

Background to the certification scheme

The BPIF (British Printing Industries Federation) ISO 12647 certification scheme requirements were published in February 2010, and version 2 of the scheme published in September 2013. The document is available from the BPIF (www.britishprint.com) and is available to all printers, not just members of the BPIF, and it defines the requirements for certification.

The scheme takes ISO 9001 and adds requirements specific to the pre-press and printing process, as well as the colour values and tolerances defined in the ISO 12647 series of standards. As a result, the certification scheme can now be applied to any printing production method and process, and including outsourced printing, pre-press and proofing

PMC's world leading accredited certification to ISO 12647 through the BPIF scheme

Certification is achieved through audits against the scheme's requirements by PMC. Certification is open to any printer seeking to meet the ISO colour quality standard through the BPIF scheme.

PMC is the only certification body to be accredited by UKAS for certification to this scheme, and is the only accredited certification body for ISO 12647 in the UK. Audits for the scheme combine an audit of the organisation's colour quality and production management system and an audit test of sample product in a test run. Once certified, organisations can make valid claims about product colour conformity through their own testing of products.

Benefits of certification

There are many benefits, including

- membership of the PMC Elite Colour Club;
- listing on the PMC Colour Centre, available to global print buyers;
- greater product quality;
- significantly reduced wastage;
- reduced make ready and downtime;
- more efficient colour management workflows
- qualification for tenders;
- highly motivated and skilled staff;
- reduced colour quality complaints;
- new product markets and new customers.

PMC's ISO 12647 certification is the only accredited certification that identifies colour quality printers to customers and is verified through an independent and impartial audit and testing process.

Costs of certification

The cost of the audit is determined on a case by case basis, depending on your specific requirements. Please contact Jon Stack on 07813 618831 or jon.stack@printcertification.co.uk to obtain a quotation.

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ISO 12647 certification: Frequently Asked Questions

What does the certification mean?

The certification means that the certified organisation operates a colour quality production management system and is capable of printing to ISO 12647.

What does accreditation mean?

Accreditation is carried out by National Accreditation Bodies such as UKAS in the UK (www.ukas.com) and is awarded to certification bodies for providing certification for customers in particular industry sectors. To become accredited, certification bodies have to demonstrate that they are competent, impartial and independent in their certification work, and meet the relevant requirements of the international standard which applies for that certification. Certifications issued by accredited certification bodies also have full international recognition.

How should I choose a certification body?

You should always choose a certification body specifically UKAS accredited for ISO 12647, and the certification body, its auditors and other staff must be print specialists and entirely impartial in their work. PMC fulfils all these requirements and is the only print specialist UKAS accredited certification body in the UK.

Do I need to be certified to ISO 9001?

Although the BPIF ISO 12647 certification scheme builds in quality system requirements, you do not need a separate certification for ISO 9001, although the scheme does require a quality management system as applied to the printing process.

Do all my jobs have to be ISO 12647 compliant when I am certified?

No, only for those jobs where you make a claim of compliance, although you may choose to print compliant jobs, without making a specific claim to the customers. Claims should be printed on your invoices and delivery notes to your customer. For jobs with a compliant claim, you will need to submit your own compliance data to PMC on a quarterly basis.

Do I need to run product tests on all my presses?

No, you choose which presses you wish to test, and if they pass the audit's product test, then you have completed one of the steps to achieving certification. The other step is to have a colour quality management system which meets the requirements of ISO 9001 and the additional colour quality requirements of the scheme.

If I wish to claim compliance for a production print job to my customer, do I need to run it on a press which has passed an audit product test?

No, you can run the production job on any press at any site, and production method and process at that site, which are included in the scope of the certification. A site can only be included in the scope if at least one press, using that production method, has passed an audit product test.

How long do the audits take?

The length of the initial audit depends on the scope of the certification and the number of presses to be tested, the number of sites included, and other factors, so this has to be assessed on an individual company basis. The initial audit comes in two stages, with the audit product test normally conducted at Stage 2. Audits will take place annually once certified, with surveillance audits taking less time to complete than the initial audit, until a full system re-audit is required in the third year. A successful audit product test is required at each audit.

What happens if I fail the product test?

You can request further audit product tests at any time from PMC. If you are already certified, and a product test fails, then you have 3 months to complete a satisfactory test.

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Can I test my press first, prior to the audits, to see if it is capable of meeting the standard?

Yes, PMC can arrange to conduct a pre-audit product test. If this test is passed, then this can count as a successful audit product test, and so give you the first step to full certification..

How do I tell my customers that I am certified?

You can use the compliant product claim on invoices and delivery notes. Once certified you will receive PMC's prestigious 12647 certification mark, and the UKAS "crown and tick" accreditation symbol to use for promotion of your company on letterheads, brochures, websites etc . You will also appear on PMC's website, together with the scope of your certification, so that you can be found by potential customers seeking ISO 12647 certified suppliers. You receive a certificate from PMC on paper, and electronically, which details the scope of your certification. PMC is also happy to contribute to your press releases or other promotional material.

Can print managers be certified?

Yes, print managers can be certified with a certification scope of "outsourced printing".

I know a printer claiming to be certified to ISO 12647. How do I know it's a genuine certification?

Many printers make claims of certification to ISO 12647, but certifications are only valid and fully recognised when issued by a UKAS accredited certification body.

I know a printer claiming compliance to ISO 12647. Is this a meaningful claim?

Undergoing fully independent and impartial product testing is the only meaningful way to claim compliance to ISO 12647. Compliance certificates issued by equipment or software suppliers are not independent and would not be UKAS accredited as a result.

If I already have ISO 9001 certification, does this reduce the cost and time involved in 12647 audits?

If you have a PMC ISO 9001 certification, then the audit for ISO12647 will take account of the results of the 9001 audits and your audit time, and hence costs, will be reduced accordingly. PMC will accept transfers of ISO 9001 certifications from other accredited certification bodies free of charge, and can pick up the audit schedule as it is.

Can I combine my ISO 9001 or ISO 14001 audits with ISO 12647 audits?

Yes, PMC will be happy to combine your audits and transfer your certification from other non-print specialist certification bodies. We would simply pick up your audit at your next scheduled date. Combined audits would reduce time and cost, using the same auditor at the same audit visit, to cover the different systems.

I have already had a print test and have demonstrated compliance to another organisation. Will PMC recognise the results of this test as being valid?

As audit product tests are conducted under certain defined conditions and standards, PMC will only recognise print tests carried out by organisations with which it has a valid and current recognition agreement for product testing.

Does the certification apply to all types of presses?

The BPIF scheme applies to all the ISO 12647 standards and so takes in all of the production methods and processes defined in those standards.

Who should I contact to find out more about certification, the costs and time involved, or to arrange an audit?

The cost of the audit is determined on a case by case basis, depending on your specific requirements Contact Jon Stack at PMC on 07813 618831 or on jon.stack@printcertification.co.uk with any questions. We're also happy to visit and discuss your requirements.

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