

Benefits of Accredited Certification: Factsheet

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is the formal recognition by a national accreditation body, like UKAS (the United Kingdom Accreditation Service) in the UK, that a certification body meets the requirements of the relevant international standards for certification, to demonstrate their competence, impartiality, independence and performance capability.

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service is the sole national accreditation body recognised by the UK government to assess, against internationally agreed standards, organisations that provide certification, testing, inspection and calibration services.

For more information about UKAS visit www.ukas.com.

What is an Accredited Certification?

An accredited certification is a certification which has been provided by a certification body with a specific accreditation from a national accreditation body (i.e. UKAS in the UK), for that particular standard or certification scheme; for example, ISO 9001, ISO 14001 or the BPIF ISO 12647 certification scheme. Accreditations are awarded to certification bodies for particular sector schemes and for particular industry sectors.

PMC's Accreditation by UKAS

PMC is accredited by UKAS to perform certification in the paper, print and publishing sectors for management systems standards and product certification. This means that PMC has demonstrated, and continues to demonstrate that it is impartial, independent and highly competent in the certifications it offers to customers.

By achieving a PMC accredited certification, certified customers can demonstrate that they have been audited robustly, by an independent body that has been entirely impartial and competent in auditing and certifying them. This is entirely different to unaccredited certifications, carried out by organisations who have an interest in selling products, services, and/or advice to those customers, and whose interests mean that their certification cannot be relied upon, at best, or is entirely worthless, at worst. Unaccredited certifications are damaging to customers and the reputation of the print industry as a whole.

PMC is the only certification body in the world to be accredited specifically for ISO 12647-2 through the BPIF scheme, and so PMC's UKAS accredited certification is the only certification which can demonstrate global recognition for its independence and impartiality. PMC's certified customers can demonstrate this recognition through use of the prestigious PMC and UKAS marks on their stationery, websites and other promotional material.

Print & Media Certification Ltd.,

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member of

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Benefits of Accredited Certification through PMC

- Credibility in the market: UKAS accredited certification is recognised by buyers as the only truly reliable certification.
- Achieve new customers: an accredited certification will allow access to tenders, and potential customers, which would otherwise not be available.
- Improve your business processes and products: having spent time and effort in developing and implementing systems, and improving product quality, highly competent and impartial auditing will help to sustain and drive improvement in your business further.
- Offer market differentiation and leadership by demonstrating credible evidence of good practice.
- Identify and adopt industry best practice: PMC's auditors are all specialist in their field, with knowledge of best practice that can be brought to your organization.
- International Recognition of certification: through an international agreement between National Accreditation Bodies, PMC's UKAS accredited certifications are recognised internationally, and have equal credibility and confidence amongst customers throughout the world. Certified once, recognised everywhere.
- Use of PMC and UKAS marks and symbols: As a PMC certified customer, you can use PMC's prestigious certification marks and UKAS's famous "crown and tick" symbol on your organisation's promotional material, an easy way to demonstrate your commitment to the highest standards, and recognised throughout the industry and by buyers of really high quality organisations.
- Gain access to new markets and customers: as an accredited certification body, working specifically in print, PMC is regularly contacted by print buyers and others seeking companies with PMC certifications. We regularly provide information about our certified customers to buyers throughout the world, thereby potentially opening new markets for them.
- Access to a recognised source of expertise and knowledge: PMC's auditors and technical experts, and our standards specialists, are all recognised as experts in their field, and their knowledge has been tapped to produce PMC's range of world class generic training courses, including PMC's prestigious Certified Colour Champion programme.

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Frequently Asked Questions

How can I identify if my certification is accredited?

Access the UKAS website (www.ukas.com) or the relevant national accreditation body) and check if the organisation issuing your certificate is listed for the particular standard involved and for your industry sector.

I have a certificate of compliance from one of my equipment suppliers: is this an accredited certification?

No, this is simply a statement of compliance from one of your suppliers, who are not independent and therefore cannot demonstrate impartiality in issuing the certification. Impartiality is a key requirement for accredited certification.

I have a certificate of compliance from an independent consultant, who has provided advice: is this an accredited certification?

No, it is provided by an organisation which is providing advice and therefore cannot be impartial in issuing the certification. Accredited certification bodies are not allowed to provide specific advice or consultancy to you, as this would mean they could be auditing their own systems.

I have a certification for ISO 12647-2 from an accredited testing laboratory: is this an accredited certification?

No, it is simply a certificate of compliance issued by that laboratory. The laboratory would have to be specifically accredited to provide certification to ISO 12647-2 for it to be able to offer this to you.

Are accredited certification bodies allowed to offer training?

Yes, they are, but it must be "generic" training only, and not company specific advice. PMC offers a range of generic training courses in all aspects of management system standards and colour quality management and compliance.

Are there any differences between accredited certification bodies?

Yes, there are: each one will have its own approach to auditing, and particular specialisms and methods. Industry specialist certification bodies, like PMC, which is the only print specialist certification body in the UK, will have highly competent and experienced auditors, who understand products and processes and will be able to bring good practice to your organisation through highly relevant audits.

I have a certification which is accredited by an accreditation body which is not UKAS. Is this a recognised certification?

If the accreditation body is a member of the International Accreditation Forum's Multilateral Recognition Agreement (see www.iaf.nu), as most of the world's national accreditation bodies are, then the certification is fully recognised.

I'd like to transfer my certification to PMC, how do I go about it?

If your certification is issued by an accredited certification body, then it can simply be transferred to PMC: we issue a certificate to you and pick up your audits at the next scheduled date. If your certification is not accredited, then it is not recognised, and so an initial audit would have to be organised for you to gain certification.

What does UKAS do to ensure that certification bodies are competent and impartial?

UKAS has an ongoing programme of audits of the certification body's office systems and processes. They also witness a sample of the certification body's audits or product testing on a regular basis to ensure compliance with the relevant international standards for certification.

For more information, or if you have any further questions, about PMC's accredited certifications and generic training courses, please contact PMC's Jon Stack on jon.stack@printcertification.co.uk.

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