

GUIDELINES ON THE COMPLIANCE WITH, AND VALIDATION OF, ISO QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (QMS) CERTIFICATION/RECERTIFICATION

This Annex shall serve as the guidelines for agencies in line with the Agency Accountability under Section 5.0 of the AO 25 Memorandum Circular No. 2023-1 which is a continuing ISO QMS certification or equivalent certification.

1.0 GUIDELINES IN DETERMINING COMPLIANCE WITH THE ISO QMS CERTIFICATION/RECERTIFICATION

1.1 Only a valid ISO 9001:2015 QMS certification/recertification or the latest version of the ISO 9001 certification is considered as compliance with the subject agency accountability.

Should a new version of the ISO 9001 be available during the year, agencies are encouraged to endeavor in migrating to said latest version as soon as possible.

The **certifications/recertifications must be valid as of 31 December 2023**, i.e., the effectivity date indicated in the certificate. Accordingly, certifications/recertifications with an effectivity date starting 1 January 2024 onwards **shall not be considered** as compliance with said agency accountability.

Agencies are reminded that they must pursue **continued certification**, i.e., ensure that there is no gap in terms of the expiration of its previous certification and the effectivity date of its existing certification, except for justifiable reasons, e.g., change of certification body (CB) which may cause gap in the certification.

1.2 The **scope** of the QMS indicated in the agency's ISO QMS certification shall be as follows:

- a. For departments/agencies, state colleges and universities (SUCs), and government-owned or -controlled corporations (GOCCs) under the DBM, it shall cover **at least one (1) critical frontline service or core process** of the agency concerned, based on its mandate under existing pertinent laws.
- b. For GOCCs under Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG) and local water districts (LWDs) under Categories A and B, the scope of their certification shall be based on the guidelines to be issued by the GCG and Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA), respectively.

- 1.3 The ISO QMS certifications must be issued by any of the CBs accredited by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) member.

However, the CBs which are duly **accredited by the Department of Trade and Industry - Philippine Accreditation Bureau (DTI-PAB)**¹ to certify the agencies' ISO QMS shall be preferred for the latter's provision of certain degree of control over CBs engaged by government agencies on their ISO QMS certification. This will better address the challenges in the validation process on acquiring information from CBs, among others. The DTI-PAB, aside from being an IAF member, is the recognized national accreditation body in the Philippines pursuant to Executive Order No. 802, s. 2009.²

Beginning FY 2023, government agencies which are still in their certification journey or those which have expiring/expired contract, shall endeavor to obtain their certification/recertification from CBs accredited by the DTI-PAB.

- 1.4 The CBs contracted shall have been accredited to audit and certify QMS for the specified scopes which are deemed relevant to the nature and functions of the agency, e.g., accreditation under ISO 9001 QMS for IAF 36 (Public Administration), IAF 37 (Education), and/or IAF 38 (Health and Social Work).

- 1.5 **Letters of attestation or similar documents issued by CBs** indicating that certification/recertification audits have been completed but still subject to approval of their Certificate Decision Maker³ **shall not be considered** as compliance to the ISO QMS certification agency accountability.

- 1.6 As an alternative, ISO QMS-equivalent certifications are **considered** as compliance with the subject agency accountability. The following certifications/awards are considered equivalent to ISO 9001 certification inasmuch as they similarly ensure consistency of quality of products and services through quality processes, enabling the provision of better service delivery and thereby enhancement of public sector performance:

- Philippine Quality Award (PQA)/Recognition (*for specific office concerned*)
- ISO/IEC 17025 or 17020 Accreditation

¹ The list of the CBs accredited by DTI-PAB could be accessed at the DTI webpage (http://pabaccreditation.dti.gov.ph/public/public_mscb.php).

² *Strengthening and Recognizing the Philippine Accreditation Office Attached to the Department of Trade and Industry as the National Accreditation Body* dated 18 May 2009

³ As provided under **Clause 9.5 Certification Decision** of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 (*Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems*), the CB shall ensure that the persons or committees that make the decisions for granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending or restoring certification, withdrawing certification or renewing certification are **different** from those who carried out the audits. Moreover, the Certificate Decision Maker may seek additional information or clarification from the audit team or other sources during its technical review with respect to, among others, the certification requirements, scope of certification, and the client's corrections and corrective actions for nonconformities, if any.

- Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines, Inc. (AACCUP)'s Institutional Accreditation (*for SUCs*)
- Qmentum International Canada Accreditation (*for hospitals*)
- Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) of the International Organization of SAIs (*for the Commission on Audit*)
- Universal Postal Union's Quality Management Certification (*for the Philippine Postal Corporation*)

1.7 Certifications **not included in the list shall not be accepted** as equivalent to ISO 9001 certification and could not serve as compliance to the ISO QMS certification as agency accountability.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

2.1 All departments/agencies, SUCs, and GOCCs under the DBM must post a copy of their respective ISO QMS certification or equivalent certification in their respective Transparency Seal webpages **not later than 31 December 2023**.

For GOCCs covered by the GCG and LWDs, the deadline of the submission of forms and/or posting of the ISO QMS certification/recertification in their respective websites, as applicable, shall be based on the guidelines to be issued by the GCG and LWUA, respectively.

2.2 In order to facilitate the conduct of the final validation of the submitted ISO certification/recertification with the CBs, agencies, which have not yet submitted the following in the previous PBB cycle, shall:

- Include a provision in the **contract with the winning CB** that they shall accommodate requests of the Government Quality Management Committee (GQMC)-DBM Secretariat, i.e., Systems and Productivity Improvement Bureau (SPIB) and/or other oversight/validating agencies/units⁴ for information or documents relative to their ISO QMS certification/recertification; or
- Ensure completeness of details and information in the **authorization and consent form** and submit the same **to the CBs**, attached as **Annex 3.1** hereof, to provide information/documentation to the GQMC-DBM Secretariat and/or oversight/validating agencies relative to their ISO QMS certification/recertification.

⁴ Commission on Higher Education for SUCs; GCG for GOCCs under its coverage; and LWUA for LWDs.

Copy of the contract or the authorization and consent form shall be submitted to their respective CBs, copy furnished the DBM-SPIB at dbm-spib@dbm.gov.ph on or before **31 January 2024 or within fifteen (15) working days from the issuance of the Notice to Proceed by the agency to the CB, whichever comes earlier.**

The editable copy of the authorization and consent form is available for download on the Results-Based Performance Management System (RBPMS) website at <https://rbpms.dap.edu.ph/downloads/>.

Said authorization and consent form should be updated every time there will be a change in the head of the agency or authorized representative.

3.0 VALIDATING AGENCIES

3.1 The following **oversight agencies/units**, hereinafter referred to as the "validating agencies," **shall consolidate the details of the ISO QMS certifications** of their respective agency coverages:

- GQMC-DBM Secretariat –SPIB, for departments/agencies and GOCCs under the DBM;
- Commission on Higher Education (CHED), for SUCs;
- GCG, for GOCCs under its coverage; and
- LWUA, for LWDs.

4.0 VALIDATION PERIOD

4.1 The validating agencies for departments/agencies, SUCs, and GOCCs under the DBM shall conduct the consolidation of the details of the ISO QMS certifications from **2 January 2024** until **29 February 2024**.

On the other hand, the validating agencies for GOCCs and LWDs shall conduct the consolidation of the details of the ISO QMS certifications and the initial validation of the compliance of the agencies based on their respective guidelines within the same period.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VALIDATING AGENCIES

5.1 The **validating agencies shall provide the consolidated ISO QMS certification or equivalent certification details** of the agencies within their respective coverages using the template herein attached as **Annex 3.2**.

Moreover, the validating agencies for LWDs and GOCCs covered by the GCG must also provide the validation on the compliance of the agencies based on the guidelines to be issued by the LWUA and GCG, respectively.

The reason for non-compliance shall also be indicated in column [8] using the following codes:

Code	Description
N	No submitted ISO 9001 certification or equivalent certification/accreditation , nor any ISO QMS-related documents
Q	Submitted QMS Documents only (Quality Manual, Internal Quality Audit Certification and/or Management Review minutes)
E	ISO 9001 certification or equivalent certification/accreditation is invalid or has expired
A	Submitted Attestation/Confirmation Letter/Audit Report from CB only
U	Submitted documents are unnecessary which are not only not required under the guidelines but also not considered as QMS documents (e.g., office orders, memorandum of agreement with Development Academy of the Philippines, Human Resources manual/handbook, program-based AACUP accreditation, certification from the agency head/QMS consultant on the agency's QMS efforts)
B	Validity of the ISO 9001 certification or equivalent certification/accreditation commences beyond the 31 December 2023 deadline
C	Scope covered by the ISO QMS certification or equivalent certification/accreditation is not based on the requirement (<i>only applicable to agencies which the ISO QMS certification/recertification is the ultimate requirement</i>)

- 5.2 Said annexes shall be duly signed by the authorized personnel of the validating agency.
- 5.3 The CHED, GCG and LWUA shall submit to the GQMC-DBM Secretariat at dbm-spib@dbm.gov.ph, on or before ten (10) working days after the validation period, i.e., **on or before 14 March 2024**, the accomplished **Annex 3.2**.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GQMC-DBM SECRETARIAT

- 6.1 Upon receipt of the initial reports from the oversight agencies/units, the GQMC-DBM Secretariat shall consolidate the same for confirmation by the CBs/Accrediting Agencies.
- 6.2 Accordingly, the GQMC-DBM Secretariat shall provide the final reports on the validation, or in case of no changes, confirmation of the initial reports of the validating agencies, to the AO 25 IATF on or before twenty (20) working days after the submission of the initial reports, i.e., **on or before 11 April 2024**.
- 6.3 In case of changes in the compliance status of the agencies, specifically the GOCCs under the GCG and LWDs, after the submission of the final report to the AO 25 IATF, the GQMC-DBM Secretariat shall submit a revised report on the summary of findings on the agencies' compliance to the AO 25 IATF, as it deems necessary. Such changes could be as follows:
 - a. The request for reconsideration/exemption of an agency has been granted; and
 - b. The status of the ISO QMS certification of the agency was confirmed only after the validation period/submission of the final report to the AO 25 IATF.

The Annex 3.2 shall be updated to reflect the changes in the rating or compliance of the agencies concerned, and shall be submitted together with the revised report on the summary of findings.

However, if there is only **less than** fifty percent (50%) change in compliance status of the aforesaid agencies, the GQMC-DBM Secretariat shall inform the AO 25 Secretariat on said changes but the revision of the reports need not be made.

7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CBs

- 7.1 The CBs shall provide necessary information and/or clarifications to the GQMC-DBM Secretariat in relation to the submitted ISO QMS certification/recertification by the agencies concerned.
- 7.2 To facilitate the conduct of verification by the GQMC-DBM Secretariat (SPIB) from the CBs, the latter are encouraged to provide their respective contact persons and contact information by sending an electronic mail to the dbm-spib@dbm.gov.ph on or before **31 December 2023**.

8.0 REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION AND EXEMPTION

- 8.1 An agency subject for compliance with the ISO QMS certification that is deemed non-compliant may request for the following, **within thirty (30) calendar days** from the posting of the result of the validation for the ISO QMS certification as agency accountability in the Results-Based Performance Management System website (<https://rbpms.dap.edu.ph/>):
- A reconsideration based on justifiable reasons and factors that are considered beyond the control of the agency, e.g., errors in the validity period of the certification as prepared by the CB/accrediting agency; or
 - An exemption in view of circumstances which make it impossible for agencies to comply with the ISO QMS as agency accountability, such as an ongoing agency restructuring, functional and organizational modifications and other related circumstances which may result in the agency's failure to effectively implement key activities of its documented QMS, thereby hindering its attainment of an ISO QMS certification or could constitute as a ground for suspension/cancellation/withdrawal of its existing ISO QMS certification.
- 8.2 The foregoing requests for reconsideration and exemption shall be addressed to the DBM-Organization and Systems Improvement Functional Group Head, thru the GQMC-DBM Secretariat (SPIB) and submit via email at dbm-spib@dbm.gov.ph for proper evaluation. After finalization of the evaluation, the GQMC shall inform the agency concerned of the action to said request, copy furnished the validating agency concerned and the AO 25 Secretariat.

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