



**Hong Kong Institution of Certified Auditors**

**香港專業審核師學會**

**HKICA-CC901E**

**Personnel Certification Scheme for  
Food Safety Management System [FSMS] Auditors**

**Certification Criteria**

The Secretary, Room 108, 1/F Sun Ling Plaza, 30 On Kui Street,  
Fanling, New Territories

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## FOREWORD

The Hong Kong Institution of Certified Auditors (HKICA) was established in 2006. It is a non-profit making organization providing services to the quality, environmental, occupational health & safety, food safety, laboratory and other management systems auditing professions in Hong Kong. Its Executive Board comprises members from universities, public authorities, governmental organizations, certification bodies and management systems consultants in Hong Kong.

### 1. Objectives of HKICA are:

- (a) to promote the status of management system auditors to the public as a profession;
- (b) to establish a local based lead auditors and auditors registration system in accordance with ISO/IEC 19011:2018 and relevant standards and to maintain a database of all registered auditors in the HKICA website for the benefit of the industry;
- (c) to set up personnel certification schemes for different levels of management system auditors in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17024, IPC\_PL\_11\_006 and CNAS-CC03;
- (d) to deliver auditing related seminars and workshops which are of common interests to local auditing profession;
- (e) to provide a focal point where registered auditors and certified auditors can get together for exchange of experience and knowledge and fostering of future developments in the related professions;
- (f) to liaise with overseas equivalent bodies for reciprocal recognition of auditors certification schemes; and
- (g) to approve auditing and related training courses for recognition by the auditing profession and the public in accordance with international practice.



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## 2. Background of Food Safety Management System Auditor Certification Scheme

2.1 Determined to avert the lack of recognition of professional status of food safety auditor locally, a Registration Scheme of Food Safety Management System Auditor (RSFSMSA) was established by HKICA with the following aims:

- (a) to give professional recognition to the food safety auditing practitioners to attract and retain talented and skillful personnel to enter the food safety auditing industry.
- (b) to set benchmarks for the upgrade of expertise and knowledge of the food certification personnel.
- (c) to improve the professional image of Hong Kong food related certification industry and contribute to the building up of brand name for Hong Kong certification services.

2.2 The benefits of Registration for Food Safety Management System Auditor include:

- (d) recognition and prestige for the individual and creation of a competitive advantage over non-certified individuals in the same field;
- (e) enhanced employment opportunities;
- (f) establishment of a professional standard for individuals in a particular auditing field;
- (g) assistance to employers in making more informed recruitment decisions;
- (h) a more productive and highly trained workforce for employers;
- (i) enhanced professional impression on customers;
- (j) assistance to customers in making informed decisions about qualified auditors and prevention of using incompetent and unfit practitioners; and assurance of the accuracy and validity of auditing results.

3. This “Criteria” is established by HKICA based on (IPC-PL-11-006) “Certification Scheme IPC Management System Auditors” and IPC (BD-05-007) “Specification for the Development of Examinations as Part of a Certification Scheme for MS Auditors”. The objective of the Scheme is to ensure the knowledge, competence and personal attributes of FSMS auditors in meeting the food safety management system requirements of auditing operation.

4. The mechanism of evaluation of competence of HKICA-FSMS auditors as stipulated in this “Criteria” is based on the concept and requirements of BS EN ISO/IEC 17024:2012 “Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons”, CNAS ““General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons



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(ISO/IEC 17-24:2012, IDT)” and ISO 19011: 2018 “Guidelines for auditing management systems”.

All HKICA documents are published in both Chinese and English. The latest version will be uploaded to the HKICA website. Applicant can contact the Secretariat for information regarding the Registration Scheme of Food Safety Management System Auditor by the following means:

Address: Room 108, 1/F Sun Ling Plaza, 30 On Kui Street, Fanling, New Territories

website: <http://www.hkica.org>

Email: [info@hkica.org](mailto:info@hkica.org)

Phone: 27892389



## 1. SCOPE

- 1.1. This document prescribes procedures by which personnel may be registered, if successful, with HKICA as Certified Food Safety Management System Auditor or Registered Food Safety Management System Auditor

## 2. REFERENCES

- 2.1. BS EN ISO/IEC 17024:2012 “Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons”
- 2.2. CNAS-CC03:2014 “General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons (ISO/IEC 17024:2012, IDT)”
- 2.3. IPC\_BD-05-007 “Specification for the Development of Examinations as Part of a Certification Scheme for MS Auditors”
- 2.4. IPC\_PL\_11\_006 “Certification Scheme for Management System Auditors”
- 2.5. IPC-PL-14-05 “Common requirements for IPC certification schemes”
- 2.6. ISO 19011: 2018 “Guidelines for auditing management systems”
- 2.7. ISO 22000:2018 “Food Safety Management Systems – Requirements for any organization in the food chain”
- 2.8. ISO/TS 22002-1:2009 Prerequisite programmes on food safety - Part 1: Food Manufacturing’
- 2.9. ISO / TS 22002-2:2013 Prerequisite programmes on food safety- Part 2: Catering’
- 2.10. ISO 22003-1:2022 ‘Food Safety – Part 1: Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems’.
- 2.11. ISO/IEC 17021: 2015 “Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems”.



### 3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

In view of any difference of the terms and definition given below and other standards, the definitions as stipulated in this Criteria will be followed.

- 3.1. **Applicant:** person who has submitted an application to be admitted into the certification process.
- 3.2. **Appeal:** request by applicant or certified person for reconsideration of any decision made by the certification body related to her/his desired certification status.
- 3.3. **Assessment:** process that evaluates a person's fulfilment of the requirements of the certification scheme.
- 3.4. **Audit:** systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which audit criteria are fulfilled.
- 3.5. **CCAA:** China Certification and Accreditation Association
- 3.6. **Certificate:** document issued by a certification body under the provisions of this International Standard, indicating that the named person has fulfilled the certification requirements.
- 3.7. **Competence:** ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results.
- 3.8. **Complaint:** expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by any individual or organization to a certification body, relating to the activities of that body or a certified person, where a response is expected.
- 3.9. **CNAS:** China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment
- 3.10. **Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDU)** is the measuring unit used to quantify approved learning and professional service activities. Typically, one CPDU is earned for every one hour spent in a planned, structured learning experience or activity.
- 3.11. **Examination:** mechanism that is part of the assessment which measures a candidate's competence by one or more means, such as written, oral, practical and observational, as defined in the certification scheme.



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3.12. **IPC:** International Personnel Certification Association

3.13. **Qualification:** demonstrated education, training and work experience, where applicable.

For any other terms not listed above, the relevant definitions in ISO/IEC 17000:2004 and the International Vocabulary of Basic and General Terms in Metrology apply.





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## 4. REGISTRATION GRADES

### 4.1 Certified Food Safety Management System Auditor

HKICA Certified Food Safety Management System Auditors are certified to possess the training, knowledge, skill and competence in taking the role as Food Safety Management System Auditor.

Certified FSMS Auditors are capable to initiate, plan, execute and prepare audit report; capable to assess the pre-requisite programs (PRP), Operational Pre-requisite Programs (OPRP), Critical Control Points (CCP) and Food Safety hazards.

Certified FSMS System Auditor may be a member of the first, second or third party audit team or lead an audit team in accordance with ISO 22003, ISO 19011 and ISO/IEC 17021.

### 4.2 Registered Food Safety Management System Auditor

HKICA Registered Food Safety Management System Auditors are known to possess the training, knowledge and skill in taking the role as Food Safety Management System auditor. He shall be similar with the pre-requisite programs (PRP), Operational Pre-requisite Programs (OPRP), Critical Control Points (CCP) and Food Safety hazards; and able to plan and prepare audit report.

## 5. REQUIREMENTS OF FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AUDITOR GRADES

Applicants shall fulfill the following academic qualification, working experience, professional working experience, training and other competence and experience requirements:

### 5.1 **Certified Food Safety Management System Auditor**

#### 5.1.1 Academic qualification, working experience, professional working experience.

The applicant shall have

- (a) Master degree or above and 2 years of working experience with a minimum of 1 year of food safety experience; or
- (b) HKICA accredited Master degree programme graduates relevant to Food Safety Management System auditing with a minimum of 1 year of food safety experience; or
- (c) Bachelor degree and 4 years of relevant professional experience in food safety management system; or
- (d) HKICA accredited Bachelor degree programme graduates relevant to food



safety management auditing with 1 year of working experience and a minimum of 1 year of food safety experience; or

- (e) Higher diploma, Associate degree and 5 years of relevant professional experience in food safety management system; or
- (f) Qualified as Registered Food Safety Management System Auditor and 4 years of professional working experience in food safety management system.

Note: Applicants for Registration shall provide documentary evidence of work experience; this evidence may be presented in the form of employer references giving information on work carried out and position held.

#### 5.1.2 Training

The applicant shall complete at least 16-hours of Food Safety Management System Auditor training course approved; or recognized by HKICA and not less than 18 hours of CPD in food safety management system discipline in the preceding 5 years.

#### 5.1.3 Other competence and experience requirements

The applicant shall

- (a) have educational background/knowledge/training in food safety management system professional in food industry; or Certified personnel by Personnel Certification Scheme recognized by HKICA and
- (b) obtain internal auditor qualification certified by HKICA; or pass the HKICA internal auditor assessment/or examination; and
- (c) Possess the ability to supervise Registered Food Safety Management System Auditor or technical professionals and
- (d) (i) have relevant audit experience (at least 40-mandays of food safety management system certification/audits, or 100-mandays of food safety technical expert service) or  
(ii) participated in food safety management system establishment in at least 3 projects

#### 5.1.4 Examination requirements

- (a) Applicants for Certified Food Safety Management System Auditor shall obtain satisfactory results in the 'FSMS Auditor' Examination. The written examination is an open book assessment. All examination papers are prepared by HKICA.
- (b) Examination can be waived for applicants holding a valid FSMS Auditor certification status granted by certification bodies accredited for ISO 17024 or organization recognized by HKICA.
- (c) HKICA accredited programme graduates relevant to FSMS auditing will be accepted as having satisfied the examination requirements.

## 5.2 Registered Food Safety Management System Auditor

### 5.2.1 Academic qualification, working experience, professional working experience.



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The applicant shall have

- (a) Master degree or above; or
- (b) Bachelor degree and 1 year of working experience; or
- (c) HKICA accredited degree programme graduates relevant to food safety management auditing; or
- (d) Higher diploma, Associate degree and 2 years of working experience.

#### 5.2.2 Training

The applicant shall complete at least 16-hours of Food Safety Management System Auditor training course. The training course should be approved by HKICA or equivalent recognized by HKICA. HKICA accredited programme graduates relevant to Food Safety Management System auditing will be accepted as having satisfied the training requirements.

#### 5.2.3 Examination requirements

- (a) Applicant for Registered Food Safety Management System Auditor shall obtain satisfactory results in the 'FSMS Auditor' Examination. The written examination is an open book assessment. All examination papers are prepared by HKICA.
- (b) Examination can be waived for applicants holding a valid FSMS Auditor certification status granted by certification bodies accredited for ISO 17024 or organization recognized by HKICA.
- (c) HKICA accredited programme graduates relevant to FSMS auditing will be accepted as having satisfied the examination requirements.

## 6. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

### 6.1. Initial application

6.1.1. Applicants shall read and understand the requirements of this Registration Criteria.

6.1.2. Applicants can submit their application by email or by post with all necessary information including certificate of academic qualifications, certificate of achievement in training courses, audit log and any related documents together with the application fee. The application form is available for download from the HKICA website or available upon request. Applicants can also submit their application following the on-line application system and upload the required documents and fee.

6.1.3. Applicants shall provide complete and accurate information and evidence.



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- 6.1.4. Applicants shall sign the declaration in the application form. They shall commit to abide to the requirements of the HKICA Registration criteria particularly the criteria of Code of Conduct.
- 6.1.5. No applications can be confirmed until receipt of a correctly completed application form and the full fees.
- 6.1.6. In the event of false statements being discovered, any certificate awarded will be revoked and declared null and void.
- 6.1.7. Applicants shall apply in written form for request for accommodation of special needs for the Registration process or release of information. The Certification Body shall provide assistant to the applicant as far as practicable.
- 6.1.8. Applicant for Registration or certified persons shall pay the fee as stipulated in HKICA03 “Schedule of Fees for Person Certification”. Once the Registration process starts, the Registration fee is non-refundable despite results of Registration.
- 6.1.9. Recommendation on registration of an applicant shall be made solely on the basis of the information gathered during the Registration process by the examiners.
- 6.1.10. The Governing Council of HKICA reviews the recommendation and concludes the Registration decision. Members of the Council shall not be involved in the examination and/or evaluation processes.
- 6.1.11. HKICA accredited programme organization shall submit the list of graduates apply for registered / certified FSMS auditor to HKICA for the endorsement from Governing Council.
- 6.2. **Registration / Certification notice and certificate**
- 6.2.1. HKICA shall inform results of registration / certification within 15 calendar days after decision by Governing Council.
- 6.2.2. HKICA shall upload the certification notice and issue registration / certification/re-certification certificate, the certificate is valid for 3 years. HKICA will inform the nominated organizations or the applicants of unsuccessful certification.



- 6.2.3. The certificates are signed by the President of the Certification Body and shall contain, as a minimum, the following information:
- (a) name of the registered / certified person and certificate number (unique identification);
  - (b) name and logo of the Certification Body (HKICA);
  - (c) reference to the certification criteria HKICA-CC901E and year of issue on which the certification is based;
  - (d) the scope of registration / certification; and
  - (e) effective date of registration / certification and date of expiry.
- 6.2.4. HKICA shall maintain sole ownership of the certificates. Certified persons shall stop use of the certificate during suspension or termination.
- 6.2.5. HKICA will upload the list of certified persons as public information to the website. The list includes:
- (a) name of certified person;
  - (b) scope of registration / certification;
  - (c) certificate number;
  - (d) certification date and expiry date.
- 6.3. **Monitoring and Re-certification**
- 6.3.1. Annual maintenance requirements: Registered/Certified FSMS Auditors should complete at least 20 continuing professional development units (CPDUs) of which 5 shall be approved by HKICA. (1 contact hour is normally equivalent to 1 CPDU); Every year at the month of registration/certification, the Secretariat will inform the auditors to pay for the annual fee and remind them to record and keep their annual verification (CPD) records. These records will be checked during the re-certification process.



6.3.2. Re-certification audit requirements:

Certified FSMS auditors shall complete at least 5 FSMS audit within the recertification cycle. If they cannot fulfill the FSMS auditing requirements, they shall either completing a HKICA approved training course and obtain certificate of achievement or obtaining a pass in re-examination as specified in section 5 to demonstrate their competence. The Operation Manager shall alert the applicant three months before expiration of the certification by e-mail. Registered FSMS auditors do not have such requirement.

6.3.3. Monitoring criteria

(a) HKICA monitors the performance and personal behavior and compliance of Code of Conduct of certified FSMS auditors through complaints against the person, feedback of the nominated organizations audited by the certified person and annual verification evidence.

(b) All certified FSMS personnel shall undergo at least one monitoring exercise within the 3-year re-certification cycle.

(c) Methods of monitoring:

i) review of on-site evaluation report by accreditation body.

ii) review of evaluation of performance and competence conducted by the organization conducting FSMS audit (e.g. review of certification file, audit report and witness evaluation report, etc.)

iii) results of interview assessment conducted by HKICA

6.3.4. Certified personnel should take appropriate corrective actions if the following problems are encountered:

(a) Complaints in relation to performance of their audit are not resolved;

(b) Unsatisfactory results in an on-site evaluation by the accreditation body; or

(c) Fail in an interview assessment.

6.3.5. HKICA can conduct interview assessment in monitoring the audit activities and performance of certified personnel, HKICA may suspend or terminate one's certification status in case there is no improvement of the above situations.

6.3.6. Re-certification follows the same procedures as initial certification.



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## **7. APPEAL AND COMPLAINT**

- 7.1. HKICA shall follow the procedures as stipulated in HKICA06E “Appeal and Complaint Procedure” to handle appeal and complaint.
- 7.2. Appellant shall submit their appeal in written form in HKICA-F04 “Appeal Form” within 30 days from related decision.
- 7.3. Appellant or complainant can download the document HKICA06E “Appeal and Complaint Procedure” and the form from the website. HKICA can provide the document and form upon request.

## **8. ACTIONS AGAINST REGISTRATION/CERTIFICATION STATUS**

- 8.1. All registered / certified persons shall ensure the information provided is valid and complete. In view of any false or fraud statement, HKICA will suspend or terminate the registration / certification status in accordance with Section 7 of HKICA01E “Regulations for Certification Scheme of Quality Management System Auditor”.
- 8.2. The same procedures as 6.1.1 will be carried out in case the registered / certified person fails to abide to Regulations as set by HKICA or fails to comply with the registration / certification criteria. Warning, suspension, downgrade will be imposed. The final penalty is termination of registration / certification status.
- 8.3. A registered / certified auditing person may, on any personal reason by serving a written notice signed by the applicant, voluntarily suspends or terminates his/her registration / certification for any or all of his/her registered / certified activities.



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### Appendix 1: Use and Format of HKICA Registration Symbol

1. Certified/Registered persons are entitled to use the HKICA's logo and related certified/registered level on their name card, abbreviations for different certified levels:
  - a) Certified Auditor: CA<sub>(FSMS)</sub>;
  - b) Registered Auditor: RA<sub>(FSMS)</sub>;
2. Certified/Registered persons cannot self-make the HKICA registration symbol, all logo and mark should be provided by HKICA when certified/registered. The HKICA registration symbol consists of three basic parts:
  - a) HKICA logo
  - b) RSFSMSA mark
  - c) Registered level
3. The HKICA logo should be used as an entity. Certified/Registered personnel cannot use HKICA and scheme separately.
4. The formats of the HKICA registration symbols, including its appearance, aspect ratio, colour, shade, font style, relative sizes and positions of its components and other features shall be as specified in this Regulation.
5. The symbol given below is based on a white colour background and when printing against a background of any other colour. Precaution shall be taken to ensure that the colours of the symbols are not affected. Samples of the HKICA registration symbol (for RSFSMSA):



6. Color code of the symbol :
  - a) C : 286C
  - b) A : 185C
  - c) HKICA: black
  - d) RSFSMS registered level : 185C





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7. In addition to the colour specified above, the registration symbols may be displayed in a black and white. Samples are given below (for RSFSMSA):



8. The registration symbols may be enlarged or reduced in size. Irrespective of its size, the features of the registration symbol shall be clearly discernible

-END-