



Global Recycled Standard 4.0 Certification Procedures



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The GRS Certification Procedures 4.0 supplement requirements for certification bodies in GRS 4.0 and are effective as of June 1, 2020. All audits conducted after September 1, 2020 shall be conducted using GRS Certification Procedures 4.0.

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English is the official language of the Global Recycled Standard Certification Procedures. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

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The GRS will undergo a revision process at least every five years. The GRS Certification Procedures will typically be revised alongside the GRS. The next revision is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2021. You may submit feedback to the standard at any time; send to Standards@TextileExchange.org. Points of clarification may be incorporated into GRS guidance documents prior to 2021. More substantive feedback or suggested changes will be collected and reviewed as part of the next revision of the standard.

Document Revision History

Global Recycled Standard Certification Procedures 4.0 released June 2020

Note: V4.0 is the earliest version of this document in order to align with versions of the GRS.



Section A - General Information

A1. About the Global Recycled Standard

The Global Recycled Standard (GRS) is an international, voluntary, full product standard that sets requirements for third-party certification of recycled content, chain of custody, social and environmental practices, and chemical restrictions. The goal of the GRS is to increase use of recycled materials in products and reduce/eliminate the harm caused by its production.

This is a voluntary standard that is not intended to replace the legal or regulatory requirements of any country. It is the responsibility of each operation to demonstrate compliance with all applicable laws and regulations related to marketing, labor, and business practices. Sellers of GRS products are advised to reference the allowed recycled content claims in the countries of sale, to ensure that they are meeting all legal product claim requirements.

Individual sites are certified by independent third-party certification bodies using annual audits. Material is tracked from the farm to the final product, following the requirements of Textile Exchange's Content Claim Standard (CCS). For more information, please visit: TextileExchange.org/Integrity.

A2. About Textile Exchange

The Global Recycled Standard 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, and the human population.

A3. About the Certification Procedures

The GRS Certification Procedures presents normative requirements for *accreditation bodies* and *certification bodies* which are specific to the Global Recycled Standard. These requirements are in addition to the requirements for all Textile Exchange standards, which can be found in *ASR-101 Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards*.

The GRS Certification Procedures V4.0 have been developed as a supplemental document to the existing Global Recycled Standard V4.0. A more complete document will be developed alongside the GRS revision process which is scheduled to begin in 2021.

In an effort to minimize the disruption to certification bodies outside of a revision process, some criteria below are identified as recommended (use of the word 'should'). Textile Exchange intends to update these criteria to be requirements (use of the word 'shall') upon the revision to V5.0.

Section B - References

B1. Terms and Definitions

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

B2. Reference Documents

The following documents are key documents for conducting GRS certification. It is essential that they are used alongside this document.

1. *GRS-101 Global Recycled Standard*
2. *GRS-201 GRS User Manual*
3. *GRS-301 GRS Logo Use & Claims Guide*
4. *RCS-101 Recycled Claim Standard (“RCS”)*¹
5. *ASR-101 Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards (“ACP”)*
6. *CCS-101 Content Claim Standard*
7. *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards*

Section C - Requirements for Accreditation Bodies

Additional requirements for accreditation bodies will be defined in V5.0 of this document.

Section D - Requirements for Certification Bodies

D1. General Requirements

D1.1 Personnel Qualifications

Personnel qualifications will be included in V5.0 of this document.

- D1.1.1 An auditor may obtain GRS auditor qualification based on experience and shadow audits with any GRS scope.
- D1.1.2 An auditor should complete a successful shadow audit for GRS at a material recycler prior to being considered qualified to audit material recyclers.

¹ References to “RCS” in this document refer to the Recycled Claim Standard, owned by Textile Exchange, and not to any other standard which may use the same acronym.

D1.1.3 Shadow audits under ACP D3.1.6.c should be conducted at a material recycler for auditors who are qualified to audit material recyclers.

D1.2 Data and Reporting

Data and reporting requirements will be included in V5.0 of this document.

D2. General Auditing Requirements

D2.1 Auditing of Material Recyclers

D2.1.1 Financial records and correlation of purchased and sold materials records should be reviewed to validate the volumes of recycled and GRS material purchased and sold.

D2.2 Auditing of Collectors and Concentrators

D2.2.1 The certification body may certify collector and concentrator sites following a full evaluation of the site to the GRS. This is optional; collectors and concentrators do not require full certification.

D2.2.2 If the certification body issues a transaction certificate to a collector or concentrator site, a statement shall be included in box 15 to clarify that the material is “reclaimed” and not “recycled”.

D2.2.3 Certification is not required for collector or concentrator sites. Even when a collector or concentrator is GRS certified, the Reclaimed Materials Declaration Form (GRS Appendix C) is sufficient for sales from these sites. Issuing transaction certificates from collector and concentrator sites is not required but is permitted.

D2.3 Auditing of Organizations Certified to Other Recycled Standards

D2.3.1 The certification body shall not issue a GRS scope certificate to an organization which holds an RCS scope certificate with another certification body, unless the RCS scope certificate is in the process of being transferred to the certification body (see ACP D4.12).

D2.3.2 If an organization is certified to another standard which recognizes recycled content, the certification body shall include all standards which recognize recycled content in its review of the volume reconciliation, and shall evaluate the claims made regarding the other standard and any other necessary records to ensure that products are not being double claimed.

NOTE: It is allowable for a product to be sold with certification claims about recycled content under GRS or RCS, and also under other standards which recognize recycled content, provided that all certification requirements for all standards are met. However, it is not allowable to claim more recycled content across all applicable standards than is purchased.

D2.4 Auditing of Subcontractors

D2.4.1 The certification body shall audit all subcontractors on-site annually unless the subcontractor is GRS certified independently of the organization.

NOTE: GRS subcontractors are not currently required to hold their own GRS certification. This option may be considered during future revisions of the GRS.

D2.4.2 When auditing an organization who acts as a subcontractor for other certified organizations, the certification body shall ensure that all GRS material processed is considered for the evaluation of chemical use requirements.

D2.5 Audit Duration

D2.5.1 The following minimum time (sum of a. and b.) shall be spent on-site to conduct each audit. This does not include auditor travel or reporting time and is specified per site.

- a. A set minimum time per site, based on the type of operation:
 - i. Collector or concentrator (GRS certified)²: 2 hours
 - ii. Material recycler (mechanical recycling and/or biological recycling): 4 hours
 - iii. Material recycler (chemical recycling): 5 hours
 - iv. Supply chain site conducting one of the following processes: Dyeing, extrusion, finishing, non-woven, pre-treatment, preparatory, printing, pulp making, tanning, washing, or laundering: 4 hours
 - v. Trader site (no physical possession of material): See *CCS-102 CCS Certification Procedures*
 - vi. All other supply chain sites: 3 hours
 - vii. Subcontractors: As above, based on the type of activity
- b. A minimum time for worker interviews related to GRS Section B (Social Requirements) based on the following table. This is required for all sites except for traders in addition to the time specified in a.

Number of Workers	Minimum Audit Duration
1-100	2 hours
101-500	4 hours
501-1000	5 hours
Each additional 1000 workers or part thereof	Add 1 hour

NOTE: The audit times listed in D2.5.1 are presented as a minimum. Many audits will require a longer duration than the minimum, and certification bodies should allow for more time in planning.

² This applies to collectors and concentrators who choose to become fully GRS certified, which is optional. Time for mandatory evaluations of collectors and concentrators (site visits/document review) is not specified.