PR-13

CERTIFICATION RULES

Management System Certification

Document	PR-13
Title	Certification Rules
Document type	Process description
Revision	00
Effective from	01 October 2026
Responsible	Certification Manager
Approved by	Managing Director
Status	Approved
Classification	Public

Revision History

Rev. 00 | 01 October 2026 | Initial issue | Prepared by Andrea Enç | Approved by Managing Director

Contents

1 Purpose and Scope

2 Terms and Definitions

3 Reference Documents

4 Process Description

4.1 Application for Certification

4.2 Quotation and Conclusion of Contracts

4.3 Performance of the Certification Procedure

4.4 Certification Decision and Issuance of the Certificate

4.5 Maintenance of Certification

4.6 Surveillance Audits

4.7 Recertification

4.8 Extension and Reduction of the Scope of Certification

4.9 Suspension, Restoration and Withdrawal of Certification

4.10 Use of the Certificate and Certification Mark

4.11 Complaints and Appeals

4.12 Confidentiality and Data Protection

4.13 Obligation to Notify Changes

4.14 Public Information

4.15 Fees and Payment Terms

4.16 Amendments to the Certification Rules

4.17 Entry into Force

5 Associated Documents

6 Annexes

1 Purpose and Scope

These Certification Rules describe the fundamental conditions for the certification of management systems and the rights and obligations of the certification body and applicant or certified organizations.

They apply to all management system certifications performed by DSR Certification, LLC. DSR Certification, LLC is an independent, virtually organized certification body. Administrative, commercial and organizational support services may be provided by commissioned external service providers. Responsibility for certification activities and certification decisions rests exclusively with DSR Certification, LLC.

2 Terms and Definitions

Certification body
An independent third-party body that audits and certifies management systems on the basis of published management system standards and, where applicable, other applicable requirements. In these Certification Rules, DSR refers to DSR Certification, LLC.

Applicant
An organization applying to DSR Certification, LLC for certification of its management system. This includes organizations that already hold certification and apply for a certificate transfer.

Certified organization
An organization whose management system has been certified following a successful certification procedure.

Management system
A system for establishing an organization's policies, objectives and processes to achieve defined results in accordance with the requirements of the relevant management system standard.

ISO 9001
Standard for quality management systems.

ISO 14001
Standard for environmental management systems.

ISO/IEC 27001
Standard for information security management systems (ISMS).

Certificate
A document issued by DSR confirming that an organization's management system meets the requirements of the relevant management system standard.

Certification scheme
Rules, procedures and requirements according to which certifications are carried out and maintained.

Technical expert
A person with particular knowledge or specific experience who provides technical support to the audit team.

Audit time
The time required to plan and conduct a complete and effective audit of the management system.

Audit duration
The period from the opening meeting to the closing meeting, including all audit activities on site or using information and communication technologies (ICT).

Nonconformity
Failure to fulfil a specified requirement.

Major nonconformity
A nonconformity that affects the management system's ability to achieve its intended results.

Minor nonconformity
A nonconformity that does not significantly affect the management system's ability to achieve its intended results.

3 Reference Documents

External documents

- ISO/IEC 17021-1 – Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- Applicable management system standards (e.g. ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO/IEC 27001)
- Applicable IAF Mandatory Documents (MD)
- Applicable IAS accreditation requirements

Internal documents

- Organization Manual (OHB)
- PR-01 Certification Process
- PR-08 Complaints and Appeals
- PR-12 Organization and Operation of the Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality
- TL-01 Instructions for the Use of Logos and Certificates
- FR-02-1 Quotation
- FR-02-2 Commercial Contract
- FR-02-3 Certification Agreement

4 Process Description

Management system certification is carried out in accordance with a defined and documented procedure. The certification process covers all phases, from application and audit performance to the certification decision and the maintenance of certification throughout the entire certification cycle. The individual process steps are described in the following sections.

4.1 Application for Certification

Organizations wishing to apply for certification of their management system submit an application to DSR. The application must contain all information necessary to assess the scope of certification and to plan the certification procedure.

Upon receipt of the application, DSR examines whether:

- the requested scope is clearly described;
- the organization's activities fall within DSR's scope of accreditation;
- sufficient information is available for quotation and audit planning; and

- potential risks to impartiality and conflicts of interest can be identified, assessed and appropriately addressed.

If the requirements are met, the application is accepted and the certification procedure continues in accordance with DSR's established procedures. If the requirements are not met, the applicant is informed accordingly.

4.2 Quotation and Conclusion of Contracts

Following successful application review and technical determination of the required audit time by DSR Certification, LLC, DSR GmbH, acting as the commissioned external service provider, prepares the commercial quotation (FR-02-1).

The commercial, administrative and organizational arrangements between DSR GmbH and the applicant organization are governed by the commercial contract (FR-02-2). The quotation forms part of the commercial contractual documentation.

The Certification Agreement (FR-02-3) is concluded separately between DSR Certification, LLC and the applicant organization. It governs the rights and obligations of the contracting parties in connection with certification.

Performance of the certification procedure is conditional upon conclusion of the required contractual agreements.

Responsibility for technical application review, determination of audit time, audit planning, performance and control of the certification procedure, and all certification decisions remains with DSR Certification, LLC.

4.3 Performance of the Certification Procedure

The certification procedure is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the applicable management system standard and the applicable accreditation requirements.

Before initial certification, the organization's management system is assessed in a two-stage audit procedure consisting of a Stage 1 audit and a Stage 2 audit.

The audit is performed by a qualified audit team. The organization ensures that the audit team is granted access to all areas, processes, sites, information and records required for the certification procedure.

Nonconformities identified during the audit are explained to the organization and documented. The organization is obliged to correct identified nonconformities within the deadlines specified by DSR and to provide evidence of suitable corrective actions.

Following completion of the audit, the audit team prepares an audit report that serves as the basis for the certification decision.

4.4 Certification Decision and Issuance of the Certificate

Decisions to grant, maintain, extend, reduce, suspend, restore or withdraw certification are made on the basis of the results of the certification procedure.

The certification decision is made exclusively by authorized persons of DSR Certification, LLC who were not involved in conducting the audit concerned. The decision is based on reviewed audit documentation and all information relevant to the certification decision.

Following a positive certification decision, DSR Certification, LLC issues a certificate stating the scope of certification, the certification period and the certificate's period of validity.

The certificate states a three-year certification period. The initial certification date remains unchanged throughout uninterrupted certification, including after successful recertifications, and documents the start of the organization's

certification.

The certificate's issue date is updated after each initial certification, successful surveillance audit and successful recertification in accordance with the current certification decision.

As a rule, the certificate expires one calendar year after its issue date, minus one day. However, the certificate expiry date may not extend beyond the end of the current three-year certification period.

The three-year certification period begins on the initial certification date and ends three years after that date, minus one day. To continue certification without interruption, the recertification audit and the required certification decision must be completed before the current certification period expires. If certification expires, the restoration provisions of ISO/IEC 17021-1 apply.

Maintaining certification requires successful completion of the prescribed surveillance audits. Following each successful surveillance, DSR Certification, LLC issues an updated certificate with a new issue date and correspondingly adjusted validity period.

4.5 Maintenance of Certification

Maintenance of certification requires the certified organization to comply with the requirements of the applicable management system standard and these Certification Rules throughout the entire certification period.

To verify the continued effectiveness of the management system, DSR conducts surveillance audits at the specified intervals. The organization is obliged to facilitate these audits within the prescribed deadlines and provide DSR with all necessary information and evidence.

Material changes that may affect the certified management system must be reported to DSR without delay. These include, in particular, changes to the organization, scope, sites, significant processes or other circumstances that may affect management system conformity.

If the conditions for maintaining certification are not met, or required surveillance audits are not performed on time, DSR may reduce, suspend or withdraw certification in accordance with these Certification Rules.

4.6 Surveillance Audits

To maintain certification, DSR Certification, LLC conducts regular surveillance audits throughout the certification period.

The first surveillance audit must be conducted within twelve months of the initial certification decision. Further surveillance audits are conducted at least once annually.

The purpose of surveillance audits is to determine whether the certified management system continues to be implemented effectively and meets the requirements of the relevant management system standard.

The organization is obliged to enable DSR Certification, LLC to conduct surveillance audits and provide all required information, records and access to relevant areas.

If nonconformities are identified during a surveillance audit, they must be remedied and evidence provided within the deadlines set by DSR Certification, LLC.

If surveillance audits are not conducted within the specified deadlines or identified nonconformities are not effectively remedied, DSR Certification, LLC may take measures up to and including suspension or withdrawal of certification.

4.7 Recertification

Before the current certification period expires, DSR Certification, LLC conducts a recertification audit to determine whether the organization's management system remains effective and meets the requirements of the relevant management system standard.

The recertification audit includes, in particular, an assessment of the management system's continuing effectiveness, implementation of corrective actions, continual improvement and compliance with the applicable management system standard.

For uninterrupted continuation of certification, the required recertification activities and certification decision must be completed before the current certification period expires. If certification expires, the restoration provisions of ISO/IEC 17021-1, clause 9.6.3.2.5, apply.

Following successful recertification, DSR Certification, LLC issues an updated certificate. The initial certification date remains unchanged and documents the start of the organization's uninterrupted certification. The certificate issue date is updated in accordance with the new certification decision. The new three-year certification period begins when the previous certification period expires.

4.8 Extension and Reduction of the Scope of Certification

The certified organization may apply at any time for an extension or reduction of its certification scope.

Before extending the scope of certification, DSR Certification, LLC examines whether the requested extension falls within its scope of accreditation and whether assessment of the extended scope is required. An additional audit or scope extension audit may be conducted for this purpose.

If audits or other findings show that individual activities or areas no longer meet the requirements of the relevant management system standard, DSR Certification, LLC may reduce the scope of certification accordingly.

An extension or reduction of scope takes effect only following a positive certification decision. In this case, DSR issues a correspondingly updated certificate.

4.9 Suspension, Restoration and Withdrawal of Certification

DSR Certification, LLC may suspend certification if the certified organization fails to comply with the requirements of the relevant management system standard, these Certification Rules or the contractual agreements.

Suspension may occur in particular if:

- required surveillance or recertification audits are not conducted on time;
- identified nonconformities are not effectively remedied within the specified deadlines;
- the certification mark or certificate is misused; or
- other material violations of certification requirements occur.

During suspension, the organization must not represent its certification as valid or use it in a way that could cause misunderstanding about certification status.

If the reasons for suspension are effectively eliminated within the deadline set by DSR Certification, LLC, certification may be restored.

As a rule, suspension lasts no longer than six months. If the reasons for suspension are not remedied within this period, certification is withdrawn or its scope reduced accordingly.

If the reasons for suspension are not remedied within the specified period, or serious violations of certification requirements occur, DSR Certification, LLC may reduce or withdraw certification.

Following withdrawal or termination of certification, the organization must immediately cease all use of the certificate and all references to certification.

4.10 Use of the Certificate and Certification Mark

The certified organization is entitled to use the certificate issued by DSR Certification, LLC and the certification mark only within the framework of valid certification and in accordance with the conditions established by DSR.

The certificate and certification mark may be used only for the certified scope. They must not be used in a misleading manner or in a way that suggests products, services or processes have been certified where certification relates solely to the management system.

The organization must not make misleading statements about its certification or misuse or alter the certificate, in whole or in part.

Following expiry, suspension or withdrawal of certification, the organization must immediately cease using the certificate and certification mark and adjust or remove all references to valid certification accordingly. If the scope is reduced, the certificate and certification mark may be used only for the remaining valid scope.

DSR Certification, LLC monitors the proper use of the certificate and certification mark. In the event of misuse, DSR Certification, LLC may take appropriate measures up to and including suspension or withdrawal of certification.

4.11 Complaints and Appeals

Any interested party has the right to submit complaints or appeals in connection with the certification activities of DSR Certification, LLC.

Complaints may relate, in particular, to the conduct of DSR Certification, LLC or its auditors, or to the performance of certification procedures. Appeals may be lodged against DSR decisions relating to certification procedures.

All complaints and appeals are handled confidentially and impartially under a documented procedure. Persons involved in the original certification decision or in conducting the audit do not participate in the decision on an appeal.

DSR acknowledges receipt of complaints and appeals, informs the party concerned of the status of processing and communicates the outcome in writing once the procedure has been completed.

Complaints and appeals are handled in accordance with the procedures established for this purpose by DSR Certification, LLC.

4.12 Confidentiality and Data Protection

DSR treats all information received during the certification procedure as confidential and uses it exclusively for the performance and maintenance of certification.

All employees, auditors, technical experts, committee members and other persons working for DSR are obliged to maintain confidentiality. This obligation continues after their work has ended.

Information about certified organizations is published or disclosed to third parties only to the extent provided for by certification requirements, required by law or approved in writing by the organization concerned.

If DSR is required to disclose confidential information under legal or regulatory requirements, the organization concerned is informed in advance of the intended disclosure, to the extent legally permissible.

Personal data are processed solely in accordance with applicable data protection laws and are collected, stored and used only to the extent necessary for the certification procedure.

4.13 Obligation to Notify Changes

The certified organization is obliged to inform DSR Certification, LLC without delay of material changes that may affect the validity or scope of certification.

These include, in particular, changes relating to:

- legal form or company name;
- ownership or organizational structure;
- address or sites;
- scope of the management system;
- material changes to processes, products or services;
- number or structure of sites; or
- material changes to the management system or responsible contact persons.

Upon receiving notification of a change, DSR Certification, LLC assesses whether the change affects the existing certification. Where necessary, additional information may be requested or a special audit conducted.

Required adjustments to certification, including extension, reduction, suspension or updating of the certificate, are made on the basis of an appropriate assessment and certification decision.

4.14 Public Information

DSR Certification, LLC makes publicly available the information required by the accreditation requirements and ISO/IEC 17021-1.

This includes, in particular:

- information about certification services offered by DSR Certification, LLC;
- rules governing certification procedures;
- information about complaints and appeals;
- information on the impartiality of certification activities; and
- the possibility of verifying the validity of issued certificates.

DSR Certification, LLC maintains a directory of certifications granted, including their respective certification status. Confidential information is not disclosed in this process.

4.15 Fees and Payment Terms

The commercial processing of certification services is carried out by DSR GmbH as a commissioned service provider of DSR Certification, LLC. Fees and payment terms are agreed in the respective quotation (FR-02-1) and commercial contract (FR-02-2).

The agreed fees cover the certification services described in the quotation. Additional services not included in the agreed scope of services, in particular special audits, extension audits, follow-up audits or other activities required at

the organization's request or due to special circumstances, are charged separately.

Invoicing is carried out in accordance with the contractual agreements. The organization is obliged to pay the agreed fees within the specified payment period.

If the organization fails to meet its payment obligations despite a reminder, DSR may suspend the certification procedure or reduce, suspend or withdraw certifications already granted in accordance with the applicable procedures.

The obligation to pay for services already provided remains unaffected.

4.16 Amendments to the Certification Rules

DSR reserves the right to amend these Certification Rules and the associated certification requirements where necessary due to changes in normative requirements, accreditation requirements, legal provisions or organizational needs.

Amendments to the Certification Rules are communicated to the certified organizations concerned in an appropriate manner.

Where amendments affect existing certifications, DSR establishes appropriate transition periods and informs the organizations concerned of any measures required.

Certified organizations are obliged to implement the amended requirements within the specified deadlines insofar as they are relevant to maintaining certification.

4.17 Entry into Force

These Certification Rules enter into force upon approval by DSR management and replace all previous versions.

They apply to all certification procedures carried out from the date of entry into force. Transitional arrangements may apply to certification procedures already in progress where required by normative, legal or accreditation-related requirements.

The currently valid version of the Certification Rules is controlled by DSR and updated as necessary.

5 Associated Documents

The relevant internal procedures, forms and work instructions of DSR, as well as the applicable standards, accreditation requirements and mandatory rules, apply to the certification activities described in these Certification Rules.

6 Annexes

No annexes are provided for these Certification Rules.