

	PSC Certification Body Procedure	No.	CB_14
		Revision No.	2.2
		Date	5/29/24

Procedure For Impartiality

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to acknowledge that impartiality is important to the clients and other stakeholders and to conform to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 and ISO 27006:2015. This procedure provides the necessary steps for identifying, assessing, and minimizing risks to impartiality.

2.0 Scope

This procedure applies to all activities and processes that pertain to performing audits of the management system, generating and reporting audit and/or assessment report.

3.0 Responsibility

3.1 **Top Management** is responsible for providing the resources and training to implement this procedure. To provide model as an example of impartiality and communicate its importance to Auditors and company employees as well as empanelled as an ongoing basis.

3.2 **CB Manager** is responsible for maintaining this procedure and ensures that it is appropriately followed. CB Manager maintains record, as evidence that this procedure is being followed in day to day work.

3.3 **Auditors and company employees as well as empanelled** are responsible to follow this procedure and request for assistance if needed to maintain impartiality.

4.0 Description of Activity

4.1 Definition

4.1.1 **Client:** An individual or entity seeking certification of their management system.

4.1.2 **Code of conduct:** A set of rules outlining the social norms, responsibilities, and practices for individuals and organizations.

4.1.3 **Impartiality:** Actual and perceived presence of objectivity, freedom from conflicts of interest, freedom from bias.

4.1.4 **Stakeholder:** Any individual or entity with a valid cause for engagement with the audit and/or assessment report produced by this PSC

4.2 Mechanism to safeguard impartiality

4.2.1 CB Manager will ensure impartiality by:

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- 4.2.1.1 Conducting checks on risks to the impartiality;
- 4.2.1.2 Completing annual impartiality assurance reviews;
- 4.2.1.3 Responding to claims of conflicts of interest;
- 4.2.1.4 Implementing recommended actions to ensure ongoing impartiality.

4.3 Periodic impartiality assurance meeting

- 4.3.1 **Annual** meeting (during management review meeting) is conducted to assure ongoing impartiality.
- 4.3.2 During the meeting the following issues affect the impartiality of the management system certification activities are discussed;
 - 4.3.2.1 Commercial, financial or other pressures to Auditors and company employees as well as empanelled,
 - 4.3.2.2 Over pressure related to audit carried-out by Auditors and company employees as well as empanelled,
 - 4.3.2.3 Relationship with the client, suppliers, employees etc.
 - 4.3.2.4 Shared resources
 - 4.3.2.5 Finances, contracts, marketing and payment of a sales commission or other inducement for the referral of new clients.

4.4 Identification of threats to the impartiality

- 4.4.1 Threats are identified during the discussion during the management system certification activities.
- 4.4.2 Following threats are identified and concluded at the end of meeting;
 - 4.4.2.1 **Familiarity threats:** Threats that arise from a person being familiar with or trusting of another person, e.g. top management or Auditors and company employees as well as empanelled developing a relationship with a client that affects the ability to reach an objective judgment;
 - 4.4.2.2 **Intimidation threats:** Threats that prevent an organization or its Auditors and company employees as well as empanelled from acting objectively due to fear of a client or other interested stakeholder;
 - 4.4.2.3 **Financial threats:** The source of revenue for an organization can be a threat to impartiality.
 - 4.4.2.3.1 **NCC Group prior relationship:** where a client has received management systems consultancy from a body that has a relationship with a certification body, this is a significant threat to impartiality. Certification applications must only be accepted where permitted under ISO 17021-1 and ISO 27006.

4.5 Corrective action

- 4.5.1 Corrective action will be implemented as quickly as possible by assigned qualified Auditors and company employees as well as empanelled or external person(s), as deemed appropriate by the management. Corrective actions shall be recorded using the corrective action procedure and recorded using the corrective action report.
- 4.5.2 It is ensured that the corrective action is sufficient to eliminate the threat and recurrence of similar types of threats.

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4.5.3 If it is identified to provide additional training as a part of corrective action, training is planned as per the procedure for training and is provided. Records of training provided and its evaluation are maintained.

4.5.4 Modification in the audit report or modification of an interpretation of audit and/or assessment report, identified as a part of corrective action, will be done and implemented immediately, and the concerned stakeholders will be informed accordingly.

4.6 Annual confidentiality and impartiality declarations are done and recorded once we have clients, or they will be done as necessary if a need arises.

5.0 Reference

- 5.1 CB_06 HR Functions
- 5.2 CB_04 Corrective action
- 5.3 PY_03 Impartiality

6.0 Enclosure None

7.0 Forms / Exhibits

- 7.1 ===== Impartiality check report

Revision Number	Date	Revision Details	Author	Verifier
V1	2022	initial	CB Mgr.	JM Vice President
V2	2/7/24	2/12/24: Add references to DIRECTOR, yearly review, and update.	RBR CB Mgr.	Director
2.1	3/24/24	Revision update	RBR CB Mgr.	Director
V 2.2	5/29/24	Updated reference to assessors	RBR CB Mgr.	Director