



Specific Criteria for Accreditation
Competency Model Requirements



This page is intentionally blank

Specific Criteria for Accreditation

Competency Model Requirements

AS IB C3

Third Edition July 2020

Published by:

International Accreditation New Zealand
626 Great South Road, Ellerslie, Auckland 1051
Private Bag 28908, Remuera, Auckland 1541, New Zealand
Telephone: +64 9 525 6655
Email: info@ianz.govt.nz
Internet: www.ianz.govt.nz

© Copyright *International Accreditation New Zealand* 2020

Edition Statement

Edition	Amendment	Date of Issue	ISBN No.
1	New publication	July 2019	978-1-877531-63-7
2	Addition of Appendix 1	March 2020	978-1-877531-73-6
3	Rebrand	July 2020	978-1-877531-82-8

Contents

1	Introduction	6
2	Background	6
3	The Competence Model	6
3.1	System requirements	7
3.2	Competence Definitions	7
3.3	Personnel competence assessment and record keeping systems	7
3.4	Preparation for assessment by IANZ.....	8
3.4.1	IANZ preparation	8
3.4.2	Inspection body preparation.....	8
3.5	The IANZ assessment process.....	8
3.6	Outcome of IANZ assessments	9
3.7	Maintenance of accreditation	9
3.8	Changes of accreditation scope between assessments.....	9
3.8.1	Extension of accreditation scope	10
3.8.2	Reduction of scope.....	10
Appendix 1:	Transition to the Competency Model – Workflow	11

1 Introduction

International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ) Specific Criteria amplify or particularise IANZ's generic accreditation criteria for specific fields of technology. A list of all published Criteria is available from IANZ on request.

This document has been prepared as a companion to the following two IANZ accreditation criteria documents:

1. *Procedures and Conditions for Accreditation (AS 1)*, which describes the structure of IANZ, the general IANZ accreditation processes, and rules for accredited organisations across all IANZ accreditation programmes, including the inspection body accreditation programme;
2. *Specific Procedures and Conditions for Inspection Body Accreditation (AS IB C2)*, which includes additional descriptions of the IANZ accreditation processes specific to the inspection body accreditation programme, and additional clarification of the rules for accredited inspection bodies. In particular, it introduces the concept of a Competency Model as an alternative to the IANZ Approved Signatory Model as a means of demonstrating personnel competence in the accreditation process.

This document must be read in conjunction with the current edition of both the above documents AS 1 and AS IB C2.

2 Background

Since the beginning of the inspection body accreditation programme IANZ has operated a signatory based model of accreditation. In this model an inspection body nominates individuals to be signatories but they cannot begin to act as signatories until IANZ has completed an on-site witness assessment and, if successful, the individual is granted "IANZ approved signatory" status and added to the inspection body's published scope of accreditation along with their personal signatory scope.

This model is effective but has the disadvantages that inspection bodies sometimes experience delays in IANZ approving applicant signatories and there is a cost involved in the witnessing and approval process, particularly if performed separately from a scheduled assessment. Unfortunately some accredited inspection bodies treat IANZ signatory assessments as an alternative to in-house competence assessments, while others see IANZ signatory assessments as a costly duplication of an in-house process.

3 The Competence Model

IANZ will now operate a 'competence model' in which IANZ will assess the overall competence of inspection bodies based on the effectiveness of their management systems in consistently delivering technically reliable inspection results in conformance with the requirements of accreditation. The competence model will remove the disadvantages of the signatory model described above and will rely on the accredited organisation to assess competence and manage the signatory authorisation process internally. The only exceptions to this change will be in regulated fields where the regulator requires the signatory model to continue.

ISO/IEC 17020:2012 clause 7.4.2(e) requires reports/certificates to include the signature or other indication of approval, by authorised personnel. Therefore a process for authorisation of persons to approve or release inspection reports or certificates is still required. In the competence model these individuals are referred to as '**authorised signatories**' and the authorisation will be by the accredited inspection body rather than by IANZ.

IANZ will still witness individuals during scheduled assessments but the purpose will be to assess the effectiveness of the inspection body's systems for authorisation rather than for IANZ to approve witnessed individuals.

Following sections explain the minimum requirements for systems and records under the competence model and outline the changes to the accreditation process and the effects this could have on the some accredited inspection bodies.

3.1 System requirements

The move to a competence model should require no fundamental changes to the documented quality management systems of inspection bodies; however in some cases more detail may be needed.

3.2 Competence Definitions

Clause 6.1.1 of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 sets out the requirements for the definition of competencies. These definitions need to be sufficiently detailed and explicit to enable the inspection body to assess each individual's actual education, training, technical knowledge and experience for each function they undertake against the documented competence requirements.

In an accredited inspection body, an authorised signatory refers to a person that is both technically competent to perform specified inspection tasks but is also competent to authorise the use of the IANZ accreditation symbol or a reference to IANZ accreditation as an endorsement on reports/certificates. Competence to authorise the use of the IANZ endorsement typically includes a thorough knowledge of ISO/IEC 17020, the IANZ documents that describe the rules of endorsement and the responsibilities of a person that authorises IANZ endorsed inspection results ("*Procedures and Conditions for Accreditation*", "*Specific Procedures and Conditions for Inspection Body Accreditation*"), and the inspection body's own documented quality management system..

To enable an inspection body to assess the competence of individuals as authorised signatories under a competence model, it is essential that details of the education, training, technical knowledge, skills and experience required to perform the functions of an authorised signatory are included in the competence requirements for relevant roles in the inspection body.

Clause 6.1.5 requires documented procedures for selecting, training, formally authorizing, and monitoring inspectors and other personnel involved in inspection activities. Under a competence model inspection bodies must also have documented procedures for selecting, training, formally authorizing, and monitoring authorised signatories.

The qualifications, training, technical knowledge, skills and experience required of inspection body personnel cannot be rigidly specified but must be appropriate to the work in which they are engaged. Where regulations or published standards require specific qualifications or types and duration of experience these must be inspection body pre-requisites for authorised signatories. Where there are no published requirements IANZ requires qualifications, training, technical knowledge, skills and experience that correspond to "industry best practice".

3.3 Personnel competence assessment and record keeping systems

Authorisation of authorised signatories should be the responsibility of appropriately technically competent members of the inspection body's senior management. Inspection bodies are required to have a documented process for assessing the competence level of personnel and authorising appropriate individuals as signatories. The documented processes must include the keeping of records to demonstrate the effective implementation of these processes.

Inspection bodies will be expected to maintain sufficiently detailed records for each person involved in inspection activities that there is evidence to justify the assessed level of competence against each of the documented criteria. A simple competence matrix with coded check boxes may be accepted as a record of competence decisions but each checked box must have associated evidence to support competence and authorisation decisions. Records must show when each authorised signatory was authorised for each scope item, by whom and on what basis. The date when each signatory ceased to be authorised for a particular scope item must also be recorded when this has happened. Historic records of signatory authorisation should be kept for a minimum of four years (from the date the signatory ceased to be authorised), or for the validity period of any certificates or reports signed/authorised by the individual, whichever is longer.

In effect the scope of competence and of an inspection body is the sum of the scopes of all the authorised signatories. Therefore, the inspection body must maintain a list of currently authorised signatories, including the technical scope of their authorisation(s). This list may be included in the inspection body's quality manual or as a separate document. There must be at least one authorised signatory for each inspection, or group of inspections in the inspection body's scope of accreditation. To the extent that the validity of this list is confirmed by IANZ assessment this also represents the scope of accreditation of the inspection body. Therefore it is essential that this list is maintained up-to-date at all times.

3.4 Preparation for assessment by IANZ

3.4.1 IANZ preparation

In preparation for assessment under a competence model, IANZ must determine the size of sample required to ensure coverage of the entire technical scope, at least once, over an accreditation cycle (normally 4 years). The level of detail at which the scope needs to be assessed may vary from field to field, taking into account the level of risk and the consequences of failure, of the inspections involved. In order to determine what activities need to be witnessed and which individuals are to be witnessed, IANZ will request information including a list of all personnel as described in the previous section. IANZ will also require a summary of the volume of work undertaken in each scope category since the last technical assessment.

Following review of this information, together with the information previously requested under a signatory model, IANZ will decide which locations are to be visited, which activities are to be witnessed and which individuals are to be witnessed.

Sampling decisions will be made by IANZ, taking into account factors such as new employees, the risks and complexity of inspection activities, requirements of regulators, previous performance of the inspection body and any other relevant factors. The inspection body will be informed of sampling decisions in sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements for the witnessing required.

Note: Under a competence model IANZ may choose to witness any person listed by the inspection body as being involved in inspection activities, this will not be limited to IANZ approved signatories or applicants for signatory approval as under a signatory model.

3.4.2 Inspection body preparation

The following information is provided to clarify and emphasise the minimum additional information and records that must be forwarded to IANZ in preparation for an assessment under a competence model.

In preparation for an IANZ assessment under a competence model an inspection body must provide a list of all the persons involved in inspection activities (see Note below). The list must include each person's currently assessed level of competence in each activity they perform, including, but not limited to, authorisation(s) as signatories where appropriate. The list must also indicate the extent and nature of supervision required to ensure that the validity of inspection outcomes is not affected by the level of competence of the person that performed the inspection activity. This information will be used to determine who should be assessed as representative of the inspection body's technical scope and of the effectiveness of the inspection body's training and authorisation processes.

Note: As clarified in the IANZ publication *Specific criteria for accreditation of inspection bodies* (AS IB C1) 5.2.7(a), persons involved in inspection activities include but may not be limited to managers and support/administration staff as well as authorised inspectors, trainee inspectors, part-time staff and contractors.

An inspection body shall provide a summary of work carried out in each scope category since the last technical assessment. This summary should indicate an estimate of the number of jobs undertaken in each scope category. IANZ will use this information to prioritise witnessing activity and highlight inspection activities that are not performed frequently and therefore require alternative means of maintaining competence and proficiency.

3.5 The IANZ assessment process

The assessment process under a competence model will be very similar to that traditionally performed under a signatory model, however, there will be some change of emphasis and the implications drawn from the evidence collected may be different.

The international standard that accreditation bodies must comply with (ISO/IEC 17011), requires accreditation bodies to assess the competence of inspection bodies to perform all of the activities covered by the inspection body's scope of accreditation using witnessing and other assessment techniques as applicable. Witnessing is the default means of assessing technical competence and accreditation bodies must document their reasons in exceptional circumstances where witnessing is not considered appropriate.

Therefore IANZ will continue to witness practical inspection work under a competence model. Under a signatory model IANZ witnessing was almost exclusively of IANZ approved signatories and new signatory

applicants. Under a competence model any person acting on behalf of an inspection body may be selected to be witnessed. It is not a requirement to witness every person who performs specific inspection activities. The emphasis in a competence model is on collecting evidence of the effectiveness of the documented competency management system, rather than a focus on individual competence for the purpose of personal approval.

Assessment of policies, procedures and records related to personnel will focus on collecting evidence of the rigour and effectiveness of an inspection body's systems for defining, assessing and maintaining the competence of the entire organisation to perform the accredited activities. IANZ assessment teams need to collect sufficient evidence to make a decision on the effectiveness of the inspection body's systems to deliver the whole accredited scope.

Assessment of all other requirements of ISO/IEC 17020 is the same whether a signatory or competence model is in force.

3.6 Outcome of IANZ assessments

Previously conclusions drawn from reassessment of IANZ approved signatories or initial assessment of signatory applicants consisted largely of adjustments to the signatory scope of each individual. Under a competence model evidence collected during witnessed activities will be used to draw conclusions about the appropriateness and/or effectiveness of the inspection body's systems and procedures for selecting, training, authorising and monitoring of personnel. The results of witnessing could therefore have consequences for the whole organisation, from a corrective action being raised, to the suspension of the whole or part of the scope of accreditation. In addition, if IANZ finds evidence that an inspection body continued to perform inspection activities, for which it did not have at least one authorised signatory, the inspection body will be required to withdraw all reports/certificates issued in contravention of the rules of accreditation and provide an explanation to their clients for the withdrawal.

If the inspection body considers that unsatisfactory performance during a witnessed activity was due to personal or other particular circumstances, on the day, they may request further witnessing to confirm the exceptional reason for a particular unsatisfactory outcome. Agreement to perform further witnessing is at IANZ's discretion and at the expense of the inspection body.

Unsatisfactory witness performance during an initial assessment could result in accreditation being delayed, withheld or restricted.

3.7 Maintenance of accreditation

The IANZ *Procedures and Conditions for Accreditation* document places an obligation on accredited inspection bodies to notify IANZ of any significant changes in the organisation between assessments. Under a competence model it is essential that IANZ has a current copy of the list of personnel and particularly the authorised signatories and their scopes at all times. Therefore any changes to the list of personnel including authorisations are considered to be significant changes that must be notified to IANZ as soon as the changes take effect.

When a new authorised signatory is added to an inspection body's list of personnel or an existing authorised signatory has their scope increased records of the training and competence assessment that justify the addition must be provided to IANZ with the updated list. The records will be reviewed and IANZ reserves the right to question the authorisation of a new signatory if the authorisation appears to be inappropriate.

Any person who ceases to fully comply with the documented competence requirements, e.g. the lapsing of a required qualification, automatically ceases to be an authorised signatory, by definition, and with immediate effect. The inspection body's systems must recognise this, update the list of personnel and inform IANZ so that the inspection body's scope of the IANZ website can be updated if necessary.

3.8 Changes of accreditation scope between assessments

Under a competence model an inspection body may recruit new personnel, train them and authorise them as signatories without any IANZ assessment. However, this is restricted to the limits of the currently published scope of accreditation.

3.8.1 Extension of accreditation scope

Accredited inspection bodies are not permitted to increase their scope of accreditation without notifying IANZ and in most cases this will result in some degree of assessment. If an inspection body wishes to extend its scope an application must be made to IANZ. A document review will take place to establish that the documented quality management system has been amended to cover all requirements of the new scope. An on-site assessment will also take place to confirm that the organisation has at least one person with the required competence for the new scope and that all other facilities, equipment, reference documents etc. are satisfactory.

3.8.2 Reduction of scope

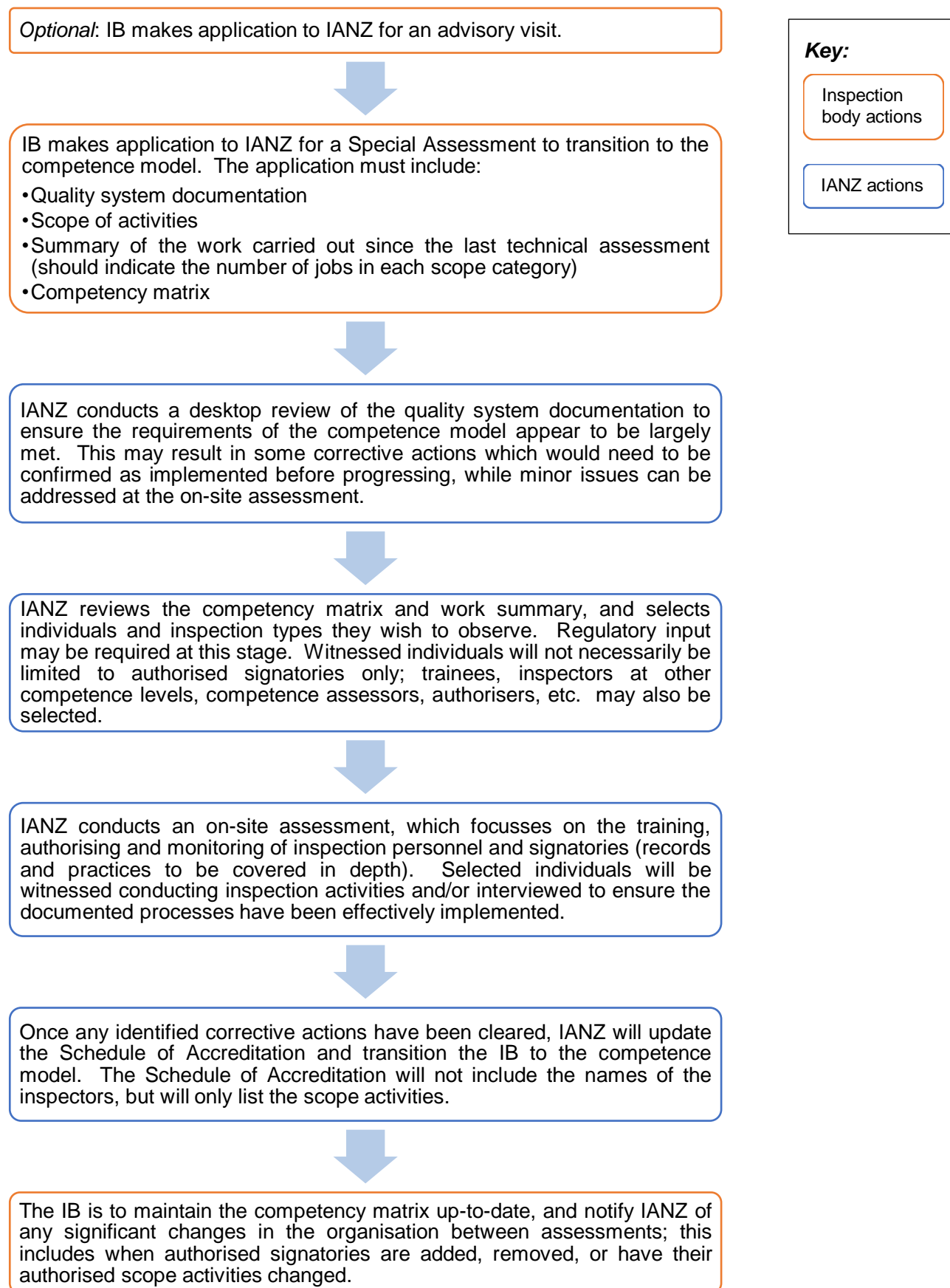
An accredited inspection body may elect to reduce its published scope at any time by informing IANZ.

An accredited inspection body may also have its scope reduced through a number of circumstances such as but not limited to:

- If an IANZ assessment finds evidence that an inspection body's systems for determining the level of competence and supervision of its personnel is ineffective all or part of the inspection body's scope of accreditation may be suspended
- If an inspection body loses the services of the sole authorised signatory for a particular type of inspection, for any reason, then the scope of competence and therefore accreditation is reduced accordingly, with immediate effect.

IANZ must be informed when this happens to ensure that the scope of accreditation on the IANZ website is accurate at all times.

Appendix 1: Transition to the Competency Model – Workflow



Competency Matrix

IANZ can provide Inspection Bodies with an example of a Competency Matrix. As a minimum the Competency Matrix must include the following information:

- Names, job titles and start dates of all persons involved in inspection activities, including trainees, part-time staff, contractors
- Activities they have been authorised to carry out (this should correspond with the scope categories and sub-categories of your inspection body)
- Each person's currently assessed level of competence in each activity, including authorisation as signatories if applicable (levels of competence are to be defined in your management system)
- The extent and nature of supervision required
- When each person was authorised for each activity (records of supervision are to be kept)
- By whom they were authorised
- Indication of whether a person has been deemed competent to train or authorise others
- Date when each signatory ceased to be authorised for a particular scope item