



Q3, A1, 10th Floor, Cyber Towers, Hi-Tech, Madhapur, Hyderabad, Telangana 500081

Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Reference | LexQ_PR21_PRA_V1.0 | Issue No. | 03 |
| Release Date | 12-05-2020 | Total Number of pages | 8 |
| | Designation | Name | Date |
| Prepared by | Quality Manager | Sandeep Gajula | 13/05/2020 |
| Approved by | Certification Director | Dr.VC | 13/05/2020 |

| | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
|  | LEX-Q CERTIFICATIONS (A Division of Lex Nimble Solutions Ltd) | Lex-Q_PR21_PRA_V1.0 |
| | | 12-05-2020 |
| Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit | | |

| Revision details | | | |
|------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Rev No. | Issued on | Details of amendment / revision made | Reason for amendment |
| V1.0 | 12-05-2020 | First issue | Due to implementation of ISO/IEC 17021-1 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|
| Prepared By | Approved By | Signature | Page |
| Quality Manager | Managing Director | | 1 of 9 |

| | | |
|---|--|---------------------|
|  Lex-Q Certifications QUALIFYING QUALITY | LEX-Q CERTIFICATIONS (A Division of Lex Nimble Solutions Ltd) | Lex-Q_PR21_PRA_V1.0 |
| | | 12-05-2020 |
| Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit | | |

1.0 Purpose

This procedure describes the methods used for the remote assessment as per the requirements of IAF ID12. The objective of a remote assessment is to establish the level of confidence in the Lex-Q Certifications. certification process by direct observations carried out through an electronic medium. Remote assessments provide the opportunity for increased efficiency, increased safety, better timing, inclusion of personnel that may not be easily accessible, and avoidance of travel delays and restrictions.

2.0 Scope

It covers all types of assessment, such as Stage–1 assessment for the document review as well as Stage–2 assessment for the certification of the management system as per the defined requirements.

3.0 Responsibility

3.1 **Certification Manager and Lead Auditors and Auditors** are responsible to conduct the remote assessment as per the details given in this procedure.

4.0 Description of Activity

4.1 Criteria for initiating remote assessment

4.1.1 The use of remote assessments by **Lex-Q Certifications** is on a voluntary basis, by mutual agreement, or may be initiated for its assessment needs (surveillance etc.).

4.1.2 Remote assessments is considered for use when;

- Travel to a specific location is not reasonable (i.e., for safety reasons, travel restrictions, etc.).
- There are unavoidable changes in scheduling for the Auditors (i.e., personal issues, change in business priorities, etc.).
- The number of sites to be assessed is difficult to completely fulfil within its timeframe.
- Client has systematic implementation of its system where records, data, etc. can be reviewed at any site, despite where the work is being performed.
- The assessment is for a minor extension to scope of certification such as inclusion of new products or facility in the management system.
- Client has a proven track record of conformance at the location of the remote assessment.
- The risk level of the assessment is of low concern to the **Lex-Q Certifications**.
- An activity or activities planned for the on–site assessment could not be completed and extending the on–site assessment is not the best resolution.
- The situation requires the assessment team to come back for a follow up assessment, but another visit is not easily achievable within a short time frame.
- **Lex-Q Certifications.** has an assessor (or team of assessors) already familiar with the system and its practices and who have visited the client once.

4.1.3 Remote assessments is not favourable in the situation, such as;

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|
| Prepared By | Approved By | Signature | Page |
| Quality Manager | Managing Director | | 2 of 9 |

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | LEX-Q CERTIFICATIONS (A Division of Lex Nimble Solutions Ltd) | Lex-Q_PR21_PRA_V1.0 12-05-2020 |
| Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit | | |

- When the client has a history of more numbers of non-conformances at the location being assessed and implementation is not up to the mark.
- During initial assessment activity of a new client facility, scope, or significant change etc., this is having bigger impact.
- When no on-site assessment has taken place for an extended period of time.

Surveillance Audit

- When a Surveillance Audit 1 (SA-1) cannot be performed within one year after the Initial Certification Audit, or when a Surveillance Audit 2 (SA-2) cannot be performed within two years after the Initial Certification Audit, the audit can be delayed for a maximum of 6 months after the initial scheduled date. The initial scheduled date must be considered as the last day of the initial certification audit plus 12 or 24 months.
- Therefore, SA-1 should be conducted maximum 18 months after the initial certification audit and SA-2 should be conducted maximum 30 months after the initial certification audit date. The normal window to perform the audit should be respected based on the revised date.
- If such an on-site audit is not possible for the exceptional reasons mentioned above, it may be acceptable to perform a remote audit in place of physical audit. This should be completed within the 6 month period after the initially scheduled audit date.
- The Certification Body shall as a first step perform a "Preliminary Risk Assessment for allowing a remote audit". If the SA-1 was already performed using remote means, then the SA-2 shall be an on-site physical audit (no repetition of two successive remote surveillance audits)
- If the preliminary risk assessment concludes a remote audit is not acceptable, or if for any other reason a remote audit cannot be performed, then the Lex-Q Certifications shall be suspended for a maximum 6 months period and be withdrawn immediately after 6 month

Note:

1. Remote audit, if feasible, on the basis of the company's activity or based on the use of technologies that allow remote access and monitoring of sites / facilities etc. of the company, or
2. Change/extend the due date of the audit to a maximum of six months
3. Contact the customer again, and if there is unsubstantiated refusal of audit, the validity of his certificate will be suspended.

Re-certification Audit

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|
| Prepared By | Approved By | Signature | Page |
| Quality Manager | Managing Director | | 3 of 9 |

| | | |
|--|--|---------------------|
|  Lex-Q Certifications QUALIFYING QUALITY | LEX-Q CERTIFICATIONS (A Division of Lex Nimble Solutions Ltd) | Lex-Q_PR21_PRA_V1.0 |
| | | 12-05-2020 |
| Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit | | |

- If a re-certification audit (RCA) cannot be performed within the three year period after the Initial Certification Audit, the audit can be delayed for a maximum of 6 months after the initial scheduled date.
- Therefore, an RCA should be conducted no later than 42 months after the initial certification audit date. In this case, there should be an extension of the expiry date of the certificate.
- If such on-site audit is not possible for the reasons mentioned above, it may be acceptable to perform a remote audit, in order to partially replace an on-site physical audit and to avoid certification suspension. It should be considered that a remote RCA does not replace an on-site audit, but it allows the Certification Body to postpone the RCA for not more than 6 additional months when there is an acceptable risk assessment concerning the Supplier Quality Management System. This remote audit should be completed within 6 months after the initially scheduled audit date.
- The Certification Body shall as a first step perform "Preliminary Risk Assessment for allowing a remote audit". If the conclusion is that risk is low or moderate, the Certification Body can propose to the Supplier a remote audit according to the procedure.
- The remote audit will then allow the on-site RCA to be postponed for not more than 6 months, i.e. not more than 42 months after the initial certification audit. In such an option, the remote audit must be confirmed by an on-site audit within the 6-month period after remote audit. This on-site audit duration will be shorter as documentation was already assessed during the remote audit.
- If the preliminary risk assessment concludes a remote audit is not acceptable, or if for any other reason a remote audit cannot be performed, then Lex-Q Certification shall be suspended for a maximum 6 months period and withdrawn immediately after.

Note:

1. Remote audit if feasible, on the basis of the company's activity or based on the use of technologies that allow remote access and monitoring of sites / facilities etc. related to the company's activities. In this case, the certificate shall be extended for a period of six (6) months, during which an on-the-spot check shall be carried out as part of the re-certification inspection. In the event that the on-the-spot check is not carried out within this period, the certificate shall be withdrawn, or
2. Extend the validity of the certificate for a period of six (6) months within which the re-certification inspection is to be carried out. In the event that the on-the-spot check is not carried out within this period, the certificate shall be withdrawn, or
3. Contact the customer again and if the customer continues to refuse while there is no substantiated reason, we will revoke the certificate.

4.2 Planning and scheduling of remote assessments

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|
| Prepared By | Approved By | Signature | Page |
| Quality Manager | Managing Director | | 4 of 9 |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
|  | <p align="center">LEX-Q CERTIFICATIONS (A Division of Lex Nimble Solutions Ltd)</p> | <p>Lex-Q_PR21_PRA_V1.0</p> <p>12-05-2020</p> |
| Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit | | |

4.2.1 It is beneficial for the **Lex-Q Certifications** to determine whether or not the client is a viable for remote assessment. The **Lex-Q Certifications** defines qualification criteria for determining when it is appropriate to perform an assessment remotely, such as;

- The acceptable period to perform a remote assessment (surveillance, extension in the scope of certification such as inclusion of new products or facility in the management system, extraordinary assessment, follow-up, partial assessment which could not be completed on-site, investigations, etc.).
- The criteria for appropriate use of remote assessment.
- The eligibility of the client for remote assessment (i.e., the facility may be contractually obligated or the scheme required to be assessed on-site).
- Whether there is a conflict of interest with the parties being assessed remotely.
- Whether the **Lex-Q Certifications** permits and accommodates remote assessment activity (i.e., availability of records in electronic format or document reader).
- Whether the client is able to provide a representative that is capable of communicating in the same language as the assessor/auditor.
- Whether the **Lex-Q Certifications** has the capability and aptitude to conduct the remote assessment in the chosen medium/forum of the remote assessment.
- Whether a list of activities, areas, information and personnel to be involved in the remote assessment is available.

4.2.2 Before initiation of remote assessment, **Lex-Q Certifications** defines the followings;

- The agenda for the planned remote assessment with pre-defined records and documentation to be available during remote assessment.
- The desired scope of review.
- The list of activities, areas, information and personnel to be involved in the remote assessment.
- The list of items to be assessed.
- The timeframe for conducting the remote assessment (i.e. 8 hr/day). Timing adheres to the rules/guidance defined for duration. Permit time for breaks and individual review by the Assessor/Auditor. Assessment days should be calculated using prescribed methods, requirements, etc.
- A plan on how to review information that cannot be shared remotely (i.e. due to confidentiality or access issues). **Lex-Q Certifications** defines or express how this will be dealt with (i.e., follow-up, issuance of a non-conformance, etc.).

4.2.3 Client is requested to provide the following information to conduct the remote assessment;

- Designated individual(s) that will facilitate manage and coordinate the arrangements of the assessment on behalf of the client. This should include translators, if required.
- Applicable files, projects, reports, etc.
- Required documents, such as Manual, Procedures, Guidelines, legal requirements, product specifications, relevant standards etc. Some information, such as project report

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|
| Prepared By | Approved By | Signature | Page |
| Quality Manager | Managing Director | | 5 of 9 |

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | LEX-Q CERTIFICATIONS (A Division of Lex Nimble Solutions Ltd) | Lex-Q_PR21_PRA_V1.0 12-05-2020 |
| Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit | | |

files, may need to be sent to the Assessor/Auditor for review prior to the remote assessment.

- Other evidence deemed essential and necessary, considering the product under certifications.

4.2.4 Following technology etc. may be used during the remote assessment;

- Platform such as Go-To-Meeting, WebEx, Microsoft Lync, etc. for hosting the assessment, to be agreed upon between the **Lex-Q Certifications** and the client.
- Granting security and/or profile access to the Assessor/Auditor.
- Testing platform compatibility between the Assessor/Auditor and client prior to assessment.
- Encouraging and considering the use of web-cams, cameras, etc. when physical evaluation of an event is desired or necessary.

4.2.5 During the scheduling, following careful considerations are given;

- Time zone acknowledgement and management to coordinate reasonable and mutually agreeable convening times.
- A trial meeting using the same media platforms agreed upon should be conducted to ensure the scheduled assessment will perform as planned.
- Proper security measures are taken, when applicable, to protect confidential information.

4.3 Conducting the remote assessment

4.3.1 When any aspect of the system is not being able to be reviewed or complete determination not be able to be made, a record should be made in the report of the remote assessment.

4.3.2 Conducting the opening meeting:

In addition to the normal opening meeting agenda the following agenda should also be discussed during the remote assessment:

Determine main point of contact for the audit duration

1. Establish lines and methods of communication
2. Where multiple Assessor/Auditors are involved. They are to “attend” the opening meeting where feasible
3. Ensure the client has appropriate resources available for a multi Assessor/Auditor/day audit and ensure methods of communication are in place
4. Review the audit plan and amend as necessary to ensure as much of the plan as possible is covered
5. Determine the most appropriate way of obtaining evidence for the audit. E.g. interview, document, records, photographs, video, Drop box etc.
6. Outline the process for the audit e.g.
 - a. Interview
 - b. Receive audit evidence

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|
| Prepared By | Approved By | Signature | Page |
| Quality Manager | Managing Director | | 6 of 9 |

| | | |
|---|--|---------------------|
|  LexQ Certifications QUALIFYING QUALITY | LEX-Q CERTIFICATIONS (A Division of Lex Nimble Solutions Ltd) | Lex-Q_PR21_PRA_V1.0 |
| | | 12-05-2020 |
| Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit | | |

- c. Review audit evidence
 - d. Further discussion based on the evidence
 - e. Decision on conformance of the evidence reviewed
 - f. Identify the final objective as being able to provide an effective audit report to enable continued certification or to obtain certification
7. Explain that areas not able to be audited (by any means) will need to be audited at next visit as a minimum

Please remember the 3C's

Clarity: ensure that all parties are fully aware of the process and what is required by all

Common sense: take a pragmatic approach to the audit. Things will change as the audit progresses. Be flexible in your approach

Communication: continue to keep lines of communication open and methods of communication effective between all parties.

- 4.3.3** The assessment should be facilitated in quiet environments whenever possible to avoid interference and background noise (i.e., speakerphones).
- 4.3.4** Facilitation of the assessment should follow normal assessment plans and processes.
- 4.3.5** Both parties should make their best effort to confirm what was heard, stated and read throughout the assessment.
- 4.3.6** Following information / evidences will be required for the remote assessment;
- a. Records internal audits and management review,
 - b. A review of actions taken on nonconformities identified during the previous audit,
 - c. Complaints / appeal handling,
 - d. Effectiveness of the management system with regard to achieving the certified client's objectives, and the intended results of the respective management system,
 - e. Review progress of planned activities aimed at continual improvement,
 - f. Confirm continuing operational control, requirements as per requirements,
 - g. Video or photographic evidence for identified activities,
 - h. Review of any changes,
 - i. Use of certificate, marks and/or any other reference to certification
 - j. Interviews with appropriate staff

This is not a definitive list and it is important that sufficient information and evidence is gathered to confirm that the management system remains effective. Where possible ask the client to supply evidence in advance of the audit to save time.

Note: Far from being an easy option and saving time, quite often remote audits take much more time to complete due to the difficulty in retrieving and sending information.

Previous reports should be reviewed to ensure that there were no issues that need a follow up at this audit.

Where possible the visit plan should be reviewed and amended to include the fact that it is a remote audit and to ensure that it includes as a minimum the above requirements. Include the names and titles of the staff to be interviewed. If site visits have been planned these can be marked as not applicable but added to the plan for the next audit.

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|
| Prepared By | Approved By | Signature | Page |
| Quality Manager | Managing Director | | 7 of 9 |

| | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
|  | LEX-Q CERTIFICATIONS (A Division of Lex Nimble Solutions Ltd) | Lex-Q_PR21_PRA_V1.0 |
| | | 12-05-2020 |
| Procedure for Conducting a Remote Audit | | |

4.3.7 All remote assessments should be concluded with a summary, review of the day(s)'s events, issues of concern, clarification of issues, non-conformances and expectations.

4.3.8 There should be allowance for the Assessor to terminate the assessment prior to schedule due to an inability to maintain satisfactory connections or conditions during the scheduled time. This should be recorded in the assessment report.

4.3.9 Both parties need to take appropriate measures to safeguard confidentiality of data in any format.

4.4 Post assessment activities

4.4.1 Findings (Non-conformances, corrective actions, Opportunities for Improvement, etc.) are drafted by the remote assessment team members and passed on to the client in a timely manner for each session for review and acknowledgement, prior to closure of non-conformances.

4.4.2 Stage 1 and Stage 2 audits

Remote stage 1 audits may be carried out when justified and planned. These are reported using the normal documentation and again clearly marked as remote audits. However, it may not be possible to set a date for the stage 2 audit until after the current issues have been resolved.

Stage 1 and 2 audits will continue to be conducted as normal. These shall be done remotely. Clients will be advised that where "key process activities" cannot be audited at stage 2, then a limited life certificate will be issued and once it becomes possible to complete the "full" audit then a three-year certificate will be issued. Limited life certificates shall be for a maximum of three months.

4.4.3 The findings are posted in writing (as per the **Lex-Q Certification's** policies and procedures) and the client needs to be encouraged to provide additional information to be included in the text of its response.

4.4.4 The assessment report includes the details of the records reviewed and any findings. **Lex-Q Certification** and client make their best efforts to confirm what was heard, stated and read throughout the assessment.

4.4.5 Communication between the Assessor/Auditor and CAB for sending documents or clarification on issues and corrective action management are pre-defined and communicated.

4.4.6 Assessor/Auditor confirms deletion of any confidential documents, images, recordings, etc. before finalization of assessment report.

4.4.7 The treatment of non-conformances, renewing/continuing approval of accreditation follows the same processes that are utilized for on-site assessments.

5.0 References

5.1 IAF ID12 Principles on remotes assessment

6.0 Enclosures Nil

7.0 Formats / Exhibits

7.1 Remote Audit Planning LexQ_FR48_ICT_V1.0

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------|
| Prepared By | Approved By | Signature | Page |
| Quality Manager | Managing Director | | 8 of 9 |