

Assessment and Certification

European Quality Assurance (EQA) Certification schemes provide independent third party assurance of an organisation's ability to work to a specification.

A specification is a national or international standard, a customer's specification, client's brief or terms of appointment or the organisation's own specification.

An organisation requiring management certification under the Scheme must have documented procedures which explain how their management system functions. These procedures must satisfy the requirement of the relevant international/national standard.

An organisation requiring product certification under the Scheme must have systems of work in place to guarantee that the product will consistently meet the required national or international standard.

For Management certification schemes, EQA ask for a controlled copy of the applicant's procedures for examination (this may take place on-site or off-site depending on the size of the organisation). If any changes are required, these must be completed prior to the date of the initial assessment. The initial assessment is then planned around the organisation's operations.

For Product certification schemes, EQA may ask for a copy of documentation in advance of the audit or this may be carried out on the day of the audit (depending on the complexity of the organisation)

The assessment is a sampling procedure to satisfy EQA that the written procedures and/or documentation requirements are being followed and meet the requirements of the relevant standard. Management commitment, staff awareness and efficient auditing (where internal audit is a requirement) have to be demonstrated. The assessor uses his/her experience to interview members of staff to establish confidence that the system is managed, understood and in place.

For installed product certification (e.g. intruder alarm), EQA will sample a number of sites from completed installations. The assessor will visit the sites to confirm that the installations are fully compliant with the relevant standard.

For Guarding Security certification, EQA will sample a number of guarded locations. The assessor will visit these locations to confirm that activities are fully compliant with the relevant standard

The assessment begins with an opening meeting where the assessor agrees the programme and explains how apparent problems are recorded. The assessment ends with a closing meeting where all the findings are tabled.



The assessor produces a detailed report which is examined by EQA and copied to the applicant. The applicant must correct all problems before a certificate is awarded and is asked to send the details of all corrections to EQA for approval. EQA may require to re-assess the applicant's corrections or may accept the written evidence.

EQA carry out regular surveillance visits at the frequency detailed on the quotation. Surveillance visits are mini assessments designed to ensure that the certificated organisation is maintaining compliance with the relevant standard. If EQA are not satisfied with the surveillance findings or receive serious customer complaints they will re-assess the organisation's systems.

Management system certificates are issued for a period of 3 years, after which a re-assessment audit will take place and a new certificate will be issued. Product system certificates are issued for a period of 2 years, a new certificate will be issued every 2 years (subject to continued conformance with the standard).

Please note: All assessments are performed on the basis of limited sampling. If discrepancies are not discovered, there is no guarantee that they do not exist.

The assessed scope may be revised on application to EQA . Simple extensions to assessed scope may be examined during a surveillance visit. More complex extensions may require further assessment (application for extension to scope must be submitted in advance of an audit taking place).

For further information regarding the assessment process please contact EQA, at the following address:-

**E. Q. A. (Ireland) Limited
15 Greenmount House
Greenmount Office Park
Harolds Cross
Dublin 6W.**

**Tel: (01) 4734188
Fax:(01) 4734191
E-mail: info@eqa.ie**