Certification Regulations
Management Systems

partner for intelligent solutions
intellcert

1. Introduction

These certification conditions define the policies and procedures applied by the certification body of intellcert GmbH, hereinafter referred to as the "certification body," for the certification of management systems. Their purpose is to support organizations in implementing and maintaining effective management systems that comply with internationally recognized standards.

The certification body offers certification services for a wide range of management systems across various industries and geographical regions. These certification conditions set out the requirements that organizations must meet in order to obtain certification, as well as the procedures applied by the certification body to assess conformity with these requirements.

A fundamental principle to which the certification body is committed is the **safeguarding of impartiality**. All certification activities are carried out independently, objectively, and free from any conflicts of interest. The certification body takes appropriate measures to ensure that no internal or external influences compromise the neutrality of its decisions. It is committed to maintaining transparency in dealing with potential conflicts of interest and to systematically identifying, assessing, and managing risks to impartiality. Neither commercial, financial, nor other pressures may affect the independence, integrity, and objectivity of certification decisions. This commitment to impartiality is in accordance with the requirements of international standards such as ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17020, ISO/IEC 17024, and ISO/IEC 17065.

These conditions apply to all organizations applying for certification of their management systems by the certification body or that are already certified. They ensure that the certification process is transparent, fair, and objective, and that the integrity and credibility of the certification body's services are safeguarded.

These certification conditions may be updated and amended to reflect changing requirements and developments in relevant standards and best practices. Organizations seeking certification from the certification body are encouraged to regularly inform themselves about any updates to these conditions.

2. Scope

These certification regulations apply to the certification of management systems according to internationally recognized norms and standards recognized by the certification body. The certification body, intellcert GmbH, provides certification services for the following management systems:

- Quality management systems according to ISO 9001
- Environmental management systems according to ISO 14001
- Occupational health and safety management systems according to ISO 45001
- Energy management systems according to ISO 50001
- Quality management in the aerospace industry EN 9100 / 9120
- Information security management systems according to ISO/IEC 27001
- Food safety management systems according to ISO 22000

The certification services provided by the certification body are always offered for a defined technical and local scope. This scope is determined during the certification process and includes the organization's address(es) as well as the specific activities, products, or services covered by the management system. The certification body reserves the right to define the boundaries of the technical and local scope, guided by facts, relevant criteria, and applicable regulations for determining scopes according to the respective norms and standards.

The certification services provided by the certification body may be offered to organizations in various industries and geographical regions worldwide. Therefore, the scope of these certification regulations extends to organizations in different sectors and geographic locations, provided they meet the requirements of the respective norms.

3. Definitions

In these certification regulations, the following definitions apply:

- **Certification Body:** The organization that offers and conducts certification services according to these regulations.
- **Management System:** A systematic approach to managing an organization aimed at improving performance, managing risks, and seizing opportunities. A management system can cover various aspects such as quality, environment, occupational health and safety, energy, information security, food safety, etc.
- **Norms and Standards:** International or national documents that establish requirements, guidelines, or specifications for specific management systems. Examples include ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001, ISO 50001, ISO/IEC 27001, ISO 22000, and other relevant standards.
- **Certification:** The formal process by which an independent certification body confirms the conformity of a management system with the established norms and standards.
- **Certificate:** The official document issued by the certification body confirming the certification of a management system. It typically includes information about the scope of certification, the management system, and the applicable norms and standards.
- **Audit:** The systematic, independent, and documented examination to determine whether activities and results are in accordance with planned arrangements and whether these arrangements have been effectively implemented and are suitable to achieve policies and objectives.
- **Auditors:** Individuals appointed by the certification body to conduct audits. They possess the necessary qualifications, knowledge, and skills to audit objectively and impartially.
- **Conformity:** The compliance of a management system with the requirements of the relevant norms and standards.

These definitions aim to establish a common understanding of the terminology used in these certification regulations. They may also be referenced in other documents related to the certification process.

4. Certification Process

The certification process comprises several steps, ranging from the submission of an application to the issuance of the certificate. The procedure is aligned with the applicable norms, standards, and established protocols. Below are the main phases of the certification process explained.

4.1 Application Submission

The organization wishing to certify its management system submits an application to intellcert GmbH. This application can be formal or informal and should contain relevant information about the organization, the management system, and the desired scope of certification.

4.2 Quotation Phase and Application Review

After receipt of the certification application, intellcert GmbH conducts an application review. The purpose of the application review is to determine whether the prerequisites for conducting the certification process are fulfilled.

As part of the application review, the following aspects are evaluated in particular:

- completeness and plausibility of the information provided by the client

- consistency of the applied scope with the actual activities, processes and sites of the organization
- availability of the required competence and resources to perform the certification activities
- identification and management of potential conflicts of interest
- applicability of the requested management system and the underlying standard(s)

Based on the results of the application review, the certification body decides on the acceptance or rejection of the certification application.

4.2.1 Rejection of a Certification Application

intellcert GmbH reserves the right to reject a certification application if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- the prerequisites for a standard-compliant certification are not fulfilled
- the applied scope is not consistent with the actual processes and activities of the organization
- the required competence or resources to conduct the certification process are not available
- conflicts of interest exist that cannot be adequately managed
- information provided by the client is incomplete, inconsistent or implausible

The rejection of a certification application shall be communicated to the applicant, including the reasons for the decision.

The decision and the underlying information shall be documented by the certification body.

4.2.2 Definition of the Scope

The definition of the management system scope is the responsibility of the client. Within the application review, the certification body assesses whether the applied scope:

- adequately and correctly reflects the relevant processes, activities and sites, and
- complies with the requirements of the applicable standard(s).

If the applied scope does not correspond to the actual situation of the organization or is not permissible according to the standard, the certification body shall inform the client and request an appropriate adjustment.

Certification based on an inaccurate or misleading scope is excluded.

4.3 Audit Preparation

Prior to the actual audit date, the organization prepares for the audit by gathering the necessary documents, conducting internal audits, and ensuring that the management system complies with the requirements of the standards.

4.4 Audit Preparation by the Certification Body

The certification body prepares for the audit by selecting auditors, creating the audit plan, and providing the necessary resources. The audit plan is developed in close coordination with the organization before the audit and typically includes information about the areas to be examined, the audit schedule, and the involved personnel.

4.5 Audit Execution

The audit process involves a systematic examination of an organization's management system by qualified auditors, typically conducted on-site. The aim of the audit is to assess the conformity of the management system with applicable norms and standards and to identify opportunities for improvement.

The audit process is designed to ensure that an organization's management system complies with applicable norms and standards and supports the organization in continuous performance improvement. Through careful planning, execution, and evaluation of the audit, potential risks can be identified, opportunities seized, and the effectiveness of the management system enhanced.

The audit process includes interviews with employees, review of documentation and records, inspection of facilities and processes, and assessment of the effectiveness of the management system.

During initial certification, the audit process consists of two stages, Stage 1 and Stage 2.

4.5.1 Stage 1 Audit

The Stage 1 audit serves to assess the basic certification readiness of the management system and to prepare for the Stage 2 audit. It is conducted by an independent and qualified auditor or audit team.

The objectives of the Stage 1 audit include in particular:

- auditing the management system documentation for conformity with the applicable standard,
- evaluating the sites as well as site-specific conditions,
- assessing the level of understanding and implementation of the standard requirements, particularly with regard to processes, objectives, performance indicators, risks, or significant aspects,
- collecting relevant information on the scope of the management system, processes, sites, and applicable legal and regulatory requirements,
- evaluating whether internal audits and management reviews have been planned and conducted,
- assessing whether the management system has reached a level of maturity that allows the performance of the Stage 2 audit,
- determining the audit effort and coordinating and planning the Stage 2 audit.

The results of the Stage 1 audit are documented and communicated to the organization. Based on these results, the detailed planning of the Stage 2 audit is carried out. Sufficient time must be allowed between Stage 1 and Stage 2 to address identified weaknesses.

If the Stage 1 audit reveals significant findings or deficiencies that substantially affect the effectiveness or certification capability of the management system, this may lead to adjustments to the audit planning. In such cases, it may be necessary to repeat parts of or the entire Stage 1 audit. The customer is explicitly informed that the results of the Stage 1 audit may result in the postponement or cancellation of the Stage 2 audit.

4.5.2 Stage 2 Audit

The Stage 2 audit is an on-site audit and serves the comprehensive evaluation of the implementation, effectiveness, and conformity of the management system with the standard. It is conducted by an independent and appropriately qualified auditor or audit team.

The scope of the Stage 2 audit includes in particular:

- full conformity of the management system with all requirements of the underlying standard,

- the effectiveness of the management system with regard to achieving defined objectives and meeting the expectations of relevant interested parties,
- performance monitoring, including the measurement, analysis, and evaluation of performance indicators,
- the ability to comply with legal, regulatory, and contractual requirements,
- the operational control of all relevant processes within the scope of certification,
- the performance and effectiveness of internal audits and management reviews,
- the commitment and responsibility of top management.

As part of the Stage 2 audit, all processes, areas, sites, and, where applicable, work shifts included in the scope of certification are assessed. A positive Stage 1 audit and the completion of any necessary corrective actions arising from Stage 1 are prerequisites for conducting the Stage 2 audit.

If major nonconformities are identified during the Stage 2 audit, they must be effectively corrected and verified by the audit team within a maximum of six months after the last audit day. If this is not achieved, the Stage 2 audit must be repeated in full.

After completion of the audit, an audit report is prepared. Identified nonconformities must be addressed through appropriate corrective actions and their effectiveness must be demonstrated. Certification is granted only once all requirements of the standard have been fully met.

4.6 Audit Report and Evaluation

Auditors document their observations, findings, and recommendations during the audit. Upon completion of the audit, they prepare an audit report summarizing the audit results and identifying any non-conformities or improvement opportunities.

4.7 Certification Decision

Upon completion of the audit process, the certification body makes a decision regarding the certification of the organization's management system. The certification decision is based on a thorough evaluation of the audit results and the fulfillment of specified requirements. The main phases of the certification decision are explained below:

- **Audit Report and Evaluation:** The auditors prepare a detailed audit report summarizing their observations, findings, and recommendations during the audit. The certification body carefully evaluates this report and examines the conformity of the management system with applicable norms and standards.
- **Conformity Assessment:** The certification body assesses whether the organization's management system meets the requirements of the respective standard(s). Both identified non-conformities and the effectiveness of corrective actions taken are taken into consideration.
- **Decision Making:** Based on the conformity assessment and audit results, the certification body makes a decision regarding the certification of the management system. If the organization meets the requirements, the certificate is issued. Otherwise, actions to address non-conformities are initiated.
- **Certificate Issuance:** Upon a positive certification decision, the certificate is issued and handed over to the organization. The certificate confirms the conformity of the management system with applicable norms and standards, as well as the valid scope of certification.
- **Certification Publication:** The certification body is the owner of the certificate and is entitled to publicly disclose the organization's certification – for example, by publishing it on its website or in other appropriate media. This serves to strengthen stakeholder confidence in the organization and its

management system. The same applies to a possible suspension or withdrawal of the certificate if the organization fails, or temporarily fails, to meet the requirements set forth in the applicable standards and norms for maintaining certification, or if it does not fulfill its obligations arising from the certification rules.

The certification decision is made objectively, fairly, and independently, based on the results of the audit process. It contributes to ensuring the integrity and credibility of the certification and ensures that certified organizations meet the requirements of norms and standards.

4.8 Certificate Issuance and Surveillance

Upon successful certification, the certificate is issued and handed over to the organization. The certificate typically has a limited validity period (certification period). During the validity period of the certificate, the certification body regularly monitors the certified organizations through surveillance audits (at least annually). These surveillance audits aim to support the continuous improvement of the management system and to verify the effectiveness of corrective actions. Before the expiration of the certificate's validity, the organization may apply for re-certification. The re-certification of the organization follows the same process outlined for certification, with the difference that the new certification period begins with a re-certification audit instead of an initial certification audit. The requirements for planning and conducting re-certification audits are established by relevant norms and standards.

The certification process is designed to ensure that the certified management systems comply with internationally recognized norms and standards and support organizations in continuously improving their performance and managing risks.

5. MULTI-SITE CERTIFICATION

Multi-site certification allows organizations to consolidate multiple locations under a single certificate for their management system. This offers numerous benefits, including consistent implementation of standards and policies, as well as efficient certification management.

Regulations for multi-site certification:

- **Unified management system:** The organization must have implemented a unified management system that is consistently applied across all locations. This management system must meet the requirements of the respective standard, such as ISO 9001, ISO 14001, or ISO 45001.
- **Central management:** There must be a central entity within the organization responsible for managing the management system and coordinating between locations. This entity should have the necessary resources and authority to ensure that the management system is effectively implemented and maintained.
- **Standardization of processes:** Processes and procedures within the management system must be standardized to ensure that all locations meet the same requirements. This includes documenting procedures, work instructions, and other relevant documents.
- **Internal audits and management reviews:** The organization must establish internal audit programs to regularly review the effectiveness of the management system at all locations. Additionally, regular reviews should be conducted by central management to ensure compliance with certification requirements.
- **Risk management:** Effective risk management should be integrated into the management system to identify, assess, and control potential risks at all locations. This is crucial to ensure the continuity of certification and minimize potential operational disruptions.

- **Reporting and communication:** The organization must ensure effective reporting and communication between locations and central management. This includes regular updates on the status of the management system and the sharing of relevant information and best practices.

Compliance with these regulations is crucial for the successful implementation of multi-site certification. Organizations pursuing this model should ensure that all locations meet the same high standards to maintain the integrity and credibility of their certification.

6. Rights and Responsibilities of the Certified Organization

Organizations seeking certification of their management systems in accordance with applicable norms and standards must meet the following requirements:

- **Intellectual Property:** The intellectual property of the audited company, its affiliates, and/or subcontractors (if any) always remains with them.
- **Compliance with Norm Requirements:** The applicant must ensure that its management system complies with the requirements of the respective norm(s) for which certification is sought. This includes adherence to established processes, procedures, and documentation requirements.
- **Documentation of the Management System:** The applicant must provide adequate documentation of its management system, containing all necessary information in accordance with norm requirements. This may include quality manuals, procedural instructions, work instructions, process documentation, and records, among others.
- **Collaboration with the Certification Body:** The audited company must collaborate closely with the certification body throughout the certification process. This includes providing information, responding to auditor inquiries, and supporting the audit process.
- **Audit Preparation:** Before the scheduled audit date, the applicant must ensure that all relevant employees are informed about the audit and adequately prepared. This may involve training and awareness efforts to ensure that all stakeholders are familiar with the audit process.
- **Cooperation During the Audit:** The applicant must ensure that the audit team from intellcert GmbH receives the necessary support in full, so that the audit objectives can be achieved. In particular, the applicant must ensure the following:
    - **Access to Documents:** The audit team, acting on behalf of the certification body, shall have unrestricted access to all relevant documentation. This includes all management system documents, internal audit reports, and reports from independent assessments (e.g., information security assessments in the context of ISO 27001 certification). These documents may be fully reviewed for inspection purposes.
    - **Access to Facilities:** All responsible auditors from the certification body and the accreditation body have the right to access the facilities relevant to the scope of certification of the audited company.
    - **Provision of Resources During the Audit:** The applicant is required to provide all necessary resources during the audit – including suitable premises, continuous accompaniment of the audit team by designated guides, and any other support needed to ensure a smooth audit process. The audit team must ensure that the guides do not interfere with or influence the audit process or its outcomes.

  - **Permission for Eligible Individuals to Participate in the Audit:** The applicant must allow eligible individuals who wish to ensure the conformant conduct of the audit process to participate in the audit. This may include assessors from DAkkS or other relevant accreditation bodies who wish to participate randomly in certain audits.
  - **Provision of Adequate Refreshments:** The applicant is obligated to provide adequate refreshments to the audit team during the audit to ensure that the auditors can effectively perform their duties.
- **Remote Audit:** When conducting a remote audit, all necessary evidence and audit-relevant documents must be available in digital format and shared through secure data transfer. Aspects of security and privacy must be adhered to and applied by both the auditors and the organization being audited before and during the audit.
- **Implementation of Corrective Actions:** If non-conformities are identified during the audit, the applicant must take appropriate corrective actions to address them. The implementation of these corrective actions should be done promptly to ensure that the management system meets the requirements.
- **Maintenance of Conformity:** The applicant is responsible for maintaining the conformity of its management system according to the respective regulations.
- **Commitment to Continual Improvement:** The applicant is obligated to continuously work on improving its management system and identifying and implementing opportunities to enhance performance.
- **Right to Use the Certificate and Certification Logo:** The certified organization has the right to use the issued certificate as well as the certification logo provided by the certification body, using them as evidence of the conformity of its management system with applicable norms and standards.
- **Responsibility for Correct Use of the Certificate and Logo:** the certified organization is obligated to use the certificate and the certification mark strictly in accordance with the requirements of the certification body. This applies in particular to marketing materials, websites, product packaging and accompanying product information, as well as all other communication media.
  Statements regarding the certification may **only refer to**:
  - the **name of the certified organization** (e.g., brand or company name),
  - the **type of management system** (e.g., quality, environment) and the applicable **standard**,
  - the **certification body** that issued the certificate.

  It is prohibited to make or distribute statements that:
  - imply that **products, services, or processes** themselves are certified,
  - refer to or include **non-certified sites or activities**,
  - **discredit** the certification body or the **certification system** or undermine **public trust** in them.

  Packaging is defined as any component that can be removed without damaging the product; **accompanying information** refers to materials that are separately available or easily removable. **Nameplates or identification plates** are considered part of the product and must not contain any certification statements.
  In the event of **suspension, reduction, or withdrawal of certification**, the organization agrees to **immediately remove or appropriately revise** all relevant claims, logos, and references to certification, and to **discontinue** the use of all affected promotional materials.

The organization ensures that all statements regarding its certification status are **not misleading** and comply fully with the requirements of this agreement.

- **Obligation to Report Relevant Changes:** The applicant is obligated to inform the certification body promptly and without request in writing about significant changes that could affect its management system or the scope of certification. This may include changes to processes, organization, structures, locations, or products. The certification body, intellcert GmbH, is entitled to assess the reported changes and decide whether they necessitate a special audit to determine whether the management system continues to meet all relevant legal, regulatory, and normative requirements after the respective change(s). Should the certification body deem the conduct of a special audit necessary, intellcert GmbH will provide a separate offer in accordance with the audit effort and conditions set by the certification body (e.g., on-site and/or remote). In such a case, the applicant must agree to the special audit to maintain certification and commission intellcert GmbH to conduct it.
- **Document Archiving:** All documents disclosed by the audited company to the certification body may remain in the archive of intellcert GmbH.
- **Payment Obligation:** The applicant is required to settle payment obligations for services rendered by the specified deadline on the invoice, according to the applicable payment terms of intellcert GmbH, without deductions.

Meeting these requirements is crucial for a smooth and successful certification process. Adhering to these rights and responsibilities helps maintain the integrity and credibility of the certification, ensuring that the certified organization continues to enjoy the benefits of an effective management system.

7. Withdrawal, Suspension, and Cancellation of the Certificate

Certification may be revoked, suspended, or cancelled under the following conditions:

- **Non-compliance with Certification Requirements:** If the certified management system no longer meets the established standards, norms, or requirements.
- **Violation of Codes of Conduct:** Any actions or omissions that violate the codes of conduct or ethical standards set forth in the certification process.
- **False Statements or Documentation:** Providing false or misleading information during the certification process or during the term of certification.
- **Non-compliance with Update Requirements:** Failure or inability to maintain or update the certified management system according to the required updating or review procedures.
- **Violations of Laws:** Actions or omissions that contravene applicable laws, regulations, or governmental provisions.

Examples of situations that may lead to withdrawal, suspension, or cancellation:

- **Quality Deficiencies:** Evidence of serious quality deficiencies in the certified management system that compromise safety, reliability, or performance.
- **Ethical Violations:** Discovery of actions or practices contrary to the ethical principles or codes of conduct of the certification body, such as corruption, bribery, or unfair competition.
- **Misrepresentation:** Discovery of forgeries or manipulations of documents, test results, or other information related to the certification process.

- **Failure to Fulfill Obligations:** Failure of the certified company to fulfill its obligations under certification, such as regular reporting, compliance with audit schedules, or payment of fees.
- **Legal Violations:** Identification of legal violations or legal conflicts that could jeopardize the integrity or reputation of the certification body.

The process of withdrawal, suspension, or cancellation of certification proceeds according to a defined procedure and consists of the following steps:

- **Notification:** The certified company is informed in writing of the reasons and consequences of the withdrawal, suspension, or cancellation of certification.
- **Response Period:** The certified company has a reasonable period to respond to the notification and, if necessary, to take countermeasures or appeal.
- **Review Procedure:** The certification body conducts a review to assess the validity of the arguments presented and make a final decision on the withdrawal, suspension, or cancellation of certification.
- **Communication:** The decision regarding the withdrawal, suspension, or cancellation of certification is communicated to the certified company as well as relevant stakeholders.
- **Appeal Options:** The certified company has the right to appeal the decision and file an appeal to seek a reassessment of the case.

These provisions are designed to ensure the integrity, credibility, and quality of our certification processes and to ensure that certified management systems meet the highest standards.

8. Extension and Reduction of the Scope

The **extension of the scope** refers to the expansion of the application areas of certified management systems to include new products, services, locations, or processes. This may be necessary due to organizational changes, strategic decisions, or market requirements. The procedure for extending the scope is as follows:

- **Application submission:** The certified organization submits a formal application for the extension of the scope to the certification body. The application should include the planned scope extension, as well as the reasons and objectives for the change.
- **Review by the certification body:** The certification body reviews the application to ensure that the proposed changes are consistent with the requirements of the existing management system and the applicable standards.
- **Audits and assessments:** If necessary, the certification body conducts audits or on-site assessments to verify the implementation and effectiveness of the extended processes or locations.
- **Decision and scope update:** Following the review, the certification body makes a decision regarding the extension of the scope and updates the certificate accordingly.

The **reduction of the scope** refers to the narrowing of the originally certified application areas, for example, due to the discontinuation of products, services, locations, or processes. This may be required for economic reasons, organizational restructuring, or due to nonconformities. The procedure for reducing the scope includes:

- **Organization’s duty to inform:** The certified organization is obliged to proactively and without delay inform the certification body of any planned or already implemented changes that could lead to a reduction of the scope. These may include, for example, the discontinuation of a production area, the closure of a site, the outsourcing of essential processes, or the withdrawal of certain products or services.

- **Assessment by the certification body:** The certification body evaluates the impact of the reported changes on the management system and its continued conformity with certification requirements.
- **Audit, if necessary:** In the case of significant changes, an additional audit may be conducted to verify the ongoing effectiveness and compliance of the reduced management system.
- **Decision and certificate adjustment:** Based on the assessment, the certification body makes a decision regarding the reduction of the scope and updates the certificate accordingly.

9. Fees

he certification body levies fees for the conduct of certification procedures and related services in accordance with applicable tariffs and fee schedules. The fee structure may vary depending on the type and scope of certification services and typically includes the following elements:

- **Application Fee:** A one-time fee charged for processing the certification application and preparing a quotation for certification services. If it is an easily determinable need for which a standard offer can be made, intellcert GmbH may waive the application fee.
- **Audit Fees:** Fees charged for the conduct of audits according to the audit plan and agreed conditions. Audit fees may vary based on the number of audit days, travel and accommodation costs of auditors, and other variable factors.
- **Certification Fee:** A fee charged for the issuance of the certificate and administration of certification documents. This fee may vary depending on the validity period of the certificate and other factors. For certain standards, such as EN9100ff, additional fees from third-party organizations may apply (e.g., use of OASIS), which are collected by intellcert GmbH on behalf of the relevant organizations.
- **Annual Surveillance Fees:** Fees charged for the conduct of surveillance audits and maintenance of certification. These fees are typically billed annually and serve to cover the ongoing costs of certification services.
- **Additional Services:** Fees may also apply for additional services, such as training or GAP or special audits, if ordered or situationally necessary according to relevant norms and standards. Similarly, fees for services from eligible third-party organizations may apply in connection with certification to certain standards[1]. This would result in costs beyond the standard costs of certification.

The exact fees and payment terms are specified in an individual offer or contract between intellcert GmbH and the organization. It is important that the organization fully understands the fee structure and that all costs are transparent before deciding to pursue certification.

intellcert GmbH reserves the right to update and adjust the fee structure and rates at any time. All changes will be communicated to the affected organizations in a timely manner to allow for adequate planning and budgeting.

[1] For example, OASIS fees in the case of certification to EN/AS 9100ff.

10. Complaints, Appeals, and Dispute Resolution Procedure

intellcert GmbH has an established procedure that enables organizations and other interested parties to address complaints, appeals, or disputes related to the certification process or certification decisions.

The procedure generally includes the following steps:

- **Submission:** Complaints or appeals may be submitted in writing to intellcert GmbH (e.g., by email, letter, or online form). They must contain sufficient information to allow for proper handling.
- **Acknowledgment of receipt:** The receipt of the complaint or appeal will be confirmed promptly, with an explanation of the further course of the procedure.
- **Independent review:** Both complaints and appeals are reviewed impartially. Appeals are evaluated by individuals who were not involved in the original certification decision.
- **Evaluation and decision-making:** The facts are carefully examined, relevant documents and arguments are considered, and—if necessary—additional information is obtained. A decision is then made based on this assessment.
- **Notification of decision:** The decision, along with any necessary corrective or follow-up actions, is communicated in writing to the complainant or appellant.

An appeal arises when an organization disagrees with a decision made by the certification body—for example, regarding the granting, maintenance, suspension, or withdrawal of certification. Appeals are handled through a structured process that ensures that:

- appeals are processed fairly, promptly, and transparently,
- decision-making is independent and free from conflicts of interest,
- the appellant is not disadvantaged by lodging an appeal, regardless of the outcome,
- all decisions related to appeals remain under the responsibility of the certification body.

The combined complaints, appeals, and dispute resolution procedure ensures that all concerns related to certification services are addressed fairly, transparently, and effectively. intellcert GmbH is committed to seriously reviewing all complaints, appeals, and disputes, taking appropriate measures to resolve them, and safeguarding the integrity and credibility of certification.

11. Confidentiality

intellcert GmbH is committed to treating all information obtained during the certification process confidentially and to taking appropriate measures to protect confidentiality. This includes, among other things:

- **Confidentiality of Documents:** All documents created, transmitted, or received as part of the certification process are treated confidentially and used only for the intended purpose. This includes application materials, audit reports, correspondence, and other relevant documents.
- **Access Restrictions:** Access to confidential information is restricted to authorized personnel necessary for the conduct of the certification process. Unauthorized individuals are prohibited from accessing confidential information.
- **Data Privacy and Security:** intellcert GmbH applies appropriate measures to effectively protect personal data and other confidential information against unauthorized access, loss, misuse, or disclosure, in accordance with applicable data protection laws and internal policies. Customer-

related information obtained from sources other than the customer (e.g., authorities or complainants) is likewise treated confidentially in line with established data protection principles.

- **Confidentiality During Audits:** During audits, confidential information disclosed by the organization is used and treated confidentially solely for the purpose of evaluating the management system. Auditors are bound by confidentiality agreements and are not permitted to disclose confidential information unauthorizedly.
- **Confidentiality of Customer Information:** Information about customers of the certified organization is treated confidentially and may not be disclosed or used for purposes other than the conduct of the certification process without the customer's consent.
- **Special case:** If intellcert GmbH is legally obligated or contractually authorized (e.g., through an agreement with the accreditation body) to disclose confidential information, it will—provided this is legally permissible—inform the affected individual or customer in advance.

Confidentiality is an essential component of the certification process and helps to strengthen the trust of organizations and their stakeholders in the integrity and credibility of the certification body. intellcert GmbH is committed to complying with all confidentiality requirements and data protection regulations and ensuring the security and integrity of confidential information.

12. Changes to Certification Regulations

The certification terms and regulation may be updated or amended from time to time to meet changing requirements, standards, or regulations or to improve the processes and procedures of the certification body. Changes to the certification terms and regulations are usually made in consultation with the affected organizations and may include the following elements:

- **Updates Due to Normative Changes:** Changes to the certification terms and regulations may be necessary to reflect changes or updates in relevant norms, standards, or best practices. These changes may relate to requirements for the management system, audit procedures, or other aspects of certification.
- **Process and Procedure Improvement:** The certification body may make changes to the certification terms and regulations to improve the efficiency, transparency, or quality of certification services. This may include the introduction of new procedures, tools, or guidelines to optimize the certification process.
- **Incorporation of Customer Feedback:** Customer feedback and input from the certification process can help make improvements and introduce changes to the certification terms and regulations to better meet the needs and expectations of customers.
- **Compliance with Legal Requirements:** Changes to the certification terms and regulations may also be necessary to comply with new legal requirements or regulatory mandates that may affect the certification process.

intellcert GmbH informs the affected organizations in a timely manner about planned changes to the certification terms and regulations and provides an opportunity for comments or feedback. The updated certification terms and regulations come into effect once they are published or communicated by the certification body.

It is the responsibility of organizations to ensure that they are familiar with the current certification regulations and to consider any changes accordingly. If there are any questions or uncertainties, the contacts at the certification body are available to provide assistance and additional information.