



# RABQSA International

## Criteria for Qualification-Based Occupational Health and Safety Auditor Certification

### Asia-Pacific

PO Box 347 Penrith BC  
NSW 2751 Australia  
Phone: +61 2 4728 4600  
Fax: +61 2 4731 6466

### Europe

18 Kifisias Ave  
GR 115 26 Athens Greece  
Phone: +30 210 77 99 707  
Fax: +30 210 77 99 065

### The Americas

PO Box 602  
Milwaukee WI 53201-0602 USA  
Phone: 1 888 722 2440  
Fax: +1 414 765 8661

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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 organization of first choice for persons seeking international recognition...'

### **RABQSA'S MISSION IS**

'...to improve the performance of organizations 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 OHS 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 OHS 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.

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

<b>SCOPES</b>	
<b>Scope</b>	<b>Definition</b>
OHS Management System (OHSMS) Audit	an audit undertaken against national or international OHS management system standards, e.g. AS4801, Z-10 or BSI OHSAS 18001.
Plant Audit	identification and evaluation of the effectiveness of the control of predictable hazards to health and safety arising from plant and systems of work associated with plant.
Emergency Preparedness Audit	an audit of systems and plans in place to deal with significant emergencies such as fire, explosion, or natural disasters, bomb threats or any other event threatening life, property, equipment and/or the environment.
Occupational Hygiene Audit	an audit of the identification, assessment and control of chemical, biological or physical workplace hazards.
Ergonomics Audit	an audit to determine the extent to which human factor principles have been implemented in the design of workplaces and systems of work.
Dangerous Goods Audit	an audit of the effectiveness of the management of storage, use, transport and disposal of dangerous goods.
OHS Compliance Audit	an audit of the effective control of the legal risks in order to ensure that the requirements of laws, regulations, industry codes and organizational standards are met.
Injury Management Audit	an audit of injury management systems/activities that are concerned with achieving safe and durable return to work. This involves treatment, rehabilitation, claims management and employment practice.



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**Criteria for Qualification-Based OHS Auditor Certification**

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<b>Scope</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Hazardous Substances Audit	an audit of the management of the use of hazardous substances.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFICATION-BASED OHS AUDITOR CERTIFICATION

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This certification scheme has been developed by RABQSA International, Inc. (RABQSA), to provide international recognition for auditors of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) management systems, including audits using national or International management system standards, or other management system standards recognized by RABQSA, and auditors of other specialized OHS 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](http://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:

- a. 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 OHS management system audits;
- b. to assist organizations in selecting appropriately qualified auditors; and
- c. to enhance the professional recognition of qualified auditors.

#### 1.2 Grades of Certification

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

- a. Associate OHS Auditor;
- b. OHS Auditor;
- c. Principal OHS Auditor;
- d. Lead OHS Auditor; and
- e. Business Improvement OHS Auditor.

**Associate OHS 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.

**OHS 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 OHS 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 OHS 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 OHS 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' apply 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 must be submitted on the RABQSA OHS 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](http://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 OHS 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](http://www.rabqsa.com).

### **3.1 Training method**

RABQSA-certified OHS Lead Auditor courses will be accepted as evidence of knowledge requirements for all qualification-based OHS 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

##### *OHS Management Systems (RABQSA-OH)*

- Understand OHS laws, principles, codes of practices, and standards

- Identify OHS hazards that are reasonably expected to occur for that business type or industry
- Assess the risk of identified hazards in the context of the organization's OHS management system
- Assess the effectiveness of methodologies to control OHS hazards
- Assess the OHS roles and responsibilities within the context of the organizational environment
- Determine the adequacy and effectiveness of an OHS management system

#### **LEAD OHS AUDITOR AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT OHS 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 OHS 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](http://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 OHS AUDITOR**

Associate OHS Auditors are not required to provide evidence of audit experience. However, awareness of the requirements is recommended for future expansion to higher grades.

#### **OHS 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 OHS Audits as a member of an audit team.

#### **PRINCIPAL OHS 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 OHS 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 OHS AUDITOR and BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT OHS 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 OHS 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 the OHS Standard or reference being applied. The auditor may have no part in the set up of, ongoing development of, or maintenance of the OHS 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 OHS auditor certification must provide evidence of qualifications (education, training and/or work experience) that demonstrates the requirements for the type, grade and scope of certification sought.

### **5.1 Duration of work experience**

All applicants are required to demonstrate two years of OHS 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 RABQSA 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 personnel 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 OHS auditor certification at Auditor, Principal Auditor, Lead Auditor or Business Improvement Auditor grades may be awarded recognition for their competence to conduct specialized OHS 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. OHS Management System Audit** – an audit undertaken against the specific requirements of an acceptable OHS management system standard. RABQSA maintains a register of management systems that are considered acceptable in providing auditing experience. Other standards may be considered on submission.

**2. Plant Audit** – identification and evaluation of the effectiveness of the control of predictable hazards to health and safety arising from plant and systems of work associated with plant.

**3. Emergency Preparedness Audit** – an audit of systems and plans in place to deal with significant emergencies such as fire, explosion or natural disasters, bomb threats or any other event threatening life, property, equipment and/or the environment.

**4. Occupational Hygiene Audit** – an audit of the identification, assessment and control of chemical, biological or physical workplace hazards.

**5. Ergonomics Audit** – an audit to determine the extent to which human factor principles have been

implemented in the design of workplaces and systems of work.

**6. Dangerous Goods Audit** – an audit of the effectiveness of the management of storage, use, transport and disposal of dangerous goods.

**7. OHS Compliance Audit** – an audit of the effective control of the legal risks in order to ensure that the requirements of laws, regulations, industry codes and organizational standards are met.

**8. Injury Management Audit** – an audit of injury management systems/activities that are concerned with achieving safe and durable return to work. This involves treatment, rehabilitation, claims management and employment practice.

**9. Hazardous Substances Audit** – an audit of the management of the use of hazardous substances.

## 9 SURVEILLANCE

While there is a requirement for payment of the Annual Fee, there is no specific requirement for surveillance in this OHS 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.

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](http://www.rabqsa.com).
- Confirmation that the Code of Conduct has been adhered to and any complaints against performance have been resolved.



## RABQSA International Criteria for Qualification-Based OHS Auditor Certification

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](http://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](http://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 OHS Scheme Examiner.

A reduction in certification may also be advised to an applicant 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 persons. 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 OHS 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](http://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 International. For contact details, please refer to the Contacts section of the RABQSA website [www.rabqsa.com](http://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](http://www.rabqsa.com) or email [info@rabqsa.com](mailto:info@rabqsa.com).

**End of Certification Criteria**