



RABQSA International

Criteria for Qualification-Based Environmental Auditor Certification

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Disclaimer

While every effort is made to ensure that the process for evaluating applications for certification is effective, the RABQSA International Inc does not accept liability for the performance, conduct or services provided by the certified person.

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OVERVIEW OF RABQSA AUDITOR CERTIFICATION

RABQSA's VISION IS

'...a virtual, e based organization demonstrating a culture that is entrepreneurial, innovative, industry focused and achieves a time to market performance that exceeds world's best practice and, through continual improvement, remains the company of first choice for persons seeking international recognition...'

RABQSA's MISSION IS

'...to improve the performance of industry by providing recognition to individuals who, having demonstrated competence to RABQSA International personnel certification schemes, can improve and offer a positive contribution to the performance of organizations...'

RABQSA's VALUE GUARANTEE TO CUSTOMERS

- we will satisfy our customers and stakeholders expectations
- our services will remain of value and relevance to our customers and stakeholders
- our ideals and practices will remain consistent with the wider quality movement
- we will replace process with service outcomes
- we will communicate with our customers and stakeholders
- we will remain abreast of technology and new information systems

WHY APPLY TO RABQSA FOR EMS AUDITOR CERTIFICATION?

Certification with RABQSA International (RABQSA) provides certified persons with an internationally recognized qualification.

Auditors certified under this scheme by RABQSA can demonstrate that they have been independently evaluated as meeting the standards established by RABQSA using ISO19011:2002 '*Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing*' as guidance. This provides confidence and assurance in audit outcomes for the auditee and industry.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

This table provides a summary of certification requirements only. Details of these requirements are available in this document and **must be referenced** when applying for auditor certification.

GRADES				
	Grade	Knowledge competencies (Section 3)	Audit Experience (Section 4)	Qualifications (education, training, work experience) (Section 5)
	Associate Environmental Auditor (EMS-AA)	RABQSA-AU, RABQSA-EM or EMS Auditor course	N/A	<p>The following applies for all grades:</p> <p>At least two years of environmental work experience in the last four years.</p> <p>and</p> <p>A minimum of four to eight years work experience, depending on formal qualifications</p>
	Environmental Auditor (EMS-A)	RABQSA-AU, RABQSA-EM or EMS Auditor course	20 audit days, with at least 4 complete audits as member of audit team	
	Principal Environmental Auditor (EMS-PR)	RABQSA-AU, RABQSA-EM or EMS Auditor course	20 audit days, with at least 4 complete audits. At least 10 days and 2 complete audits as a solo auditor	
	Lead Environmental Auditor (EMS-LA)	RABQSA-AU, RABQSA-EM, RABQSA-TL or EMS Lead Auditor course	35 audit days, with at least 7 complete audits. At least 15 days and 3 complete audits as Team Leader	
	Business Improvement Environmental Auditor (EMS-BI)	RABQSA-AU, RABQSA-EM, RABQSA-TL, RABQSA-OI or EMS Lead Auditor course plus RABQSA-OI	35 audit days, with at least 7 complete audits. A least 15 days and 3 complete audits as Team Leader	

SCOPES	
Scope	Description
Environmental Management Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> audits of an organization's environmental management processes (where the system does not have all elements of ISO 14001) audits of a facility or processes pre-acquisition or for other reasons environmental due diligence audits baseline audits of a facility or process for an environmental impact assessment or consulting work.
Environmental Management System (EMS) Audit	Audits conducted on environmental management systems using ISO 14001 (or equivalent) as the reference standard.
Site Contamination Assessment	systematic and documented identification, evaluation or confirmation of the existence or otherwise of contamination on or emanating from a site.
Environmental Report Verification	establishing environmental performance data, through examining the company's internal data gathering systems and controls, for public or other reporting.
Compliance Audit	determining the extent of compliance with existing legislation, permits and codes applicable to operations and procedures.

REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFICATION-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR CERTIFICATION

1 INTRODUCTION

This certification scheme has been developed by RABQSA International, Inc. (RABQSA), to provide international recognition for auditors of Environmental Management Systems (EMS), including audits using national or international management system standards, or other standards recognized by RABQSA, and auditors of other environmental audit categories.

RABQSA is accredited by the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) as meeting the requirements of the international standard for personnel certification bodies, ISO/IEC 17024:2003 'General Requirements for bodies operating the certification of persons'.

This scheme is not included under the scope of RABQSA's accreditation. For details on the accredited competency-based certification scheme, please refer to www.rabqsa.com and select the competency-based criteria.

1.1 Scheme Objectives

Confidence and reliance in the audit process depends on the competence of personnel conducting the audit. This scheme has been developed to meet the following key objectives:

- to ensure that auditors meet or exceed the qualification guidelines for management system auditors described in ISO 19011:2002 and are assessed as competent to perform environmental audits.
- to assist organizations in selecting appropriately qualified auditors; and
- to enhance the professional recognition of qualified auditors.

1.2 Grades of Certification

In this scheme, RABQSA offers certification in the following grades:

- Associate Environmental Auditor;
- Environmental Auditor;
- Principal Environmental Auditor;
- Lead Environmental Auditor; and
- Business Improvement Environmental Auditor.

Associate Environmental Auditor grade recognizes that an applicant has met the formal education, training

and work experience requirements for certification but has not yet demonstrated the ability to conduct audits.

Environmental Auditor grade recognizes that an applicant has met the formal education, training and work experience requirements for certification and has demonstrated the ability to conduct all or part of an audit as a member of a team.

Principal Environmental Auditor grade recognizes that an applicant has satisfied the criteria for Auditor certification and, in addition, has demonstrated the ability to conduct audits either alone or as a member of a team.

Lead Environmental Auditor grade recognizes that an applicant has satisfied the criteria for Auditor certification and, in addition, has demonstrated the ability to manage an audit team and co-ordinate all aspects of a complete audit.

Business Improvement Environmental Auditor grade recognizes that an applicant has satisfied the criteria for Lead Auditor and, in addition, has demonstrated the ability to improve the performance of organizations.

Note:

Auditors may be recognized for their professional and/or technical experience as defined under Scope of Certification. In establishing audit teams for any purpose, consideration of these skills in the overall make up and management of the team should be taken into account.

1.3 Definitions

For the purpose of the criteria, the definitions given in ISO 19011:2002 'Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing' and, in addition, those definitions specific to RABQSA.

Audit: systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which audit criteria are fulfilled.

Audit Criteria: set of policies, procedures or requirements (used as a reference).

Auditor: person with the competence to conduct an audit.

Audit Team Leader: auditor with competence to lead an audit team that includes at least one other auditor.

Expansion: Movement from one certification grade to another and/or addition of certification scopes via demonstration of the competencies required for that grade and/or scope.

Qualification: demonstration of education, training and/or work experience.

Tertiary Education: post secondary education, may include trade school, associate, bachelor and/or higher college degree.

TPECS: Training Provider and Examiner Certification Scheme, offered by RABQSA.

1.4 Requirements for Certification Applications

Applicants must ensure that the information they provide is accurate and addresses all the requirements set out in the criteria document for the type, grade and scope of certification being sought.

All application information must be provided in English. Where translations of documents are provided, these must be independently verified for accuracy.

Applications should be submitted on the applicable RABQSA Environmental Auditor (qualification-based) Certification Application Form together with payment of the Application Fee. The Application Fee must be received by RABQSA before processing of an application can commence. Please refer to the Fee Schedule for your region (available at www.rabqsa.com) for details of fees.

Applicants who have any special needs related to language and/or disabilities should contact RABQSA for advice.

To enable effective evaluation of applications, RABQSA requires all Applicants to provide verifiable documentary evidence that demonstrates compliance with the criteria of personnel certification being sought.

2 KEY REQUIREMENTS

Education, training, work experience and audit experience are the means by which a person acquires the appropriate competencies to become an auditor. The requirements defined by RABQSA for Environmental auditor certification are based on the guidelines in ISO 19011:2002 '*Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing*'.

For certification, applicants must demonstrate RABQSA-defined requirements applicable to the grade and scope sought, covering knowledge, audit experience, and qualifications. In addition, applicants must provide contact details of persons who can verify information about the applicant.

The evidence required for certification applications is detailed in the following sections.

3 KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge requirements are demonstrated through the successful completion of a training course and/or an examination by an RABQSA Certified Training Provider.

Applicants must submit the certificate/s from RABQSA Certified Training Provider/s that confirms the required training/examination has been successfully completed within three years prior to application.

RABQSA maintains a Register of RABQSA Certified Training Providers on the RABQSA website www.rabqsa.com.

3.1 Training method

RABQSA-certified Environmental Auditor courses will be accepted as evidence of knowledge requirements for Associate Auditor, Auditor and Principal Auditor grades.

RABQSA-certified EMS Lead Auditor courses and IPC (formerly IATCA) EMS Lead Auditor courses will be accepted as evidence of knowledge requirements for Lead Auditor and Business Improvement Auditor grades.

Note: For Business Improvement Auditor, completion of the RABQSA-OI module is also required.

3.2 Examination Method

Where an applicant has been examined by an RABQSA TPECS-certified Training Provider, the following competency units are required to be demonstrated.

ALL GRADES

Management System Auditing (RABQSA-AU)

- Understand the application of the principles, procedures and techniques of auditing
- Understand the conduct of an effective audit in the context of the auditee's organizational situation
- Understand the application of regulations, and other considerations that are relevant to the audit management system, and the conduct of the audit
- Practice personal attributes necessary for the effective and efficient conduct of a management system audit

Auditing Environmental Management Systems (RABQSA-EM)

- Understand the application of Environmental Management Principles in the context of ISO 14001
- Relate the Environmental Management System to the organizational products, including services, and operational processes

LEAD ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR

Leading Management System Audit Teams (RABQSA-TL)

- Establish, plan and task the activities of an audit team
- Communicate effectively with the auditee and audit client
- Organize and direct audit team members
- Prevent and resolve conflict with the auditee and/or within the audit team
- Prepare and complete the audit report

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR

Advising on Organizational Improvement and Risk Management (RABQSA-OI)

- Write a organizational business plan
- Interpret financial statements
- Write a risk management plan
- Determine HR best practice
- Determine appropriate organizational improvement tools
- Communicate with senior management

4 AUDIT EXPERIENCE

Audit Experience is demonstrated by submitting an audit log providing details of audits required for the grade requested.

The information on the audit log must be legible, verifiable, and include contact details of auditees.

The RABQSA Audit Log is available on the RABQSA website at www.rabqsa.com. Alternative audit logs may be accepted if they provide all information as required on the RABQSA Audit log.

4.1 Levels of Audit Experience

The following audit experience is required to be demonstrated.

ASSOCIATE ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR

Associate Environmental Auditors are not required to provide evidence of audit experience. However,

awareness of audit experience requirements is recommended for future expansion to higher grades.

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR

An applicant must demonstrate twenty audit days in accordance with the conditions for audit experience. A maximum of six days of off-site audit activity is allowed in these twenty days.

Included in the twenty audit days, an applicant must demonstrate at least four complete Environmental Audits as a member of an audit team.

PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR

An applicant must demonstrate twenty audit days in accordance with the conditions for audit experience. A maximum of six days of off-site audit activity is allowed in these twenty days.

Included in the twenty audit days, an applicant must demonstrate at least four complete Environmental Audits as a solo auditor, as a member of an audit team or as an audit team leader.

At least two of the complete audits and a total of at least ten audit days must be performed either solo or as an audit team leader.

LEAD ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR and BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR

An applicant must demonstrate thirty-five audit days in accordance with the conditions for audit experience. A maximum of ten days of off-site audit activity is allowed in these thirty-five days.

Included in the thirty-five audit days, an applicant must demonstrate at least seven complete Environmental Audits as a solo auditor, as a member of an audit team or as an audit team leader.

At least three of the complete audits and a total of at least fifteen audit days must be performed as an audit team leader managing a team of at least one other auditor.

4.2 Conditions for Audit Experience

Only eligible audit experience completed in the three years prior to application is considered.

Only independent audits satisfy the auditing experience requirements. The auditor shall be independent from the audited organization.

Examples of relationships that may be acceptable are:

- A head office audit of a plant or division

- One division or plant auditing another division or plant
- A customer organization auditing a supplier
- A third party registration audit
- A consultant contracted to provide an independent conformance audit.

All audits must be for determining conformity to a recognized Environmental Standard. The auditor may have no part in the set up of, ongoing development of, or maintenance of the system being audited.

Audits that are combined with consulting activities cannot be used to meet the audit experience requirement for initial certification, expansion, or re-certification.

Examples of consultancy audits include:

- Audits where advice was given on an action plan for developing/improving the system as part of the audit
- Audits where the auditor had a part in setting up the system
- Audits where the auditor was involved in the ongoing development of the system.

Audits must be recorded in calendar days, not man days. Onsite activity shall not be less than six hours per day.

5 QUALIFICATIONS

All Applicants for Environmental auditor certification must provide evidence of qualifications (education, training and/or work experience) that demonstrates the requirements for the type, grade and scope being sought.

5.1 Duration of work experience

All applicants are required to demonstrate two years of environmental work experience in the four years prior to application.

An applicant with a University degree of Bachelor or higher must provide details of a minimum of four years work experience.

An applicant with post-secondary nationally recognized non-university education, including associate degrees and Australian Certificate IV or higher, must provide details of a minimum of six years work experience.

An applicant with secondary education must provide details of a minimum of eight years work experience.

5.2 Details of work experience

Evidence of work experience must be verifiable and include:

- employer (including contact details)
- dates of employment,
- roles, responsibilities and achievements.

6 PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

All applicants shall possess the following personal attributes, based on ISO 19011:2002.

An auditor should be:

- ethical
- open-minded
- diplomatic
- observant
- perceptive
- versatile
- tenacious
- decisive
- self reliant

These personal attributes will be verified by RAQSA Scheme Examiners with auditees provided on an applicant's audit log, employers and through witnessed audits where applicable.

7 CODE OF CONDUCT

All certified auditors have an obligation to improve the standing of their profession by observing the RABQSA Code of Conduct. Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a condition of certification and all certified auditors are required to sign their compliance to the Code at time of initial application for certification and at each period of re-certification.

RABQSA Code of Conduct

- I will act professionally, accurately and in an unbiased manner.
- I will strive to increase the competence and prestige of my profession.
- I will assist those in my employ or under my supervision in developing their professional competencies.
- I will not undertake any assignments that I am not competent to perform.
- I will not represent conflicting or competing interests and will disclose to any client or employer any relationships that may influence my judgment.
- I will not discuss or disclose any information relating to any assignment unless required by law

or authorized in writing by the client and/or my employing organization.

- I will not accept any inducement, commission, gift or any other benefit from client organizations, their employees or any interested party or knowingly allow colleagues to do so.
- I will not intentionally communicate false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of any assignment or the personnel certification process.
- I will not act in any way that would prejudice the reputation of RABQSA or the personnel certification process and will cooperate fully with an enquiry in the event of any alleged breach of this code.

8 SCOPES OF CERTIFICATION

Applicants applying for Environmental auditor certification may be awarded recognition for their competence to conduct specialized Environmental audits in the Scopes listed.

The decision on which Scopes are appropriate will be dependent on each applicant's specialized qualifications (education, training and/or professional experience).

It is possible for an auditor to be awarded more than one Scope.

1. Environmental Management Audit

- audits of an organization's environmental management processes (where the system does not have all elements of ISO 14001)
- audits of a facility or processes pre-acquisition or for other reasons
- environmental due diligence audits
- baseline audits of a facility or process for an environmental impact assessment or consulting work.

2. Environmental Management System (EMS) Audit

Audits conducted on environmental management systems using ISO 14001 (or equivalent) as the reference standard.

3. Site Contamination Assessment

Systematic and documented identification, evaluation or confirmation of the existence or otherwise of contamination on or emanating from a site.

This category must include:

Phase 1 audits– Preliminary Site Investigation

Identification of all past and present potentially contaminating activities, reporting on the site condition,

providing a preliminary assessment of the site contamination and recommendation on further investigations.

This category may include:

Phase 2 audits– Detailed Site Investigation

Addressing issues raised in the preliminary investigation, defining the extent and degree of contamination, assessing potential effects posed by contaminants to human health and the ecosystems and obtaining sufficient information to allow decisions on remediation options

or

Phase 3 audits– Validating Site Remediation

setting remediation goals, determining the remediation strategy, obtaining the necessary approvals, undertaking remediation and validating it has been achieved.

The sub-categories for which an applicant is certified will be detailed on the provided certificate.

4. Environmental Report Verification

establishing environmental performance data, through examining the company's internal data gathering systems and controls, for public or other reporting.

5. Compliance Audit

determining the extent of compliance with existing legislation, permits and codes applicable to operations and procedures.

9 SURVEILLANCE

While there is a requirement for payment of the Annual Fee, there is no specific requirement for surveillance in this Environmental Auditor Certification Scheme. However, it is strongly recommended that audit logs and CPD forms be submitted on an annual basis to facilitate review of the information provided.

10 RE-CERTIFICATION

To maintain certification, all certified personnel are required to demonstrate continuing competence against the current certification criteria for the type and grade of certification awarded.

RABQSA will provide reminders with the annual invoice to all certified auditors when the date for re-certification is due and the information required to be submitted to RABQSA.

Every three years from the date of initial certification and subsequent re-certification, certified auditors must demonstrate continuing compliance with the current certification criteria by providing:

- Audit logs, demonstrating audit experience in accordance with the requirements for the grade of certification
- Evidence of 45 hours of Professional Development activities. Continual Professional Development logs and guidance are available on the RABQSA website at www.rabqsa.com
- Confirmation that the Code of Conduct has been adhered to and any complaints against performance have been resolved.

Note: For complete details of re-certification requirements, please refer to the RABQSA Requirements for Re-Certification of Qualification-Based Certification, available on the RABQSA website www.rabqsa.com.

11 EXPANSION OF CERTIFICATION

Certified auditors can apply to expand their grade and/or scope of certification by submitting an Expansion Application Form to RABQSA, together with the Expansion Fee.

Please refer to the Fee Schedule for your region for details of the Expansion Fee. Expansion Application Forms are available on the RABQSA web site www.rabqsa.com.

The additional requirements, as defined in this document, for the grade or scope sought must be demonstrated and evidence provided with the application.

12 REDUCTION OF CERTIFICATION

Certified auditors can reduce their certification at any time by notification in writing to the RABQSA Environmental Scheme Examiner.

A reduction in certification may also be advised to a certified auditor by the RABQSA Scheme Examiner after evaluation of relevant information. RABQSA will request confirmation in writing of acceptance by a certified auditor of a reduction of certification.

RABQSA does not refund fees to any certified auditors when reducing certification.

13 SUSPENSION

RABQSA reserves the right to suspend certification as a result of investigations into the conduct or performance of certified auditors. Refer to the Complaints Process in Section 15 for further details.

RABQSA remains the sole owner of any certificates and ID cards issued to certified auditors. In the event of suspension of certification, the certificate and ID card issued must be returned to RABQSA.

RABQSA does not refund fees to any certified auditors when suspending certification.

14 WITHDRAWAL

RABQSA reserves the right to withdraw certification as a result of investigations into the conduct or performance of certified auditors. Refer to the Complaints Process in Section 15 for further details.

Certified auditors can withdraw their certification at any time by notification in writing to the RABQSA Environmental Scheme Examiner.

RABQSA remains the sole owner of any certificates and ID cards issued to certified auditors. In the event of withdrawal of certification, the certificate and ID card issued must be returned to RABQSA.

RABQSA does not refund fees to any certified auditors when withdrawing certification.

15 COMPLAINTS PROCESS

All complaints shall be submitted in writing to the Manager, Certification Services, RABQSA International. For contact details, please refer to the Contacts section of the RABQSA website www.rabqsa.com.

15.1 Complaints Against Auditors

Complaints against the actions or conduct of a certified auditor will be reviewed and investigated by RABQSA using documented procedures. A valid substantiated complaint may result in suspension or withdrawal of certification.

15.2 Complaints Against RABQSA

Complaints against RABQSA may be submitted in writing to RABQSA. Each complaint will be reviewed, investigated, and resolved in a timely manner through a formal documented process.

In appropriate circumstances, the RABQSA Scheme Committee will investigate complaints against RABQSA.

16 APPEALS PROCESS

All appeals shall be submitted in writing to the Manager, Certification Services, RABQSA



RABQSA International Criteria for Qualification-Based Environmental Auditor Certification

International. For contact details, please refer to the Contacts section of the RABQSA website www.rabqsa.com.

An appeal against adverse certification decisions, suspension or withdrawal of certification must be submitted in writing. The written appeal will be reviewed, investigated, and resolved in a timely manner through a formal documented process.

Appeals may be made on the following decisions:

- refusal to grant initial certification,
- refusal to grant continuation of certification,
- refusal to grant an expansion of grade of certification,
- reduction in certification grade,
- suspension of certification, or
- withdrawal of certification.

The applicant shall submit his or her appeal to RABQSA no later than 30 days after notification of the decision. The appeal shall include appropriate substantiation for the appellant's position and it shall contain any additional or updated information.

17 CERTIFICATION PROCESS

For further information on RABQSA's:

- certification processes
- applicants' rights and responsibilities
- complaints and appeals process
- conditions of use for certificates, ID cards and RABQSA logo and
- privacy

please contact RABQSA via the website www.rabqsa.com or email info@rabqsa.com.

End of Certification Criteria