ACCREDITATION AND CERTIFICATION OF THE QUALITY CONTROL CENTER SWITZERLAND: 9 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

DEFINITIONS

Accreditation: Formal recognition by a body of the technical competence of an organization to provide a concrete provision of a service, as defined in the accredited scope. Technical competence is key to transparency, confidence and comparability (1).


Certification: Procedure in which a third party confirms in writing that a service respects predefined normative requirements (2).

Since 1999, the CSCQ has been certified according to ISO 9002 then ISO 9001 2000.

Conformity evaluation: Systematic examination aimed to check the respect of predefined requirements for the provision of a service. The requirements can be set up by legal dispositions, norms or by other means.

Quality: Totality of characteristics of a service provision that bear on its ability to satisfy stated and implied needs (8).

In other words: To see its own requirements fulfilled during processes with evolving requirements and data.

Conditions for accreditation and certification (5)

✓ Independence and impartiality. No pressure, either commercial, financial or from a third party
✓ Management committed to Quality
✓ Implementation of European and International norms
✓ Collaborators’ recognition by the Management
✓ Reliable communication, common interests and internal co-operation (4)
✓ Technical competence and experience come first and foremost

for:

✓ Development and processes checks with strictly targeted means
✓ Detection of non-conformities (NC) ➔ opportunities for training and change (7)
✓ Evaluation of opportunities and projected risks ➔ motivation for the detection of these NC (7)
✓ Error analysis, complaints, deviations ➔ creation of corrective and preventive actions (7)
✓ Internal audits, indicators for the state of processes involving collaborators (8)
✓ Direction review, analysis of the quality system relevance ➔ Objectives, intentions and plans of actions for the coming year (7)
✓ Systematic continuous improvement in service provisions and quality control surveys (4)

Steps towards accreditation / certification

From pure theory, ...:

a) Quality awareness
b) Development of strategies
c) Definitions of quality objectives
d) Adaptation of other existing systems
e) Transparency of conclusions for the collaborators

... to practice

1. Appointment of Quality manager linked to Management and answering for quality
2. Collaborators’ involvement by granting clear functions according to a structured flowchart
3. Determination of technical and social competence of collaborators
4. Choice of a Quality Manual index and of a documentation system
5. Development of procedures and forms (non-automated)
6. Education and practice for collaborators towards assimilation of the system
7. Systematic internal audits to evaluate the setting up of the system with feedback evaluation of the received results
8. Analysis of external and internal complaints for the system to adjust to the needs
9. Compilation of audit check-lists for accreditation or certification
10. Request for an audit by accrediting or certifying organisms

RESULTS OF ACCREDITATION + CERTIFICATION AFTER 9 YEARS

➢ Increase of surveys and participants without increasing collaborators
➢ Increase of surveys and participants without increasing complaints
➢ Increase of experts’ requirements about samples homogeneity evaluation, samples stability and uncertainty of assigned values results

Output surveys / collaborators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Coll.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>12,95</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
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<td>13,46</td>
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Evolution of complaints / participants

<table>
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<th>Complaints</th>
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<td>2005</td>
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<td>301</td>
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Cost: CHF 170 200,-

Number of audits by accrediting-certifying organisms: 11
Number of quality documents: more than 300

Conclusions: expected and obtained benefits

➔ confidence in the organism results, reports, and the certificates
➔ national and international recognition of the organism’s competence
➔ transformation into a “learning-teaching” organism thanks to the maintenance of a continuous improvement system
➔ competence to offer follow-up and advice to the participants

Prospects

Certification = conformity ➔ new opening to true innovations
Accreditation = competence ➔ new opening to true innovations

REFERENCES

(2): http://www.sqs.ch/ Association Suisse pour Systèmes de Qualité et de Management
(4): sasFORUM N°. 3/2001
(5): Evaluation of opportunities and projected risks ➔ motivation for the detection of these NC (7)
(7): God of passages, Janus was represented with two opposite faces, one looking to front, the other facing backward
(9): NF EN ISO 8402, Management de la qualité et assurance de la qualité (1995)