



Business Quality Assurance International

# Remote Assessment Guidance

## Definition - Remote Assessment

A remote assessment is one that is conducted partially or completely off site. The assessment will cover everything that is usually covered on site but uses technology to support the Assessor when a site visit is not possible /appropriate.

## Overview

The remote assessment will typically be the same duration as your onsite assessment. You will need to be available at all times and will be dialled into a conference call for most of the assessment duration.

Remote assessments are also best delivered using screen share. This reduces the amount of data and information transferred between your organisation and BQAI.

You may be asked to email documents to the Assessor for review. Any information you send us will be managed in accordance to our confidentiality and data privacy policies, which are available on our website and within the BQAI regulations related to registration.

## Getting Ready

As you would expect, remote assessment is heavily reliant on technology. There are a few simple logistical points you need to make sure of to be ready for your remote assessment:

- A system which will allow an online conference call (with video where possible) such as Teams or Skype;
- If you do not have access to a system like this, then your BQAI Assessor will send you a meeting invitation via Skype;
- If online connectivity is not possible; the Assessor may ask you to send them information via email and follow up with a telephone call;
- Please ensure you are familiar with the technology prior to your assessment to avoid unnecessary delays.

## Who Needs to be Available?

### 1. Personnel

- the person responsible will need to be available for the entirety of the assessment;
- any key personnel will need to be available for the relevant parts of the assessment. They can either dial in separately or from the same point as other personnel where possible;
- leadership individuals will need to be available during the leadership part of the assessment (if part of the assessment plan) as well as the opening and closing meetings.

### 2. Documentation

- We will review as much of the management system as possible remotely. This can be done via screen share or by sending the information to your assessor via email;
- Be aware of any information security processes you have internally.

### 3. Site Tours

- For standards and certifications that require a site tour or specific processes to be followed on the “shop floor” where possible you should show the Assessor around using a webcam or video call from a mobile;
- If this is not possible due to technology, health and safety or the closure of a location, then this will be followed up on site in a subsequent special assessment or at the next assessment. This will be determined by your Assessor and will be based on your unique circumstances. This is also subject to the type of assessment, your business activities and the standard against which you are certified.

### Dealing with Problems on the Day

The Assessor will try to continue with the assessment wherever possible. If there are issues with connectivity during your remote assessment, the Assessor will attempt to complete the assessment over the phone.

If this is the case, then be prepared to email over key documents for the Assessor to review and ensure you are located in an area of good signal /phone coverage.

### Examples of Documents to email in Advance

- internal assessment records
- internal assessment plan
- management review minutes and actions
- complaints log
- corrective actions
- improvement documentation
- risk register
- documentation, supporting core business processes (if possible)

### Extent of Remote Assessment Capability

We will try to complete as much of the assessment remotely as possible. Where we cannot fully verify the effectiveness of your system and therefore are unable to complete your entire assessment remotely (this is more likely on a recertification assessment), then BQAI will arrange to complete the onsite activities at a later date.

In these circumstances, BQAI may choose to temporarily extend your certificate validity by a maximum of six 6 months subject to a successful remote assessment. BQAI will then follow this up with an onsite assessment within the 6 months and prior to the cert expiry to cover the remaining elements. Where possible BQAI will utilise your existing assessment duration for this.

Please note that all remote assessments are subject to risk review by BQAI. Previous performance of your management system may affect your suitability for full remote assessment.

Timeframes

<b>Preparation Timing</b>	<b>Activities</b>
2 to 3 weeks before assessment	You will receive a call from your Assessor to agree the logistics for the assessment, the assessment plan and timescales, and the personnel, records and evidence required.
Any time before assessment	Prepare any documents and personnel in advance of the remote assessment. Submission of any documents to your BQAI Assessor if agreed in prior call.
Assessment day opening meeting	Conference call begins using technology as agreed in your call 2 to 3 weeks previously

Note: This was developed using guidance from IAF ID 3:2011 and ongoing industry best practices for, in particular, emergency events.