



# **RABQSA International**

## **Training Course Certification Criteria**

### **Environmental Management System (EMS) Lead Auditor Training Course**

**RABQSA TP4.EMSLA**

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**1.0 GENERAL**

- 1.1 The achievement of certification and its continuance require that the training provider adhere to the criteria on which the certification is based, and conduct its training operation ethically. When there is evidence that this is not the case, RABQSA may initiate actions to suspend or withdraw (cancel) the application received or certification granted.
- 1.2 This document is intended for use with the following IATCA documents (available through RABQSA):
- Criteria for the Assessment of Training Providers and the Training Courses
  - Criteria for Training Providers
- 1.3 No other course (e.g., internal auditor) may be included within the Environmental Management Systems (EMS) lead auditor training course.
- 1.4 RABQSA assures confidentiality of all materials provided and any other information or knowledge obtained during the course certification process, with the exception of non-proprietary contact information.
- 1.5 RABQSA will safeguard against conflict of interest between training providers and evaluators.
- 1.6 Program fees and expenses related to course certification and maintenance of certification are the responsibility of the training provider.

**2.0 COURSE CONTENT**

**2.1 General**

- 2.1.1 This course shall provide for the training of auditors in the principles and practices of EMS auditing as it relates to the ISO 14000 series standards, using ISO 19011 as the guidance document. Auditor training shall be based upon the most current revision of ISO 14001 and ISO 19011.
- 2.1.2 The students' achievement of the learning objectives shall be measured by the training organization.
- 2.1.3 Early in the course presentation, the training provider shall provide to the students a description of the course format, student responsibilities, how the student will be evaluated, and the basis for each type of evaluation.
- 2.1.4 The course shall include reference to the following documents (the contents of which are not required to be covered in the course):
- ISO/IEC Guide 66
  - IAF Guidance to Guide 66

## **2.2 Learning Objectives**

A student who successfully completes the course shall be able to:

- 2.2.1 Explain the purpose and intent of the ISO 14000 series of standards;
- 2.2.2 Describe the continuing process of development of the ISO 14000 Series and ISO 19011, the impact that these developments may have on the audit process, and the need for auditors to keep up to date;
- 2.2.3 Explain the intent and requirement of each clause of ISO 14001;
- 2.2.4 Identify the audit evidence needed to demonstrate conformity to the requirements of ISO 14001;
- 2.2.5 Evaluate the effectiveness of an entire EMS;
- 2.2.6 Describe the difference between legal compliance and conformity with ISO standards, and the significance of these terms when conducting audits;
- 2.2.7 Describe the systems of certified registration and the differing functions of the accreditation bodies, registrars, auditor certification bodies, and training course approval bodies;
- 2.2.8 Describe the process of registration of an organization's EMS, including but not limited to:
  - a) Initial assessment process and purpose of 2 stages
  - b) Potential outcomes and registration decisions
  - c) Considerations for multi-site registrations
- 2.2.9 Describe the environmental audit process as defined in the current revision of ISO 19011;
- 2.2.10 Compare the types of audits and their objectives; including;
  - a) Systems Audits
  - b) Compliance Audits
  - c) Site Audits (i.e., due diligence)
  - d) Process Audits
  - e) Internal Audits
- 2.2.11 Explain and identify EMS scopes (e.g. organizational-specific; centralized; facility-specific; site-specific, etc.);
- 2.2.12 Understand the RABQSA certification criteria and Auditor's Code of Conduct for EMS auditors;

- 2.2.13 Understand the hierarchy of environmental legislation and regulation processes, including the relationship of federal, state and local agencies, and how to evaluate whether an auditee's system has effectively identified resource information;
- 2.2.14 Perform the phases of an EMS audit as described in ISO 19011, including, but not limited to:
- a) Audit planning and preparation, including document review and team selection
  - b) Conduct of meetings (opening, debriefing and closing)
  - c) Conduct of interviews (effective interpersonal skills and interviewing techniques including an ability to listen and question)
  - d) Evaluation of evidence collected during the audit and preparation of reports of conformity and nonconformity to the audit criteria
  - e) Completion of an audit report
  - f) Evaluation of corrective action to audit findings
- 2.2.15 Describe the process for follow-up investigations, including audits as required.

### **3.0 COURSE STRUCTURE, TRAINING METHODS AND FACILITIES**

#### **3.1 Course Pre-requisites**

- 3.1.1 Each student shall be required to have studied the current published version of ISO 14001 prior to attending the course.
- 3.1.2 The training provider shall develop procedures to ensure that potential students are advised of this prerequisite and that the prerequisite is met.

#### **3.2 Course Duration**

- 3.2.1 The total course time devoted to direct instruction and to assigned team and individual activities shall be at least 36 hours plus an additional two hours for examination.
- 3.2.2 Time devoted to the examination and to meals, breaks or other free time shall not be included in the calculation of the course duration.
- 3.2.3 If the course is given through interpreters, this time shall be increased as required to meet the learning objectives.
- 3.2.4 The course shall be presented during five consecutive days, unless otherwise authorized by RABQSA (see Section 5).

#### **3.3 Training methods**

- 3.3.1 Training courses shall be designed to have a high degree of interaction between students and instructors. Training methods shall be designed to involve and engage students throughout the duration of the course.
- 3.3.2 The training course shall include both knowledge-based sessions (to facilitate understanding of concepts) and skill-based sessions (application of knowledge and skills

in practical activities) and each student shall be subjected to realistic environmental management system audit practices and conditions.

- 3.3.3 Methods for validating student achievement of the learning objectives and for providing timely feedback shall be included in the course.
- 3.3.4 Each student shall actively participate in practical skills-based activities (workshops, case studies, auditor role playing, and/or actual environmental management system audit situations) as part of the structured class activities. At least 50% of the total course time shall be used for such activities. In actual audit situations, transit time to and from the audit site and any delay time is not to be counted in the course duration.
- 3.3.5 Training aids, such as commercial training videos, videos produced during the course to record and review the performance of student, CDs, or interactive training tools that are directly relevant may be used to supplement the training by the instructors. No more than 10% of the total course time may be devoted to commercial training aids.
- 3.3.6 Instructors shall demonstrate effective management of the course, including attention to time schedule, course content, requirements of the standard, instructor conduct, and other course requirements.

### **3.4 Class Size; Attendance**

- 3.4.1 The number of students in a class shall be no greater than 20, nor fewer than four.
- 3.4.2 Under rare and exceptional circumstances, a course offering for fewer than four students or greater than 20 students may be considered for approval in accordance with Section 5.
- 3.4.3 Students shall be required to be in attendance for the full duration of the course. Failure to do so shall be reflected in the students continual and final evaluations.
- 3.4.4 The training provider shall establish a policy for student attendance and that policy shall be communicated to the students at and/or prior to the beginning of the course.

### **3.5 Number of Instructors**

- 3.5.1 Each course offering for 11 or more students shall be presented by two instructors, who shall be actively involved in instruction and evaluation for the full course duration. Additional resource people or trainee instructors may be used for specific subjects or activities; however, the two instructors remain responsible for the entire course offering.
- 3.5.2 When the number of students is four to 10, the course may be presented by one instructor.
- 3.5.3 When course activities (for example, written quizzes or preparation of checklists) involve neither direct instruction nor evaluation, and do not require the availability of both instructors for explanation, clarification, or counsel, at least one instructor shall be present. At least one instructor shall be available to all students during team and individual activities, even if these activities are outside normal class hours.

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- 3.5.4 At least one instructor shall be present during the entire exam to assure good examination practice. A proctor may be used under exceptional circumstances, and/or for a re-examination (see Section 4.4).
- 3.6 Course Materials** Each student shall be provided with a complete set of course notes to supplement the training program.
- 3.6.2 The documents included in the course notes shall themselves illustrate good organization, layout and document management practices, including document revision level and appropriate page numbering.
- 3.6.3 The set of course notes shall prominently identify the certified training provider (for example, on the cover page).
- 3.6.4 The student notes shall cover each session and shall include all important points of the learning objective(s) being covered.
- 3.6.5 Examples of typical documents, reports, and forms shall be included.
- 3.6.6 Course notes may include typical examination questions, provided they are not used in any of the examinations, either during the course or following the course.
- 3.6.7 Each student shall have a copy of the current published version of ISO 14001. If the ISO 14001 standard is not supplied as part of the course notes, each student shall be required to bring a copy to the course. A copy shall be made available for loan to any student who does not have one.
- 3.6.8 Instructor materials shall contain sufficient information to ensure consistency of meeting the learning objectives among varying instructors.
- 3.7 Facilities**
- 3.7.1 The training provider shall ensure that suitable facilities for training are provided, including classroom, audio-visual and other training equipment, and facilities for team activities.
- 3.7.2 Suitable meal and break arrangements must be planned in advance and communicated to students in literature related to the course presentation.
- 3.7.3 The training provider shall encourage students to be resident at or near the location of the course offering, as this enhances participation in team activities and student contact with the instructors outside the structured class setting.
- 4.0 EVALUATION OF STUDENTS**
- 4.0.1 Each student shall be evaluated using the following two independent elements, both of which shall be satisfied if the student is to successfully complete the course:
- a) The continual evaluation by the instructors of each student's achievement of the learning objectives detailed in Section 2 above;
  - b) A written examination that tests students' ability to apply audit principles and practices against the requirements of ISO 14001.

4.0.2 Each student shall be informed of the exam format, grading procedure, continual evaluation, and the pass/fail criteria at or prior to the beginning of the course.

#### **4.1 Continual Evaluation**

4.1.1 The continual evaluation shall be documented and shall evaluate each student's:

- a) achievement of the learning objectives through various activities (e.g., presentations case studies, audit exercise, group discussions, etc.);
- b) attendance and punctuality during the course.

4.1.2 Each student's performance shall be reviewed at the end of each day by the instructor(s). A daily grade shall be assigned for each student, reflecting the assessment of both instructors.

4.1.3 Course instructors shall identify students who appear to be having difficulty achieving the learning objectives or who are not performing adequately in course activities. Such students shall be informed privately and in a timely manner of the instructor's observations and be given the opportunity to improve. A record shall be maintained of all such sessions.

4.1.4 A student who fails the continual evaluation must satisfactorily complete another full training course before being eligible to receive a certificate of successful completion.

#### **4.2 Course Examination**

4.2.1 The written examination shall evaluate the students' comprehension of the audit process and the application of ISO 14001, and their ability to provide written justification of their evaluations.

4.2.2 The examination shall be designed so that a competent student (i.e., one who has demonstrated achievement of the learning objectives) could achieve a minimum mark of 70% in two hours.

4.2.3 The time allotted for taking the examination shall be two hours. Strict adherence to the time limit shall be maintained.

4.2.4 The instructor(s) or proctor(s) may allow a student whose primary language is not the language in which the course is conducted up to 30 minutes additional time for taking the written examination. The student may use an appropriate two language dictionary. Any such allowance shall be indicated in the records of the course or of the examination, with supporting reasons.

4.2.5 The instructor(s) or proctor(s) may allow a student with a particular disability that adversely affects the student's capability to complete the examination in the allotted time up to 30 minutes additional time for taking the written examination. Any such allowance shall be indicated in the records of the course or of the examination, with supporting reasons.

4.2.6 Questions shall provide appropriate coverage of the relevant course materials and activities.

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- 4.2.7 At least 75% of the examination grade shall be based on questions that require essay responses that test the students' comprehension of the audit process and the application of ISO 14001, and their ability to provide written justifications of their evaluations. An essay response is defined as a response to a question which demonstrates the student's ability to analyze and synthesize the information. An essay question may be one or two sentences, provided it demonstrates the ability to apply knowledge and demonstrates coherence and flow of thought.
- 4.2.8 The remainder of the examination grade shall be based on multiple choice, true/false and/or short answer questions.
- 4.2.9 The minimum passing grade shall be 70%.
- 4.2.10 The only reference material allowed during the examination (except as noted in 4.2.4 above) is a copy of the ISO 14001 standard, the course notes provided by the training provider and any personal notes made by the students during the course.
- 4.2.11 The training provider shall ensure the security of examinations (before and after completion), and shall provide for the proper conduct of the exam itself.
- 4.2.12 Copies of examination questions (other than those in an example examination paper), examination papers, solutions or completed examination papers shall not be supplied to any student or any other party (except to RABQSA) for any reason.
- 4.3 Grading; Pass/Fail Decisions** Each examination paper shall be graded by one of the instructors. Another instructor shall check the addition of the score allocated in each section and re-grade all examination papers with scores between 60 and 75 percent.
- 4.3.2 The training provider shall have procedures to resolve any differences in grading and to issue final grades.
- 4.3.3 If the course is given through interpreters, the translators who translate the students' written examinations shall be selected by the training provider in such a way that the training provider is confident that they provide impartial, knowledgeable, and accurate translations.
- 4.3.4 Results of the continual evaluation along with the examination grade shall be considered and a final pass/fail mark shall be issued for the class records.
- 4.3.5 In order to pass the course, a student must receive a minimum grade of 70% on both the continual evaluation and the written examination.
- 4.4 Re-examination** A student who fails the written examination but has passed the continual evaluation shall be allowed one re-examination within twelve months of the last day of the course.
- 4.4.2 The re-examination shall normally be conducted by the same training provider that conducted the (failed) examination.



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- 4.4.3 If RABQSA gives its approval, a different body may conduct the re-examination. This should be submitted to RABQSA as a variation request that shall only be granted where RABQSA is confident that the examination will be administered according to the requirements in Section 4.2 above.
- 4.4.4 A different examination paper (meeting the requirements of Section 4.2) shall be used for the re-examination.
- 4.4.5 The re-examination shall be taken in the presence of an approved proctor, as described in the training provider's procedures.
- 4.4.6 A student who fails the re-examination must take a full training course again before being eligible to take another examination.

## **5.0 VARIATIONS**

- 5.1 Variations to any of these criteria shall be considered for approval upon written submission by the training provider to RABQSA. Any such request shall be made immediately upon the reason for the variation request becoming known. RABQSA shall respond in writing.
- 5.2 When evaluating a request for variance, RABQSA shall take into account the training provider's:
- a) reasons for the requested variance;
  - b) rationale for the requested variance;
  - c) modified training plan and/or revised course outline; and
  - d) assessment of impact on the learning process.

## **6.0 COURSE PUBLICITY AND ADVERTISING**

- 6.1 Advertising of an EMS Lead Auditor training course certified by RABQSA and any literature related to the course shall make it clear that the certificate of "Successful Completion" satisfies the training requirement for individual EMS auditor certification by RABQSA.

- 6.2 The following wording (or other very similar wording that has been approved by RABQSA) shall be used:

"This course is certified by RABQSA and meets the training portion of the requirements for certification of individual EMS Auditors."

NOTE: The word "certified" shall be used. Any words that may imply RABQSA sponsorship of the course shall not be used.

- 6.3 The training provider's name shall appear in all promotional materials as it appears on the certification certificate when the RABQSA name and/or logo appear.
- 6.4 No RABQSA-certified course shall be subcontracted and/or licensed to a second organization or training provider. A training provider may, however, contract with another organization to make arrangements such as marketing and/or hotel accommodations for an offering.



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6.5 If any promotional materials are being contracted through another organization, that organization may be referenced provided the identity of the certified training provider is readily evident. Such materials shall use the wording “this course is being presented in conjunction with (the RABQSA certified training provider)” or other similar wording that has been approved by RABQSA.

6.6 It shall remain the responsibility of the certified training provider to ensure that all contracted materials and/or activities continually conform with all requirements of the training provider and of RABQSA.

**7.0 USE AND MISUSE OF CERTIFICATES AND LOGOS**

7.1 The training provider shall exercise proper control over use and display of the RABQSA certification logo.

7.2 The training provider shall take suitable action to deal with incorrect references to its certification or certification status or misleading use of the RABQSA certification logo in advertisements, catalogs, etc.

7.3 The training provider shall not make statements in advertisements, catalogs, certificates, etc., that could serve to undermine the reputation of the RABQSA programs. Any and all violations shall be subject to suitable actions. Suitable actions may include, but are not limited to, corrective action, suspension, or withdrawal of RABQSA course certification and, if necessary, legal action.

7.4 In addition to the above, misuse of the RABQSA name and/or logo by a training provider that has not submitted a course for certification or has not yet received certification will jeopardize its current submission or any future attempt to seek RABQSA certification.

End of Criteria