



MAURITAS

A3

Procedure for recruiting and contracting Assessors/Technical Experts

Mauritius Accreditation Service

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Foreword

The MAURITIUS ACCREDITATION SERVICE (MAURITAS) is a governmental body established in 1998 to provide a national, unified service for the accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) such as calibration/testing laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies. Organizations that comply with the MAURITAS requirements are granted accreditation by MAURITAS.

About MAURITAS publications

MAURITAS publications are categorized as follows:

- R series Publications containing general policy and requirements related to MAURITAS accreditation.
- G series Publications providing guidance on MAURITAS requirements.
- A series Publications related to assessment procedures.
- P series MAURITAS quality system procedures
- F series MAURITAS Forms
- Directories Classified listing of accredited organizations.

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Procedure for recruiting and contracting Assessors/Technical Experts

1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to define how MAURITAS identifies, selects and contracts an individual to act as a team leader, Assessor or Technical Expert for all the assessment/accreditation functions for which it has responsibility.

2 Scope and Responsibilities

2.1 This document covers the recruitment process of Assessors/Technical Experts that are used by MAURITAS for all its accreditation schemes. It is the responsibility of MAURITAS Staff to ensure that this procedure is adhered to at all times.

3 References

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of the MAURITAS accreditation system. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. For undated MAURITAS references, the latest edition of the document referred to, applies. MAURITAS maintains a register of the current valid MAURITAS accreditation documents.

- 3.1 MAURITAS A2, MAURITAS – Criteria for Assessors/Technical Experts
- 3.2 MAURITAS A6, Assessor Monitoring
- 3.3 ILAC/IAF JWG A-Series FAQ1

4 Definitions

4.1 **Assessor (A):** Person assigned by MAURITAS to perform, alone or as part of an assessment team, an assessment of a CAB. He/she may perform individual assessments of limited and technical scope based on acceptance from the Director.

4.2 **Team Leader (TL):** Assessor who is given the overall responsibility for the management of an assessment.

4.3 **Technical Expert (TE):** Person assigned by MAURITAS, working under the responsibility of an Assessor, who provides specific knowledge or expertise with respect to the scope of accreditation to be assessed and does not assess independently. However, a Technical Expert can work in an area alone if an Assessor/Team Leader is available and periodically checking and communicating with the Technical Expert (this includes also keeping in touch via email or telephone or a mobile application).

5 Local Assessors/Technical Experts

5.1 Initial identification

5.1.1 MAURITAS will need to use the services of external Assessors and Technical Experts having thorough knowledge of the relevant assessment methods and appropriate technical knowledge of the specific activities for which accreditation is sought or has been granted. Training in assessment criteria and methods will be specified and arranged as necessary by MAURITAS once a potential Assessor has been identified as technically competent as specified in **MAURITAS A2** document.

5.1.2 Assessors/Technical Experts are likely to be identified through a number of different methods. These may include proposals from the MAURITAS Advisory Council, the MAURITAS Technical Advisory Committees and from MAURITAS itself. Individual potential Assessors/Technical Experts, local or foreign, may also apply directly to MAURITAS. MAURITAS may also invite applications for enlistment of Assessors/Technical Experts through press advertisements.

5.1.3 MAURITAS will send to the potential Assessor/Technical Expert an application form (**F1.19**) to complete and return same to MAURITAS for consideration. The applicant will also be advised to visit the MAURITAS website for further information on the selection criteria.

5.1.4 On receipt, application forms will be checked for completeness by MAURITAS. If application forms have not been filled up properly, applicants will be requested to submit missing information.

5.2 Eligibility of application

5.2.1 The Head of Section or designated staff of MAURITAS shall review the suitability of the applicant against the Assessor/Technical Expert Criteria as per **MAURITAS A2** document and decide whether he/she is eligible.

5.2.2 MAURITAS may decide to express an opinion on the need for the particular Assessor/Technical Expert to be contracted, even if eligible, based on the Assessor/Technical Expert's areas of competence and the current and anticipated future demands for accreditation in these areas.

5.2.3 MAURITAS shall be responsible for informing the applicant on his/her eligibility. If application meets the criteria as per **MAURITAS A2** documents, the applicant shall be requested to attend an interview.

5.2.4 A file for each applicant shall be maintained in the event that the application is accepted by MAURITAS.

5.3 Evaluation process

5.3.1 Applicants, who are accepted as per the **MAURITAS A2** document, will undergo an interview exercise, by MAURITAS, so as to evaluate their ability to conduct assessments. The Form **Interview Checklist, F2.22** to be used during the interview exercise enlist the following criteria:

- Communication Skills/Presentation (10 marks);
- Technical Knowledge on accreditation (15 marks);
- Personality/Motivation (10 marks);
- Technical Knowledge in relevant field (15 marks);

5.3.2 Applicants are expected to score at least twenty-five (25) marks out of fifty (50) marks during the interview exercise.

5.3.3 Once the applicant has passed the interview exercise, he/she will be included in a formal Assessor training course organised by MAURITAS. The Assessor training course has to include at least the following:

- Review of the relevant accreditation criteria;
- Assessment techniques (horizontal, vertical and witnessing);
- Observation/non-conformity writing;
- Risk based assessment principles;
- MAURITAS Regulations, and
- MAURITAS accreditation process.

5.3.4 Candidates completing the training course shall be expected to:

- perform or coordinate assessments;
- interpret the accreditation standard;
- have a knowledge of the administrative procedures of the accreditation body, and
- have a knowledge of the main policies of the accreditation body.

5.4 Contracting process

5.4.1 Assessors/Technical Experts will be required to sign a contract or an agreement by which they commit themselves to comply with the rules and regulations defined by MAURITAS, including those relating to confidentiality and independence from commercial and other interests and any prior, present or foreseeable association with the bodies to be assessed.

5.4.2 Assessors/Technical Experts will be sourced, but not limited to, from the following sectors:

- government departments including laboratories;
- industry (manufacturing and service);
- universities;
- technical consultancy organisations;
- independent consultants.

5.4.3 In all cases, an appropriate contract agreement must be prepared and signed before the Assessor/Technical Expert undertakes any assignment on behalf of MAURITAS. Signature of both parties is a proof of formal authorisation to the Assessor/Technical Expert to carry out the relevant accreditation activities listed in the contract agreement.

5.4.4 The confidentiality obligation of Assessors/ Technical Experts shall be covered through their signature of the contract agreement form **F 1.07**.

5.4.5 Once it has been agreed to accept an applicant Assessor, it is the responsibility of MAURITAS to ensure that the requirements of MAURITAS policy on Assessor training are implemented.

5.4.6 MAURITAS shall then initiate the contracting process. The contract agreement form **F 1.07** shall take into consideration the following:

- conditions of the contract,
- job description of Assessor/Technical Expert,
- starting date for the contract, and
- fees and expenses.

5.4.7 An Assessor who has been trained by an Accreditation Body Signatory to the ILAC MRA or IAF MLA can be contracted by MAURITAS. The Assessor shall be required to submit evidence of on-site monitoring dated not more than 3 years back and provided by the Accreditation Body to which he/she is affiliated. It shall be ensured that the Assessor has knowledge of:

- MAURITAS Assessment techniques (horizontal, vertical and witnessing);
- MAURITAS Regulations, and
- MAURITAS accreditation process.

5.4.8 All contracts shall be established between MAURITAS and the Assessor/Technical Expert.

5.4.9 MAURITAS may decide not to contract an Assessor/Technical Expert, even if he/she is eligible, based on the Assessor/Technical Expert's areas of competence and the current and anticipated future demands for accreditation in these areas.

5.4.10 In its initial stages of operation, MAURITAS has been making use of the Assessors who successfully completed the training course as per the table below:

Accreditation Schemes	Training on prevailing Accreditation Standards
Calibration/Testing Laboratories	ISO/IEC 17025
Medical Testing Laboratories	ISO 15189
Certification Bodies (Management systems)	ISO/IEC 17021-1 Competence Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISO 22003-1 (FSMS and HACCP) • ISO/IEC 17021-3 (QMS) • ISO/IEC 17021-2 (EMS) • ISO/IEC 27006-1 (ISMS)
Inspection Bodies	ISO/IEC 17020

These Assessors were then monitored prior to being registered.

For the subsequent group of applicants, candidates shall have to be monitored and then registered. MAURITAS shall inform the registered Assessors about the period of time and accreditation scheme for which they have been registered and shall carry out their monitoring on-site at least once every **3 years**.

5.4.11 MAURITAS shall pay a daily allowance for contracting Assessors/Technical Experts. The rate may be subject to any overriding policy imposed by MAURITAS, as deemed necessary to ensure that any financial targets agreed for MAURITAS can be met. A distinction between team leader and Assessor/Technical Expert rates should be established, reflecting the levels of responsibility of the respective tasks. These rates will be reviewed as and when required.

5.4.12 Payment shall cover the time incurred by the Assessor/Technical Expert during on-site assessment or assessment tasks, related preliminary work (reviewing documentation etc), preparation of assessment reports and dealing with the clearance of non-conformities and attending to any pre and post assessment meetings with team leader.

6 Foreign Assessors/Technical Experts

In cases where no suitably qualified Assessor can be identified in Mauritius, MAURITAS will consider using an Assessor/Technical Expert who is already qualified and trained by another accreditation body. The accreditation body concerned shall be a signatory of either the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Agreements (MRAs). Enlistment of foreign Assessors shall be done by following the current procurement procedures of government as described in the sub-clauses below.

6.1 Initial identification

6.1.1 MAURITAS shall request the names and contact details of potential Assessors/Technical Experts, who are already qualified and trained by an accreditation body which is signatory of either the International

Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Agreements (MRAs).

6.1.2 With respect to selection, training and monitoring of potential Assessors/Technical Experts, MAURITAS relies on the processes of the accreditation bodies which are signatory of either the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Agreements (MRAs) as these processes have already been evaluated.

6.1.3 Upon receipt of the list of potential Assessors/Technical Experts, MAURITAS will contact the latter to investigate whether they are interested to form part of the MAURITAS assessment team.

6.1.4 The potential Assessors/Technical Experts who express interest to be part of the MAURITAS assessment team will be included in the list of potential bidders for the exercise.

6.2 Tendering, evaluation of bids and contracting process

6.2.1 After finalisation on the list of potential bidders, the relevant section in MAURITAS shall prepare the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the particular exercise which includes the following:

- Background;
- The Services (scope to be covered, criteria to be met for selection/evaluation of Assessors/Technical Experts);
- Facilities to be provided by the MAURITAS and Ministry responsible for the subject of industry;
- Contract duration and fees; and
- Deliverables.

6.2.2 The finalised TOR with the respective list of potential bidders are forwarded to the Ministry and eventually, the Procurement Section shall launch the international tender exercise.

6.2.3 On receipt of the bids, the Departmental Bid Committee (DBC) of the Ministry will set up a Bid Evaluation Committee (BEC) to evaluate the technical responsiveness of the bids received. Bids technically responsive (>70% marks) are then evaluated financially so as to select the lowest substantially responsive bid for the award. The BEC shall include a technical staff of MAURITAS. The DBC may decide not to set up a BEC in the event that only one bid is received.

6.2.4 MAURITAS shall maintain records of the technical proposal of the selected bidder.

6.2.5 Once the Assessor/Technical Expert is selected, the latter shall sign a contract with the Ministry for the assignment. The contract is a templated one used by all Ministries when enlisting services of foreign consultants.

6.3 Sensitisation session

6.3.1 Prior to each assessment, Team leaders/MAURITAS staff shall carry out a sensitisation session with each foreign Assessor/Technical Expert whose services are enlisted so that the latter becomes familiar with relevant MAURITAS assessment techniques, MAURITAS regulations and MAURITAS forms to be used during the assessment.

7 Related Forms

- 7.1** Application form for Assessors/Technical Experts, **F 1.19**
- 7.2** Briefing Meeting with Assessors/Technical Experts, **F 1.15**
- 7.3** Contract Agreement for the provision of independent Assessor/Technical Expert services, **F 1.07**
- 7.4** Assessor/Technical Expert Monitoring Checklist – Laboratories and Inspection Bodies, **F 1.10**
- 7.5** Team Leader/Assessor/ Technical Expert Monitoring Checklist – Certification Bodies, **F 1.27**
- 7.6** Team Leader/Assessor/ Technical Expert Monitoring Checklist – Product Certification Bodies, **F 1.30**
- 7.7** Interview Checklist, **F 2.22**

Appendix A: Amendment Table

SN	Section	Amendment
Issue 1, Rev 5		
1.	5.4.10	Reference to updated standard ISO 22003-1 & ISO/IEC 27006-1 have been made
2.	7.6	A new sub-section 7.6 “Team Leader ... F 1.30 ” has been added