

Certification Process

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

SGS

Accreditation status

SGS United Kingdom Ltd holds UKAS Accreditation (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) for Customer Service Excellence Assessment services. Upon completion of a successful assessment you may use the Customer Service Excellence hallmark.



STEP A

ACCEPTING THE SGS CONTRACT AND WHAT YOU NEED TO SEND US

A proposal is submitted by SGS for consideration. We are happy to arrange a visit or discussion with a Member of the Customer Service Team. The meeting will explain the process and give you guidance on the application process.

Applying for Customer Service Excellence: The application form, must be completed signed where appropriate and returned to the Customer Service Team before work can commence. Your application will be processed and one of our assessors will contact you to arrange the next steps of the assessment process. This proposal is valid for 60 days. Once the 60 days end we will review the contract again and issue a new quote if necessary.

Application: To apply for registration the application form must be completed, signed and returned to your sales executive before work can commence. Your application will be processed and one of our registered assessors will be in contact with you to arrange the next steps of your assessment process. Please note we will conduct credit check for all new applications.

STEP B

STAGE I DOCUMENT REVIEW

The first stage of the assessment is a document review of the application pack as prepared by you. This enables your assessor to gain an understanding of how the organisation is meeting the requirements of Customer Service Excellence. We will then provide a report that details any area of weakness that will be the focus of the on-site assessment. In addition, an itinerary for the on-site assessment will be supplied.

We typically suggest you leave a period of 3-4 weeks between the document review and the on-site assessment to give you time to review our report and illustrate on-site practice that will help close any gaps.

OPTIONAL STEP

PRE-ASSESSMENT

The pre-assessment is an optional service prior to the mandatory stage 1 document review. It can be tailored to your needs but typically this is a one-day on-site visit that is undertaken once you have developed the first draft of your application. The pre-assessment is designed to give you information and feedback on how you are progressing as well as identifying suitable levels of evidence.

The pre-assessment can also take the form of a Gap Analysis that will help identify current practices and how they match with the Customer Service Excellence criteria. This enables you to make decisions on project plans and timescales etc.

STEP C

STAGE II ON-SITE ASSESSMENT

The final stage is an on-site assessment. The aim of this part of the assessment is to obtain objective evidence that you are meeting the requirements of the Customer Service Excellence standard.

Evidence is obtained from the review documents, interviews with staff, customers, partner organisations and senior management.

The on-site assessment closes with a meeting where the assessor summarises the findings of the assessment and states if the organisation is being recommended for the Customer Service Excellence hallmark.

Scoring Mechanism: During the assessment process the Customer Service Excellence criteria are scored on a four-band scale:

Compliance Plus – Behaviours or practices that exceed the requirements of the standard, and are viewed as exceptional or as an exemplar for others – either within the applicant’s organisation or in the wider public, private and voluntary service area.

Compliant – Your organisation has a variety of good quality evidence that demonstrates that you comply fully with this element. The evidence which reflects compliance is consistency throughout and embedded in the culture of the organisation.

Partial Compliance – Your organisation has some evidence but there are some significant gaps. The gaps could include:

- parts of the applicant organisation which are currently not compliant and/or areas where the quality of the evidence is poor or incomplete and/or
- areas which have only just begun to be addressed and are subject to significant further development and/or
- areas where compliance has only been in evidence for a very short period of time.

Non-Compliant – Your organisation has little or no evidence of compliance or what evidence you do have refers to only a small (minor) part of your organisation.

The scheme allows the applicant a maximum number of partial non-compliances that equates to a pass mark of 80% for each criteria.

Reporting/Certification issues: A report of the findings is then prepared; this includes areas where the organisation was partially compliant as well as areas of compliance plus. As part of the report we will produce an action plan.

If unsuccessful the organisation can use the action plan to help guide them through the elements that need addressing. Once the organisation has implemented the action plans we will re-assess those areas again.

If the organisation is successful, we will issue a certificate and letter announcing the achievement of Customer Service Excellence. In addition, we can offer you PR support by way of a certificate presentation and issue a press release to relevant local and national media. There is no additional charge for the issue of the press release.

STEP D

ANNUAL REVIEW

Once issued certificates are only valid subject to satisfactory maintenance of the standard. We are required to undertake regular reviews to ensure certificated services continue to meet the requirements of the Customer Service Excellence standard. The review will take place every 12 months due on the anniversary of your initial assessment date each year. The review consists of two parts; ongoing compliance with the standard and progress made in relation to any partial compliances raised at the previous visit. The continuous assessment ensure compliance with the standard and also means that there is a significantly reduced recertification process in year 3.

STEP E

RECERTIFICATION

SGS operates a system of continuous certification. As part of this programme it is not necessary to conduct a complete re-application. Rather, we conduct a recertification visit, which is more in-depth than the annual review and will ensure that we have covered all elements of the standard since the initial assessment. We carry this out in year 3 of the certification. The recertification assessment must be carried out at least one month before your current certificate expiry date. The recertification assessment is the first visit of your new certification cycle.



PAYMENT TERMS

We will send you an invoice for the fees when we have carried out each stage. Once you receive an invoice, you must pay it within 30 days after the date of invoice (no matter what your company's payment terms) unless we agree otherwise in writing.

If you require a purchase order it is your responsibility to ensure this is supplied to SGS, either prior to the date of assessment on the booking confirmation letter, or given to the assessor during the on-site visit.

You do not need to make any payment on your application subject to a company credit check.

ORGANISATION CHANGES

In the event of any development that will alter your certification, e.g. sites additions, reductions, mergers or acquisitions, it is important you inform us at your earliest convenience. Changes to scope can be covered at any time in the process, a revised contract would be issued in advance, the scheduling can take place at the same time as an annual review/recertification assessment, whichever is the most cost effective method, or can be carried out between

assessment depending on your requirements and instructions. As this is personal to your individual business needs, it is anticipated this would need to be discussed between SGS and you, the client.

MERGERS

When an organisation that holds Customer Service Excellence certification with SGS is merging with another organisation that holds Customer Service Excellence certification with SGS, it is possible to merge the certificates. Once notified of this, SGS will provide a no-obligation proposal for the new organisation. On receipt of the signed Application from you, SGS will issue a new certificate. No visit is required at this time as a review of the effectiveness and impact on customer service levels of the merger will be carried out at your next visit.

Where an organisation that holds Customer Service Excellence certification with SGS is merging with an organisation that holds Customer Service Excellence certification with another Certification Body, it is possible to merge the certificates as part of a switching process. See 'Switch of Certification' right.



SPLITS

Where an organisation that holds Customer Service Excellence with SGS is splitting, it is possible for part of the organisation to retain the existing certificate, and a new certificate to be provided to the additional organisations. A no-obligation proposal will be provided to the new organisation. On receipt of the signed Application from you, SGS will issue a new certificate. No visit is required at this time as a review of the effectiveness and impact on customer service levels of the split will be carried out at your next visit.

EXTENSION TO SCOPE

Extensions to scope are necessary when the organisation assessed expands through merger with an organisation, service or department that is not a current Customer Service Excellence holder. A visit, and in some cases a document review, will need to take place to assess the status of the new part of the organisation, to check for compliance to the standard. A no-obligation proposal will be provided for the additional work involved. On receipt of the signed Application from you, SGS will follow Step C as indicated above.

SWITCH OF CERTIFICATION

If you have a current certification assessed by an accredited certification body, and this certification is up to date and in good standing, you can switch to SGS at any time in the process. We will conduct a review of your current certification and in order for us to do this you will need to send us a copy of your current certificate, previous visit reports, including the status of any outstanding partial compliances and the date of your last visit. Following the review we will provide you with a proposal to take over this certification. Once you have accepted our proposal and dates have been arranged, we simply take over the next visit.

The process for reporting and certificate issue is the same as outlined above in Step D.



ABOUT SGS

SGS are the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and Certification Company. SGS is recognised as the global benchmark for quality and integrity.

With more than 89,000 employees, SGS operates a network of over 2,600 offices and laboratories around the world.

We offer the following main services:

- **Customised Audit Solutions** – our diverse skills and experiences help organisations to exploit established management systems, by working in partnership to optimise efficiency and effectiveness, finding practical solutions to challenges related to: best practices in organisational operation, process efficiency and improvement, supply chain management, and Sourcing & Procurement.
- **Inspection services** – we inspect and check the quantity, weight and quality of traded goods. Inspection usually takes place when goods are moved from one type of transport to another.
- **Testing services** – we test quality and performance of products against various health, safety and regulatory standards. We use state-of-the-art laboratories on or close to customers' premises.
- **Certification services** – we confirm that systems or services meet the standards set by governments, standardisation bodies (for example, ISO 9001) or our customers' products. We also develop our own standards to meet our clients' needs. SGS as an accredited certification body can provide confidence to clients that professional, experienced auditors are used and standards are consistently applied.
- **Verification services** – SGS verification services ensure that products and services comply with global standards and local regulations. Combining global coverage with local knowledge, unrivalled experience and expertise in virtually every industry, SGS covers the entire supply chain from raw materials to final consumption.

In the UK, SGS employs over 1,800 staff based in over 30 regional offices. Our certification section provides independent certification and audits to a range of standards, including:

- Quality Management Systems (ISO 9001);
- Environmental Management (ISO 14001);
- Risk Management, IT Certification (ISO 20000);
- Information Security Management (ISO 27001, ISO 27701, BS10002, ISO 27017, ISO 27018);
- Business Continuity Management System (ISO22301)
- Energy Management Systems (ISO 50001)
- Asset Management Management Systems (ISO 55001)
- Customer Service Excellence;
- Occupational Health and Safety (ISO 45001)
- EC Directives (CE Mark) and other regulations;
- UKCA Mark for Medical, PPE and CPR
- Medical Device Certification (ISO 13485 and MDSAP);
- British Retail Consortium Global Standards;
- Food Safety Management Systems (ISO 22000);
- Aerospace

For more information on any of our services visit

www.sgs.co.uk/certification



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WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE

