



IECEX OPERATIONAL DOCUMENT

IEC System for Certification to Standards Relating to Equipment for Use in Explosive Atmospheres (IECEX System)

Assessment procedures for IECEx acceptance of applicant Ex Certification Bodies (ExCBs), Ex Testing Laboratories (ExTLs) and Additional Testing Facilities (ATFs) –

Part 1: Appointment and surveillance of assessors for IECEx certification schemes



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CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	3
1 Scope.....	4
2 Application	4
3 Endorsement of application	4
4 IECEX assessor training.....	4
5 Review by IECEX Secretariat	4
6 Review by ExAG.....	4
7 Voting and acceptance by ExAG.....	4
8 Entry into the list of approved assessors.....	5
9 Reporting to ExMC	5
10 General requirements for all assessors.....	5
11 Competencies and skills of assessors and lead assessors.....	5
11.1 Assessors	5
11.2 Lead assessors	5
12 Communication.....	6
13 Maintenance of competencies and skills	6
14 Acceptance of assigned tasks	6
15 The re-appointment of assessors	6
16 Feedback on assessments and assessors.....	6
Annex A Competencies and skills for assessors.....	8
A.1 General competence.....	8
A.2 Technical competence and skills.....	8

INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

IECEX Operational Document OD 003-1 –**Assessment procedures for IECEx acceptance of applicant
Ex Certification Bodies (ExCBs), Ex Testing Laboratories (ExTLs) and
Additional Testing Facilities (ATFs) –
Part 1: Appointment and surveillance of assessors for
IECEX certification schemes**

FOREWORD

This operational document has been prepared to detail the process for appointing IECEx assessors and to establish a general Code of Conduct for all IECEx assessors appointed by the IECEx ExMC, via the IECEx Ex Assessment Group, ExAG. This document replaces the previous edition of the document OD 003-1.

This document also sets out requirements for the maintenance of assessors' competencies and the on-going verification of acceptance by ExMC as a means of maintaining international confidence in the IECEx ExCB, ExTL and ATF assessment process.

Document history

Date	Summary
April 2009	Edition 1.0 This document supersedes and replaces ExMC/102/CD Surveillance of IECEx Assessors.
September 2017	Edition 2.0 This document supersedes and replaces OD 003-1 Edition 1.0.
February 2021	Edition 3.0 This document supersedes and replaces OD 003-1 Edition 2.0. This was accepted by vote on ExMC/1642/DV as reported as ExMC/1668/RV.

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**Assessment procedures for IECEx acceptance of applicant
Ex Certification Bodies (ExCBs), Ex Testing Laboratories (ExTLs) and
Additional Testing Facilities –
Part 1: Appointment and surveillance of assessors for IECEx certification
schemes**

1 Scope

This operational document addresses the appointment and surveillance of IECEx assessors for all the schemes within the IECEx System.

2 Application

The applicant assessor shall complete ExMC/43/Q IECEx Assessor Application and attach a copy of their current Curriculum Vitae.

3 Endorsement of application

The application shall be reviewed and endorsed by the applicant's National Member Body and forwarded to the ExMC Secretariat. This process shall include a review of the assessor competences as required by 10.1 and Annex A of this operational document. The supporting information for this review may initially be provided to the National Member Body by the applicant assessor's sponsoring organization/employer.

4 IECEx assessor training

The applicant must attend IECEx assessor training prior to final acceptance. This training may be attended any time after the application is made but consideration will be given to including others when the training is conducted, for example those just about to make application.

NOTE The members of ExAG have a standing invitation to attend IECEx assessor training sessions.

5 Review by IECEx Secretariat

The IECEx Secretariat then checks if the application contains all the required documents and for evidence that the applicant has completed assessor training and seeks additional information if needed. Once the application is complete it is forwarded to the Convenor and Deputy Convenor of ExAG for them to review the application against the criteria for an assessor.

6 Review by ExAG

The review by the ExAG Convenor and Deputy Convenor is documented and a recommendation is also included in that spreadsheet. The recommendation will include the IECEx schemes for which acceptance is recommended and may include recommended restrictions based on the assessor's competencies.

7 Voting and acceptance by ExAG

The Convenor of ExAG will then organize with the IECEx Secretariat to submit the application to vote by ExAG, together with the application documents and the review result. The voting period will normally be four weeks but may be extended to six weeks if it is close to a summer holiday period (Northern or Southern Hemisphere).

8 Entry into the list of approved assessors

If there is a majority of votes in favour of the application, the candidate is appointed as an assessor by the IECEX Executive Secretary and added to the list of assessors on the IECEX website. The applicant will be advised of his/her appointment by the Convenor of ExAG. Following an applicant's acceptance by the ExAG, the ExMC Secretary will arrange for official notification, and entry in the list of IECEX Approved Assessors and Assessment Teams, on the IECEX website www.iecex.com.

9 Reporting to ExMC

The ExAG will provide a report to the ExMC for noting, with information about assessors who have been accepted by ExAG.

10 General requirements for all assessors

All assessors, when conducting ExCB, ExTL and ATF assessments, shall follow the assessment procedures as outlined in the following documents, as applicable: IECEX OD 003-2, IECEX Technical Capability Documents, and the IECEX Scheme Rules IECEX 02, IECEX 03 series, IECEX 04 and IECEX 05.

IECEX assessors are expected to act professionally and in a timely manner at all times during the assessment process, including not allowing any commercial or other interests to impair their judgement.

11 Competencies and skills of assessors and lead assessors

11.1 Assessors

Applicant assessors are expected to have the competencies and skills shown in Annex A. These shall be reviewed by the national member body as part of the application process. Assessors must have both general competence, and technical competence and skills detailed in the annex. In addition, assessors shall meet the following, which shall be detailed in the application form:

- Good English skills, both written and verbal
- Auditor training on ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC 17024 or ISO 9001
- Employment or other experience relevant to Ex
- IECEX experience over a period of at least five years
- Relevant auditing experience of at least five years

11.2 Lead assessors

Appointment of lead assessors will be by invitation by the Chair of IECEX from the existing pool of assessors. Each new lead assessor will be required to initially lead at least one assessment under supervision of an existing lead assessor, prior to being recommended for appointment as a lead assessor. The Chair of IECEX may consult with ExAG Convenor as part of the process of decision making on the appointment of a lead assessor.

Lead assessors are expected to be able to demonstrate the ability to lead ISO 9001 audits. For example, a lead auditor with an ExCB body auditing to ISO/IEC 80079-34 would meet this requirement.

12 Communication

Assessors shall respond in a timely manner to all correspondence relating to the IECEx Assessment or any other IECEx System matters. In general, a maximum response time of 48 hours, from receiving the correspondence.

E-mail correspondence is expected. Assessors shall always ensure that their contact details, as recorded on the IECEx website directory, are current and if not, to immediately notify the IECEx Executive Secretary.

13 Maintenance of competencies and skills

It is expected that all assessors will ensure that their technical knowledge of Ex matters and audit skills remain current and that they maintain up to date knowledge of changes in Ex standards and IECEx schemes' requirements.

Assessors are expected to maintain auditing skills.

Assessors are required to attend an IECEx assessor training at least once every two years. Those who do not meet these requirements may be removed from the assessor panel by the IECEx Executive Secretary on recommendation of ExAG.

14 Acceptance of assigned tasks

Assessors are expected to accept assessment tasks assigned to them, noting that there may be periods during which assessors may be unavailable. In such instances, assessors shall inform the Secretariat of their unavailability and the period for which they are unavailable.

As noted in the application form, the availability of assessors is critical to the bodies being assessed and to the credibility of the IECEx System and its schemes. If assessors are consistently unable to be available for assessments or are not able to respond to issues related to assessments so they can be carried out and concluded in a timely manner, then their position as an IECEx assessor will be reviewed.

15 The re-appointment of assessors

A periodic review of assessors (at approximately 5-year intervals) will be carried out by ExAG. At this time assessors may be required to submit a new IECEx Assessor Questionnaire form ExMC/43/Q.

If an assessor fails to submit a new IECEx Assessor Questionnaire when requested during the review, the IECEx Executive Secretary may remove the assessor from the panel of appointed IECEx assessors.

16 Feedback on assessments and assessors

At the end of an assessment, when all issues have been resolved and the report finalized, the IECEx Executive Secretary will issue a form (IECEX OD 206) to the body that has been assessed seeking their feedback on the assessment process and the performance of the assessors.

In addition to the above, complaints regarding the conduct of an assessor may separately be raised with the IECEx Executive Secretary. These complaints shall be in writing.

Where there is a complaint, the Secretary shall notify the Convenor of ExAG and in consultation with the IECEX Chair and Officers shall determine the course of action in relation to complaints about assessors. One option available is the removal of the assessor as an appointed assessor. In such cases, the Convenor of ExAG shall report at the next ExMC meeting. The Secretary may need to adjust the above process if the Convenor of ExAG is the subject of the complaint.

The Secretary shall maintain a record of complaints and the action taken.

Feedback on the assessment process will be used by ExAG to identify potential improvements to the assessment process.

Annex A

Competencies and skills for assessors

A.1 General competence

Assessors shall possess the following general competence:

- a) Good interpersonal skills
- b) Good oral and written communication skills
- c) Basic knowledge of ISO 9001, ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC 80079-34, ISO/IEC 17040, and ISO/IEC 17024 as far as appropriate, and
- d) Familiarity with the relevant IECEx rules, procedures and operational documents relevant to the scheme for which they are applying to be an assessor.

A.2 Technical competence and skills

Assessors shall possess the following technical competence and skills:

- e) A broad knowledge of Ex philosophies including an understanding of:
 - The ignition properties of flammable and combustible materials
 - The properties, mechanisms, and control of ignition, and
 - A significant range of protection techniques in the IEC 60079 series and ISO/IEC 80079 series of standards
- f) Access to, or involvement in:
 - IEC or corresponding national standards such that there is assured access to knowledge of all developments in those standards, and
 - Ex research
- g) Documentation and reporting skills
- h) At least five years' practical experience in the scope of the relevant IECEx scheme(s). This may be achieved, but not limited by:
 - Employee or contractor for an ExCB, ExTL or ATF
 - Ex responsible person within an Ex equipment manufacturer or situations associated with explosive atmospheres
 - Involved in IECEx working groups or committees
 - Expertise/consulting for IECEx products or services

For the IECEx 03 Scheme the following technical experience and knowledge is also relevant:

- Sufficient experience in the activities covered by the IECEx Certified Services Facility Scheme
- Sufficient experience in the "Ex service sector"
- Familiarity with the Standards as they apply to explosion protection techniques used by organizations covered by IECEx Certificates for Service Facilities, and
- Familiarity with IECEx 03 Scheme rules of procedure and operational documents.