



**Textile
Exchange**

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TEXTILE EXCHANGE
STANDARDS



GENERAL CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION BODIES

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A. About the document

TE-TXL-POL-202 General Criteria for Accreditation Bodies specifies the criteria for accreditation bodies to carry out the accreditation process to assess and accredit certification bodies to certify against one or more of the Textile Exchange standards/scopes, and for the accreditation body's own systems to allow them to be authorized to do so.

These procedures shall be considered to be normative for all accreditation bodies working with Textile Exchange standards. Additional guidance documents (for example, user manuals) may also be provided.

A1. Implementation

The following implementation timelines apply:

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- A1.1.1** *TE-TXL-POL-202-V1.0 General Criteria for Accreditation Bodies* is effective **October 1, 2026** and may be used as of that date.
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- A1.1.2** *TE-TXL-POL-202-V1.0 General Criteria for Accreditation Bodies* is mandatory on **April 1, 2027**. From this date onward, all audits and assessments are required to be conducted using *TE-TXL-POL-202-V1.0 General Criteria for Accreditation Bodies*. This document supersedes the following document(s), which are not to be used for audits or assessments conducted after this mandatory date:
- a. *ASR-101-V2.1 Accreditation and Certification Procedures*;
 - b. *ASR-112-V2.0 Procedure for the Withdrawal of Certification Body Licensing*;
 - c. *ASR-114-V1.0 Audit Methods Policy*; and
 - d. *CCS-102-V3.1 CCS Certification Procedures*, Section F and other selected criteria.
-

A2. Document references

Textile Exchange provides additional policies, guidance documents, and templates to support the implementation of this document. All documents relevant to the standards system are available at the [Textile Exchange Knowledge Center](#). The latest version (or code) of referenced documents, including any amendments (for example, calibrations), applies.

The following documents are integral to understanding and implementing this document. This list is for reference only and is a non-exhaustive list.

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- A2.1.1** *TE-TXL-POL-204 Standard-Specific Details for Scope and Transaction Certificates* (TE-TXL-POL-204)
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- A2.1.2** All Textile Exchange standards as applicable, including the following:
- a. *TE-MM-STN-101 Materials Matter Standard* (TE-MM-STN-101);
 - b. *CCS-101 Content Claim Standard* (CCS-101);
 - c. *OCS-101 Organic Content Standard* (OCS-101);
 - d. *GRS-101 Global Recycled Standard* (GRS-101);
 - e. *RCS-101 Recycled Claim Standard* (RCS-101);
 - f. *RDS-101 Responsible Down Standard* (RDS-101);
 - g. *RAF-101a Responsible Wool Standard* (RAF-101a);
 - h. *RAF-101b Responsible Mohair Standard* (RAF-101b); and
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- i. *RAF-101c Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAF-101c).*
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A2.1.3 *ASR-214 Geographic Classification (ASR-214)*

A2.1.4 *TE-TXL-TEM-201 Application Form for Certification Bodies and Accreditation Bodies (TE-TXL-TEM-201)*

A2.1.5 The criteria for using standard-specific claims and labels (“applicable claims and labeling policy”), including the following:

- a. *TE-MM-POL-301-V1.0 Materials Matter Claims and Labeling Policy (TE-MM-POL-301);*
 - b. *TE-301 Standards Claims Policy (TE-301);* and
 - c. *TE-302 Standards Logo Use Specifications (TE-302).*
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A2.1.6 *ASR-401 Policy for Assurance Technical Training (ASR-401)*

A2.1.7 *TE-TXL-201 General Criteria for Certification Bodies (TE-TXL-POL-201)*

A2.1.8 The auditing criteria for certification bodies that apply for audits to the applicable standard (“standard-specific criteria for certification bodies”), including the following:

- a. *TE-MM-POL-201 Materials Matter Criteria for Certification Bodies (TE-MM-POL-201);*
 - b. *CCS-102 CCS Certification Procedures (CCS-102);*
 - c. *OCS-102 OCS Certification Procedures (OCS-102);*
 - d. *GRS-102 GRS Certification Procedures (GRS-102);*
 - e. *RCS-102 RCS Certification Procedures (RCS-102);*
 - f. *RDS-102 RDS Certification Procedures (RDS-102);* and
 - g. *RAF-102 RAF Certification Procedures (RAF-102).*
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A2.1.9 *TE-TXL-POL-203 Policy for Scope and Transaction Certificates (TE-TXL-POL-203)*

A3. Document definitions

Refer to the [Textile Exchange Glossary](#) for definitions of terms used in this document.

NOTE: *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents* will not be updated going forward and will become obsolete (that is, retired) alongside the mandatory implementation date of the *Materials Matter Standard*. The Textile Exchange Glossary takes precedence in case of any contradiction or omission.

A4. Document interpretation and feedback

Points of clarification may be incorporated into supplementary and guidance documents prior to the next revision of this document where applicable. More substantive feedback or suggested changes will be collected and assessed as part of the next review (and if applicable, revision) of this document.

Any uncertainty regarding the correct interpretation of a criterion should be resolved by the “**Notes**” and “**Examples**” section, where possible. You may submit feedback to Textile Exchange’s standards system at any time via [this form](#) or by sending an email to standards@textileexchange.org.

B. Document criteria and conformity

B1. Terminology

B1.1.1 In *TE-TXL-POL-202 General Criteria for Accreditation Bodies*, the following terms are used to indicate requirements, recommendations, permissions, and possibilities or capabilities:

- a. “Shall” indicates a requirement.
 - a. “Should” indicates a recommendation (non-binding).
 - b. “May” indicates a permission (non-binding). And
 - c. “Can” indicates a possibility or a capability.
-

Section 1: Scope of accreditation

1.1. Standards' scopes

- 1.1.1** The accreditation body may issue accreditation to certification bodies for one or more of the scopes or subscopes as described in *TE-TXL-POL-204 Standard-Specific Details for Assurance Systems*. The accreditation shall specify any details as required by TE-TXL-POL-204.
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1.2. Restrictions on scope

- 1.2.1** Accreditation may be granted globally, for a specific list of countries/areas, or for another defined geographic region.
-

NOTE:

- 1) Accreditation should be granted for a specific list of countries/areas but may be granted globally. If accreditation is not global, it shall be clearly defined based on ASR-214.
-

- 1.2.2** Accreditation scopes may be limited based on factors deemed relevant by the accreditation body or Textile Exchange, such as industry or product type.
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EXAMPLE:

- 1) A certification body wishes to audit brands but not manufacturers and only works in the European Union. *Content Claim Standard* (CCS) accreditation may be granted with the scope limited to brands located in the European Union.
-

- 1.2.3** The accreditation body shall respect and enforce any scope restrictions imposed by Textile Exchange and ensure that the certification body only operates within the scope that is allowed by both the accreditation body and Textile Exchange.
-

EXAMPLE:

- 1) An accreditation body grants global accreditation to a certification body. Textile Exchange imposes a geographic restriction on where the certification body may operate. The accreditation body is required to ensure that the certification body does not operate outside of the geographic scope allowed by Textile Exchange.

NOTE:

- 1) The accreditation body may issue accreditation with a broader scope than is allowed by Textile Exchange. However, the most restrictive scope allowed by both the accreditation body and Textile Exchange shall apply.
-

1.3. Scope of accreditation body authorization

- 1.3.1** The accreditation body may be authorized to assess one or more standards' scopes, as defined in 1.1.1.
-

- 1.3.2** Textile Exchange may restrict the scope of authorization (for example, geographically) if concerns about the accreditation body's ability to conduct credible assessments exist.
-

NOTE:

- 1) The accreditation body may also restrict their own scope beyond any limitations by Textile Exchange.
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Section 2: General criteria

The oversight of certification bodies is based on a third-party accreditation system. Accreditation bodies may apply for authorization as long as the criteria are met in order to ensure a professional and impartial accreditation service. The list of authorized accreditation bodies is available online at <https://textileexchange.org/accreditation/>. Criteria in this section apply to accreditation bodies. Criteria from *ISO17011* are referenced in this section.

2.1. Accreditation body qualifications

2.1.1 See *ISO17011*, 4.1

2.1.2 The accreditation body shall be invited to apply for authorization by Textile Exchange prior to submitting an application. All signatories of the European cooperation for Accreditation Multilateral Agreement (EA MLA), who act as the national accreditation body for a European Union member country, are considered to have an open invitation to apply for authorization.

2.1.3 The application form *TE-TXL-TEM-201 Application Form for Certification Bodies and Accreditation Bodies* shall be submitted to Textile Exchange.

2.1.4 The accreditation body shall undergo a technical assessment by Textile Exchange based on the criteria of this document and competencies in the proposed scope of authorization, prior to being authorized.

2.1.5 The accreditation body shall be a signatory of the International Accreditation Forum Multilateral Agreement (IAF MLA) or hold equivalent status under Global Accreditation Cooperation and shall conform with the related international norms, membership criteria, and so forth that give them such recognition.

2.1.6 The accreditation body shall meet or fulfill the criteria of these procedures, its referenced documents, and any further Textile Exchange criteria.

2.1.7 The accreditation body shall have issued a valid accreditation for a standard that requires conformance with *ISO17011*.

2.2. Scope of work

2.2.1 Within their scope of *ISO17011*, the accreditation body shall provide evidence of issuing a valid accreditation according to *ISO17065*.

2.2.2 The accreditation body shall have in-depth knowledge of the standard scope(s) for which accreditation is authorized. Accreditation activities shall show an understanding of the overall objective of each standard/scope, of the criteria of the applicable normative references, and the expertise to assess the particular criteria of authorized standard(s)/scope(s) (see example 1).

EXAMPLE:

1) Environmental criteria for primary processors; farming, farm group, and animal welfare criteria for animal fiber farms.

2.2.3 The accreditation body shall provide adequate information to demonstrate their related competence (for example, on assessments performed in relevant scopes, CVs, and training protocols of assigned staff).

NOTE:

- 1) CVs are one way to demonstrate competency, and other equivalent supporting evidence may suffice.

2.2.4 Once Textile Exchange has approved the accreditation body's application, the accreditation body shall sign a contract with Textile Exchange that confirms the scope of the accreditation body's authorization (for example, applicable standard(s)).

2.2.5 The accreditation body shall notify Textile Exchange if the scope of the accreditation body's authorization is to be expanded, reduced, or adjusted in any way. Textile Exchange approval is required if the scope of authorization is to be expanded.

2.2.6 The accreditation body shall cooperate with Textile Exchange and its authorized representatives to schedule and participate in monitoring activities, including witnessing or reviewing accreditation assessments and certification body audits on request, and shall respond to any nonconformities that arise from an assessment.

NOTES:

- 1) Textile Exchange conducts monitoring activities to observe and evaluate the accreditation and certification process, providing additional oversight of certification body performance.
- 2) Assessments may include document review of a completed assessment, observing a remote or on-site assessment of a certification body, observing a certification body audit with or without the accreditation body present, and/or conducting an on-site review assessment of certification body audit results. Textile Exchange is responsible for paying its own costs associated with its own assessments.

Language

2.2.7 For each standard for which they are authorized, the accreditation body shall define any necessary limits (for example geographical) to their own operations and shall not take on assessments they do not have the capacity to complete.

2.2.8 The accreditation body shall submit all regular reporting to Textile Exchange in English.

NOTE:

- 1) Translation of any documents and records requested by Textile Exchange will be at the accreditation body's expense.

2.3. Accreditation agreement

2.3.1 See *ISO17011*, 4.2

2.3.2 The accreditation body agreement with certification bodies shall include the following:

a. The certification body shall allow Textile Exchange and their authorized representatives to conduct or participate in monitoring activities, including witnessing or reviewing accreditation assessments and certification body audits on request (see 2.2.5).

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- b. The accreditation body may share any information provided to them by the certification body, including information about its facilities and/or subcontractors, with Textile Exchange, or their authorized representatives, which may be used in accordance with the Textile Exchange standard(s) and related normative documents. And
 - c. The accreditation body shall provide their client(s) with at least 90 calendar days' prior written notice before ceasing any or all accreditation services, should the accreditation body voluntarily cease Textile Exchange standard(s) activities.
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NOTES:

- 1) The accreditation body may also share information with any other accreditation body that the certification body, or their affiliated certification bodies, has applied to, or that has held accreditation within the last year for Textile Exchange standard(s).
 - 2) Textile Exchange will inform accreditation bodies of relevant third-party authorized representatives for information sharing. Authorized representatives will operate under confidentiality agreements.
-

2.4. Use of accreditation symbols and other claims of accreditation

2.4.1 See *ISO17011*, 4.3.1

2.4.2 See *ISO17011*, 4.3.2

2.4.3 See *ISO17011*, 4.3.3

2.4.4 See *ISO17011*, 4.3.4

2.4.5 See *ISO17011*, 4.3.5

2.4.6 The accreditation body shall meet the criteria of the applicable claims and labeling policy for any claims made publicly (for example, on the accreditation body's website) about Textile Exchange and Textile Exchange standards.

2.5. Management of impartiality

2.5.1 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.1

2.5.2 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.2

2.5.3 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.3

2.5.4 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.4

2.5.5 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.5

2.5.6 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.6

2.5.7 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.7

2.5.8 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.8

2.5.9 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.9

2.5.10 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.10

2.5.11 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.11

2.5.12 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.12

2.5.13 See *ISO17011*, 4.4.13

2.5.14 The accreditation body shall establish rules and procedures to prevent or minimize threats of conflict of interest. Any actual or perceived interest in an action that results in or has the appearance of resulting in personal, organizational, or professional gain is considered to be a conflict of interest. In particular:

- a. The accreditation body shall require personnel, committee, and board members to declare existing or prior association with an organization subject to certification or a certification body subject to accreditation.
- b. The accreditation body shall require personnel, committee, and board members to declare existing or prior association with standards covering the same material or related environmental impact area.
- c. Where such an association threatens impartiality, the accreditation body shall exclude the person concerned from work, discussion, and decisions at all stages of the accreditation process related to the potential conflict of interest.
- d. If a conflict of interest between accreditation personnel and a certification body or certified organization is identified after an assessment has occurred, the accreditation body shall immediately assign an independent and impartial assessor to determine whether the conflict has affected, or could reasonably be perceived to have affected, the objectivity or validity of the accreditation process. Where any influence is confirmed or cannot be ruled out, the accreditation body shall repeat the affected portions of the assessment using an assessor approved by Textile Exchange. And
- e. Personnel shall not perform, review, or make accreditation decisions on any activities in which they have been directly involved or that may constitute an assessment of their own work.

2.5.15 The accreditation body shall maintain a register of all conflict(s) of interest relevant to Textile Exchange accreditation and share annually with Textile Exchange for review.

2.6. Financing and liability

2.6.1 See *ISO17011*, 4.5.1

2.6.2 See *ISO17011*, 4.5.2

2.7. Establishing accreditation schemes

2.7.1 See *ISO17011*, 4.6.1

2.7.2 See *ISO17011*, 4.6.2

2.7.3 See *ISO17011*, 4.6.3

2.7.4 See *ISO17011*, 4.6.4

2.7.5 See *ISO17011*, 4.6.5

Section 3: Structural criteria

3.1. Structural criteria

3.1.1 See *ISO17011*, 5.1

3.1.2 See *ISO17011*, 5.2

3.1.3 See *ISO17011*, 5.3

3.1.4 See *ISO17011*, 5.4

3.1.5 See *ISO17011*, 5.5

3.1.6 See *ISO17011*, 5.6

3.1.7 See *ISO17011*, 5.7

3.1.8 See *ISO17011*, 5.8

Section 4: Resource criteria

4.1. Competence of personnel

4.1.1 See *ISO17011*6.1.1

4.1.2 The accreditation body shall employ, or demonstrate documented access to, at least one subject-matter expert with a tertiary qualification in a discipline directly relevant to the authorized scope. In the absence of such a qualification, a minimum of five years of verifiable professional experience in each applicable sector within the accreditation scope (for example, garment manufacturing, textile processing, or animal fiber scouring) is required. This individual shall be actively involved in technical oversight and evaluation of assessments within those sectors.

4.1.3 The accreditation body shall assign employed or contracted personnel to each of the following key roles:

- a. Primary contact: The main contact person between the accreditation body and Textile Exchange.
- b. Secondary contact: The alternate contact person who shall be available when the primary contact is absent.
- c. Assessor: Personnel who are qualified and approved to conduct assessments. And
- d. Accreditation decision-maker: A body or committee responsible for making accreditation decisions based on relevant criteria.

4.1.4 Accreditation body assessors shall meet the following minimum qualifications:

- a. One of the following options for professional experience:
 - i. Tertiary education (college/university qualification) in a relevant discipline and two years of relevant professional experience as an auditor or assessor; or
 - ii. Secondary education (high-school diploma) and four years of relevant professional experience as an auditor or assessor.
- b. Successful completion of a training course on assessment techniques consistent with the principles and guidelines of *ISO19011*, as well as trainings related to accreditation body requirements as per *ISO/IEC 17011* and evaluation criteria for certification bodies as per *ISO/IEC 17065*.
- c. Demonstrated and maintained knowledge of the applicable Textile Exchange standard(s), including but not limited to successful completion of all required training modules, as specified in *ASR-401 Policy for Assurance Technical Training*.
- d. Demonstrated comprehensive knowledge of:
 - i. The accreditation body's documented procedures, assessment methodologies, and reporting criteria;
 - ii. The organizational structure, certification processes, and decision-making framework of the certification body to be assessed;
 - iii. The production methods, processing activities, and supply chain operations relevant to the organizations within the scope of assessment;
 - iv. Integrity, environmental, and social risks specific to the sectors and countries of operation; and
 - v. The preparation of assessment reports that are objective, evidence-based, and written with sufficient detail and accuracy to substantiate findings against the applicable Textile Exchange standard(s) and related normative documents.
- e. Participation in a minimum of one assessment to the standard/scope, led by a qualified assessor.
- f. Completion of a minimum of one assessment to the standard/scope where the assessor is witnessed and evaluated by a qualified assessor. The qualified assessor shall prepare a report of

the witness assessment that recommends whether the assessor be qualified to assess the standard/scope. And

- g. If an accreditation body cannot qualify new assessors using the above criteria (for example, due to being new in the accreditation process or due to the departure of key personnel), the accreditation body shall prepare a documented plan to qualify initial personnel and shall receive approval from Textile Exchange prior to qualifying the personnel. Use of this alternative methodology is limited to one assessor per standard/scope.

4.1.5 The accreditation body shall ensure that personnel with responsibility for accreditation of Textile Exchange standard(s) (see 4.1.3 for personnel in key roles) participate in all mandatory trainings and events (for example, courses, webinars, calls), as required by Textile Exchange, for calibration and quality.

4.1.6 Where technical experts are assigned to provide technical support to an assessment team, the accreditation body shall be solely responsible for their selection, contracting, and performance oversight, and verify and document the following for each technical expert:

- a. Demonstrated knowledge of the applicable Textile Exchange standard(s) and accreditation procedures;
- b. Demonstrated and current expertise in the specific technical area relevant to the assessment scope;
- c. Qualifications and professional experience substantiating their role as a technical expert; and
- d. No financial, professional, or personal interests that could compromise impartiality.

NOTE

- 1) Previous work with certification bodies accredited to any Textile Exchange standard(s) would constitute a conflict of interest.

4.1.7 The accreditation body shall meet the following criteria related to language skills of their personnel:

- a. Accreditation body primary and secondary contacts shall be able to communicate effectively with Textile Exchange in English and be able to understand training materials provided in English. (See 4.1.3.a and 4.1.3.b below for definitions of primary and secondary contacts.)
- b. Accreditation body key personnel (that is, assessors) shall be able to complete the required trainings from Textile Exchange in one of the supported languages.

4.2. Determination of competence criteria

4.2.1 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.1

4.2.2 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.2

4.2.3 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.3

4.2.4 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.4

4.2.5 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.5

4.2.6 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.6

4.2.7 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.7

4.2.8 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.8

4.2.9 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.2.9

4.2.10 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.3.1

4.3. Competence management

4.3.1 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.3.2

4.3.2 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.3.3

4.3.3 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.3.4

4.3.4 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.3.5

4.3.5 See *ISO17011*, 6.1.3.6

4.4. Personnel involved in the accreditation process

4.4.1 See *ISO17011*, 6.2.1

4.4.2 See *ISO17011*, 6.2.2

4.4.3 See *ISO17011*, 6.2.3

4.5. Personnel records

4.5.1 See *ISO17011*, 6.3

4.6. Subcontracting

4.6.1 See *ISO17011*, 6.4.1

4.6.2 See *ISO17011*, 6.4.2

4.6.3 See *ISO17011*, 6.4.3

4.6.4 Subcontracting of accreditation activities shall be limited to accreditation bodies that are current signatories of the IAF MLA for *ISO/IEC 17011* (or equivalent status under Global Accreditation Cooperation). The subcontracted accreditation body shall hold an active scope of recognition relevant to the assessment activity being subcontracted. The accreditation body shall maintain documented evidence verifying the subcontractor's IAF MLA status and technical competence prior to engagement and on an annual basis thereafter. Subcontracting to any other entity is not permitted.

4.6.5 See *ISO17011*, 6.4.4

4.6.6 See *ISO17011*, 6.4.5

4.6.7 The accreditation body shall take responsibility for managing the competence of personnel involved in all outsourced activities unless the subcontractor is an authorized accreditation body for the applicable standard(s).

4.6.8 The accreditation body shall establish and implement a documented process for evaluating and approving subcontractors, including periodic reevaluation of their competence, impartiality, and conformance with confidentiality and conflict-of-interest requirements. Records of such evaluations and approvals shall be maintained and made available upon request.

4.6.9 See *ISO17011*, 6.4.6

Section 5: Process criteria

5.1. Accreditation requirements

5.1.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.1

5.1.2 The general criteria for accreditation shall be this document and *TE-TXL-POL-201 General Criteria for Certification Bodies*, the relevant standard(s), the standard-specific criteria for certification bodies, and any applicable supplementary documents.

5.2. Application for accreditation

5.2.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.2.1

5.2.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.2.2

5.2.3 See *ISO17011*, 7.2.3

5.2.4 See *ISO17011*, 7.2.4

5.2.5 See *ISO17011*, 7.2.5

5.2.6 If a certification body requests to transfer its accreditation to a different office, the accreditation body shall evaluate whether the change may be treated as an administrative update of contact information or whether it requires a new accreditation. This determination shall be based on the extent of organizational, personnel, and operational changes associated with the new office. The accreditation body shall document the evaluation, justify its decision, and communicate the outcome in writing to Textile Exchange prior to implementation.

NOTE:

- 1) The certification body is required to submit an updated application under both circumstances.
-

5.2.7 Upon receipt of an application from a certification body, and confirmation from Textile Exchange that the corresponding application has been accepted, the accreditation body shall conduct a comprehensive document review of the certification body's management system, procedures, and supporting evidence to verify conformity with all applicable Textile Exchange criteria. This review shall be completed within 30 calendar days of receiving the full application package. The accreditation body shall issue a written evaluation report to Textile Exchange upon completion of the review. Where justified by documented evidence and approved by Textile Exchange, the accreditation body may recommend a defined grace period in accordance with the provisions established in *TE-TXL-POL-201*.

NOTES:

- 1) See *TE-TXL-POL-201* for details on criteria for certification bodies in the application process.
 - 2) The accreditation body may divide this review into a separate application review and document review or conduct a single review.
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- 3) Under specific circumstances, certification body licensing contracts with Textile Exchange may permit the issuance of scope certificates during a defined “grace period” before the certification body has achieved accreditation.
 - 4) The accreditation body may reject an application if it does not meet the scope of the accreditation body’s authorization (for example, geographic location).
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5.2.8

The following criteria apply if the applicant certification body is currently accredited by another accreditation body or has been accredited by another authorized accreditation body within the previous five years:

- a. The succeeding accreditation body shall obtain approval of the accreditation body transfer from Textile Exchange before proceeding with the assessment process.
- b. The succeeding accreditation body shall obtain, review, and evaluate all accreditation assessment reports, associated documentation, and records of nonconformities issued by the preceding accreditation body covering at least the last two years of the previous accreditation. This evaluation shall be completed prior to conducting the initial assessment and shall include the verification of the effective closure and corrective action of all previously identified nonconformities (see 5.14.3 related to the sharing of certification body records). The accreditation body shall document this review and provide a written summary of findings and conclusions to Textile Exchange as part of the assessment record. And
- c. Where relevant, the preceding accreditation body and succeeding accreditation body should decide on a date of transfer of accreditation.

NOTES:

- 1) A certification body that is undergoing suspension or withdrawal proceedings with an accreditation body is not eligible to change accreditation bodies during the course of suspension or withdrawal proceedings.
 - 2) TE-TXL-POL-201 further defines eligibility criteria for a certification body applying to change its accreditation body.
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5.3. Resource review

5.3.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.3.1

5.3.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.3.2

5.4. Preparation for assessment

5.4.1 The accreditation body shall define and agree on the scope of the assessment with the certification body based on Section 1.1 (see also TE-TXL-POL-204).

5.4.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.1

5.4.3 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.2

5.4.4 A qualified assessor (see 4.1.6) shall perform or accompany office assessments and all witness assessments.

5.4.5 When interpreters are engaged in the conduct of assessments, they shall be entirely independent of both the certification body under assessment and any organization being audited. Interpreters shall not

be selected, contracted, or remunerated by the certification body or by the organization being audited under any circumstance. The accreditation body shall be solely responsible for the selection, contracting, and oversight of interpreters, ensuring impartiality, confidentiality, and technical competence in the applicable language(s). The interpreter's full name, organizational affiliation, and contractual relationship shall be recorded in the assessment report and maintained in the accreditation body's records.

5.4.6 When technical experts are engaged in the conduct of assessments, they shall be fully independent of both the certification body under assessment and any organization being audited. Technical experts shall not be selected, contracted, or remunerated by the certification body or by the organization being audited under any circumstance. The name, qualifications, professional background, and organizational affiliation of each technical expert shall be documented in the assessment report and retained in the accreditation body's records.

5.4.7 The accreditation body shall notify Textile Exchange in writing at least four weeks prior to the start of each assessment. The following conditions apply:

- a. The notification shall include the assessment schedule, scope, locations to be assessed, and the names of all assigned assessors, technical experts, and interpreters.
- b. Textile Exchange shall use this notification to provide the accreditation body with the latest list of certified and suspended sites, and to communicate any integrity concerns or issues to be addressed during the assessment. And
- c. The accreditation body shall not commence the assessment until written acknowledgment has been received from Textile Exchange.

NOTE:

- 1) Textile Exchange may approve exceptions to the need for four weeks' notice where necessary for technical reasons (excluding scheduling delays).
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5.4.8 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.3

5.4.9 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.4

5.4.10 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.5

5.4.11 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.6

5.4.12 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.7

5.4.13 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.8

5.4.14 See *ISO17011*, 7.4.9

5.5. Review of documented information

5.5.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.5.1

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- 5.5.2** The accreditation body shall evaluate the certification body's identification and justification of critical offices for the applicable standard to ensure completeness and accuracy. See TE-TXL-POL-201 for determining factors to designate critical office(s).

NOTE:

- 1) Textile Exchange and the accreditation body may each choose to treat offices as critical even if the certification body has not identified them as critical offices.

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- 5.5.3** See *ISO17011*, 7.5.2
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5.6. Assessment

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- 5.6.1** See *ISO17011*, 7.6.1
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- 5.6.2** See *ISO17011*, 7.6.2
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- 5.6.3** The accreditation body shall include the following elements in their initial assessment, at a minimum:
- a. Assessment of the accredited office of the applicant certification body, which should be conducted on site.
 - b. On-site assessment of at least 20% of a certification body's critical offices, with a focus on those offices that have (or are expected to have) the greatest level of involvement in accreditation activities. Each critical office shall receive an on-site assessment at least every three years.
 - c. Review of certification files (that is, all certification body records pertaining to an audit of an organization) in accordance with the following sampling rates and criteria:
 - i. A minimum of five files plus 1% of the total number of valid scope certificates shall be selected for review, up to a maximum of 15.
 - ii. The sampled files shall include at least one from each of the following categories, as applicable: farm group, supply chain group, and farm area.
 - iii. The sampled files shall include at least one scope certificate of each standard/scope included in the certification body's accreditation.
 - iv. The sampled files shall include at least one of each of the following, as available: initial audit, annual audit, recertification audit.
 - v. The sampled files shall include at least one certification file for scope certificates that have been suspended or withdrawn, or where an audit was conducted but no scope certificate has been issued (that is, certification is either pending or denied). And
 - vi. The sampled files shall be selected to be representative of the certification body's geographic scope of work including work overseen by different critical offices.
 - d. Review of transaction certificates, in accordance with the following sampling rates and criteria:
 - i. A minimum of five transaction certificates plus 1% of the total number of transaction certificates issued in the previous 12 months shall be selected for review, up to a maximum of 15.
 - ii. The sampled files shall include at least one from each of the following categories, as applicable: farm group, supply chain group, and farm area. And
 - iii. The sampled files shall include at least one transaction certificate of each standard/scope included in the certification body's accreditation. And
 - e. Witness audit performed at a representative organization for each applicable Textile Exchange standard/scope.
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NOTE:

- 1) A representative organization shall be an applicant or certified organization with a certification scope to the same specified standard as the certification body's accreditation scope that is being assessed.
- 2) Reference TE-TXL-POL-201 (see 3.1.4) for criteria to identify a certification body's critical office(s).
- 3) Review of audit records, documentation, and reports assesses:
 - Competency of personnel and audit team;
 - Consistent application of certification process;
 - Evidence used for certification decisions; and
 - Standard-specific criteria are met.
- 4) *TE-TXL-POL-203-V4.0 Policy for Scope and Transaction Certificates* details criteria and guidance for certification bodies to issue scope and transaction certificates in accordance with any Textile Exchange standard.
- 5) An increase in sampled files should be employed where inconsistencies are identified.

5.6.4 The accreditation body shall include the following elements in surveillance assessments, at a minimum:

- a. Assessment of the accredited office of the certification body once every two years, which should be conducted on site.
- b. Witness audit performed on site at a representative organization for each applicable Textile Exchange standard scope at least once every calendar year.
- c. On-site assessment of 100% of the number of the certification body's critical offices over three years, distributed approximately evenly during that time frame. And
- d. In case of identified inconsistencies or upon Textile Exchange request, the accreditation body shall increase its number of assessments associated with the accredited certification body.

 NOTES:

- 1) 5.6.4.a and 5.6.4.b may be completed during the same year or during alternate years. A single critical office may be visited more than once during a five-year time period if the accreditation body identifies a high risk. The above represents the minimum assessment level; the accreditation body may choose to do additional assessments. Office assessments may include remote evaluation and may be conducted remotely in the case of virtual offices of a certification body.
- 2) After the minimum number of witness audits is met, review audits may also be used to assess conformance by visiting the relevant certified organization to verify information from the certification body's latest audit report and certification decision.
- 3) In addition to the minimum number of witness audits, review assessments may also be used to verify information from the certification body's latest audit reports and certification decisions through on-site visits to the relevant certified organization(s).

5.6.5 The accreditation body shall review the following documentation at least annually (either through an on-site assessment, a remote assessment, or a remote document review):

- a. The management system and certification process of any new critical office.
 - b. The management system of any subcontractor, with particular focus on subcontractors with the following risk factors:
 - i. New subcontractors; and/or
 - ii. Subcontractors that take responsibility for both auditing and client recruitment/management.
 - c. The competence of any new certification body personnel working with the standard(s), through verification of qualification and training records, as well as audit records.
 - d. Verification of the implementation of corrective measures regarding any nonconformity issued in the previous assessment.
 - e. Verification of the records and procedures the certification body uses to track and report on certified organizations and sites.
 - f. A cross-check of the figures of certified and withdrawn sites for each applicable standard, based on site data received from Textile Exchange. The accreditation body shall immediately report any deviations to Textile Exchange. And
 - g. Certification files in accordance with 5.6.3.c and 5.6.3.d.
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5.6.6 The accreditation body shall review the certification body's risk assessment procedures and a sample of risk assessment records based on the risk and sampling criteria for each standard and scope.

5.6.7 The accreditation body shall evaluate certification body conformance with the applicable claims policy during each assessment.

NOTE:

- 1) A certification body becomes authorized to use the Textile Exchange standard logo(s) when the certification body licensing contract for the applicable standard has been signed with Textile Exchange.
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5.6.8 If a certification body has fewer than five active scope certificates at the time of the initial assessment, all files shall be reviewed, and the first surveillance assessment shall be scheduled not more than six months after the date of accreditation.

NOTE:

- 1) Mock files may be reviewed by the accreditation body but do not count toward the total number of active scope certificates.
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5.6.9 See *ISO17011*, 7.6.3

5.6.10 During witness audits, the competence and performance of the certification body's assigned auditor/audit team shall be assessed against all auditing and certification criteria and for their understanding of each applicable standard (see example 1).

EXAMPLE:

- 1) General chain of custody; auditing social criteria for the *Materials Matter Standard*; farm issues such as animal welfare for farm scopes.
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5.6.11 See *ISO17011*, 7.6.4

5.6.12 See *ISO17011*, 7.6.5

5.6.13 See *ISO17011*, 7.6.6

5.6.14 See *ISO17011*, 7.6.7

5.6.15 See *ISO17011*, 7.6.8

5.6.16 See *ISO17011*, 7.6.9

5.7. Accreditation decision-making

5.7.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.7.1

5.7.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.7.2

5.7.3 The accreditation body shall have final responsibility for the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, suspending, or withdrawing of accreditation. Delegation of accreditation decisions to other entities (including freelancers) is not permitted.

5.7.4 See *ISO17011*, 7.7.3

5.7.5 See *ISO17011*, 7.7.4

5.7.6 See *ISO17011*, 7.7.5

5.7.7 See *ISO17011*, 7.7.6

5.7.8 The accreditation body shall verify that the certification body has a signed licensing contract in place with Textile Exchange prior to issuing an affirmative accreditation decision.

5.8. Accreditation information

5.8.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.8.1

5.8.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.8.2

5.8.3 See *ISO17011*, 7.8.3

5.8.4 The accreditation body shall provide Textile Exchange with notice of all decisions to grant, maintain, renew, extend, suspend, or withdraw accreditation. When accreditation is granted, the accreditation body shall provide Textile Exchange with the information required by 5.8.1 in a timely manner. At a minimum, this shall include the following: date of accreditation, geographic scope, standards, scopes and subsopes (including materials where applicable), and any scope restrictions. Data shall be provided in a format specified by Textile Exchange.

5.8.5 See *ISO17011*, 7.8.4

5.9. Accreditation cycle

5.9.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.9.1

5.9.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.9.2

5.9.3 See *ISO17011*, 7.9.3

5.9.4 See *ISO17011*, 7.9.4

5.9.5 See *ISO17011*, 7.9.5

5.10. Extending accreditation

5.10.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.10.1

5.10.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.10.2

5.11. Reduction, suspension, or withdrawal of accreditation

5.11.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.11.1

5.11.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.11.2

5.11.3 See *ISO17011*, 7.11.3

5.11.4 The accreditation body shall ensure that its procedure(s) to determine circumstances for the withdrawal of a certification body's accreditation includes that a valid and signed contract with Textile Exchange is a condition for continued accreditation.

NOTE:

- 1) In the case that a licensing contract is withdrawn or sanctions are issued, Textile Exchange will notify the accreditation body.
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5.11.5 The accreditation body shall include Textile Exchange in any communication notifying a certification body of a reduction, suspension, or withdrawal of accreditation.

5.11.6 The accreditation body shall ensure that notifications of a suspension of accreditation includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Reference to the accreditation body's procedure(s) for suspension and lifting of suspension of accreditation;
- b. Description of the nonconformity and related supporting evidence;
- c. Any conditions of the suspension (for example, restrictions on the issuance of scope and/or transaction certificates) and associated timelines, including any impacted countries/areas or offices where relevant; and
- d. Specific steps and clear deadline(s) for the certification body to demonstrate corrective actions and for resolution.

NOTE:

- 1) When a dispute or appeal is initiated by the certification body, the suspension will remain until a decision can be made.

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- 5.11.7** The conditions of a suspension of accreditation shall confirm the allowance or restrictions for certification body to:
- a. Maintain existing scope certificates (including recertification);
 - b. Issue scope certificates for new organizations;
 - c. Expand the scope of certification in ways that require auditing;
 - d. Expand the scope of certification in ways that do not require auditing;
 - e. Reduce the scope of certification (for example, remove a facility);
 - f. Issue transaction certificates based on current valid scope certificates; and
 - g. Audit new organizations.
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5.12. Complaints

5.12.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.1

5.12.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.2

5.12.3 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.3

5.12.4 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.4

5.12.5 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.5

5.12.6 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.6

5.12.7 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.7

5.12.8 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.8

5.12.9 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.9

5.12.10 See *ISO17011*, 7.12.10

5.12.11 The accreditation body shall inform Textile Exchange when issuing a formal complaint to a certification body.

5.12.12 The accreditation body shall seek a timely resolution of complaints, concluding an investigation and decision-making, within 90 days of notification of the complaint.

5.13. Appeals

5.13.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.1

5.13.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.2

5.13.3 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.3

5.13.4 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.4

5.13.5 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.5

5.13.6 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.6

5.13.7 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.7

5.13.8 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.8

5.13.9 See *ISO17011*, 7.13.9

5.14. Records of conformity assessment bodies

5.14.1 See *ISO17011*, 7.14.1

5.14.2 See *ISO17011*, 7.14.2

5.14.3 In the case that a certification body wishes to transfer their accreditation or regain accreditation with a different accreditation body within five years of withdrawal, the preceding accreditation body shall provide the succeeding accreditation body with the most recent assessment report including all nonconformities, covering at least the last two years of the previous accreditation, upon request (see 5.2.8).

5.14.4 Where a certification body and their affiliated certification bodies hold accreditation with different accreditation bodies, the accreditation body shall share records with the affiliated certification bodies' accreditation bodies on request. This includes any nonconformities.

NOTE:

- 1) Reference TE-TXL-POL-201 for criteria related to affiliated certification bodies (see 3.1.3).
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Section 6: Information criteria

6.1. Confidential information

6.1.1 See *ISO17011*, 8.1.1

6.1.2 See *ISO17011*, 8.1.2

6.1.3 See *ISO17011*, 8.1.3

6.1.4 See *ISO17011*, 8.1.4

6.2. Publicly available information

6.2.1 See *ISO17011*, 8.2.1

6.2.2 See *ISO17011*, 8.2.2

6.2.3 The accreditation body shall maintain accurate and up-to-date public information on all accredited certification bodies. Published details shall clearly indicate the accreditation status (for example, active, suspended, or withdrawn), effective dates of any status changes, applicable scopes of accreditation, and any restrictions or conditions applied. This information shall be promptly updated following any accreditation decision.

NOTE:

1) Information related to restrictions or conditions on accreditation include impacted counties and/or offices.

6.2.4 Following the suspension of a certification body's accreditation, the accreditation body shall communicate the conditions of suspension to Textile Exchange (see 5.11.7), which shall be treated as public information, and should also share the information directly on public platforms.

6.2.5 See *ISO17011*, 8.2.3

6.2.6 See *ISO17011*, 8.2.4

Section 7: Management system criteria

7.1. General management system criteria

7.1.1 See *ISO17011*, 9.1.1

7.1.2 See *ISO17011*, 9.1.2

7.1.3 See *ISO17011*, 9.1.3

7.1.4 See *ISO17011*, 9.1.4

7.1.5 See *ISO17011*, 9.1.5

7.2. Management system

7.2.1 See *ISO17011*, 9.2.1

7.2.2 See *ISO17011*, 9.2.2

7.3. Document control

7.3.1 See *ISO17011*, 9.3

7.4. Records control

7.4.1 See *ISO17011*, 9.4.1

7.4.2 See *ISO17011*, 9.4.2

7.5. Nonconformities and corrective actions

7.5.1 See *ISO17011*, 9.5

7.6. Improvement

7.6.1 See *ISO17011*, 9.6

7.7. Internal audits

7.7.1 See *ISO17011* 9.7.1

7.7.2 See *ISO17011* 9.7.2

7.7.3 See *ISO17011* 9.7.3

7.7.4 See *ISO17011* 9.7.4

7.7.5 The internal audit program shall comprehensively cover all Textile Exchange standard/scope(s) for which the accreditation body is currently authorized or has submitted an application for authorization. The accreditation body shall verify that the internal audit program is implemented in full and updated whenever new authorizations or scope extensions are granted.

7.7.6 The accreditation body shall submit to Textile Exchange, on an annual basis, the complete results of its internal audits related to all applicable Textile Exchange standards. The submission shall include a detailed record of all findings, including nonconformities, root cause analyses, corrective actions taken, and verification of their effectiveness. Reports shall be provided in the format and within the timeline prescribed by Textile Exchange.

7.7.7 The accreditation body shall disclose peer-evaluation results (IAF or regional MLA) to Textile Exchange, including nonconformities and corrective-action status.

7.8. Management reviews

7.8.1 See *ISO17011*, 9.8.1

7.8.2 See *ISO17011*, 9.8.2

7.8.3 See *ISO17011*, 9.8.3
