	<b>Halal Center Consulting &amp; Foreign Trade Limited Company</b>		
	<b>Title: Procedure for Certificate Issue, Suspension, Withdrawal and Renewal</b>		
	<b>Doc ref: HCQC/02/11</b>	<b>Issue: 01</b>	<b>Rev: 00</b>
	<b>Prepared by: Quality Manager</b>		<b>Date: 01<sup>st</sup> July 2022</b>
		<b>Approved by: Certification Manager</b>	

## 1.0 Purpose

To describe a procedure for granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending or restoring certification, withdrawing certification or renewing certification.

## 2.0 Scope

This procedure covers overall activity for certificate issue, suspension and withdrawal of certificate; expanding or reducing the scope of certification and renewal of the certification for all types of certification activities carried out by Halal Center Consulting & Foreign Trade Limited Company (here & after - Halal Center).

## 3.0 Responsibility

All certificates shall be reviewed by respective country **Quality Manager** and approved by **Certification Manager** prior to issue. The operations In-charge is responsible to issue the certificate to the client. Quality Manager is authorized to communicate to the client regarding Certification Committee's decision on granting or refusing certification; expanding or reducing the scope of certification; withdrawal or restoring certification and renewal of the certification.

## 4.0 Description of Activity

### 4.1 Receipt and Review of Audit Report


4.1.1 The audit team leader is responsible for submission of audit report documents, which shall include at least the audit report, non-conformances, if any, identified during the audit, corrective action plans submitted by the client along with the evidence/s in case of major non-conformances; assessor notes etc.

4.1.2 The audit reports are reviewed at multiple steps detailed below:

**Step-01:** includes an administrative review in which, the submitted set of documents are reviewed for completeness by the operation manger or operations in-charge. A letter will be issued to the team leader if he/she finds any variation / deviation in the completeness of the documents during the technical review. The documents along with the deviation note and the response from the team leader shall be forwarded to the Certification Committee for the technical review and decision-making process.

**Step-02:** includes a technical review, in which the member of the Certification Committee responsible for the technical review shall conduct the review of the report. The technical reviewer shall not be the one who was part of the particular audit. The technical review shall cover at least:

- Confirm that the information provided by the audit team is sufficient with respect to certification requirements and the scope of certification;
- The details of the non-conformities, if any, identified during the audit and the corrections and corrective actions taken by the client, if applicable.
- In case of any major non-conformities, the audit team has reviewed, accepted and verified the correction and corrective actions;
- Confirm that the audit objectives have been achieved

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If any deviations from the above stated are identified during the step-02, the technical reviewer shall issue a letter to the audit team leader and response is sought. In case, where additional information's are required, which is inevitable to make a decision with regards to the certification; the technical reviewer may contact the audit team leader and/or the respective audit team member for further clarifications. On completion of the technical review, the report shall be presented in the certification committee for a decision-making process as detailed in Step-03.

**Step-03:** Includes decision-making process by certification committee. Based on the outcome of the administrative and technical review; decision shall be taken by the committee members. In the event of conflict of decision between the members of the committee; an additional member from the pool of the members for certification committee shall be added, who is competent in the particular scheme under review, and the decision is put for voting. On decision which received the majority of vote shall be considered as the final decision of the Certification Committee, which shall be informed to the Quality Manager to communicate to the client. In case of routine surveillance audit reports, it may not be required to be reviewed by the Certification Committee, except where the Audit team leader has identified major non-conformities which may lead to the suspension or withdrawal, expanding or reduction of the scope etc. In all such cases, the reports shall be reviewed by the Quality Manager and/or the technical member, where the Quality Manager was involved in the audit process. During the decision making by the Certification committee, factors such as complaints received against the client, media reports; changes in the scope; new regulations or requirements; etc. are also taken into consideration. The committee along with the approval shall indicate the date of commencement of the certification and its validity period.


For the Halal certification case the decision-making process by certification committee includes three members which including an Islamic affairs expert. Based on the outcome of the administrative and technical review; decision will be taken by the committee members, the decision will be taken unanimously, not by majority of votes.

**Step-04:** Based on the outcome of the Step-03; if a new certificate needs to be issued, the administrative secretary and/or Operations In-charge shall prepare the certificate (Refer Clause 4.2) and forwarded to the Quality Manager for review. A Draft copy of the certificate is also forwarded to the client for verification. Upon getting the confirmation, the original certificate shall be prepared and issued to the client with the approval of the Certification Manager. All certificates shall be issued along with the procedure for use of certificate and certification mark and acknowledgement on receipt of the certificate and the procedure by the client is maintained in the respective client file.

Along with the issue of the Certificate, the Administrative Secretary and/or Operations In-charge shall update the client database as per the latest certificate details.

## **4.2 Certificate Preparation and Issue**

4.2.1 Certificates are issued to clients following initial audit, extension or reduction to accredited scope, triennial audit, or change in company details (name, address etc).

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4.2.2 Each certificate issued by Halal Center shall carry a unique certificate number of the format as follows:

The **10-character Alpha-Numeric Unique Certification Number** is proposed as below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Scheme Type			Calendar Year		Cert / Report Number				

The details of Unique Certificate Number are as follows:

1. The first three characters shall represent the scheme type as described below:

Scheme	Digits Used	Scheme	Digits Used
HACCP	<b>HAC</b>	FSMS	<b>FSM</b>
Halal	<b>HAL</b>		

2. The next two characters shall be the last two digits of the calendar year [01 January 20xx – 31 December 20xx] in which the accredited certificate / report is issued. E.g. if the certificate/report is issued in year 2021, the digits shall be used as 21.

3. The last five characters shall be the date-wise, running sequence number of certificates and/or reports issued by CABs, starting from 00001 to 99999. This number shall restart from 00001 on 1<sup>st</sup> of January each year.

4. The alphabets to be used in Unique Certificate Number shall always be in CAPITALS. There shall be no gaps in the last five characters (sequence number) while issuing certificates/reports.


4.2.3 In case of re-certification; the initial certification date shall be reflected in the certificate. The initial certification date will be applicable only when there is no gap between the initial certification expiry date and the re-certification date.

4.2.4 In case of Multi-site certifications operating a common system with the same scope of certification, all the addresses on the client locations, which are certified is included in the certificate. The client may request for individual certificate for each site or in case where the scope of activities at each location is different, in such cases, the serial number in the certificate shall be appended with ‘/1’ for the 1<sup>st</sup> site, ‘/2’ for the second site and so on.

4.2.5 Clients may have integrated system where certificates for multiple standards are issued, in such cases separate certificates are issued for each of the standard.

4.2.6 Once the Certification Decision has been made by the Certification Committee, no member has the authority to change the decision unless the decision is appealed formally in the Appeal Committee. The decision of the appeal committee will be binding to all the members as well as the clients.

4.2.7 One original of the signed certificate is sent to the client at his address or any other address specifically requested by the client. Additional copies of the certificates may be issued depending on the contract agreement.

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4.2.8 The certificate shall only be issued to authorized representative of the client unless the client has requested in writing to hand over to another representative.

4.2.9 Along with the issue of the certificate, the following document/s shall be submitted to the client. The cover letter shall indicate all the attachments and acknowledgement of receipt from the client representative is obtained.

- Covering Letter
- Certificate (Original)
- Additional certificate copies (if requested)
- Policy for Use of Certificate & Certification Mark
- CD containing soft copy of the logos.
- Client Satisfaction Survey Form

4.2.10 A copy of the certificate together with all other documents supporting the approval and decision making shall be maintained in

### **4.3 Change in Certificate**

4.3.1 The client may request for change in certificate. This may be due to –

- ❖ Change in ownership
- ❖ Change in name of the company
- ❖ Change in location
- ❖ Increase or decrease in scope (products, services offered etc.)
- ❖ Increase or decrease in locations (opening / closing of site etc.)


4.3.2 Client may request for change in certificate or reduction / expansion in scope to Quality Manager. Quality Manager shall review the request and decide for a special audit if the next audit is not due in near future or if the next audit cannot be proposed. Quality Manager also determines if the changed scope is within accreditation scope of Halal Center.

4.3.3 In case of change in name of company or location without any change in management, the client shall submit ROC approval for the change. Where the management has changed, the details of M&A and ROC approval shall be submitted along with the request.

4.3.4 The duration for the special visit shall be decided by Quality Manager and communicated to the client. The lead auditor submits a descriptive report detailing the changes, justification for reduction / expansion of scope and review of the impact of change in the scope (use of logos etc.) Where expansion of scope is requested, the compliance to QMS for the respective activities and impact on other processes is verified. In case the special visit is carried out as a part of routine surveillance, the descriptive report is added to the surveillance report.  
The report is reviewed as detailed in 4.1 and 4.2 above. A new certificate is issued with the same expiry date on successful completion of the above process. Quality Manager reviews the contract to determine change in contract w.r.t. duration for further visits etc.

### **4.4 Suspension and Withdrawal or Cancellation of Certificates**

4.4.1 This instruction covers suspension procedures through withdrawal or cancellation of the certification


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certificate and revision of the register of approved firms.

- Grounds for action are brought to the attention of the Certification Manager / Quality Manager, who reviews the information and forward to the Certification Committee for appropriate decision.
- If the committee agrees with the decision of the audit team; the client shall be notified in writing for an immediate correction / corrective action to prevent a suspension / withdrawal of the certificate. Specific time period (usually 7 days, may be reduced to extended depending on the criticality, nature of the problem identified) is allocated for the client to respond with the detailed correction and corrective actions taken.
- The affectivity of the actions taken by the client shall be verified, if required onsite, the report shall be submitted to the Certification Committee to withdraw the decision of suspension.
- If the client has not positively responded to the notification within the allocated time period; the committee shall proceed with the decision of suspension of the certificate and shall inform the same to the client in writing. The suspension normally will be for a period of 7 days, within which client is advised to take all the necessary corrections and corrective actions.
- The client is also advised to avoid using the certificate or certification logo in any of the advertisements, or on labeling during the period of suspension.
- In the event of client responding within the specified time period with the detailed corrections and corrective actions; the effectiveness of the actions shall be verified and confirmed by the audit team, if required, through on-site assessment.
- The recommendations of the audit team are forwarded to the Certification Committee, who shall review the evidences and take appropriate decision. The authority to resume the certification shall rests with the Certification Committee.
- Where in case the client has not responded positively to the suspension notification and/or has not effectively implemented the corrective actions within the time frame; the certificate shall be withdrawn with immediate effect. The client shall be notified of the decision of withdrawal and advise the client to return all the original copies of the certificates; refrain from using the certificate or certification mark.
- Once the certificate has been withdrawn; the client needs to re-apply for certification which shall follow the same procedure as that of initial certification.
- In the event of withdrawal or cancellation of the certificate; Halal Center, if required shall publish the details of the certification cancelled through its website. The client shall be removed from the list of the certified clients.

4.4.2 The following reason/s are considered grounds for suspension or cancellation:

- Major non-conformance(s) or effective corrective action not implemented within a specified time period.
- Improper use of the certificate, symbol or logo not remedied to the satisfaction of Halal Center.
- Client ceases to supply product or service of the certified quality system for an extended period of time.
- Client's certified management system has persistently failed to meet any of the requirements for certification including requirements for the effectiveness of the management system.
- Client fails to meet financial obligations to Halal Center
- Client makes a formal request to withdraw certification.


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- Infringement by the client of any contractual conditions between the client and Halal Center
- Client is unable or unwilling to ensure conformance to revisions of standards.
- Existence of a serious complaint, or a large number of second- or third-party complaints, which indicate that the quality management system is not being maintained.
- Client does not allow routine surveillance to be conducted at the required frequency.

4.4.3 The suspension or cancellation can be initiated if the client does not allow the routine surveillance to be conducted at the required frequency. The routine surveillance is carried out not more than 12 months from the last audit. In case the audit is not done within 12 months (13 months in case of yearly surveillance), the certificate is suspended, and a letter is sent to the client requesting him to agree for the audit. In case of a delay up to 3 months (15 months from the last audit), the audit time shall be extended by 50% of the routine surveillance time (at least 1 man-day). Successful completion of the audit within 15 months shall not impact the certification. In case the audit is not done within 15 months, the certificate is cancelled, and the client shall be considered as a fresh case for certification. The above are for special conditions like strike, natural calamities, business operations (case to case basis) etc.

#### 4.5 **Conditions for Suspension or Cancellation of Client Certification\***

- 4.5.1 Subject to actions by the client, the following steps will be taken leading to possible suspension or cancellation of the client's certification:
- Unless a reply is received to the letter accompanying notification within 7 days, certification will be suspended, and a notification of suspension may be published at the discretion of Halal Center
  - The client's response to the accompanying letter will be reviewed and the proceedings may be put on hold while clarification is sought.
  - Where mutually agreed-upon corrective action is to be implemented, a time period for implementation will be specified and a review of the corrective action undertaken at the appointed time. This may be the subject of a special surveillance visit or of review of submitted objective evidence, at the discretion of Halal Center Should the corrective action not be considered adequate or not be completed by the appointed time, certification will be automatically suspended.
  - In the case of serious circumstances, Halal Center may invoke suspension during the period pending the implementation of corrective action.
  - Where suspension has been invoked, unless otherwise specified, the client must advise Halal Center every 7 days of the current situation of corrective action. Failure to meet this requirement will result in cancellation of the client's certification.
  - Where suspension has been invoked due to failure to conduct surveillance audit, the client shall give justification for failure and offer suitable date. An additional man-day shall be added to routine surveillance days. The date shall not be later than 15 months from last audit. Failure to offer for audit within 15 months shall result in cancellation of certification.

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- When corrective action to resolve the problem(s) taken by the client has been verified, certification will be resumed. The period of certification will not be revised to cover the period of suspension.
- Cancellation of certification will be invoked where, following suspension of certification, the client fails to respond to Halal Center communications within the 7 days grace period or fails to implement corrective action within the appointed time period.
- In extreme circumstances Halal Center may invoke the cancellation of certification with immediate effect without recourse to initial certification suspension.
- Cancellation of certification will require the client to assume the status of non-approval and return all certification documentation to Halal Center
- Use of certification documents, symbols, or logos by the client following certification cancellation may result in legal action being taken against the client.
- Re-approval after certification cancellation will be on the same basis, and follow the same process, as that of initial application for a new client. This will require a full assessment, with optional document review at the discretion of Halal Center
- The de-certification will be published as a separate list and will be available at the Halal Center office and made available upon request.
- The client has the right to appeal any decisions of Halal Center and a copy of the appeals procedures will be made available upon request.
- AE shall remove the companies where the certificate has been cancelled. During suspension, suspension remark shall be placed in the registered of approved firms.
- The client files for all cancelled cases shall be archived for a period of 3 months and then destroyed.

#### **4.6 Reduction in Scope of Certificates Issued**


Halal Center shall wherever applicable reduce the scope of certification if during the time of routine surveillance audits / Re approval or Renewal audits it finds that the certified client has continually / seriously failed to meet the certification requirements for those parts of the scope of certification. The reduction in scope will be approved by the Certification Committee.

#### **5.0 Reference**

- ISO/IEC 17021 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for Bodies Providing Audit and Certification of Management Systems;
- ISO/IEC 17065 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes and Services;
- ISO/IEC 17020 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection;
- GSO UAE.S 2055-2 - Halal Products - Part Two: General Requirements for Halal Certification Bodies;
- ISO 19011 - Guidelines for Management Systems Auditing;

#### **6.0 Formats / Exhibits**

- Ref: HCQC/03/26 - Client Satisfaction Survey Form
- Ref: HCQC/03/42 - List of Certified Clients
- Ref: HCQC/03/46 - Policy for Use of Certificate and Certification Mark

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- Clients Certificate
- Client Files