



*Over many decades, Accreditation Bodies (ABs) got accustomed to performing assessments in a certain way – what one would refer to as ‘the normal way’. Our normal way of performing assessments with the sole objective of determining Conformity Assessment Body’s (CAB) competence includes going on-site and witnessing personnel carrying out testing, calibration, inspection, certification or verification activities.*

*However, the outbreak of the COVID-19 made it impossible for us to continue conducting on-site assessment as we usually do. In response to this challenge, an interim measure has been put in place in order to continue servicing our customers by implementing the remote assessment technique during this COVID-19 outbreak until such time we deem it safe to revert back to the preferred on-site assessment technique.*

#### **Question 1 What is a remote assessment?**

A remote assessment is an assessment of the physical location or virtual site of a conformity assessment body, using electronic means.

*Please refer to the SANAS P35 document which is available on the website.*

#### **Question 2 Which assessments can currently be done remotely?**

- Surveillance or Reassessments.
- Extensions to a non-critical scope.
- Extensions not requiring a separate set of competencies.
- Extensions within an existing scope.
- Approval of personnel (meeting prerequisite recognition and approval requirements).
- Follow-up assessments where only the management system is to be verified.

#### **Question 3 Do I need to apply for remote assessments as an existing client?**

No, all **confirmed** assessments taking place until further notice will automatically be remote assessments. The assessment notification which is sent by the SANAS Administrators will indicate that the assessment will be conducted remotely. In addition, the assessment plan which the assessment Team Leader will send, will indicate all the requirements for the remote assessment.

**Question 4 P35 requires that we email or upload our documentation on Dropbox etc. How can we be sure that our information will be treated in confidence?**

The same confidentiality requirements that apply to on-site assessments will apply to remote assessments. All assessors have contracts with SANAS that require confidentiality of CAB's documentation. In addition, a confidentiality undertaking is signed for each individual assessment.

**Question 5 If our re-assessment is postponed to a later stage, will SANAS extend the validity of our Certificate if the process is not completed before the expiry date?**

Yes, the validity may be extended by a maximum of 6 months.

**Question 6 If there is a postponement of 6 months in the deadline of a certificate, will the next accreditation cycle start from the new deadline, or does the original one need to remain?**

The deadline remains the original one. However, it could happen that in specific circumstances the timeline of surveillance could be modified accordingly.

**Question 7 If our re-assessment has already be conducted but the process cannot be finalised due to the lockdown. Will my certificate be extended?**

Yes, the validity may be extended by a maximum of 6 months.

**Question 8 Can SANAS still issue amendments to Certificates and Scopes of Accreditation during lockdown?**

Yes, SANAS can issue Certificates and Scopes of Accreditation.

**Question 9 Can I apply for only ext. of scope to Corona virus testing?**

Yes, see question 2 above.

**Question 10 Could time duration for closure of Non-Conformities be prolonged taken into consideration during the COVID-19 outbreak? If so, what will be the mechanism / procedure and who is responsible for decision making?**

Yes, following the SANAS existing processes and procedures for approval.