

QME Impartiality & Confidentiality Policy (Code of Ethics)

1. Introduction

QME is committed to maintaining the highest standards of impartiality and confidentiality in all its certification activities, including management systems certification (ISO 17021) and training and persons certification (ISO 17024). This policy outlines the measures we take to avoid conflicts of interest, protect sensitive information, and uphold the integrity of our certification processes.

2. Confidentiality Statement

QME is guided by strict professional ethics to avoid any actions that could harm our reputation, or the trust placed in us by our clients. All information and documentation obtained during the auditing and certification processes, whether for management systems or persons certification, will be treated as confidential.

- **Confidentiality Measures:**

- **For Management Systems Certification (ISO 17021):** Information provided by clients during the audit and certification process is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without written consent, except where legally required. Information that is publicly available may be shared without consent.
- **For Training and Persons Certification (ISO 17024):** The details of certification applicants, their assessment results, and other related information are strictly confidential and will only be shared with authorized personnel involved in the certification process.
- **Legal Obligations:** If required by law, QME will disclose necessary information to third parties. Clients will be informed of such disclosures unless prohibited by law.
- **Data Protection:** QME employs secure methods and facilities to handle and store confidential information at all levels, ensuring that such information is only accessible to authorized personnel.

3. Impartiality Policy

QME understands that impartiality is crucial to ensuring the objectivity of our certification processes. We are committed to identifying and managing potential conflicts of interest to maintain impartiality in all activities.

- **Governance:**

Impartiality Committee (IC): QME has established a CSI to oversee impartiality, with independent members representing various stakeholders. This committee monitors and advises on all matters related to impartiality.

Conflict of Interest Management: QME has procedures to identify, analyze, evaluate, and mitigate risks related to conflicts of interest. This includes maintaining a risk matrix for potential

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conflicts and implementing measures to address them.

Application to Certification Activities:

- **Management Systems Certification (ISO 17021):** QME personnel involved in auditing and certification activities do not engage in consultancy services for clients. Auditors who have provided consultancy services or were employed by a client in the past two years are not assigned to audit or certify that client.

- **Training and Persons Certification (ISO 17024):**

Independence and Separation of Roles: QME ensures that all processes related to the certification of persons are independent of any training services offered. This separation ensures that confidentiality, information security, and impartiality are not compromised at any stage of the certification process.

Separation of Training and Examination Roles: Personnel involved in training activities are not permitted to serve as examiners for candidates they have trained for a period of at least two years from the conclusion of the training. This interval ensures an unbiased evaluation process and safeguards against conflicts of interest. Any shortening of this interval must be justified and documented to demonstrate that it does not compromise impartiality.

Non-Discrimination:

QME operates in a non-discriminatory manner, providing equal access to certification services regardless of the size of the organization or its affiliations.

- **Prohibition of Misleading Claims:**

QME does not imply that certification would be simpler, easier, faster, or less expensive if specific consultancy services were used. We take corrective actions against any such claims made by third parties.

4. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

QME regularly reviews its Impartiality & Confidentiality Policy to ensure ongoing compliance with ISO 17021 and ISO 17024 standards. We are committed to continuous improvement and encourage all personnel to report any violations of this policy. All reported issues are handled in accordance with established procedures.

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