



# Standard Guide for Selection, Assignment, and Monitoring of Persons To Be Utilized as Assessors/Auditors or Technical Experts<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Scope\*

1.1 This guide provides guidance to organizations that need to utilize persons to perform assessments/audits (assessing bodies) of other organizations (assessed bodies) for purposes of recognition, accreditation or other type of approval to perform a function.

1.2 An assessing body should consider the contents of this guide and apply it according to its unique situation. The elements of this guide should be applicable to the selection, assignment, and monitoring of assessors, auditors, and technical experts whether they are contract or permanent staff members.

1.3 The text of this standard refers to notes and footnotes that provide explanatory material. These notes and footnotes (excluding those in tables and figures) shall not be considered as requirements of this standard.

1.4 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

## 2. Terminology

2.1 *Definitions*—The following definitions apply to the terms used in this guide.

2.1.1 *assessment team*—a group of two or more persons consisting of a combination of assessors, auditors and technical experts, as required by the specific assessment to be performed.

2.1.2 *assessor/auditor*—an individual who has the skills necessary to perform a comprehensive assessment of another body which includes assessment of the quality management system, policies and procedures, etc.

2.1.3 *technical expert*—a technical expert is an individual who has extensive technical expertise in a specific area(s).

<sup>1</sup> This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E36 on Accreditation & Certification and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E36.60 on Accreditation Bodies.

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## 3. Significance and Use

3.1 In a situation where an organization is performing an evaluation of another, either formally or informally, the single most important element in the evaluation may well be the selection and assignment of a properly qualified assessor/assessment team to perform an on-site assessment. Therefore it is imperative that the person(s) performing the assessment be selected and assigned with care by the assessing organization. Two basic types of individuals normally participate in an on-site assessment: assessors/auditors and technical experts; each perform separate functions (see definitions).

3.2 This guide focuses on providing guidance regarding the responsibilities and obligations of an assessing body in the selection, training, assignment and monitoring of assessors/auditors and technical experts to carry out their evaluation functions.

NOTE 1—In some cases, others may also participate in an assessment who are beyond the control of the assessing body: for example, government regulatory personnel, or other observers specified by a client. Such participants are not covered by this guide.

## 4. Management System

4.1 An assessing body should have in place a documented system describing how it fulfills the elements of its assessor/auditor, technical expert selection, training, assignment and monitoring process.

4.2 *Assessor Criteria*—An assessing body should have written qualification criteria for the selection of required assessors/auditors, and technical experts. These criteria should address such factors as the candidate's education and experience, assessment/audit participation, training, and any examination(s) passed. Requirements for qualification renewal and if applicable, re-qualification should be specified. Technical experts should be qualified based on their previous experience and demonstrated skill.

4.2.1 An assessing body should have written evaluation criteria for assessors/auditors, and technical experts.

4.3 *Continuous Interactions with Staff-Other Assessors*—An assessing body may find it advantageous to periodically have their assessors/auditors and technical experts meet with other similar persons to discuss their experiences and develop proposals to improve the assessment process.

\*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard

4.4 *Rating/Categorization/Listing Systems*—An assessing body should have a documented system to rate or classify, or both, assessors according to its needs and situation.

NOTE 2—Categories could be based on length of experience, demonstrated capability or rating other factors. Some systems currently use terms such as lead assessor, assessor, and assessor trainee, whereas others may use designations such as senior and junior assessors.

4.5 *Database*—An assessing body should maintain a functional database of all assessors/auditors and technical experts as an effective way to easily select persons for a particular assignment.

4.6 *Records*—An assessing body should maintain a complete file of all assessors/auditors and technical experts who perform assessments on its behalf. The file should, at a minimum, contain pertinent education and background material, dates and results of all pertinent training, appraisal reports, specific skill categories and any areas/situations which may cause a conflict of interest and, if available, appraisal forms from assessed bodies.

4.6.1 Assessing bodies may find it advantageous to maintain a historical record of all assignments performed by each assessor/auditor and technical expert.

4.6.2 The qualification record should identify the date and basis of initial qualification, date of last renewal or re-qualification, and expiration date.

## 5. Assessor Selection

5.1 *Sources of Potential Assessors*—Potential assessors may be identified from many sources for example, academic institutions, professional societies, industry, government, personnel certification bodies, advertisements, etc.

5.2 *Qualifications*—The assessing body should select assessors based on their background and expertise in (1) the operation of the specific type of body to be assessed, for example, laboratory operations, and manufacturing facilities; (2) quality assurance, quality management system auditing; and (3) the specific technology, process, procedure, or method requiring assessment.

5.3 *Procedures*—The assessing body should have procedures in place to adequately determine that an assessor/auditor has (1) met the requirements for qualification; (2) the ability to work effectively with other people; (3) communications skills, both written and verbal; and (4) the ability to probe for needed information for an effective assessment/audit result.

### 5.4 Training:

5.4.1 The assessing body should ensure that each assessor/auditor has obtained adequate training in the general techniques of conducting an assessment/audit to fulfill the required duties.

5.4.2 The assessing body should provide adequate training to all assessors/auditors and technical experts to explain its own specific assessment technique, in-house procedures, evaluation criteria, applicable documentation, and/or specific instructions, operations, procedures and program requirements.

## 6. Evaluation/Monitoring

6.1 Each assessor/auditor and technical expert should be evaluated initially and thereafter on a continual basis by the

assessing body. Demonstration and evaluation of the competence of assessors/auditors and technical experts may be performed by an appropriate combination of the following methods:

6.1.1 *Interviews*—Interviews may involve one or more interviewers and the use of selection boards or evaluation panels. Interviews may be used to verify evidence from other sources.

6.1.2 *Examination/Testing/Training Evaluation*—Written or oral examination may be used to determine an assessor's knowledge and skills as appropriate to the needs of the assessing body. The assessing body staff responsible for training/monitoring should take care to observe and appraise each candidate during training. A written appraisal should be prepared and filed.

6.1.2.1 The responsible assessing body staff manager should be familiar with the style, methods, personality, other traits, or combination thereof, of each assessor/auditor and technical expert in their charge.

6.1.3 *Demonstration*—Planned and formal witnessing of specific assessment skill performance, such as in role-play situations.

6.1.4 *On-the-Job Observation*—Each assessor/auditor and technical expert should be evaluated for the ability to conduct an adequate assessment. This can be accomplished in several ways for example, being accompanied by an experienced assessor or qualified assessing body staff person, through a trial assessment (pre-arranged conditions), or through observation by a person unknown to the assessor/auditor and technical expert. A written appraisal should be prepared and filed with the assessing organization by the evaluator.

6.1.5 *Casual Observation*—Unplanned or informal witnessing of limited assessor performance. This method could take place in actual assessment or other situations in which assessment skills and personal attributes can be observed.

6.1.6 *Documentation*—Recorded information, such as resumes, assessment logs, training certificates, transcripts, certifications, and professional licenses. This could support preliminary conclusions of competence.

6.1.7 *Attestation*—Oral or written statement; a testimonial. An attestation may give different levels of confidence depending on the credibility and independence of the provider.

6.1.8 *Verification*—Independent check or provision of additional objective evidence obtained to support other methods of evaluating competence such as attestation and documentation.

6.1.9 *Review of Previous Work*—Review of assessor reports, completed checklists, assessment plans or other writing samples can contribute to determining competence.

6.1.10 *Other Assessor Appraisal*—During training or regular assessments, a more experienced or senior assessor(s) could be used to make careful observation of the trainee assessor/auditor or technical expert and, when appropriate, prepare a written report of all observations and appraisals.

6.1.11 *Feedback from Assessed Body*—An assessing body should provide a rating form for each assessed body to allow feedback on each assessor/auditor and technical expert.

6.1.12 *Skills Maintenance*—An assessing body should have an on-going system to assure that all assessors/auditors and