scheme and has fulfilled the invaluable role of ‘guiding eye’, providing the challenge and scrutiny we need to ensure quality and safety remain at the heart of everything TEC Quality provides. ”

Alyson Scurfield, CEO



ForeFront Certification

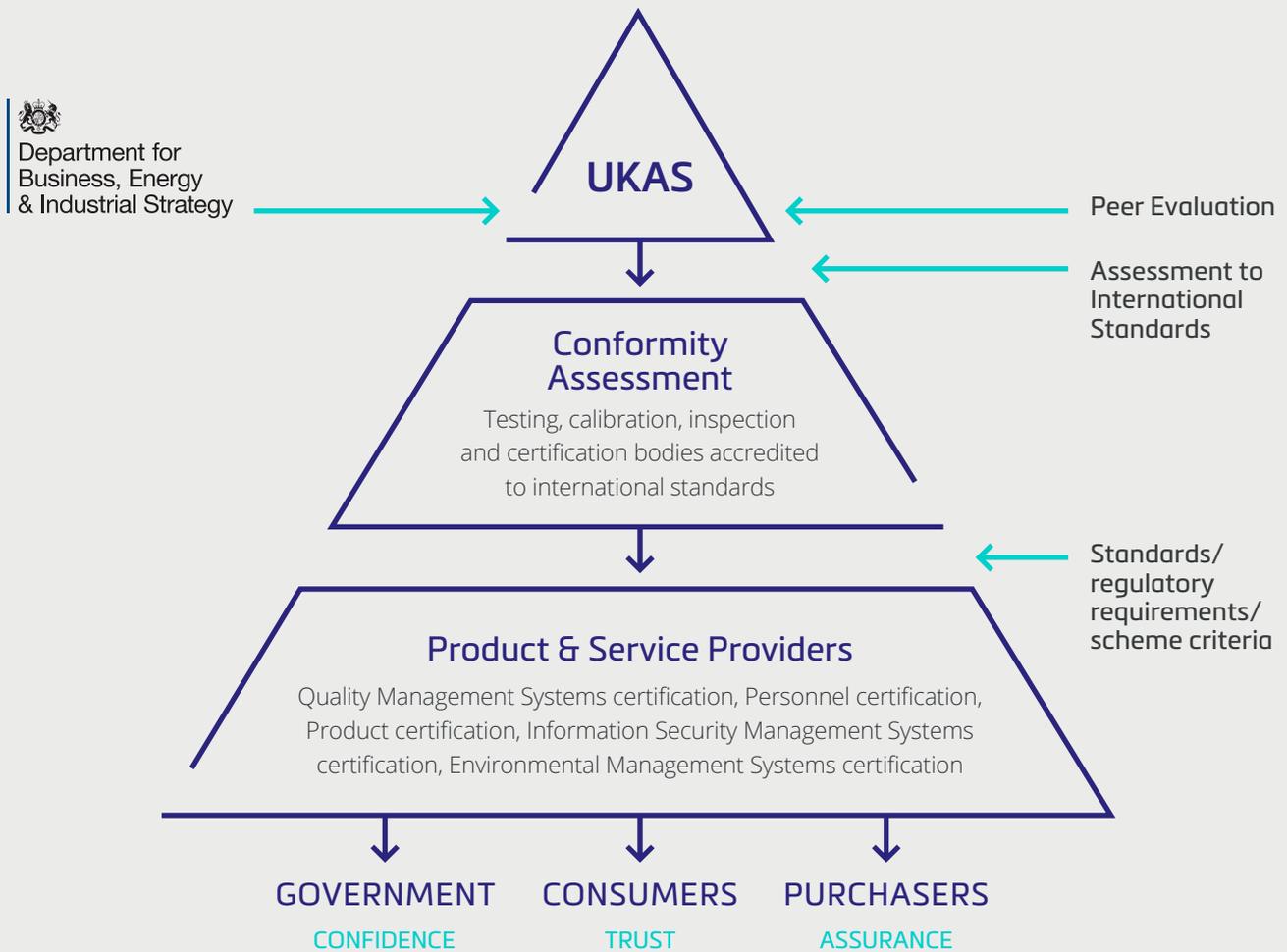
“ Reaching new overseas markets is a key ambition for ForeFront. Achieving accreditation is a foundational step to breaking into these new markets and the UKAS name is an additional plus-point because in areas such as the USA, Asia and India, UKAS is viewed as a mark of quality and high standards. ”

John Duncan, Lead Auditor



UKAS market position

A certification body accredited by UKAS has proved that it complies with best practice and is competent to deliver a consistently reliable and impartial service which meets the appropriate, internationally-recognised standard.



Mutual recognition: Global

- + Accreditation provides a global network of technical assurance, demonstrating equivalence to help eliminate technical barriers to international trade.
- + This assurance is underpinned by a robust process of peer evaluation, ensuring accreditation bodies comply with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011. This enables an Accreditation Body to become a signatory to a mutual or multilateral recognition arrangement.
- + Being a signatory to a recognized international mutual or multilateral recognition arrangement (such as EA MLA - Multilateral Agreement, ILAC MRA - Mutual Recognition Arrangement or IAF MLA - Multilateral Recognition Arrangement) means that the reports and certificates produced by bodies accredited by that signatory should be accepted as technically equivalent to reports and certificates issued in the countries of all other signatories.



Accreditation portfolio

While Quality Management System certification (to ISO 9001) accounts for a large proportion of work undertaken by certification bodies, there are other equally important areas of work, including:

- + Product certification
- + Personnel certification
- + Information Security Management Systems certification (ISO/IEC 27001)
- + Environmental Management Systems certification (ISO 14001)
- + Food Safety Management Systems certification (ISO 22000)
- + Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems certification (ISO 45001)
- + Energy Management Systems certification (ISO 50001)
- + Asset Management Systems certification (ISO 55001)
- + An organisation is only accredited for the activities that are listed on its accreditation schedule and can be found on the UKAS website.

Benefits of accredited certification

There are a host of reasons why you should use the services of a UKAS accredited certification body. Here are some of the most important:

- + **Minimise risk** – While risk can never be entirely removed, using an accredited certification body demonstrates a commitment to best practice and provides greater surety in the competence and quality of your certification.
- + **Maintain your reputation** – A UKAS accredited certification body is able to demonstrate a full audit trail for certification, calling upon best practice and using the services of trained and experienced suppliers.

- + **Access to international markets** – Accreditation provides confidence that certification is delivered to relevant national/international standards. Recognition of this equivalence facilitates access to local and international markets.
- + **Win new business** – Accredited certification provides independent assurance of competence, setting you apart from the competition and supporting the generation of new business and access to new markets.
- + **Defend against litigation** – Using an accredited certification body to carry out an independent evaluation of your management system helps demonstrate due diligence in the event of legal action.
- + **Supply chain confidence** – Accredited certification can create confidence in industry supply chains and is often specified by public and private sector organisations as a prerequisite for acceptance.

What are the risks of using a certification body that is not UKAS accredited?

Confidence in your choice of certification body is essential. Using a supplier that has not been independently assessed to the relevant national/international standard runs the following risks:

- + **Inexperienced staff** – Competence is built on qualifications, experience, appropriate professional development and consistent adherence to best practice
- + **Insufficient resource** – Risking inadequate or incomplete work and unreliable certification
- + A lack of impartiality
- + Insufficient feedback mechanisms with no formal complaints process, accountability or redress to UKAS
- + Lack of due diligence and exposure to claims
- + Uncertainty within the supply chain, causing quality concerns within your business.

Confused about the difference between accreditation and certification?

Here's what you need to know: In this leaflet we refer to both certification and accreditation. For certification services, you need to ask for an accredited certification body.

Certification

is written assurance by a third party that a product, process or service conforms to or complies with specified requirements.

Accreditation

is the procedure by which an authoritative body gives formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific tasks.

How to find a UKAS accredited certification body

All organisations accredited to the international standards ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC 17065 and ISO/IEC 17024 for organisations providing certification of management systems products, services and personnel are listed on the UKAS website. An organisation is only accredited for the activities that are listed on their schedule.

UKAS has formally been appointed as the National Accreditation Body for the United Kingdom by The Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). BEIS works with UKAS to ensure that it operates in the public interest and meets the obligation imposed by the Regulation.

Look for the UKAS symbol

A UKAS accredited certification body is permitted to display one of the national accreditation symbols. This will allow you to make an informed choice.

Only accredited certification bodies are permitted to display the certification symbol, one of the national accreditation symbols.



Further information:

A full list of UKAS accredited certification bodies can be found at: <https://www.ukas.com/find-an-organisation/>

Further information can be obtained from <https://www.ukas.com/sectors/management-systems-certification/>

Get in touch

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