

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Verification of Auditor/Certifier Qualifications

eva service gmbh

Document Number: SOP-AUD-001

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 11.04.2025

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1. Purpose

This SOP outlines the procedure for verifying and ensuring the professional qualification of auditors or certifiers working on behalf of eva under the eva Climate Standard. The goal is to ensure independence, competence and proper accreditation of the involved validation/verification bodies (VVB) and their respective personnel.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all VVBs and their assigned personnel who perform initial certifications or re-certifications on behalf of eva and applying eva Standard and Methodologies.

3. Qualification Requirements

VVBs must hold a **valid accreditation** according to at least one of the following quality standards:

- FSC or PEFC under *Forest Management*
- ISO 14065 for verifications according to ISO 14064-3

The VVB's aforementioned qualifications must be made publicly accessible by the VVB.

Accreditation by eva restricts the VVB to a forest management scope when applying eva Standard and Methodologies..

4. Onboarding to the eva Online Platform

Before being assigned to an eva certification (initial or re-certification), new VVBs and their auditing personnel must participate in an **onboarding session to the eva Standard and Methods, and to the eva online platform**.

- The onboarding is conducted by an eva staff member.
 - It covers access, use of online tools, data management, and documentation requirements.
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5. Mandatory Training in Case of System Changes

In the event of **significant changes** to the eva Standards, Methods and online platform or its use, eva reserves the right to require a **new mandatory training session** from all affected VVBs. This training is considered an integral part of the qualification process and a prerequisite for continued access to the eva online platform.

6. Accreditation Verification

eva verifies the accreditations of the commissioned VVB

- **At least once per year,**
- **Or on specific occasions,** such as suspected invalidity, changes in accreditation bodies, or complaints.

Verification is performed through publicly available sources and/or by requesting confirmations or copies of accreditation certificates. All findings are documented.

7. Spot Checks on Quality of Validation/Verification Reports

7.1 Purpose

To ensure that validation and verification reports issued under the eva standard maintain a high level of quality, consistency, and compliance with procedural and content requirements.

7.2 Scope

Applies to all reports submitted by approved auditors/certifiers for projects undergoing validation or verification under the eva standard.

7.3 Frequency and Selection

- Spot checks are conducted on at least 10% of all validation/verification reports annually.
- Reports are selected randomly or risk-based, e.g.:
 - First-time submissions by a certifier
 - Unusual findings or timelines
 - Complaints received
 - Previously flagged issues

7.4 Procedure

1. Selection

- The QMS Representative selects reports based on the criteria above and documents the sample list.

2. Review

- Reports are reviewed against a quality checklist (EVA-QM-F-07-01), including:
 - Completeness and clarity of findings
 - Alignment with eva standard requirements
 - Justification of conclusions
 - Proper referencing and evidence
 - Absence of inconsistencies or contradictions

3. Documentation

- Findings are recorded in the Spot Check Log.

4. Feedback

- A summary of results is shared with the respective certifier, along with any required corrections or clarifications.

7.5 Mitigation Plan (if deficiencies are found)

Finding Type	Mitigation Action
Minor Issues	Feedback issued; no formal action required if corrected.
Moderate Issues	Mandatory revision of the report; retraining may be required.

Major Issues	Temporary suspension of certifier pending review; potential re-audit or escalation to Managing Director.
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- All actions are documented.
- Repeat or systemic issues trigger a re-assessment of the certifier's qualification.

7.6 Follow-up

- The QMS Representative monitors implementation of corrections.
- Spot check results are reviewed during internal audits and management reviews to identify trends and systemic improvements.

8. Documentation

The following records are created and maintained under this SOP:

- List of all active VVB and their respective accreditation status,
- Attendance logs for onboarding and training sessions,
- Verification logs for accreditation validity,
- Communications regarding system updates and mandatory trainings.

9. SOP Review

This SOP is reviewed at least every three years or in response to changes in the standard, accreditation requirements, or eva online platform functionalities.

10. Revision History

Version	Date	Change	Author
1.0	11.04.2025	Initial version	Rüdiger Meyer

Annexes:

QM-F-0701 [Validation/Verification Report Quality Checklist](#)

QM-REC-001 [Attendance Logs for Onboarding + Trainings](#)

QM-REC-002 [Attendance Logs for Accreditation Validity](#)

QM-F-0702 [Spot Check Log - Validation/Verification Reports](#)