PB02_RAC Impartiality Policy

Authorised by:	Shafaq Tazeen
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1. Conformity Assessment Body

RA CERT LTD (also referred to as racert) has been accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Services (UKAS) as a conformity assessment body (accreditation number 10720) approved against ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 to provide management systems certification.

racert provides certification against the standard,

- ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Information technology — Security techniques — Information security management systems — Requirements.

The Standard Mark for each management systems certification which racert operates is notified via email.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles and commitments of RA CERT LTD for safeguarding impartiality in all management system certification activities conducted in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021-1 and applicable UKAS accreditation requirements. Impartiality is essential to the credibility of certification and to maintaining the confidence of clients, regulators, accreditation bodies, and other interested parties.

3. Scope:

This policy applies to all certification activities undertaken by RA CERT LTD, including application review, audit planning, auditing, technical review, certification decision-making, surveillance, recertification, complaints, appeals handling, and all supporting activities performed by employees, contractors, committee members, and external associates.

4. Policy Statement:

RA CERT LTD recognizes that the value and credibility of certification depend upon the objective and impartial execution of certification activities. The organization is committed to conducting its certification services in a manner that ensures impartiality, independence, transparency, and freedom from commercial, financial, or other pressures that may compromise objectivity.

Top Management fully understands the importance of impartiality and is committed to identifying, eliminating, or minimizing threats that may arise from relationships, ownership, governance, personnel, finances, contracts, marketing activities, or any other factors that could influence certification outcomes.

Certification decisions shall be based solely on objective evidence of conformity and shall not be influenced by commercial interests, client relationships, financial considerations, or any other external or internal pressures.

5. Commitment to Impartiality:

RA CERT LTD commits to:

- Conducting all certification activities in an impartial, objective, and non-discriminatory manner.
- Ensuring that certification decisions are made solely on the basis of objective evidence obtained during the certification process.

- Maintaining independence between auditing activities and certification decision-making.
- Preventing commercial, financial, marketing, or other interests from influencing certification outcomes.
- Identifying, analyzing, evaluating, treating, monitoring, and documenting risks to impartiality on an ongoing basis.
- Taking appropriate action whenever actual or potential conflicts of interest are identified.
- Ensuring equal access to certification services for all applicants within the accredited scope.
- Preserving the confidentiality of client information and protecting it from unauthorized disclosure.
- Promoting integrity, professionalism, and ethical conduct throughout all certification activities.

6. Management of Impartiality:

RA CERT LTD maintains a documented process for the identification, assessment, treatment, monitoring, and review of impartiality risks associated with certification activities. Such risks may arise from:

- Ownership or governance arrangements.
- Management structures.
- Personnel relationships.
- Financial dependencies.
- Marketing and business development activities.
- Contractual arrangements.
- Subcontracting and outsourced services.
- Previous consultancy or advisory relationships.
- Other internal or external interested parties.

All identified threats to impartiality are recorded within the organization's Impartiality Risk Register and are subject to periodic review to ensure that suitable controls remain effective. Residual risks are evaluated and monitored to ensure ongoing confidence in the impartiality of certification activities.

7. Impartiality Committee:

RA CERT LTD maintains an Impartiality Committee comprising a balanced representation of interested parties to provide independent advice on matters affecting impartiality, openness, and public confidence in certification activities. The committee operates under documented terms of reference. No single interest shall predominate within the committee, ensuring balanced and independent oversight.

8. Conflict of Interest Controls:

To safeguard impartiality, RA CERT LTD shall:

- Require all personnel involved in certification activities to declare actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.
- Prohibit personnel from participating in audits or certification decisions where a conflict of interest exists.
- Ensure auditors do not audit their own work.

- Ensure auditors are not involved in certification decisions relating to audits they have conducted.
- Review auditor assignments to identify and eliminate impartiality risks prior to audit allocation.
- Require employees, contractors, and committee members to sign confidentiality and conflict-of-interest declarations.

9. Prohibited Activities:

RA CERT LTD do not:

- Provide management system consultancy relating to standards for which certification services are offered.
- Offer or perform internal audits for certified clients where certification could be affected.
- Certify another management system certification body for its management system certification activities.
- Certify a client where management system consultancy has been provided within the previous two years.
- Use personnel who have conducted consultancy for a client during the previous two years in any certification activity related to that client.
- Outsource audits to management system consultancy organizations.
- Market certification services as linked with consultancy services.
- Suggest that certification would be easier, faster, less costly, or more likely to be granted through the use of any particular consultant or consultancy organization.

10. Independent Certification Decisions:

RA CERT LTD ensures that certification decisions are made independently by competent personnel who have not participated in the audit of the client concerned.

Certification decisions shall:

- Be based solely upon objective audit evidence.
- Be subject to independent review where applicable.
- Be free from commercial, financial, or other undue influence.
- Be documented and traceable.

The authority for certification decisions remains solely with RA CERT LTD and shall not be delegated in a manner that compromises impartiality.

11. Responsibilities

Top Management demonstrates commitment to impartiality, approve and maintain this policy, and ensure that adequate resources are available to manage impartiality effectively. Top Management also reviews impartiality risks and controls during management reviews and takes timely action to address any identified threats to impartiality.

All personnel involved in certification activities acts impartially and ethically, disclose any conflicts of interest, comply with confidentiality requirements, and report any circumstances that could affect impartiality.

The Impartiality Committee provides independent oversight of the organization’s impartiality arrangements, monitor their effectiveness, and raise any concerns directly with Top Management when necessary.

12. Contact us:

Website	www.racert.com
Email	info@racert.com
Address & Contact	**United Kingdom** 178 Merton High Street, London SW19 1AY, United Kingdom +44 203 404 2858

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