

Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards 2.1 ASR-101-V2.1-2020.07.01



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The *Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards (ACP) 2.0* replaces ACP 1.0 and is effective as of July 1, 2020. All assessments conducted after January 1, 2021 shall be conducted using ACP 2.1.

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English is the official language of the *Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards*. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

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The ACP will undergo a revision process at least every five years. The next revision is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2022, for completion in 2024. You may submit feedback to the standard at any time; send to Assurance@TextileExchange.org. Points of clarification may be incorporated into supplementary and guidance documents prior to 2022. More substantive feedback or suggested changes will be collected and reviewed as part of the next revision of the document.

Document Revision History

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Introduction

About the Accreditation and Certification Procedures

The Textile Exchange Accreditation and Certification Procedures (ACP) define requirements for accreditation bodies and certification bodies which are completing accreditation and certification to standards owned by Textile Exchange.

A key focus for Textile Exchange is promoting and ensuring integrity in sustainability claims made about products or a company. Textile Exchange has developed standards that ensure these product and content claims can be validated through third-party certification. Certification bodies audit organizations against a Standard's requirements, issue a certificate of conformity, and continually monitor adherence to the Standard. These certification bodies are themselves assessed by an accreditation body against requirements detailed in these procedures. The main purpose of these procedures is to provide a more credible, consistent, and reliable implementation of this oversight process.

The accreditation program – as detailed in these Procedures – of Textile Exchange Standards is governed solely by Textile Exchange. The Textile Exchange Board of Directors does not directly influence the development of standards and related documents, including these procedures. These procedures do not include those of standard setting or monitoring and evaluation. These responsibilities are covered by separate procedures documents and can be found at www.TextileExchange.org/Integrity.

These Procedures are developed and revised by Textile Exchange with input and guidance from many sources, such as accreditation bodies, certification bodies, standards owners, and NGO's. These procedures were written to conform with the requirements of the *ISEAL Code of Good Practice: Assuring Compliance with Social and Environmental Standards, V2.0*.

Feedback on these procedures may be sent to Textile Exchange at any time by emailing Assurance@TextileExchange.org. There will be at least one comment period of at least 30 days during each revision cycle, where stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the revised procedures.

About Textile Exchange



This document is owned and managed by **Textile Exchange**. Textile Exchange is a global non-profit that works closely with our members to drive industry transformation in preferred fibers, integrity and standards, and responsible supply networks. We identify and share best practices regarding farming, materials, processing, traceability, and product end-of-life in order to reduce the textile industry's impact on the world's water, soil, and air, as well as the human population.

Section A - General Information

A1. References

The procedures in this document (referred to as “these procedures”) were developed based on the *ISEAL Code of Good Practice: Assuring Compliance with Social and Environmental Standards*, V2.0, January 2018.

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document and are to be used in conjunction as binding requirements wherever applicable. It is understood that any updated versions of these documents released from the relevant body will replace these references throughout these procedures and the relevant certification and accreditation bodies shall conform and follow these updated versions in accordance with the timeline established by the relevant body. References to individual requirements within these documents refer to the version noted in this section.

1. ISO/IEC 17011:2017 – Conformity Assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies
2. ISO/IEC 17065:2012 – Conformity Assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services
3. ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 – Conformity Assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems – Part 1: Requirements
4. ISO 9001:2015 – Quality Management Systems – Requirements
5. ISO 19011:2018 – Guidelines for Auditing Management Systems
6. IAF MD 12:2016 – Accreditation Assessment of Conformity Assessment Bodies with Activities in Multiple Countries
7. The applicable Textile Exchange Standard (e.g. *Organic Content Standard* or *Recycled Content Standard*), its Certification Procedures, and its guidance documents (e.g. User Manual)

NOTE: ISO/IEC standards are referred to with *ISO* followed by the number (e.g. *ISO17065*) throughout this document.

A2. Objective of these Procedures

These procedures set out the requirements for certification bodies to achieve and maintain accreditation to perform certification to the standards owned by Textile Exchange and implement their related quality assurance systems. These procedures also specify how Textile Exchange authorizes and monitors accreditation bodies responsible for assessing and monitoring certification bodies.

Section B - Scope and Principles

B1. Principles

The procedures and requirements as specified in this manual are applicable for certification bodies that apply for accreditation to certify against one or more of the Textile Exchange Standard(s) and for the accreditation body performing the accreditation process in accordance with the requirements. This document supersedes all previous Accreditation Procedures versions and amendments. These procedures apply to accreditation and certification of all standards owned by Textile Exchange.

The Standards and all official reference documents that provide for binding provisions and requirements for certification bodies and organizations applying for certification (including Standard-specific user manuals, certificate policies, logo use and claim guides, and other policies) are available at <http://textileexchange.org/integrity/>.

These procedures shall be considered to be normative and are required for all accreditation bodies and certification bodies working with Textile Exchange Standards. A separate Certification Procedures document for each Standard includes supplementary requirements for that Standard and shall also be considered to be normative. Additional guidance documents (e.g. User Manual) are also provided for each Standard.

All references to “the Standard” in this document shall be considered to be references to the Textile Exchange Standard(s) applicable to the evaluation and to the corresponding Certification Procedures and Logo Use and Claims Guide. References to “Certification Procedures” refer to the Certification Procedures for the applicable Standard.

B2. Scope of Accreditation and Authorization

B2.1 Standards Scopes

B2.1.1 Accreditation may be applied according to one or more of the following scopes:

- a. Content Claim Standard (CCS),
- b. Organic Content Standard (OCS),
- c. Recycled Claim Standard (RCS),
- d. Global Recycled Standard (GRS),
- e. Responsible Down Standard (RDS), and
- f. Responsible Animal Fiber (RAF).

B2.1.2 All scopes other than CCS Scope are considered to be *primary scopes*, which cover the farm (RDS, RWS, RMS, RAS) and/or first processing stage (OCS, RCS, GRS, RDS).

B2.1.3 Accreditation to CCS scope is required for all primary scopes except where noted in the Certification Procedures.

B2.1.4 Accreditation to the CCS Scope allows a certification body to issue certifications to Textile Exchange Standards for organizations with a *secondary scope* which does not include supplementary requirements not included in the CCS (e.g.

environmental, chemical, or social). This includes the following, where “after” refers to processes which are performed later on a lot of material:

- a. OCS, for any site after the *first processor*, where organic inputs are limited to OCS material and GOTS material;
- b. RCS, for sites after the material recycler, where recycled inputs are limited to RCS material and GRS material;
- c. RDS, for sites after the *slaughter site*;
- d. RAF (covering RWS, RMS, RAS), for sites after the farm; and
- e. use of the CCS in accordance with *CCS-103 Using the CCS Outside of TE Standards*.

B2.1.5 Accreditation to the RAF Scope allows a certification body to issue certifications to all RAF standards at the farm level. This includes

- a. The Responsible Wool Standard (RWS);
- b. The Responsible Mohair Standard (RMS); and
- c. The Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAS)¹.

B2.2 Restrictions on Scope

B2.2.1 Accreditation may be granted globally, for a specific list of countries, or for another defined geographic region.

B2.2.2 Accreditation scopes may be limited based on other factors deemed relevant by the accreditation body, such as industry or product type.

EXAMPLE: A certification body wishes to audit brands but not manufacturers, and only works in the European Union. CCS accreditation may be granted with the scope limited to brands located in the European Union.

B2.3 Scope of Accreditation Body Authorization

B2.3.1 Accreditation bodies may be authorized to assess one or more standards scopes, as defined in B2.1.

B2.3.2 Under exceptional circumstances, Textile Exchange may restrict the scope of authorization if concerns about the accreditation body’s ability to conduct credible assessments exist.

B3. Scope of Certification

B3.1 Standards Scopes

B3.1.1 Scope certificates may be issued to one of the following Standards:

- a. Organic Content Standard (OCS),
- b. Recycled Claim Standard (RCS),
- c. Global Recycled Standard (GRS),

¹ The Responsible Alpaca Standard is currently in development and is planned for publication in 2021.

- d. Responsible Down Standard (RDS),
- e. Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) – farm only,
- f. Responsible Mohair Standard (RMS) – farm only,
- g. Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAS) – farm only, or
- h. Responsible Animal Fiber (RAF) – supply chain only.

B3.1.2 For organizations with secondary scopes, scope certificates shall be issued in the name of the Standard used for claims (e.g. OCS), rather than to the CCS.

B3.1.3 For scope certificates issued in accordance with *CCS-103 Using the CCS Outside of TE Standards*, the scope certificate shall be issued based on the material to be claimed. Where the use of the CCS is not embedded in another standard, the scope certificate may be issued to the CCS.

B3.1.4 A scope certificate shall cover claims based on one Standard only. If an organization is certified for claims under multiple Standards, a separate scope certificate shall be issued for each one.

EXAMPLE: A garment manufacturer wishes to sell both RDS and RWS products. The garment manufacturer is required to obtain both RDS and RWS scope certificates.

B3.2 Other Elements of Certificate Scope

B3.2.1 Scope certificates shall have clearly defined scopes, including the following elements:

- a. Information required on the *scope certificate* (see *ASR-103 Policy for Scope Certificates*);
- b. The date the organization was originally certified;
- c. Certification type or elements, as defined by the Standard (e.g. group certification), if applicable; and
- d. Claimed inputs and outputs.

Section C - Accreditation Body Requirements

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

Requirements in this section apply to accreditation bodies. Requirements from *ISO17011* are referenced in this section. A cross-reference between terminology used by ISO and by Textile Exchange can be found in the document *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents*.

C1. General Requirements

C1.1 Accreditation Body Qualifications

- C1.1.1 See *ISO17011* 4.1
- C1.1.2 The accreditation body shall be internationally recognized (e.g. signatory of the IAF Multilateral Agreement or member of ISEAL that meets all relevant ISEAL requirements) and shall conform with the related international norms, membership requirements, etc. that give it such recognition.
- C1.1.3 The accreditation body shall meet or fulfill the requirements of these procedures, its referenced documents, and any further Textile Exchange requirements.
- C1.1.4 The accreditation body shall conform with the requirements of *ISO17011*.

C1.2 Scope of Work

- C1.2.1 Within their scope of *ISO17011*, the accreditation body shall already have completed accreditation for product certification according to *ISO17065* and provide related proof.
- C1.2.2 Accreditation bodies shall undergo a regular peer review process or other outside evaluation (e.g. through ISEAL). Reports from this process shall be provided to Textile Exchange.
- C1.2.3 The accreditation body shall complete and submit *ASR-207 Textile Exchange Accreditation Body Application* to Textile Exchange. The form may be obtained from and shall be submitted to Assurance@TextileExchange.org.
- C1.2.4 The accreditation body shall have in-depth knowledge of the Standard(s) for which accreditation is approved. Accreditation activities shall show an understanding of the overall objective of each Standard, of the requirements of the applicable normative references, and the expertise to audit the particular requirements of approved Standard(s) (e.g. social criteria and chemical inputs in GRS; farming, farm group, and animal welfare requirements in RWS and RDS).

- C1.2.5 The accreditation body shall provide adequate information to demonstrate its related competence (e.g. on assessments performed in relevant scopes, CVs, and training protocols of assigned staff).
- C1.2.6 Once Textile Exchange has approved the accreditation body's application, the accreditation body shall sign a contract with Textile Exchange which confirms the scope of the accreditation body's approval (e.g. applicable Standard(s)). The contract shall be updated or re-signed if the scope of approval is to be expanded.
- C1.2.7 The accreditation body shall allow Textile Exchange and its nominated representatives (e.g. other approved accreditation bodies) to conduct shadow assessments or to accompany assessments on request, and shall respond to any non-conformities which arise from the shadow assessment.

NOTE: Shadow assessments may include document review of a completed assessment, shadowing of a remote or on-site assessment of a certification body, and/or shadowing a certification body audit without the accreditation body present. Textile Exchange generally conducts shadow assessments for each certification body at least once every three years. Textile Exchange is responsible for paying the costs associated with shadow assessments.

- C1.2.8 The accreditation body shall provide an annual report to Textile Exchange on its accreditation activities related to each Standard. Except where personal information cannot be provided due to legal restrictions (in which case anonymized information shall be provided where possible), the report shall include the following information:

- a. Summary of all accreditation decisions made;
- b. Timing and locations of assessments;
- c. Information collected in accordance with *IAF MD 12:2016*;
- d. Reports from the accreditation body's evaluation, as required by C1.2.2;
- e. Records of initial and ongoing training and competency evaluation of assessors, including calibration;
- f. Summary of complaints and stakeholder feedback received;
- g. Status and updates on the Textile Exchange accreditation program at the accreditation body;
- h. Identified opportunities for program improvement; and
- i. Other relevant issues.

- C1.2.9 For each Standard for which it is authorized, the accreditation body shall define any necessary limits (e.g. geographical) to its own operations and shall not take on assessments which it does not have the capacity to complete.

- C1.2.10 The official language of Textile Exchange Standards is English. The accreditation body shall translate any of its documents and records requested by Textile Exchange into English on request, at the accreditation body's expense. All regular reporting by the accreditation body shall be submitted in English.

C1.3 Accreditation Agreement

- C1.3.1 See *ISO17011* 4.2

C1.4 Use of Accreditation Symbols and Other Claims of Accreditation

- C1.4.1 See *ISO17011* 4.3.1
- C1.4.2 See *ISO17011* 4.3.2
- C1.4.3 See *ISO17011* 4.3.3
- C1.4.4 See *ISO17011* 4.3.4
- C1.4.5 See *ISO17011* 4.3.5

C1.5 Impartiality Requirements

- C1.5.1 See *ISO17011* 4.4.1
- C1.5.2 See *ISO17011* 4.4.2
- C1.5.3 See *ISO17011* 4.4.3
- C1.5.4 See *ISO17011* 4.4.4
- C1.5.5 See *ISO17011* 4.4.5
- C1.5.6 See *ISO17011* 4.4.6
- C1.5.7 See *ISO17011* 4.4.7
- C1.5.8 See *ISO17011* 4.4.8
- C1.5.9 See *ISO17011* 4.4.9
- C1.5.10 See *ISO17011* 4.4.10
- C1.5.11 See *ISO17011* 4.4.11
- C1.5.12 See *ISO17011* 4.4.12
- C1.5.13 See *ISO17011* 4.4.13
- C1.5.14 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. 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.

- b. if a conflict of interest between accreditation personnel and a certification body or organization is found after an assessment has occurred, another unbiased person shall be assigned to determine if it has affected the accreditation process and to complete the remainder of the process if applicable.
- c. personnel shall not be allowed to assess their own work.

C1.6 Financing and Liability

C1.6.1 See *ISO17011* 4.4.1

C1.6.2 See *ISO17011* 4.4.2

C1.7 Establishing Accreditation Schemes

C1.7.1 See *ISO17011* 4.6.1

C1.7.2 See *ISO17011* 4.6.2

C1.7.3 See *ISO17011* 4.6.3

C1.7.4 See *ISO17011* 4.6.4

C1.7.5 See *ISO17011* 4.6.5

C2. Structural Requirements

C2.1 Structural Requirements

C2.1.1 See *ISO17011* 5.1

C2.1.2 See *ISO17011* 5.2

C2.1.3 See *ISO17011* 5.3

C2.1.4 See *ISO17011* 5.4

C2.1.5 See *ISO17011* 5.5

C2.1.6 See *ISO17011* 5.6

C2.1.7 See *ISO17011* 5.7

C2.1.8 See *ISO17011* 5.8

C3. Resource Requirements

C3.1 Competence of Personnel

C3.1.1 See *ISO17011* 6.1.1

- C3.1.2 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; or
 - ii. Secondary education (high school diploma) and four years of relevant professional experience.
 - b. Completion of a course on auditing technique based on *ISO19011*.
 - c. Demonstrated knowledge of the relevant Textile Exchange Standard(s), which should include a training course where available.
 - d. Demonstrated knowledge of:
 - i. the accreditation body's procedures;
 - ii. the general context of the certification body to be assessed;
 - iii. the general production methods and processes applicable to the organizations to be audited;
 - iv. issues and risks specific to the sectors and countries of the organizations to be audited; and
 - v. the preparation of written assessment reports that are clear, accurate, and complete, and which articulate the audit findings in relation to the Standard and other applicable requirements.
- C3.1.3 The accreditation body shall ensure that *personnel* assigned with accreditation of Standards participate in all mandatory trainings (e.g. courses, webinars, calls) and in-person accreditation meetings nominated and/or provided by Textile Exchange.

Determination of Competence Criteria

- C3.1.4 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.1
- C3.1.5 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.2
- C3.1.6 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.3
- C3.1.7 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.4
- C3.1.8 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.5
- C3.1.9 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.6
- C3.1.10 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.7
- C3.1.11 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.8
- C3.1.12 See *ISO17011* 6.1.2.9

Competence Management

- C3.1.13 See *ISO17011* 6.1.3.1

C3.1.14 See *ISO17011* 6.1.3.2

C3.1.15 See *ISO17011* 6.1.3.3

C3.1.16 See *ISO17011* 6.1.3.4

C3.1.17 See *ISO17011* 6.1.3.5

C3.1.18 See *ISO17011* 6.1.3.6

C3.2 Personnel Involved in the Accreditation Process

C3.2.1 See *ISO17011* 6.2.1

C3.2.2 See *ISO17011* 6.2.2

C3.2.3 See *ISO17011* 6.2.3

C3.3 Personnel Records

C3.3.1 See *ISO17011* 6.3.1

C3.4 Subcontracting

C3.4.1 See *ISO17011* 6.4.1

C3.4.2 See *ISO17011* 6.4.2

C3.4.3 See *ISO17011* 6.4.3

C3.4.4 Subcontractors shall be limited to internationally recognized accreditation bodies (e.g. signatories of the IAF Multilateral Agreement).

C3.4.5 See *ISO17011* 6.4.4

C3.4.6 See *ISO17011* 6.4.5

C3.4.7 The accreditation body shall take responsibility for managing the competence of personnel involved in all outsourced activities unless the subcontractor is an approved accreditation body for the applicable Standard(s).

C3.4.8 When acting as a subcontractor for another approved accreditation body, the accreditation body shall take responsibility for conforming with all applicable requirements included in the scope of the subcontracting and shall not further subcontract services (excluding *freelancers*).

C3.4.9 See *ISO17011* 6.4.6

C4. Process requirements

C4.1 Accreditation Requirements

C4.1.1 See *ISO17011 7.1*

C4.1.2 The general requirements for accreditation shall be this document (excluding Section C), the relevant Standard(s), the Certification Procedures for the relevant Standard(s), and any applicable supplementary documents.

C4.2 Application for Accreditation

C4.2.1 See *ISO17011 7.2.1*

C4.2.2 See *ISO17011 7.2.2*

C4.2.3 See *ISO17011 7.2.3*

C4.2.4 See *ISO17011 7.2.4*

C4.2.5 See *ISO17011 7.2.5*

C4.2.6 Upon receipt of an application form from a certification body and notification that Textile Exchange has accepted a corresponding application, the accreditation body shall complete a document review of the certification body's systems. This should be completed within one month of receipt of the application form and documents for review. The accreditation body may then recommend a grace period based on the requirements of Appendix D.

NOTE: See D1.1.8 for details on requirements for certification bodies in the application process.

C4.3 Resource Review

C4.3.1 See *ISO17011 7.3.1*

C4.3.2 See *ISO17011 7.3.2*

C4.4 Preparation for Assessment

C4.4.1 The accreditation body shall define and agree on the scope of the assessment with the certification body based on Section B2.

C4.4.2 See *ISO17011 7.4.1*

C4.4.3 See *ISO17011 7.4.2*

C4.4.4 A qualified assessor (see C3.1.2) shall perform or accompany office assessments and all shadow assessments.

C4.4.5 When translators or interpreters are used in assessments, the translators and interpreters shall be independent of the certification body and (if applicable) the

organization being evaluated. The names and affiliations of translators and interpreters shall be included in audit reports.

- C4.4.6 When technical experts are used in assessments, the technical experts shall be independent of the certification body and (if applicable) the organization being evaluated. The names, qualifications, and affiliations of technical experts shall be included in assessment reports.
- C4.4.7 The accreditation body shall notify Textile Exchange prior to each assessment so that Textile Exchange may provide the latest list of certified sites and inform of any specific issues to be addressed during the assessment. Data may be obtained directly from the *TTrackit* when available.
- C4.4.8 See *ISO17011 7.4.3*
- C4.4.9 See *ISO17011 7.4.4*
- C4.4.10 See *ISO17011 7.4.5*
- C4.4.11 See *ISO17011 7.4.6*
- C4.4.12 See *ISO17011 7.4.7*
- C4.4.13 See *ISO17011 7.4.8*
- C4.4.14 See *ISO17011 7.4.9*

C4.5 Review of Documented Information

- C4.5.1 See *ISO17011 7.5.1*
- C4.5.2 The accreditation body shall review the certification body's risk assessment procedures and a sample of risk assessment records based on Appendix C and the applicable risk assessment table(s).
- C4.5.3 The accreditation body shall identify critical offices for the Standard, which shall include all offices other than the headquarters / main office which take responsibility for certification decisions, or for issuing scope or transaction certificates, as well as any other offices which the accreditation body considers to be critical to the certification body's systems for the Standard.
- C4.5.4 See *ISO17011 7.5.2*

C4.6 Assessment

- C4.6.1 See *ISO17011 7.6.1*
- C4.6.2 See *ISO17011 7.6.2*
- C4.6.3 The accreditation body shall include the following elements in its initial assessment, at a minimum:

- a. On-site assessment of the headquarters / main office of the applicant certification body.
- b. Shadow assessment performed at a representative organization for each applicable Textile Exchange Standard.
- c. On-site assessment of at least 20% of critical offices with a focus on offices which the accreditation body determines to be higher risk.
- d. Review of certification files in accordance with the following table, per Standard. The sampled files shall include files from all applicable Standards, and shall represent the of the certification body's activities in terms of geography. At least one file shall be selected from each of the following categories, if applicable: farm group, supply chain group, and farm area.

Number of Active Scope Certificates	Number of Files to Review
5 to 100	5 files covering at least 3 scope certificates, minimum 5%
101 to 500	10 files covering at least 5 scope certificates, minimum 2%
501 to 1000	15 files covering at least 8 scope certificates, minimum 1.5%
>1001	20 files covering at least 10 scope certificates

- e. Review of certification files for scope certificates which have been suspended or withdrawn, and where an audit was conducted but no scope certificate has been issued (i.e. certification is either pending or denied).

C4.6.4 The accreditation body shall include the following elements in its surveillance assessments, at a minimum:

- a. On-site assessment of the headquarters / main office of the certification body once every two years.
- b. Shadow assessment performed at a representative organization for each applicable Textile Exchange Standard once every two years.
- c. On-site assessment of 100% of the number of critical offices over five years, distributed approximately evenly during that timeframe.

NOTE: C4.6.4.a and .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 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.

C4.6.5 The accreditation body shall review the following documentation annually (either through an on-site audit, remote audit, or 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;
 - ii. Subcontractors which take responsibility for both auditing and client recruitment/management; and/or
 - iii. Subcontractors located in countries with a *Corruption Perception Index* below 50.
- 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 non-conformity 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 crosscheck 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.
- g. Certification files in accordance with C4.6.3.d and .e.

C4.6.6 If a certification body has fewer than five active scope certificates at the time of the assessment, all files shall be reviewed. As new sites become certified, the files shall be reviewed remotely (i.e. document review) up to five in total.

C4.6.7 See *ISO17011 7.6.3*

C4.6.8 During shadow assessments, the competence and performance of the certification body's assigned auditor/audit team shall be assessed against all auditing and certification requirements and for their understanding of each applicable Standard (e.g. general chain of custody, chemical input review, and auditing social criteria for GRS, farm issues such as animal welfare, land use, or farm group certification for RWS and RDS).

C4.6.9 See *ISO17011 7.6.4*

C4.6.10 See *ISO17011 7.6.5*

C4.6.11 See *ISO17011 7.6.6*

C4.6.12 See *ISO17011 7.6.7*

C4.6.13 See *ISO17011 7.6.8*

C4.6.14 See *ISO17011 7.6.9*

C4.7 Accreditation Decision Making

C4.7.1 See *ISO17011 7.7.1*

- C4.7.2 See *ISO17011 7.7.2*
- C4.7.3 The accreditation body shall keep 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.
- C4.7.4 See *ISO17011 7.7.3*
- C4.7.5 See *ISO17011 7.7.4*
- C4.7.6 See *ISO17011 7.7.5*
- C4.7.7 See *ISO17011 7.7.6*
- C4.7.8 Accreditation shall only be issued if the certification body has a valid licensing contract in place with Textile Exchange.

NOTE: An initial assessment may be conducted prior to the certification body signing a licensing contract with Textile Exchange, though the contract shall be in place before accreditation is issued.

C4.8 Accreditation Information

- C4.8.1 See *ISO17011 7.8.1*
- C4.8.2 See *ISO17011 7.8.2*
- C4.8.3 See *ISO17011 7.8.3*
- C4.8.4 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 C4.8.1 in a timely manner.
- C4.8.5 See *ISO17011 7.8.4*

C4.9 Accreditation Cycle

- C4.9.1 See *ISO17011 7.9.1*
- C4.9.2 See *ISO17011 7.9.2*
- C4.9.3 See *ISO17011 7.9.3*
- C4.9.4 See *ISO17011 7.9.4*
- C4.9.5 See *ISO17011 7.9.5*

C4.10 Extending Accreditation

- C4.10.1 See *ISO17011 7.10.1*

C4.10.2 See *ISO17011* 7.10.2

C4.11 Suspending, Withdrawing, or Reducing Accreditation

C4.11.1 See *ISO17011* 7.11.1

C4.11.2 See *ISO17011* 7.11.2

C4.11.3 See *ISO17011* 7.11.3

C4.11.4 Accreditation shall be withdrawn if the certification body ceases to have a valid licensing contract with Textile Exchange.

NOTE: In the case that accreditation is suspended or withdrawn, Textile Exchange will work with the accreditation body and the certification body to minimize the impact on certified organizations while maintaining the credibility of the system.

C4.12 Complaints

C4.12.1 See *ISO17011* 7.12.1

C4.12.2 See *ISO17011* 7.12.2

C4.12.3 See *ISO17011* 7.12.3

C4.12.4 See *ISO17011* 7.12.4

C4.12.5 See *ISO17011* 7.12.5

C4.12.6 See *ISO17011* 7.12.6

C4.12.7 See *ISO17011* 7.12.7

C4.12.8 See *ISO17011* 7.12.8

C4.12.9 See *ISO17011* 7.12.9

C4.12.10 See *ISO17011* 7.12.10

C4.13 Appeals

C4.13.1 See *ISO17011* 7.13.1

C4.13.2 See *ISO17011* 7.13.2

C4.13.3 See *ISO17011* 7.13.3

C4.13.4 See *ISO17011* 7.13.4

C4.13.5 See *ISO17011* 7.13.5

C4.13.6 See *ISO17011* 7.13.6

C4.13.7 See *ISO17011* 7.13.7

C4.13.8 See *ISO17011* 7.13.8

C4.13.9 See *ISO17011* 7.13.9

C4.14 Records on Conformity Assessment Bodies

C4.14.1 See *ISO17011* 7.13.1

C4.14.2 See *ISO17011* 7.13.2

C5. Information Requirements

C5.1 Confidential Information

C5.1.1 See *ISO17011* 8.1.1

C5.1.2 See *ISO17011* 8.2.1

C5.1.3 See *ISO17011* 8.3.1

C5.1.4 See *ISO17011* 8.4.1

C5.2 Publicly Available Information

C5.2.1 See *ISO17011* 8.2.1

C5.2.2 See *ISO17011* 8.2.2

C5.2.3 See *ISO17011* 8.2.3

C5.2.4 See *ISO17011* 8.2.4

C6. Management System Requirements

C6.1 General

C6.1.1 See *ISO17011* 9.1.1

C6.1.2 See *ISO17011* 9.1.2

C6.1.3 See *ISO17011* 9.1.3

C6.1.4 See *ISO17011* 9.1.4

C6.1.5 See *ISO17011* 9.1.5

C6.2 Management System

C6.2.1 See *ISO17011* 9.2.1

C6.2.2 See *ISO17011* 9.2.2

C6.3 Document Control

C6.3.1 See *ISO17011* 9.3

C6.4 Records Control

C6.4.1 See *ISO17011* 9.4.1

C6.4.2 See *ISO17011* 9.4.2

C6.5 Nonconformities and Corrective Actions

C6.5.1 See *ISO17011* 9.5

C6.6 Improvement

C6.6.1 See *ISO17011* 9.6

C6.7 Internal Audits

C6.7.1 See *ISO17011* 9.7.1

C6.7.2 See *ISO17011* 9.7.2

C6.7.3 See *ISO17011* 9.7.3

C6.7.4 See *ISO17011* 9.7.4

C6.8 Management Reviews

C6.8.1 See *ISO17011* 9.8.1

C6.8.2 See *ISO17011* 9.8.2

C6.8.3 See *ISO17011* 9.8.3

Section D - Certification Body Requirements

The certification of *organizations* is based on a third-party *certification* system. *Certification bodies* may apply for *accreditation* as long as the requirements are met in order to assure a professional and impartial certification service. The list of accredited certification bodies is available online at <http://textileexchange.org/integrity/>.

Requirements in this section apply to certification bodies. Requirements from *ISO17065* are referenced in this section. A cross-reference between terminology used by ISO and by Textile Exchange can be found in the document *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents*.

Any reference to the “Standard” or “scheme” in *ISO17065* language applies to the Textile Exchange Standard(s) for which the certification body holds or is seeking accreditation. Requirements in these procedures that are above and beyond *ISO17065* shall also be met.

D1. General Requirements

D1.1 Legal and Contractual Matters

Legal Responsibility

- D1.1.1 See *ISO17065* 4.1.1
- D1.1.2 The structure of the certification body shall foster confidence in its certification operations. In particular, the certification body shall:
- have documents attesting to its status as a legal entity;
 - have documented the rights and responsibilities relevant to its certification activities;
 - identify the management (body, group, or person) that has overall responsibility for the functioning of the certification body, including its finances; and
 - have sufficient personnel and financial stability to properly, impartially, and effectively perform certification activities.
- D1.1.3 The certification body shall be responsible for meeting national or other legal requirements in the countries where it operates.

NOTE: Where a certification body or an organization/site following the law conflicts with Textile Exchange requirements, an exemption or calibration from Textile Exchange is required. Textile Exchange will grant exemptions to allow for legal compliance, except in cases where Textile Exchange determines that doing so would represent a threat to the integrity of the Standard.

- D1.1.4 A certification body may hold multiple accreditations to the same Standard (e.g. different offices), provided that the scope of each accreditation (e.g. geographic) is clearly defined and does not overlap. All accreditations shall be with the same accreditation body, unless

- a. Multiple accreditations were in place with different accreditation bodies prior to January 1, 2020, or
- b. The original accreditation body is not authorized or willing to become authorized for the Standard to be accredited by the subsequent accreditation body.

D1.1.5 The certification body shall meet or fulfill the requirements of these procedures, the referenced documents, and any further Textile Exchange requirements.

D1.1.6 The certification body shall conform with all requirements of *ISO17065*, and shall obtain *ISO17065* accreditation at the same time as or prior to obtaining accreditation to any Textile Exchange standard.

NOTE: Accreditation bodies are not expected to assign non-conformities to D1.1.6 when they relate to individual requirements of *ISO17065*, but should rather assign the non-conformity based on the individual requirements of this procedure. If *ISO17065* is updated, conformity to the updated version is required in accordance with the accreditation body's standard procedures.

D1.1.7 The certification body shall allow Textile Exchange to conduct shadow assessments. A shadow assessment may include one or more of the following, conducted by a representative of Textile Exchange:

- a. Observation of an office assessment of the certification body;
- b. Observation of an audit, with or without the accreditation body's presence; and
- c. Document review of the audit report, checklist, and related documentation.

Application for Accreditation

D1.1.8 Certification bodies applying for accreditation shall follow the following steps, in order:

- a. Select an *accreditation body*. If the accreditation body is not yet authorized, the certification body shall obtain a letter stating that the accreditation body will provide accreditation to the Standard and follow these procedures.
- b. Complete and submit *ASR-206 Textile Exchange Certification Body Application* and the applicable fee as specified in *ASR-107 Certification Fee Structure* to Textile Exchange. The form may be obtained from and shall be submitted to Assurance@TextileExchange.org.
- c. Obtain approval of the application from Textile Exchange, pending an agreement with the accreditation body.
- d. Apply for accreditation to the agreed accreditation body.
- e. Obtain approval of the application from the accreditation body.
- f. Sign a contract with Textile Exchange. The assessment process may proceed before the contract is signed. However, the contract shall be signed before accreditation is issued.
- g. Undergo an assessment by the accreditation body.
- h. After accreditation has successfully occurred, provide proof of accreditation to Textile Exchange along with clarification of the scope of accreditation. This

shall occur prior to issuing scope certificates to any Textile Exchange Standard, except as allowed for under a grace period (see D1.1.9).

NOTE: The application process may be completed simultaneously for multiple Textile Exchange Standards.

NOTE: Textile Exchange will not allow modification to *ASR-208 Certification Body Contract* unless this is required for legal or regulatory reasons. Textile Exchange may charge a fee for contract modifications.

- D1.1.9 Contracts with Textile Exchange may allow for a grace period during which certification may be conducted prior to full accreditation. Certification bodies shall follow grace period requirements as defined in Appendix D.
- D1.1.10 If no grace period is granted, the certification body shall perform one audit per Standard as part of its assessment. In this case, the scope certificate shall only be issued once the certification body achieves accreditation. In this case, D4.6.8 shall not apply until accreditation is issued.

Certification Agreement

- D1.1.11 See *ISO17065* 4.1.2
- D1.1.12 Certification agreements between a certification body and its clients shall be in the form of legally enforceable written contracts and shall be signed prior to commencement of the initial audit.
- D1.1.13 Prior to signing a certification agreement, the certification body shall confirm that the applicant
- is not already certified to the Standard, or shall alternately follow certificate transfer procedures (see D4.12).
 - is not on Textile Exchange's list of banned organizations.
 - has not been audited or certified to the Standard within the preceding two years. If this is the case, the results of the previous audit shall be considered, and any open non-conformities shall remain applicable.
- D1.1.14 Additionally, certification agreements shall specify that the organization shall
- return the original certificate and all copies to the certification body if the certificate is suspended or withdrawn.
 - allow the certification body to exchange information with other accredited certification bodies, authorized accreditation bodies, and Textile Exchange, as part of its ongoing evaluations.
 - agree to receive email communication from Textile Exchange and communicate directly with Textile Exchange in regard to certification and Standards.
 - disclose all information about any Textile Exchange Standard certification-related activity with other certification bodies.

- e. confirm that it is not currently engaged, nor will it engage, with another certification body to certify them against the same Textile Exchange Standard(s) at the same time.
- f. inform the certification body about any other certifications and certification body relationships that share the same scope as the Textile Exchange Standard(s) (e.g. other organic/sustainable cotton certifications for OCS).
- g. make all necessary arrangements for
 - i. the conduct of audits, including providing documentation and records, and access to relevant facilities, equipment, location(s), area(s), personnel, and client's subcontractors; and
 - ii. the investigation of complaints or other stakeholder comments.
- h. only make claims regarding certification consistent with the scope of certification and following the issuance of the scope certificate.
- i. discontinue its use of all advertising material that contains any reference to or claims regarding Textile Exchange certification and the Standard upon suspension, withdrawal, or expiry of certification.
- j. conform with the applicable *Logo Use and Claims Guide*, and any other requirements specified by Textile Exchange when referencing its certification or using marks of conformity in communication media such as documents, brochures, or advertising.
- k. inform the certification body, without delay, of changes that may affect its ability to conform with the certification requirements, including but not limited to changes in the following:
 - i. legal, commercial, organizational status, or ownership;
 - ii. organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision making, or technical staff);
 - iii. contact address;
 - iv. scope of operations;
 - v. major changes to the management system and processes; and
 - vi. the environmental and social impact of the certified organization caused by incidents or events (if applicable to the audit scope).
- l. acknowledge Textile Exchange's right to change the Standard and certification requirements and that certification is conditional on conforming to a new or revised version of the applicable Standard and new or revised certification requirements within the timeframes established by Textile Exchange.
- m. consent to Textile Exchange and the accreditation body having the right to observe audits conducted by the certification body.
- n. accept that the certification body may conduct *semi-announced audits*, *unannounced audits*, and/or *confirmation visits*, for the purpose of monitoring the organization's conformity.
- o. accept that the accreditation body also has the right to conduct audits of the client, including semi-announced audits, unannounced audits, and confirmation visits, for the purpose of monitoring certification body conformity with Textile Exchange requirements.

- p. accept that the accreditation body and Textile Exchange may become engaged in the case that a complaint or appeal escalates beyond the certification body's authority, and agrees to cooperate with investigations.
- q. agree that Textile Exchange is given access to client data. Access is offered on the premise that Textile Exchange personnel have each signed a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest declarations, and both required and used in a manner consistent with *TE-501 Textile Exchange Standards Data Policy*.
- r. agree to adhere to the data policy specified in *TE-501 Textile Exchange Standards Data Policy* and to obtain the same agreement from all sites to be included in the scope of certification.

Use of License, Certificates, and Marks of Conformity

D1.1.15 See *ISO17065* 4.1.3

D1.2 Management of Impartiality

D1.2.1 See *ISO17065* 4.2.1

D1.2.2 See *ISO17065* 4.2.2

D1.2.3 See *ISO17065* 4.2.3

D1.2.4 See *ISO17065* 4.2.4

D1.2.5 See *ISO17065* 4.2.5

D1.2.6 See *ISO17065* 4.2.6

D1.2.7 See *ISO17065* 4.2.7

D1.2.8 See *ISO17065* 4.2.8

D1.2.9 See *ISO17065* 4.2.9

D1.2.10 See *ISO17065* 4.2.10

D1.2.11 See *ISO17065* 4.2.11

D1.2.12 See *ISO17065* 4.2.12

D1.2.13 The certification 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 certification body shall require personnel, committee, and board members to declare existing or prior association with an organization subject to certification. Where such an association threatens impartiality, the certification body shall exclude the person concerned from work, discussion,

and decisions at all stages of the certification process related to the potential conflict of interest.

- b. if a conflict of interest between certification personnel and an organization is found after an audit has occurred, another unbiased person shall be assigned to determine if it has affected the certification process and to complete the remainder of the process if applicable.
- c. an individual auditor shall not audit the same organization in more than three consecutive years.
- d. personnel shall not be allowed to assess their own work.

D1.2.14 The certification body shall not provide any other products or services which could compromise the confidentiality, objectivity, or impartiality of its certification process and decisions. In case the certification body also performs other activities in addition to certification, it shall apply additional measures to ensure that the confidentiality, objectivity, and impartiality of its certifications are not affected by these other activities. In particular, the certification body shall not

- a. produce or supply products of the type it certifies;
- b. give advice or provide consultancy services to an organization as to methods of dealing with matters which are barriers (e.g. non-conformities identified in the course of the certification process) to the Standard; or
- c. produce its own standard or certification which substantially copies text or procedures from a Textile Exchange Standard without written permission from Textile Exchange or audit to such a standard which has been produced by another body (e.g. a brand-owned protocol).

NOTE: Explanations regarding the Standard and the certification body's quality assurance system are not considered to be advice or consultancy. General information or training may be given as long as this service is offered to all organizations in a non-discriminatory manner.

D1.3 Liability and Financing

D1.3.1 See *ISO17065 4.3.1*

D1.3.2 See *ISO17065 4.3.2*

D1.3.3 The certification body shall pay fees to Textile Exchange in accordance with the current *ASR-107 Certification Fee Structure*.

D1.4 Non-Discriminatory Conditions

D1.4.1 See *ISO17065 4.4.1*

D1.4.2 See *ISO17065 4.4.2*

D1.4.3 See *ISO17065 4.4.3*

D1.4.4 See *ISO17065 4.4.4*

D1.5 Confidentiality

- D1.5.1 See *ISO17065* 4.5.1
- D1.5.2 See *ISO17065* 4.5.2
- D1.5.3 See *ISO17065* 4.5.3
- D1.5.4 ~~The certification body shall ensure that agreements with organizations allow for necessary information to be shared with Textile Exchange, the accreditation body, and other certification bodies on a confidential basis, as specified in *TE-501 Textile Exchange Standards Data Policy*.~~
- D1.5.5 The certification body shall provide the following information on request to Textile Exchange for each applicant and certified organization, which Textile Exchange shall treat as confidential:
- Copies of audit reports, including full details of non-conformities identified, issued, reviewed, upgraded, and closed;
 - Copies of audit checklists detailing the organization's conformity or non-conformity to each applicable requirement;
 - Copies of application forms;
 - Copies of scope and transaction certificates;
 - Volume data for claimed materials;
 - Names and *scope certificate* numbers for certified subcontractors; and
 - Supporting documentation for *transaction certificates* and audit findings.
- D1.5.6 The certification body shall provide the following information to Textile Exchange, which Textile Exchange may share with accreditation bodies and certification bodies. The certification body shall treat this information as confidential when received about organizations which are certified with other certification bodies.
- Requests for *exemptions* to the Standard and other Textile Exchange requirements;

NOTE: Granted exemptions will be shared without identifying details of the organization. Depending on the nature of the exemption, it may be possible for other certification bodies to identify the organization(s) involved in the exemption.

- Copies of transaction certificates, which may only be shared with the responsible certification bodies of organizations named on the transaction certificate; and
- Identities of any organization which the certification body has banned from certification for one or more of the Standard(s), including the reason (e.g. controversial practices, non-payment), the applicable Standard(s), and the date of the ban.

D1.6 Publicly Available Information

- D1.6.1 See *ISO17065* 4.6

- D1.6.2 The certification body shall make available on request current copies of the Standard(s) for which it is accredited, supporting documents, and links to any vital information on the Textile Exchange website, and shall ensure that applicant and certified organizations are aware of the relevant documents.
- D1.6.3 The following general information shall be provided to Textile Exchange. Textile Exchange may consider this to be public information, which may be published.
- a. The name and address of each of the certification body's regional or national offices which offer services for each applicable Standard, and which have at least one fully qualified auditor (see D3.1.5) based in the region; and
 - b. Information about the certification body's procedures for handling identified non-conformities issued against the applicable Standard(s).
- D1.6.4 All information which appears on the scope certificate shall be provided to Textile Exchange. This will be considered to be public information, with the following exceptions:
- a. Names and addresses of *farms* and *homeworkers*, provided that the farm or homemaker is not the certified organization; and
 - b. Identities of the certified organization's subcontractors.

NOTE: Names and addresses of farms and homeworkers will be considered to be confidential at this time for personal privacy reasons. Textile Exchange intends to review the best way to balance personal privacy with appropriate levels of transparency in the certification system.

- D1.6.5 The certification body shall provide requested information in a timely manner and within the timeframes required by Textile Exchange. This shall include updates to *TTrackit* or any other database systems which may be specified by Textile Exchange.

D1.7 Cooperation with Other Accredited Certification Bodies

- D1.7.1 The certification body shall cooperate with all other accredited certification bodies in order to ensure equal application of the Standards and related documents, including these procedures, as coordinated and requested by Textile Exchange.
- D1.7.2 The certification body shall accept scope certificates and transaction certificates issued by other accredited certification bodies as equivalent to its own certificates with respect to claimed material purchased by organizations which it certifies, unless
- a. the certification body identifies the certificate to be fraudulent (i.e. not genuinely issued by an accredited certification body), in which case the certificate should be forwarded to the applicable certification body and to Textile Exchange for review; or
 - b. if the certification body believes that there is a legitimate reason that the certificate should not be accepted, in which case a complaint against the issuing certification body shall be filed with Textile Exchange.

D1.8 Language

- D1.8.1 The official language of Textile Exchange Standards is English. The certification body shall translate any of its documents and records requested by Textile Exchange into English on request, at the certification body's expense. All regular reporting by the certification body shall be submitted in English.

D2. Structural Requirements

D2.1 Organizational Structure and Top Management

- D2.1.1 See *ISO17065* 5.1.1
- D2.1.2 See *ISO17065* 5.1.2
- D2.1.3 See *ISO17065* 5.1.3
- D2.1.4 See *ISO17065* 5.1.4
- D2.1.5 The certification body shall ensure that a representative is present in-person at the Textile Exchange annual certification body meeting at least once every three years. Attendance first becomes mandatory in the calendar year after the initial application for accreditation.

D2.2 Mechanism for Safeguarding Impartiality

- D2.2.1 See *ISO17065* 5.2.1
- D2.2.2 The mechanism for safeguarding impartiality shall be a committee.
- D2.2.3 See *ISO17065* 5.2.2
- D2.2.4 See *ISO17065* 5.2.3
- D2.2.5 See *ISO17065* 5.2.4

D3. Resource Requirements

D3.1 Certification Body Personnel

- D3.1.1 See *ISO17065* 6.1.1.1
- D3.1.2 See *ISO17065* 6.1.1.2
- D3.1.3 See *ISO17065* 6.1.1.3

Management of Competence

- D3.1.4 See *ISO17065* 6.1.2.1
- D3.1.5 Auditors 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; or
 - ii. secondary education (high school diploma) and four years of relevant professional experience.
- b. Completion of an accredited course on auditing technique based on *ISO19011* (see note).
- c. Completion of a course on the relevant Textile Exchange Standard(s), including a demonstration that the material has been understood.
- d. Demonstrated knowledge of:
 - i. the certification body's procedures;
 - ii. the general production methods and processes applicable to the organizations to be audited;
 - iii. the goals and critical issues addressed by the Standard;
 - iv. issues and risks specific to the sectors and countries of the organizations to be audited; and
 - v. the preparation of written audit reports that are clear, accurate, and complete, and which articulate the audit findings in relation to the Standard and other applicable requirements.
- e. Participation in a minimum of three audits to the Standard, under the supervision of a qualified auditor. Participation may include observing the audit or conducting audit tasks. A maximum of two audits may be substituted with auditing experience in a relevant sector (e.g. supply chain auditing experience for CCS).
- f. Completion of a minimum of one shadow audit to the Standard, where the auditor is evaluated by a qualified auditor. The auditor shall prepare a report of the shadow audit which recommends that the auditor candidate be qualified for the Standard. This is in addition to D3.1.5.e.
- g. Any additional auditor qualifications defined in the Certification Procedures.

NOTES: The following notes apply for auditor qualifications:

- Certification bodies should refer to *ISO17021-1* Annex D for guidance on the qualities and behaviors of good auditors and in assessing auditors during the hiring process.
- Courses on the Standard(s) may currently be run in-house by certification bodies. Textile Exchange may offer courses directly, which may become mandatory for auditors.
- CCS training is required if the audit includes CCS requirements (e.g. RDS slaughterhouses). CCS training may be considered to cover all CCS-only scopes.
- *ISO19011* based courses include *ISO9001:LA*, *ISO14001:LA*, *ISO45001:LA*, and accredited training courses for other certification systems (e.g. FSC) which include *ISO19011* content. Accredited courses are required by the end of 2021. Informal courses (e.g. internal certification body training) may be used before this date.

- D3.1.6 Auditors shall meet the following requirements in order to maintain their qualifications:
- a. Receive ongoing training on updates to the relevant Standard(s) and related requirements.
 - b. Conduct at least one on-site audit per Standard every 12 months.
 - c. Complete a shadow audit to each Standard a minimum of once every three years, where the auditor is evaluated by another qualified auditor. The other auditor shall prepare a report of the shadow audit which recommends that the auditor retain their qualification.

NOTE: Evaluation by an accreditation body assessor does not meet D3.1.6.c.

- D3.1.7 If a certification body wishes to qualify an auditor for a Standard who has been previously qualified by another certification body, it shall ensure that requirements D3.1.5.a-.e have been previously met, and shall complete requirement D3.1.5.f directly.

- D3.1.8 Certification decision makers shall meet the following minimum qualifications:
- a. Either
 - i. current auditor qualification for the Standard (preferred option); or
 - ii. meets requirements D3.1.5.a, .c, .d, and .e, and any additional qualification requirements specified in the Certification Procedures.
 - b. Knowledge of
 - i. the certification body's procedures for certification decision making; and
 - ii. the Standard and all relevant related documents, interpretations, and guidance.
 - c. Be an employee of the certification body or one of its fully or majority-owned subsidiaries.
 - d. Completion of a minimum of three certification decisions under the supervision of a qualified certification decision maker.

- D3.1.9 Shadow auditors (auditors evaluating other auditors) shall be qualified auditors who are independent of the organization being audited, shall not be involved in the certification decision for the audit, and shall not be family members of the auditor being evaluated.

NOTE: The shadow auditor may take over the conduct of an audit if it is determined to be necessary for the successful completion of the audit. In this case, the auditor being evaluated has not met the requirement for a shadow audit.

- D3.1.10 The certification body shall conduct annual performance reviews of auditors, certification decision makers, and other *personnel* involved in the certification process. Clients shall be provided the opportunity to comment on auditors' performance, which, when provided, shall be used in the evaluation of auditors.

However, client comments on auditor performance shall not be considered as impartial and shall form only a portion of the auditor evaluation.

- D3.1.11 The certification body shall have a program for the ongoing training and calibration of auditors and other certification personnel.
- D3.1.12 If a certification body cannot qualify new auditors and/or certification decision makers using the above requirements (e.g. due to being newly in the accreditation process, or due to the departure of key personnel), the certification body shall prepare a documented plan to qualify initial personnel and shall receive approval from the accreditation body prior to qualifying the personnel.
- D3.1.13 See *ISO17065* 6.1.2.2
- D3.1.14 See *ISO17065* 6.1.3
- D3.1.15 The certification body shall ensure that any Textile Exchange created, organized, or accredited mandatory trainings are completed by the appropriate certification body personnel. Textile Exchange will communicate when and for whom a training is mandatory.

D3.2 Resources for Evaluation

- D3.2.1 See *ISO17065* 6.2.1

Subcontracting

- D3.2.2 See *ISO17065* 6.2.2.1

NOTE: The operation of the certification body through a network of legal entities which are fully or majority-owned subsidiaries of the certification body is not considered to be subcontracting. The use of *freelancers* is also not considered to be subcontracting.

- D3.2.3 The certification body shall not subcontract to non-independent bodies (i.e. bodies which are not independent from the organization being audited). (Ref: *ISO17065* 6.2.2.2)
- D3.2.4 See *ISO17065* 6.2.2.3
- D3.2.5 See *ISO17065* 6.2.2.4
- D3.2.6 The certification body shall
- Keep final responsibility for the issuing, maintaining, reissuing, suspending, and withdrawing of scope and transaction certificates. Delegation of certification decisions to *subcontractors* or *freelancers* is not permitted.
 - Take responsibility for ensuring that training and qualification requirements are met for all subcontracted auditors unless the subcontractor is an accredited certification body for the Standard.
 - Ensure that the subcontractor is

- i. competent to perform the subcontracted work consistent with the requirements set out in these procedures for the certification body and its personnel;
 - ii. not involved with the operation, process, or product that is subject to certification in any way that may compromise impartiality; and
 - iii. committed to the policies and procedures as defined by the certification body.
- d. Monitor the subcontractor's performance, including a minimum annual evaluation and ongoing monitoring of work (e.g. through the certification decision process).
- e. Ensure that business interests do not interfere with the impartiality of audits if the subcontractor is responsible for both auditing and client recruitment or management.
- f. Only use subcontractors who hold accreditation to *ISO17065*.

D4. Process Requirements

D4.1 General

- D4.1.1 See *ISO17065* 7.1.1
- D4.1.2 See *ISO17065* 7.1.2
- D4.1.3 See *ISO17065* 7.1.3

D4.2 Application

- D4.2.1 See *ISO17065* 7.2
- D4.2.2 The certification body shall also obtain the following information from applicants:
- a. an application form;
 - b. information about any past certifications, audits, or signed agreements with other certification bodies for the Standard; and
 - c. a copy of the most recent audit report, if the applicant was previously audited or certified for the Standard.

D4.3 Application Review

- D4.3.1 See *ISO17065* 7.3.1
- D4.3.2 See *ISO17065* 7.3.2
- D4.3.3 See *ISO17065* 7.3.3
- D4.3.4 See *ISO17065* 7.3.4
- D4.3.5 See *ISO17065* 7.3.5

- D4.3.6 The certification body shall prepare a proposal for each applicant so that the applicant may review and select the best certification body to meet its needs unless the certification body chooses to decline the application and to not provide services to the applicant.
- D4.3.7 The certification body shall provide organizations with an up-to-date description of its procedures for conducting certification, including
- a. contractual conditions, including fees and possible contractual penalties;
 - b. general information on additional fees which will or may apply to the organization (e.g. fees to close non-conformities or add sites to group certifications);
 - c. the organization's rights and duties, including the appeals procedure;
 - d. the current version of the Standard and corresponding relevant documents released by Textile Exchange;
 - e. relevant program changes, including regular updates of procedures and Standards;
 - f. audit procedures applied by the certification body in the course of certification; and
 - g. documentation to be maintained by the organization to enable verification of conformity with the Standard by the certification body.

Risk Assessment and Sampling

- D4.3.8 Where a risk assessment is required to meet the requirements of this procedure or the Certification Procedures, the procedure in Appendix C shall be followed.
- D4.3.9 Where a calculated sample size is required, the calculated sample size shall only be rounded up to the next integer. (e.g. A calculated sample of 2.1 means a sample size of 3 is required.)

D4.4 Evaluation

Audit Protocol

- D4.4.1 See *ISO17065* 7.4.1
- D4.4.2 The certification body shall carry out audits in order to verify information and conformity with certification requirements applicable to the organization. It shall follow a set protocol to facilitate non-discriminatory and objective inspection.
- D4.4.3 The audit protocol shall at the very minimum include the following, as applicable to the organization:
- a. Auditing of the organization's sites, which may also include visits to non-certified areas if there is reason for doing so;
 - b. Review of records and accounts in order to verify flow of *claimed materials* and other similar materials (input/output reconciliation and the tracing back);
 - c. Identification of areas of risk to *product integrity*;
 - d. Verification that changes to the Standards and to related requirements have been effectively implemented;

- e. Verification that corrective actions have been taken, with special focus on corrective actions for non-conformities which have been closed since the previous audit; and
- f. If the previous audit was conducted by another certification body and within two years prior to the audit, a full evaluation of any non-conformities which were issued in the previous audit report, whether or not they were previously closed.

NOTE: More detailed criteria on audit content and requirements (including sampling where applicable) are provided in the Certification Procedures.

D4.4.4 Audits shall be carried out on-site unless one of the following applies:

- a. the audit is a partial audit for the evaluation of non-conformities which do not require on-site evaluation (see Appendix B); or
- b. the Standard identifies the organization as not requiring on-site evaluation.

NOTE: The certification body may require an on-site audit when a remote audit is permitted.

D4.4.5 The audit duration shall be a minimum of three hours per scope certificate, not including *confirmation visits* and evaluation of non-conformities after the closing meeting (where applicable), **unless indicated as an exemption to this requirement in the Certification Procedures.**

NOTE: The minimum audit duration will not be sufficient for the vast majority of audits. The certification body should plan accordingly. Further guidance and requirements are provided in the Certification Procedures.

Audit Team

D4.4.6 See *ISO17065 7.4.2*

D4.4.7 The audit team may consist of one or more of the following roles, proportionate to certification body needs and the scale of the audit:

- a. One or more auditors (required). If more than one auditor is part of the team, one auditor shall be designated the lead auditor and shall take overall responsibility for ensuring that the audit is complete.
- b. One or more auditors in training.
- c. A shadow auditor, if the audit is part of an auditor's evaluation.
- d. One or more translators or interpreters, if needed. And
- e. One or more technical experts who are not qualified auditors, if needed.

NOTE: Accreditation body assessors, Textile Exchange representatives, and other outside observers are not considered to be part of the audit team.

D4.4.8 If an auditor is not fluent in the operating language of the auditee, they shall be accompanied by an interpreter. An interpreter is needed for worker interviews if the auditor and workers do not share a common language, even if management staff are able to communicate directly with the auditor. An auditor in training or a technical expert may also act as an interpreter.

- D4.4.9 When translators or interpreters are used in audits, the translators and interpreters shall be independent of the organization being evaluated. In all cases, the names and affiliations of translators and interpreters shall be included in audit reports.
- D4.4.10 When technical experts are used in audits, the technical experts shall be independent of the organization being evaluated. The names, qualifications, and affiliations of technical experts shall be included in audit reports.

Audit Resources

- D4.4.11 See *ISO17065 7.4.3*
- D4.4.12 See *ISO17065 7.4.4*
- D4.4.13 See *ISO17065 7.4.5*

Non-Conformity

- D4.4.14 The certification body shall issue and classify non-conformities as described in Appendix B.
- D4.4.15 See *ISO17065 7.4.6*
- D4.4.16 See *ISO17065 7.4.7*
- D4.4.17 See *ISO17065 7.4.8*

Audit Report

- D4.4.18 See *ISO17065 7.4.9*
- D4.4.19 The certification body shall report all evaluation findings according to documented reporting procedures, which shall include the following elements:
- a. Audit reports shall follow a format appropriate to the type of operation inspected, and facilitate a non-discriminatory, objective, and comprehensive analysis of the respective processing system.
 - b. The audit report shall cover all relevant aspects of the Standard and adequately validate the information provided by the organization. It shall include:
 - i. a statement of any observations relating to conformity or non-conformity with the certification requirements;
 - ii. clear identification of any non-conformities issued, including the timeline for correction (see Appendix B);
 - iii. date and duration of the inspection, persons interviewed, facilities visited;
 - iv. type of documents reviewed; and
 - v. explanation of auditor's rationale for their choice of samples taken.
 - c. An audit checklist showing detailed findings for each applicable requirement shall be prepared. The checklist should be included in the audit report.

- d. The auditor(s) shall submit the audit report and supporting documentation promptly, providing sufficient time for review and the final certification decision to be made.
- e. Final reports shall be provided to the organization. If the audit checklist is not included in the audit report, it shall also be provided to the organization.
- f. The certification body shall document measures applied to verify the effectiveness of corrective actions taken by operators to meet the requirements.

Audit Frequency

D4.4.20 Audits shall be conducted annually for each certified organization. Recertification audits should be completed no later than 60 days prior to the expiry of a scope certificate.

Auditing of Multiple Sites

D4.4.21 When multiple sites (excluding subcontractors) are included in a scope certificate, each site shall be evaluated during each audit unless an alternative is specifically defined in the Standard (e.g. group certification).

D4.4.22 Audits of *groups* shall meet the requirements of Appendix E.

Auditing of Subcontractors

D4.4.23 When outsourcing to subcontractors is included in the certificate scope, the certification body shall audit all subcontractors on-site unless the subcontractor is certified to the Standard or unless an alternative is offered in the Certification Procedures.

D4.4.24 In all cases, data regarding outsourced activities shall be reviewed during the audit.

High Risk Situations

D4.4.25 The certification body shall amend and adapt its procedures to address higher risks found in certain situations specific to the Standard's certification. See the Certification Procedures for more information. Examples of potential high-risk situations and related measures include:

- a. Parallel processing of certified and non-certified products: In order to prevent co-mingling or confusion of certified products with other products that do not meet the Standards, the certification body shall verify whether handling and documentation regarding processing, storage, and sales are well managed through trained personnel and clear distinctions between certified and non-certified products. In cases where products are not visibly distinguishable, specified measures are applied to reduce the risk.
- b. Where an operator is certified for a Standard that shares the same scope (e.g. recycled content for RCS and another standard which recognizes recycled content), the certification body ensures that material is not double-counted and that it is tracked appropriately. If the other scope certificate is

with a different certification body, the two certification bodies seek information exchange to prevent misuse of certificates.

D4.5 Review

- D4.5.1 See *ISO17065 7.5.1*
- D4.5.2 See *ISO17065 7.5.2*
- D4.5.3 The review shall include a review of the report by a qualified certification decision maker (see D3.1.8).

D4.6 Certification Decision

- D4.6.1 See *ISO17065 7.6.1*
- D4.6.2 See *ISO17065 7.6.2*
- D4.6.3 A qualified certification decision maker (see D3.1.8) shall make the certification decision.
- D4.6.4 See *ISO17065 7.6.3*
- D4.6.5 See *ISO17065 7.6.4*
- D4.6.6 See *ISO17065 7.6.5*
- D4.6.7 See *ISO17065 7.6.6*
- D4.6.8 Certification decisions shall be completed within 60 days of the audit. If a certificate is not issued by this date, certification shall be denied and a new audit shall be required before the organization may become certified to the Standard.
- D4.6.9 Certification decisions may include requests for the correction of major or minor non-conformities within a specified time period. In this case, an updated certification decision shall be made upon closure of the non-conformities or upon the deadline for the non-conformities, whichever comes first.
- D4.6.10 Within the 60 days allowed for finalization, the certification body shall not delay the certification decision unnecessarily in order to avoid suspension of a scope certificate (e.g. by delaying all certification decisions until all non-conformities have been closed).

D4.7 Certification Documentation

- D4.7.1 See *ISO17065 7.7.1*
- D4.7.2 Certification documentation shall take the form of a scope certificate which meets the requirements of *ASR-103 Policy for Scope Certificates*.
- D4.7.3 Scope certificates shall be valid for a maximum of one year from the date of issue, unless otherwise defined in the relevant Standard's Certification

Procedures. The date (month and day) one day after the expiry of the first scope certificate shall be identified as the anniversary date, and future scope certificates shall expire one day before the anniversary date.

NOTE: Changes to an anniversary date require approval from Textile Exchange due to technical limitations on *TTrackit*.

D4.7.4 Scope certificate validity shall only be extended with approval from Textile Exchange for reasons which are outside of the certification body's and the organization's control (e.g. force majeure).

D4.7.5 See *ISO17065 7.7.2*

D4.7.6 See *ISO17065 7.7.3*

D4.7.7 When requested by a certified organization, transaction certificates shall be issued in accordance with *ASR-104 Policy for Transaction Certificates*.

D4.8 Directory of Certified Products

D4.8.1 See *ISO17065 7.8*

D4.8.2 The certification body shall maintain records of scope details as specified in B3.2.1.

D4.9 Surveillance

D4.9.1 See *ISO17065 7.9.1*

D4.9.2 See *ISO17065 7.9.2*

D4.9.3 See *ISO17065 7.9.3*

D4.9.4 See *ISO17065 7.9.4*

D4.9.5 The certification body shall respond to all tips and complaints about fraudulent products or services following its complaints process (see D4.14). If fraud or other misrepresentation is found to exist, the certification body shall take appropriate action (see D4.11).

D4.10 Changes Affecting Certification

D4.10.1 See *ISO17065 7.10.1*

D4.10.2 See *ISO17065 7.10.2*

D4.10.3 The certification body shall require each certified organization to provide timely updates about changes to information included on the application form and/or the scope certificate. Upon receipt of updates, the certification body shall:

- a. determine whether the announced changes require any further auditing or document review, and inform the organization of this;

- b. conduct any required auditing or document review prior to approving the change in certification scope;
- c. issue an updated scope certificate reflecting the change in scope, if the change relates to information included on the scope certificate; and
- d. inform Textile Exchange of the change, if the change involves data ordinarily collected by Textile Exchange.

D4.10.4 See *ISO17065* 7.10.3

D4.11 Termination, Reduction, Suspension, or Withdrawal of Certification

D4.11.1 See *ISO17065* 7.11.1

D4.11.2 See *ISO17065* 7.11.2

D4.11.3 Non-conformities shall be issued and evaluated according to the procedures included in Appendix B.

D4.11.4 See *ISO17065* 7.11.3

D4.11.5 See *ISO17065* 7.11.4

D4.11.6 See *ISO17065* 7.11.5

D4.11.7 See *ISO17065* 7.11.6

D4.11.8 The certification body shall inform Textile Exchange, the accreditation body, and all direct customers who have received transaction certificates from a certified organization during the previous 12 months when a scope certificate is suspended or withdrawn.

NOTE: Textile Exchange may implement an automatic notification system which would meet the requirement of D4.11.8. In this case, the certification body would no longer be required to provide notifications.

D4.11.9 If a scope certificate is suspended for 180 days or until its expiry date – whichever is sooner – the scope certificate shall be withdrawn.

D4.11.10 The certification body shall not issue transaction certificates relating to scope certificates which are suspended or withdrawn, regardless of when the product was sold, and shall not permit a suspended organization to sell claimed materials or to use logos or labels for the Standard.

D4.12 Transfer of Scope Certificates

D4.12.1 Certified organizations may choose to change certification bodies. The succeeding certification body shall conduct an audit which also considers past conformity with the Standard before certifying the organization.

D4.12.2 The preceding certification body shall provide relevant documentation about the certified organization, including audit reports and records of non-conformities, to the succeeding certification body upon request from the organization or from the

succeeding certification body once an agreement has been signed with the organization.

- D4.12.3 Transaction certificates shall be issued by the certification body which held the scope certificate on the date when claimed materials were shipped. Shipments occurring before the change in certification bodies may not appear on the same transaction certificate as shipments occurring after the change in certification bodies.

D4.13 Records

- D4.13.1 See *ISO17065* 7.12.1
- D4.13.2 See *ISO17065* 7.12.2
- D4.13.3 See *ISO17065* 7.12.3
- D4.13.4 The certification body shall maintain a system of records (either electronic or paper documents) to demonstrate that the procedures have been effectively fulfilled, particularly with respect to application forms, audit reports, and other documents relating to granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, suspending, and withdrawing certification.
- D4.13.5 The records shall be identified, managed, and disposed of in such a way as to ensure the integrity of the process and the confidentiality of the information.
- D4.13.6 Records for each organization shall be up to date and contain all relevant information, including audit reports, certification history, and transaction certificates.
- D4.13.7 Records shall be kept on exemptions granted, appeals, and subsequent actions.
- D4.13.8 Records shall be kept for at least five years, or as required by law, in order to be able to demonstrate how procedures have been applied.

D4.14 Complaints and Appeals

- D4.14.1 See *ISO17065* 7.13.1
- D4.14.2 See *ISO17065* 7.13.2
- D4.14.3 See *ISO17065* 7.13.3
- D4.14.4 See *ISO17065* 7.13.4
- D4.14.5 See *ISO17065* 7.13.5
- D4.14.6 See *ISO17065* 7.13.6
- D4.14.7 See *ISO17065* 7.13.7
- D4.14.8 See *ISO17065* 7.13.8

D4.14.9 See *ISO17065* 7.13.9

D4.15 Exemptions to Certification Requirements

D4.15.1 The certification body shall have clear criteria and procedures for requesting and tracking exemptions to requirements for certification, including the basis on which the exemption is granted.

D4.15.2 The certification body shall receive prior approval from Textile Exchange for each exemption. Exemptions shall be of limited duration and shall be resubmitted for approval annually.

D4.15.3 The certification body may approve exemptions directly in cases where Textile Exchange has already approved an exemption which covers an organization's situation (e.g. an exemption which applies to a country). Exemptions issued under this requirement shall be reported to Textile Exchange quarterly.

NOTE: Requirements within a Standard that are not applicable to a particular client are not considered exemptions.

D5. Management System Requirements

NOTE: The certification body may use a management system based on *ISO9001* to address management system requirements, as described in *ISO17065* 8.1.

D5.1 General Management System Documentation

D5.1.1 See *ISO17065* 8.2.1

D5.1.2 The certification body shall maintain documented procedures which address work in relation to the Standard(s) and are appropriate for the type, range and volume of work performed, and considering the number of personnel involved in the process. Procedures shall include at least procedures for the following elements:

- a. Performing certification, including issuing, maintaining, reissuing, suspending, and withdrawing of scope certificates;
- b. The recruitment, selection, training, and assignment of personnel;
- c. Reviewing quality (e.g. internal audits, management review); and
- d. Ensuring that the Standard is applied consistently by all of its personnel.

D5.1.3 The certification body shall ensure that the documented procedures and relevant associated documents are accessible to all relevant personnel.

D5.1.4 See *ISO17065* 8.2.2

D5.1.5 See *ISO17065* 8.2.3

D5.1.6 See *ISO17065* 8.2.4

D5.1.7 See *ISO17065* 8.2.5

D5.2 Control of Documents

- D5.2.1 See *ISO17065* 8.3.1
- D5.2.2 See *ISO17065* 8.3.2
- D5.2.3 The certification body shall provide updated versions of the Standard and related documents as applicable to the certification body's personnel and certified/applicant organizations.

D5.3 Control of Records

- D5.3.1 See *ISO17065* 8.4.1
- D5.3.2 See *ISO17065* 8.4.2
- D5.3.3 Record retention time shall be a minimum of five years.

D5.4 Management Review

- D5.4.1 See *ISO17065* 8.5.1
- D5.4.2 See *ISO17065* 8.5.2
- D5.4.3 See *ISO17065* 8.5.3

D5.5 Internal Audits

- D5.5.1 See *ISO17065* 8.6.1
- D5.5.2 See *ISO17065* 8.6.2
- D5.5.3 The internal audit program shall include all Standards for which the certification body is accredited or has applied for accreditation.
- D5.5.4 See *ISO17065* 8.6.3
- D5.5.5 See *ISO17065* 8.6.4
- D5.5.6 Internal audit results relating to the Standards shall be provided to Textile Exchange for review on an annual basis.

D5.6 Corrective Actions

- D5.6.1 See *ISO17065* 8.7.1
- D5.6.2 See *ISO17065* 8.7.2
- D5.6.3 See *ISO17065* 8.7.3
- D5.6.4 See *ISO17065* 8.7.4

D5.6.5 Non-conformities and corrective actions shall be documented and included in internal audit results which are provided to Textile Exchange.

D5.7 Preventative Actions

D5.7.1 See *ISO17065* 8.8.1

D5.7.2 See *ISO17065* 8.8.2

D5.7.3 See *ISO17065* 8.8.3

Appendix A - Terms and Definitions

Refer to the document *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents* for definitions of terms used in these procedures. Key definitions are included below. Defined terms are shown in italics in the first usage in this document, and in some other uses for clarity.

The following verbal forms are used to indicate requirements, recommendations, permissions, or capabilities:

1. “shall” indicates a requirement,
2. “should” indicates a recommendation,
3. “may” indicates a permission, and
4. “can” indicates a possibility or capability.

Accreditation Body (AB): An authorized third-party carrying out *assessment* and *accreditation* in accordance with the provisions set out in the ACP. An authorized accreditation body may issue accreditations.

Accreditation: A third-party attestation that a *certification body* is competent to carry out specific *certification* activities. Achieving accreditation gives a certification body the authority to grant certification to a *Standard*.

Assessment: Process undertaken by an *accreditation body* to assess the quality and competence of a *certification body* based on a defined scope of *accreditation*.

Assessor: An *accreditation body* representative who conducts *assessments*.

Audit: An evaluation undertaken by a *certification body* to verify conformity with a *Standard*. It may be conducted on-site or remotely and may involve visual inspection, interviews, and/or document reviews.

Auditor: A *certification body* representative who conducts *audits*.

Certification Body (CB): An *accredited* third-party carrying out *auditing* and *certification* in accordance with the provisions set out in the applicable *Standard* and the ACP. An accredited certification body may issue *scope certificates* and *transaction certificates*.

Certification: The provision by an independent *certification body* of written assurance (a *scope certificate*) that the product, service, or system in question meets specific requirements.

Certified Organization: An *organization* which holds a *scope certificate*.

Freelancer: An individual who is hired by an *accreditation body* or a *certification body* to act as an *assessor* or an *auditor* on a contract/non-employee basis, but subject to the accreditation/certification body’s procedures. A freelancer may not also conduct client recruitment or management activities (see: *subcontractor*). An individual may be considered to be a freelancer if payment is made to a company (e.g. an incorporated consulting business), provided that the work is stipulated to be done by a named individual and that the business does not engage in client recruitment or management activities.

Group: A *scope certificate* which includes multiple, separately owned *sites* whose conformity with the standard falls under the responsibility of another separately owned legal entity with an *internal control system (ICS)*. The entity which manages the ICS is considered the *organization*. Group eligibility requirements are defined in each *Standard*.

Internal Control System (ICS): The system used by an organization for the oversight and management of conformity with a Standard for multiple sites, such as a group.

Organization: A legal entity which is certified to or in the process of becoming certified to a Standard.

Primary Scope: Certification or accreditation scope which covers primary activities of a standard which form the basis of a *claim*. This includes the farm (RDS, RWS, RMS, RAS) and/or first processing stage (OCS, RCS, GRS, RDS).

Product Integrity: The soundness of a product with respect to a claim being made under a standard. This does not include the physical product quality or other attributes which fall outside the scope of the applicable standard(s).

Scope Certificate (SC): A document issued by the *certification body* which verifies that an *organization* is competent to produce and sell specified *claimed materials* in conformity with a Standard. See *ASR-103 Policy for Scope Certificates*.

Secondary Scope: *Certification* or *accreditation* scope which is not a *primary scope*, and which covers organizations who receive incoming transaction certificates. Additional requirements (e.g. environmental, chemical, social) may also apply to organizations with secondary scopes depending on the standard.

Site: Any geographically distinct unit within a certificate scope. Locations which are geographically distinct or have different civic addresses are considered to be separate sites (see exception for *farms*). *Subcontractors* are not considered to be sites. Includes: farms, *facilities*, offices

Standard: The relevant Textile Exchange-owned standard, which may be any of the following: the Content Claim Standard (CCS), Organic Content Standard (OCS), Recycled Claim Standard (RCS), Global Recycled Standard (GRS), Responsible Down Standard (RDS), Responsible Wool Standard (RWS), Responsible Mohair Standard (RMS), Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAS), or any other standards that come under the ownership of Textile Exchange.

Subcontractor: A legal entity hired by an *organization* to perform services (e.g. storage, processing) on a *claimed material*. Subcontractors take physical possession but not legal ownership of claimed materials and are independent of the organization which *outsources* the material. **OR** An independent legal entity hired by an *accreditation body* to provide services related to *accreditation* activities, excluding *freelancers*. **OR** An independent legal entity hired by a *certification body* to provide services related to *certification* activities, excluding *freelancers*.

Suspension: The limitation of a *scope certificate* or *accreditation* due to a specific *non-conformity* or issue. A suspension may be lifted when the non-conformity or issue is resolved, and the scope certificate or accreditation becomes active again immediately.

Transaction Certificate (TC): A document issued by a *certification body* that verifies that products being sold or shipped from one *organization* to another conform to a given Standard and may be treated as *claimed materials* by the receiver. See *ASR-104 Policy for Transaction Certificates*.

Withdrawal: The revocation of a *scope certificate* or *accreditation* due to a specific non-conformity or issue, or at the request of the *accredited/certified* party. Following a withdrawal of accreditation/certification, a new *assessment/audit* is required for accreditation/certification to return to active status.

Appendix B - Non-Conformity (NC) Classification and Management

When a non-conformity is identified during an audit, it shall be classified according to the levels below.

In some Textile Exchange Standards, some requirements are assigned non-conformity levels. This is primarily used for animal welfare requirements. In this case, the certification body shall issue non-conformities for the specified requirement to the indicated level at a minimum. For all other requirements, the certification body shall assign a level based on the requirements below.

The certification body shall apply the specified timeline for each non-conformity based on its level. Shorter timelines may be given when the certification body believes they are justified.

Evaluation of non-conformities shall be conducted on-site when this is needed for credible evaluation of the non-conformity. The use of alternative technologies (e.g. video conferencing) should be considered prior to requiring an additional site visit.

In all cases, if a scope certificate is not issued within 60 days of an initial audit (see D4.6.8), or if a certificate is suspended for 180 days or until its expiry, whichever is shorter (see D4.11.9), a new audit is needed before the organization may become (re-)certified.

1. Critical Non-Conformity



Definition	Critical non-conformities represent serious failures to meet the fundamental principles of the Standard.	
Applicable Standards	All	
Initial Audit	Timeline	Prior to certification
	Consequence if not closed	Scope certificate shall not be issued
Recertification Audit	Timeline	Immediate
	Consequence if not closed	Scope certificate shall be suspended
Requirements	<p>1.1 Critical non-conformities shall be reserved for requirements identified as critical in the Standard, or for intentional fraud.</p> <p>1.2 The auditor shall notify the certification body immediately when a critical non-conformity is identified.</p> <p>1.3 When a critical non-conformity is identified for a certified organization, the certification body shall suspend the scope certificate immediately. In all cases, the suspension shall be enacted within a maximum of five business days from the day the critical non-conformity was identified, even if the entire audit has not yet been completed.</p> <p>1.4 When a scope certificate includes multiple sites (including groups) and a site receives a critical non-conformity, the site may</p>	

	<p>be suspended from the certificate to avoid suspension of the entire scope certificate.</p> <p>NOTE: 1.4 does not apply to critical non-conformities issued to an ICS.</p> <p>1.5 The certification body shall immediately notify Textile Exchange of all critical non-conformities, including details of the non-conformity.</p>
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2. Major Non-Conformity

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Definition	Major non-conformities occur if, either alone or in combination with further non-conformities relating to other requirements, they result in, or are likely to result in, a fundamental or systematic failure to achieve the objectives of the standards system.	
Applicable Standards	All	
Initial Audit	Timeline	Prior to certification
	Consequence if not closed	Scope certificate shall not be issued
Recertification Audit	Timeline	30 days from the audit (closing meeting), and prior to recertification
	Consequence if not closed	Scope certificate shall not be reissued, and shall be suspended if the 30-day timeline ends before expiry of the scope certificate
Requirements	<p>2.1 Major non-conformities shall be issued in the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For requirements which are indicated as major requirements in the Standard. OR 2. Where, either alone or in combination with further non-conformities, the non-conformity results in or may result in a fundamental or systematic failure to meet the objectives of the Standard. This may be indicated by non-conformities which: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. continue over a long period of time, b. are repeated or systematic, c. affect a wide area, d. affect the integrity of the product or the Standard, or e. are not corrected or adequately addressed once they are identified. <p>2.2 Scope certificates shall be suspended immediately if there are five or more open major non-conformities.</p>	

3. Minor Non-Conformity Mi

Definition	Minor non-conformities occur when a single observed lapse has been identified in a procedure required as part of the client's management system.	
Applicable Standards	All	
All Audits	Timeline	60 days from the audit (closing meeting)
	Consequence if not closed	Non-conformity is upgraded to become a major non-conformity with a timeline 30 days from the original deadline
Requirements	<p>3.1 Minor non-conformities shall be issued in the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For requirements which are indicated as minor requirements, unless the certification body determines that the non-conformity is major based on the requirements above; OR 2. Where the non-conformity is a temporary lapse, non-systemic, limited in scale, or does not represent a fundamental failure to achieve the objectives of the Standard. 	

4. Recommendation R

Definition	Recommendations are criteria that have been included as examples of best practice. They may indicate future expectations and flag what may be coming in a future version of the standard.	
Applicable Standards	RDS, RWS, RMS, RAS	
All Audits	Timeline	None
	Consequence if not closed	None.
Requirements	<p>4.1 Recommendations shall be issued for any animal welfare criteria which are not met and which are identified as recommendations.</p> <p>4.2 Recommendations shall be issued using 'should' language.</p> <p>4.3 The certification body is not required to follow up on recommendations.</p> <p>4.4 The certification body shall ensure that recommendations do not represent consultancy (see <i>ISO17065</i> 3.2).</p>	

Appendix C - Risk Assessment Process

The following process applies whenever a certification body is required to conduct a risk assessment. Risk assessments may be used for a range of requirements, though the process is the same.

1. Risk assessments shall be conducted by the certification body prior to each audit and at other times as needed (e.g. due to change in certificate scope or additional audit), using the applicable risk assessment table.
2. The certification body shall document the risk assessment and shall inform the organization of the assigned risk designation of very low (where applicable), low, medium, or high.
3. The certification body shall consider any additional relevant criteria it is aware of when conducting risk assessments. The certification body should notify Textile Exchange of such criteria if the criteria may be broadly relevant.
4. Where the risk assessment is conducted on a set of sites (e.g. farm group members, subcontractors), that set may be divided into subsets of similar sites which each receive a separate risk assessment and related sampling.

Qualitative Risk Assessments

5. In a qualitative risk assessment, criteria are assigned one of five designations, as follows. Some designations may not be used on all risk assessment tables.
 1. Critical – Criteria which indicate automatic high risk. If one or more critical criteria are met, a high risk designation shall be assigned.
 2. High – Criteria which contribute significantly to a high risk designation.
 3. Medium – Criteria which contribute to a high risk designation.
 4. Low – Criteria which do not contribute to a high risk designation.
 5. Very Low – Criteria which indicate a very low risk designation may be given. This is generally for products or processes where certification is in place.
6. To conduct a qualitative risk assessment, the certification body shall identify and document which risk criteria apply to the organization or subset. Based on the criteria which apply, a risk designation shall be assigned.

Quantitative Risk Assessments

NOTE: Quantitative risk assessments are not used by Textile Exchange at this time, but may be used in the future.

7. In a quantitative risk assessment, criteria are assigned a numerical score. To conduct a quantitative risk assessment, the certification body shall identify and document which risk criteria apply to the organization or subset, then add up the total score.
8. Scores from quantitative risk assessments may be used directly (e.g. to calculate sampling rates) or may be correlated to risk designations. The certification body shall assign risk scores and designations as defined for the specific risk assessment.

Appendix D - Grace Period Requirements

Contracts between Textile Exchange and an applicant *certification body* (CB) may allow for a grace period, during which Textile Exchange grants the certification body a limited license to perform certifications to the specified Standard(s) prior to completing full accreditation by a third-party *accreditation body* (AB). The grace period is intended to reduce barriers to entry for new certification bodies and to help to facilitate the *assessment* process.

1. The certification body shall identify the planned accreditation body during the initial application process. Once the application is accepted by Textile Exchange, the accreditation body shall be considered to be agreed upon. (See D1.1.8.)
2. Textile Exchange will only agree to a grace period upon the recommendation of the agreed-upon accreditation body.
3. Upon receipt of an application form, the accreditation body shall complete a document review of the certification body's systems. This should be completed within one month of receipt of the application form and documents for review.
4. Upon completion of the document review, the accreditation body may submit a written recommendation that a grace period be granted to the certification body provided that the certification body
 1. holds an existing accreditation to a Textile Exchange Standard, or:
 1. holds an existing accreditation to ISO17065 for any standard; and
 2. has sufficient legal, staffing, and financial infrastructure to provide certification within the proposed scope.
 2. has personnel with sufficient experience with the industry and region of the proposed scope, including the following as applicable to the Standard:
 1. livestock of the type to be certified (e.g. sheep, waterfowl);
 2. social conformity;
 3. environmental conformity;
 4. chemical use assessment; and
 5. volume reconciliation calculations.
 3. has adequate procedures and documents to initiate certification to the Standard(s).
 4. received ten or fewer major non-conformities as a result of the document review. And
 5. did not receive any major non-conformities to the topics identified above as a result of the document review.
5. Following the successful completion of an assessment, the accreditation body may also recommend a grace period for any certification body provided that there are no major non-conformities or that all major non-conformities have been closed.
6. Upon receipt of the accreditation body's recommendation, Textile Exchange may offer the certification body a contract which includes a grace period.
7. The grace period shall be valid:

1. from the date the contract is fully signed;
2. until the specified date, which shall not be later than 18 months after the date of the initial application to Textile Exchange;
3. for a specified number of certified *sites* per Standard, which should not be greater than 20 and should ordinarily be 10.

NOTE: The specified number of sites may be included in one or more scope certificates. For group certificates, the number of sites to be audited (excluding confirmation visits) shall be counted toward the total number of sites.

EXAMPLE: A group certificate with 25 sites and a sampling of $\sqrt{n} = 5$ sites shall be counted as five sites for the purposes of the grace period.

8. The following conditions apply during the grace period:
 1. The certification body agrees to perform certifications to the Standard(s) in accordance with ISO17065 and *ASR-101 Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards*.
 2. The certification body agrees to achieve accreditation to the Standard(s) with the agreed-upon accreditation body by the end of the grace period. If this does not occur, all scope certificates issued by the certification body to the Standard(s) shall be suspended.
 3. Auditing and other certification activities shall not be outsourced during the grace period, except to individual freelance auditors.
 4. The reporting and payment requirements of the contract with Textile Exchange shall be met in the required timeframes.

Appendix E - Requirements for the Evaluation of Group Certification

The requirements in this appendix apply to groups and may only be used when group certification is defined within a Standard.

Group Audits

1. Audits of group certifications shall consist of
 1. an audit of the *internal control system (ICS)* for the group;
 2. an audit of a sample of group members; and
 3. an audit of each site included in the scope certificate which is not part of the group, or does not meet the criteria to be a group member.
2. The audit of the ICS shall include an evaluation of the ability of the ICS to manage the group members. The certification body shall set an annual growth limit for the group, which shall not exceed 100% of the number of group members included in the audit sampling.
3. The certification body shall conduct a risk assessment on the group to determine the sampling rate to be used, based on the risk criteria and sampling rates in the Certification Procedures. Group members may be divided into sets for the purpose of risk assessment and sampling.
4. Sites shall be selected for audit to
 1. represent the group in terms of geography, activities, and size;
 2. include randomly selected sites;
 3. aim to include all sites over time; and
 4. include any sites identified as carrying particular risk (e.g. due to complaints or past non-conformity).
5. Non-conformities may be issued to the ICS or to one or more sites. If the same non-conformity is identified at several sites, it shall be considered to be a systemic issue within the group and shall be issued to the ICS.

Approval of New Group Members

6. The certification body shall approve the certification of new sites upon request from the ICS, provided that
 1. the group has not exceeded its growth limit;
 2. the ICS provides documentation to demonstrate that the site is in conformity with the requirements of the Standard, including a report of an inspection by the ICS; and
 3. the site is not banned from certification.
7. If a group has reached its growth limit and wishes to add additional sites prior to the next annual or recertification audit, the certification body shall audit the ICS and a sample of the new sites which have been added since the previous audit prior to approving additional sites. In this case, a new growth limit may be approved.