

RE-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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THE REVISED RE-ASSESSMENT PROCESS HAS BEEN IN PLACE NOW FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS. HOWEVER, THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS HAS SHOWN THAT NOT ALL CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT BODIES (HENCEFORTH REFERRED TO AS CABs) SEEM TO UNDERSTAND THIS PROCESS OR WHAT EXACTLY IT ENTAILS. FURTHER, IT IS ALSO CRYSTAL CLEAR THAT CABs ARE NOT AWARE OF THE POSSIBLE DIRE CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO ADHERE TO THE REQUIREMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCESS. THIS ARTICLE IS THEREFORE AIMED AT DECODING THE RE-ASSESSMENT PROCESS.

As a signatory to the ILAC/IAF, SANAS is obliged to comply with all the requirements set out in the ISO/IEC 17011 standard. This standard has the following to say regarding the re-assessment process:

“RE-ASSESSMENT IS SIMILAR TO AN INITIAL ASSESSMENT EXCEPT THAT THE EXPERIENCE GAINED DURING PREVIOUS ASSESSMENTS SHALL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT (7.11.1)”

From the above ISO/IEC 17011 clause, it is unambiguously clear that initial and re-assessment processes are similar in approach, format, and the degree of assessment intensity.

The only minor differences between the two is the extent of scope coverage (i.e. 100% for initial and a minimum of 75% for re-assessment) and of course the fact that with a re-assessment, experience gained during previous assessments get considered.

A re-assessment is carried out prior to the expiry of a CABs certificate and schedule of accreditation. For all other programs with the exception of the Inspection program, re-assessments are normally carried out at least 3 months prior to the expiry of certificate and schedule of accreditation. In the Inspection program, re-assessments are done at least 6 months before certificates expire.

Now that we have established that re-assessment is similar to initial assessment in many ways. It therefore stands to reason that bulk of the documentations that all new applicants are required to submit before initial assessment will also be required from accredited CABs that are due for re-assessment. Below is the list of documentations required from CABs that are due for re-assessment:

- i) Fully completed application form (F14) (clearly indicating the current existing scope and the CABs personnel i.e. nominated representative and technical signatories);
- ii) Quality Manual and relevant associated documents and records;
- iii) PT plan (where is applicable);
- iv) Any other information that may assist in determining fulfilment of requirements and the competence of the CAB.





The aforementioned documentations need to be submitted **6 months** prior to the expiry of certificate and schedule of accreditation for all programs and at least **9 months** before for the Inspection program. Upon receiving these documents, a Lead Assessor will formally be appointed to review them before the on-site assessment and feedback will be communicated to both the assessment team and the CAB. If the documentations listed above are submitted on time as per the time frame stipulated above, it affords the CAB ample time to work on any shortcomings/deficiencies that the review process might have raised or identified. Further, it helps both parties (i.e. assessment team and the CAB) to prepare for the impending on-site assessment.

As mentioned in the preamble, the consequences of not adhering to the re-assessment requirements (as discussed above) are grim. Below are some of the possible consequences of late submission or not submitting at all:

- CABs not getting adequate time to address any shortcomings identified during the review process;
- If certificate and schedule of accreditation expires before approval is granted, a CAB will have a period in which it is not accredited and the new accreditation cycle will only commence the day approval is granted;

As a result, any work (test/inspection/audit reports or certificates) done during that period will not be covered by accreditation;

- Reduced or shortened accreditation cycle;
- If certificate and schedule of accreditation expires before all the required documentations are submitted, the affected CAB will have to start the accreditation process from scratch (i.e. initial assessment) and all the associated costs will apply;
- A contractual relationship between SANAS and a CAB ends the day the certificate and schedule accreditation expires unless renewed (through submission of an application and associated documents) as discussed above.

For more information regarding the re-assessment process, please consult the SANAS Policy Manual (PM 01) and program specific documents such as: P 04 (Testing, Calibration & Medical laboratories); P 05 (Certification Bodies); P15 (Inspection Bodies); P 16 (GLP); P 17 (Verification Laboratories) and P 24 (BEE Verification Agency).

In conclusion, let's all remember what one of the Founding Fathers of the United States Benjamin Franklin said ***“You may delay, but time will not”***.

2015 COMMUNICATIONS MEETINGS DATES WITH VENUES.

REGION	DATE	VENUES
Gauteng	Tuesday, 01 September 2015	The Farm Inn
Durban	Wednesday, 02 September 2015	Garden Court
Port Elizabeth	Monday, 07 September 2015	Summerstrand Hotel
Cape Town	Tuesday, 08 September 2015	Protea Hotel Sea Point

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