

	Intellcert Quality Management Work Procedure	Doc.-ID: IQM_000204 Revision: 00.10 Effective date: 28.08.2025 Author: Process Owner Reviewer: Quality Manager Approver: CEO
<i>“Process Requirement: P1.7 Certification”</i> <i>“Suspension, withdrawal, restoring of certification or certification scope reduction”</i>		

Legal Scope: Intellcert GmbH & all related locations / organizations of which the processes are under the control of IQM Business Scope: Certification Process Scope: Certification of Management Systems

1. Objectives

The objective of this procedure is to establish a consistent and fair approach for the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification, and to specify the subsequent actions that will be taken by the certification body in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021.

2. Terms and Abbreviations

Terms/Abbreviations	Description
Suspension	The temporary cessation of the certification of a client's management system, product, or service
Withdrawal:	The permanent cessation of the certification of a client's management system, product, or service
Reduction of scope	The limitation or exclusion of one or more elements of a client's management system, product, or service from the scope of certification

3. Scope of Application

This procedure applies to all certification activities conducted by the intellcert GmbH related to accreditation based on ISO 17021.

4. Activities

These procedure covers following aspects:

4.1 Identification of nonconformities

In certain circumstances, a certificate issued to an organization may need to be suspended, withdrawn, or limited with regard to the scope. Normally certain kind of non-conformities or certificate misuse lead to such a situation. This can be identified through the certification body's regular surveillance or re-certification audits, through client complaints, or through any other means deemed appropriate by the certification body.

4.2 Notification

Upon identification of a nonconformity, the certification body shall notify the client in writing of the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification, specifying the reasons and the effective date of

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the action. The notification shall also specify any corrective actions that need to be taken by the client to maintain or regain certification.

4.3 Response by client

The client shall respond in writing within the timeframe specified in the notification, indicating whether it accepts the proposed suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification and the corrective actions to be taken, or whether it wishes to appeal the decision.

4.4 Public announcement

The certification body shall make a public announcement of the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification. The announcement shall include the name of the client, the effective date of the action, and the reasons for the action.

4.5 Suspension

A certification may be temporarily suspended if certain conditions are not met. This may occur, for example, if:

- the organization's management system no longer complies with the certification requirements either permanently or to a significant extent,
- a scheduled surveillance or recertification audit cannot be carried out on time because the client does not make it possible,
- the client requests a temporary suspension.

In the event of a suspension, the certification body shall inform the client in writing of the reasons as well as the conditions under which the certification can be reinstated. During the suspension, the client is not permitted to use the certificate.

If the underlying issue is not resolved within a period specified by the certification body (generally within six months), the certification will be withdrawn or its scope restricted by the certification body. For the reinstatement of the certification, an audit must confirm that the problem leading to the suspension has been effectively resolved through appropriate corrective actions.

4.6 Withdrawal

A certificate may be permanently withdrawn if essential requirements are no longer met or serious violations have occurred. Typical reasons for withdrawal include:

- persistent or severe nonconformities with the certification standard,
- proven misuse of the certificate,
- significant changes to the management system that no longer reflect the certified state,
- unresolved causes following a prior suspension.

In the event of a possible withdrawal, the organization will be informed in writing. The notification will include the reason, possible consequences, and a deadline for submitting a response. If necessary, an additional assessment will be conducted to thoroughly evaluate the situation.

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The decision to withdraw the certificate will be documented and communicated to the organization in writing. The organization will also be informed of its right to file a complaint or appeal within a specified period.

The following steps should be taken when a certificate must be withdrawn:

Notification: The certified organization must be notified in writing of the intention to withdraw the certificate. The notification should clearly state the reasons for the withdrawal and provide a timeframe for the organization to respond.

Investigation: An investigation should be carried out to determine the reasons for the withdrawal and to assess the organization's compliance with the standard.

Decision: Based on the findings of the investigation, a decision should be made whether to withdraw the certificate or to maintain it. The decision should be communicated to the certified organization in writing.

Withdrawal: If the decision is made to withdraw the certificate, the organization should be notified in writing of the decision, the reasons for the withdrawal, and the effective date of the withdrawal.

Appeals: The certified organization has the right to appeal the decision to withdraw the certificate. The appeal should be made in writing within a specified timeframe, and the organization should provide evidence to support their appeal.

Reinstatement: If the certified organization addresses the reasons for the withdrawal, they may apply for reinstatement of the certificate. The reinstatement process should follow the same steps as the initial certification process.

It is important to note that the withdrawal of a certificate is a serious matter and will only be carried out after careful consideration and thorough investigation.

The organization's customers and stakeholders — insofar as they are known — will also be informed of the withdrawal, as it may influence their decision to continue doing business with the organization.

4.7 Reduction of scope

If a certified organization fails to meet certain requirements permanently or to a significant extent—specifically in clearly defined areas of the existing certification scope—the scope of the certification may be adjusted.

The restriction is targeted and affects only the relevant parts of the management system. A prerequisite is that a clear separation is possible and that the remaining scope continues to meet the requirements of the applicable standard.

Before a restriction is applied, it is assessed whether the identified nonconformities are limited to specific sites, processes, or product groups. If this is the case, and correction is not possible or not planned, the scope will be reduced accordingly.

The affected organization will be informed in writing of the planned change. The revised version of the certificate will contain the updated scope, clearly indicating the excluded parts.

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A restriction may also be applied as an alternative to the complete withdrawal of the certification, provided the remaining part of the system continues to operate in compliance with the standard.

4.8 Appeals

The client may appeal the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification by submitting a written appeal to the certification body within the timeframe specified in the notification. The certification body shall review the appeal and respond to the client in writing. For details refer to IQM_000208 WP Handling of Appeals_en.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Certification Body

The certification body is responsible for:

- Identifying nonconformities and initiating the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification process when necessary;
- Notifying the client in writing of the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification, specifying the reasons and the effective date of the action, and any corrective actions that need to be taken by the client to maintain or regain certification;
- Making a public announcement of the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification, including the name of the client, the effective date of the action, and the reasons for the action;
- Specifying the conditions under which certification may be restored in the case of suspension;
- Cancelling the client's certificate and removing any reference to certification from the public domain in the case of withdrawal;
- Issuing a revised certificate indicating the reduced scope of certification in the case of reduction of scope;
- Maintaining records of all suspensions, withdrawals, and reductions of scope of certification, as well as any subsequent actions taken, including restoration of certification or appeals;
- Reviewing this procedure annually to ensure its effectiveness and make any necessary changes;
- Ensuring all personnel involved in the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification process are properly trained on this procedure;
- Keeping all information related to the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification confidential, except for the public announcement as required by this procedure.

5.2 client

The client is responsible for:

- Responding in writing within the timeframe specified in the notification, indicating whether it accepts the proposed suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification and the corrective actions to be taken, or whether it wishes to appeal the decision

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6. Handling of Records

The certification body shall maintain records of all suspensions, withdrawals, and reductions of scope of certification, as well as any subsequent actions taken, including restoration of certification or appeals. Records shall be maintained in accordance with the certification body's document control procedure.

7. Training

All personnel involved in the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification process shall receive training on this procedure.

8. Confidentiality

All information related to the suspension, withdrawal, or reduction of scope of certification shall be kept confidential, except for the public announcement as required by this procedure.

9. Records

The certification body maintains records and documentation of the “Suspension, Withdrawal, or Reduction of Scope of Certification, and Subsequent Actions” process in accordance with the requirements of ISO 9001, 17021, 17024, and 17065 and the quality management system of intellcert GmbH.

The certification body ensures that records and documentation are accurate, complete, and maintained in a manner that ensures their confidentiality, integrity, and availability.

10. Work Procedure control

This document shall be controlled in accordance with the certification body's document control procedure. Intellcert GmbH will continually improve the process “Suspension, Withdrawal, or Reduction of Scope of Certification, and Subsequent Actions” through the use of feedback from certified organizations, audit / assessment team members, and other interested parties. The certification body will also monitor changes in the regulatory environment and adjust the the process “Suspension, Withdrawal, or Reduction of Scope of Certification, and Subsequent Actions” as necessary to ensure compliance.

11. Attachments

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12. Related Documents

- IQM_000011 Quality Manual – General Part
- IQM_000021 Handbuch Part P - Policy f. susp., withdr. or reduct. of the certification scope
- IQM_000208 WP Handling of Appeals_en

13. External Reference Documents

- ISO/IEC 17021: Conformity assessment -- Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- ISO/IEC 17000: Conformity assessment -- Vocabulary and general principles
- IAF MD 1: IAF Mandatory Document for the Certification of Management Systems

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- IAF MD 2: IAF Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems
- IAF MD 4: IAF Mandatory Document for the Use of Computer Assisted Auditing Techniques (CAATs) for Accredited Certification of Management Systems.