

Swedacs policy for reference to accreditation

This policy provides guidance to the interpretation of requirements in STAFS 2020:1 related to reference to accreditation. The guidance is provided clause by clause. When the word "shall" is used, it originates from requirements in the regulations.

This policy is primarily directed to Swedac's assessors and to accredited bodies. For customers of accredited laboratories further information concerning references to accreditation is provided in Swedac Info 2020:07 Information till upphandlare av ackrediterade laboratorietjänster available at www.swedac.se.

Requirements related to the accreditation service - General requirements

Requirements for demonstrating that the conditions for accreditation are met

Section 9 A body applying for accreditation shall demonstrate that it meets the requirements for accreditation. A body to which accreditation has been granted shall at all times comply with the relevant requirements for accreditation and be able to demonstrate that it does so. The body shall provide Swedac with access to personnel, premises, equipment, information and documentation in the respects and with the advance planning necessary for Swedac to be able to assess whether the requirements for accreditation are met.

Section 9a A body applying for accreditation or is an accredited body shall organise and participate in witnessing to the extent that Swedac deems necessary to ensure that the requirements for accreditation are met and in such a way that it is possible for Swedac, or another accreditation body appointed by Swedac in its place, to participate.

A body that lacks a customer base may, after Swedac's consent, instead organise and participate in reality-simulated witnessing.

Guidance for application of Section 9:

1. At accreditation assessments and during surveillance of accredited bodies, it is Swedac's task to assess the body's competence for the scope of accreditation. The competence shall be displayed in all work performed, whether reference is made to accreditation or not.
2. Witnessing is one of the methods Swedac uses to assess competence. In cases where Swedac has identified a need to witness an activity at the body, the body must provide an opportunity for Swedac to carry out the witnessing.
In the areas of Certification and Verification, witnessing is most often planned as a separate activity, whereas in the fields of Inspection and Testing, it is more common for witnessing to be scheduled in connection with regularly planned assessments. In certain cases, reality-simulated witnessing may be accepted by Swedac as an alternative when existing customers or assignments are not available.

Requirements to the reference to accreditation

Section 12 An accredited body shall always issue an accredited report, certificate, attestation, calibration certificate or statement for the tasks covered by its accreditation, unless otherwise provided for by law or regulation or specifically agreed between the body and its client. If such a contract is concluded, the accredited body must inform its customer that Swedac will then not be able to certify the reliability of the results of the service performed. Such a contract may not be concluded where the requirement for

accreditation is prescribed, laid down in a Conformity Assessment Procedure, or where the document is to be used in relation to third party.

Guidance for application of Section 12:

1. When a party requests the services of an accredited body, it should be assumed that the party expects the services to be performed under accreditation. Consequently, the accredited body shall issue an accredited report, certificate, attestation, calibration certificate or statement, unless the customer has explicitly confirmed the acceptance of unaccredited services.
2. A certificate is assumed to be intended for someone else than the certificate holder, or it is assumed that access to the certificate will be granted to the clients of the certificate holder. This means that a certificate issued for an area covered by the certification body's scope of accreditation shall always include a reference to accreditation.
3. Report, certificate, attestation, calibration certificate or statement issued for services regulated in legislation, or that could be expected to be displayed publicly or to regulatory authorities, shall always include a reference to accreditation.
4. Permission to use Swedac's accreditation symbol is granted through the accreditation decision. When its accreditation is withdrawn, a body shall immediately cease referencing accreditation in reports, certificates, attestations, calibration certificates or statements or any other context.
5. When an accredited laboratory issues a report that includes results from testing performed with a method covered by its flexible scope of accreditation, reference shall be made to the accreditation, unless an exception listed in 12 § applies. Consequently, the critical circumstance is not whether the method is listed in the scope of accreditation or not, it is whether the method is covered by the flexible scope or not.
6. It is not permitted to issue a revised report solely to change the product's trade name, trademark of the tested product, article number, or equivalent identifiers, even if the report refers to the original version. A new report may only be issued if new testing has been performed. An accredited report may only be reissued to correct errors or to include omitted data, provided that such information was available at the time of the original testing.

Section 13 When a body refers to its accreditation, it shall use the appropriate accreditation symbol in Annexe 1 to these Regulations, or refer to the accreditation in text. Where the body refers to the accreditation in text, the information in the text shall correspond to that resulting from the accreditation symbol.

Where a body refers to its accreditation in a report, certificate, attestation, calibration certificate or statement, it shall indicate its name, mark or logo in connection with such reference.

Guidance for application of Section 13:

1. Only the accreditation symbols shown in Annex 1 under the heading "Accreditation symbols to refer to accreditation in reports, certificates, attestations or calibration certificates." may be used in this context.
2. Combined accreditation symbols (referring to multiple standards or conformity assessment activities) may be used to refer to accreditation on letterheads, marketing material or communication media. See examples in Annex 1 to STAFS 2020:1.

Section 15 An accredited body may only refer to its accreditation if it does so in such a context and manner that there can be no doubt that the accreditation was granted by Swedac, no doubt which body has been accredited, and no doubt over the scope of the accreditation or its meaning.

Guidance for application of Section 15:

1. When the accreditation symbol is used, it shall not have a dominant position or size in relation to the name, mark or logotype of the accredited body. The reference to accreditation shall not be made in a manner suggesting that Swedac is responsible for the contents of the document or the performance of the work.
2. A reference to accreditation may be applied to an inspected item, according to the scheme owner's instructions as long as these are not in conflict with Section 13 to 15.
3. A reference to accreditation may be applied to calibrated item.
4. A reference to accreditation may not be applied to tested item.
5. An accredited body may refer to accreditation on office stationery, in marketing material on its website and on vehicles, as long as the reference is not misleading as to the implications or contents of the scope of accreditation.
6. The accreditation symbol may not be displayed on business cards, or equivalent, of the accredited body's personnel, as this may be misleading as to the nature of the accreditation and may be misinterpreted as a kind of person certification.

Section 16 Before performing a service, an accredited body shall inform its customers and other stakeholders about the extent to which services offered will be performed under accreditation. After a service has been performed, the accredited body shall clarify in a report, certificate, attestation, calibration certificate or statement the extent to which the respective service has been performed under accreditation.

Guidance for application of Section 16:

1. When an accredited body reports results from an accredited activity together with results, or input to results, from unaccredited activities, the body shall in the report, certificate, attestation, calibration certificate or statement clearly indicate what results, or input to results, that do not relate to accredited activities. Note that from an inspection activity can be in the form of "fulfils specified requirements"/"does not fulfil specified requirements".
2. When a report, certificate, attestation, calibration certificate or statement includes a decision or a statement whether an object fulfils specified requirements or not, it is always considered misleading to include a reference to accreditation if the activity related to the statement is not covered by the scope of accreditation.
3. If an accredited body issues a report related to an activity covered by its scope of accreditation without a reference to accreditation, it shall communicate to the customer that the report is not issued under accreditation.
4. If an accredited body refers to its accredited status in offers, it shall clearly identify the services offered which are not covered by the scope of accreditation.

Requirements when referring to international mutual recognition agreements

Section 18 A body accredited by Swedac may refer to international mutual recognition agreements, after applying for an agreement from Swedac. The use of the IAF MLA mark and ILAC's MRA mark shall apply subject to the following conditions:

(a) the IAF MLA mark and the ILAC MRA mark may only be used in a context related to accredited activities and in combination with the Swedac accreditation mark.

(b) when referring to the IAF MLA, Swedac shall be a sub-scope signatory,

(c) when referring to the ILAC MRA mark, Swedac shall be a signatory at level three according to the ILAC guidelines,

(d) the accredited body must have procedures in place to ensure that they and their customers do not use the IAF MLA in a misleading manner. Information on which MLA/MRA agreements Swedac is a signatory can be found at www.swedac.se.

The ILAC MRA mark has the following appearance and should be rendered without changing the proportions or the font, and with the text in readable size. The mark shall be reproduced in blue or black on a background which does not make it difficult to read. When blue is used, the colours shall be CMYK C100 M56 Y0 K0, or Pantone Matching System 293C, or RGB R0 G0 B229.

Guidance for application of Section 18:

1. An accredited body can apply to Swedac to use these marks. Once the application has been approved, the mark may be used. Information on the correct use of the mark is available on Swedacs website <https://www.swedac.se/services/accreditation/international/>
2. When referring to the IAF:s MLA mark Swedac must be a signatory at sub scope-level. This means that the service referred to in the certificate or statement must be within Swedac's scope under the IAF MLA agreement in order for the IAF mark to be used. Swedacs MLA-scope is available at <https://www.swedac.se/services/accreditation/international/>
3. When referring to the ILAC MRA mark, Swedac must be a signatory at level 3 in accordance with ILAC's guidelines. This means that the service referred to in the report, certificate, or calibration statement must be within Swedac's scope under the ILAC MRA agreement, in order for the ILAC mark to be used. Swedacs MRA-scope is available at <https://www.swedac.se/services/accreditation/international/>

Requirements for information in the event of withdrawal of accreditation

Section 21 An accredited body must have procedures established to ensure that, whenever this may be of significance, its customers receive information about the full or partial withdrawal of its accreditation, or if limitations are imposed on the accreditation. The procedures must also ensure that customers receive information about the consequences to the withdrawal or reduction of accreditation.

The information shall be provided in a way and to an extent appropriate in the individual case.

Guidance for application of Section 21:

1. Information on withdrawal of accreditation is considered to be of significance to the customer when it is the owner of a certificate issued under accreditation or when the customer has an ongoing contractual relationship with the accredited body.
2. For an accredited body whose customers, e.g., put orders from a list of accredited services, it may be enough to provide information on, e.g. its website or in other place where the services are presented, that the services are no longer offered under accreditation.

Requirements related to the accreditation service - Special requirements for accreditation of certification bodies

Section 25 Where an accredited certification body consents to a customer who has obtained certification of its management system or of a product to reproduce the certification body logo or certification mark in combination with the accreditation symbol, the certification body shall have a policy and procedures in place for such use.

A certification body which has given its consent under the first subparagraph shall ensure that the accreditation symbol is not used in a context or manner that could lead to confusion as to the scope or meaning of the accreditation.

If the certification body becomes aware that the accreditation symbol is being used in the context or manner referred to in the second subparagraph, it shall request correction and inform Swedac of the occurrence.

Guidance for application of Section 25:

1. The accredited body has no right to transfer the right to use the accreditation symbol in any other case not covered in this section. E.g., a subcontractor to the accredited body may not be authorised to use the accreditation symbol.



Officeaddress: Österlånggatan 9, 503 31 Borås
Postadress: Box 878, 501 15 Borås



0771-99 09 00



registrator@swedac.se



www.swedac.se