



INTERNATIONAL
ACCREDITATION
SERVICE®

Assessing Competence vs Qualification

Dr. George I. Anastasopoulos

Competence: *“the ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results.”* ISO 19011:11

Competence-based assessment means that the Interested Party is expected to examine a candidate’s knowledge, skills, personal attributes and qualifications specific to the examined competence.

Qualification-based assessment relies on an applicant's education and qualifications, rather than on the basis of measurable competence.

“Do you know how to drive a car?”

“I was trained and acquired a driving license but I am still not confident to drive a car.”

“That means you have the qualifications but not the competence.”



There are college drop-outs who are CEOs of Fortune 500 companies because they have competencies, not qualifications.



Therefore, having both qualifications *and* competencies helps immensely but people can still excel through competencies rather than qualifications.

Qualification based programs emphasize training while **competence based programs** emphasize the *results* of training by assessing competence through one or more methods of examination which must be valid, reliable and independent.

Competency-based programs define first the competencies required so that they can be properly examined.

**Source: JOB-TASK ANALYSIS
FOR THE CERTIFICATION SCHEME
OF IPC MS AUDITORS (issue 3)**



Task Group (15 global experts)

**Interested parties trained/certified:
1,134,000 MS related experts (auditors,
consultants, managers) in 87 countries**

Issued 2005, revised 2012 and 2015.

Participating Interested Parties:



ISO 19011:2011,
Guidelines for auditing management systems

ISO/IEC 17021,
Conformity assessment – Requirements for
bodies providing audit and certification of
management systems

ISO/IEC 17024:2012
Conformity assessment -- General
requirements for bodies operating
certification of persons



International
Organization for
Standardization

TASKS AND COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR ALL AUDITORS (MS)

Unit Descriptor

This is a core unit for all management system auditors. It covers the general knowledge and skills required by all management system auditing as outlined in ISO 19011.

This unit is a pre-requisite for all persons seeking certification as an MS auditor.

This unit addresses the principles, procedures and techniques of auditing, the skills to conduct the audit and personal attributes required to become an auditor.

If ***bold italicized*** text is shown in Performance Criteria, details of the text are provided in the Range Statement.

ELEMENT - TASK		PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.</i>		<i>Performance criteria describe the required performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Examination of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.</i>	
1	Apply the principles, procedures and techniques of auditing.	1.1	The principles and objectives of auditing management systems, as outlined in ISO 19011, are followed when carrying out the audit.
		1.2	The terms and definitions of ISO 19011 are understood and applied correctly when auditing.
		1.3	Audit criteria are established and an audit is initiated in accordance with ISO 19011.
		1.4	An on-site audit plan is developed and negotiated with an auditee to meet the agreed audit criteria, and in accordance with ISO 19011.
		1.5	On-site audit activities are conducted in accordance with ISO 19011 guidelines.
		1.6	An audit report is prepared, approved and distributed in accordance with ISO 19011 guidelines.

VARIABLES TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN EXAMINING COMPETENCIES

This range statement relates to the four units of competency defined above. It allows for different work environments and situations that will affect performance.

The following variables may be present with examination depending on the work situation, needs of the applicant, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts.

If ***bold italicized*** text is shown in Performance Criteria, details of the text are provided in the Range Statement.

Audit Criteria may
include

- Regulations
- Codes of Practice
- Standards
- Customer Requirements
- Contracts
- International Agreements
- Risk Management
- Project Plans
- Industry Best Practice
- Quality management
- Environmental management
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Food Safety/HACCP
- Domestic and International Conventions

Audit plan may include:

- Opening meeting
- Timelines and schedules
- Scope and objective of audit
- Audit requirements and/or identification of system documentation
- Resource requirements
- Sampling techniques
- Auditee provision of personnel for audit
- Safety of auditors
- Reporting procedures
- Distribution of reports
- Closing meeting
- Follow-up procedures
- Confidentiality requirements
- Roles and responsibilities of auditors
- Audit criteria

Audit activities may include:

- Analysis
- Sampling
- Determining information flows
- Evaluating the effectiveness of system controls
- Questioning
- Tracing
- Trend analysis
- Advanced management information systems

Audit findings may include

- Non conformance
- Conformance
- Not able to be verified
- Observations
- Opportunity for improvement
- Strengths
- Weaknesses

Audit activities may include:

- Analysis
- Sampling
- Determining information flows
- Evaluating the effectiveness of system controls
- Questioning
- Tracing
- Trend analysis
- Advanced management information systems

Audit findings may include

- Non conformance
- Conformance
- Not able to be verified
- Observations
- Opportunity for improvement
- Strengths
- Weaknesses

THE PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE EXAMINATION

Competency based examinations

Competency based examination is the process of collecting evidence and making judgement on whether or not competency has been achieved.

All examination systems should demonstrate compliance with the four (4) technical principles of examination:

Validity

Reliability

Flexibility

Fairness

Validity

A valid examination examines what it claims to examine; evidence collected is relevant to the activity and demonstrates that the performance criteria have been met.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of the interpretation of evidence and the examination outcome. To make reliable examinations, examiners must be competent in terms of their own examination competencies and have the relevant technical competencies at least to the level being assessed.

Flexibility

Flexibility in examination allows for examination either on or off the job and at mutually convenient times and situations.

Fairness

A fair examination will not disadvantage any person and will take into account the characteristics of the person being examined.

Rules of Evidence

Evidence of competence must be:

- Valid
- Sufficient
- Current
- Authentic

Valid Evidence

Evidence of competence must cover the broad range of knowledge, skills and the application of such knowledge and skills specified in the defined competencies.

When examining against those competencies, examiners must ensure that the evidence collected focuses on the appropriate knowledge and skills specified in the Performance Criteria and Evidence Guides.

Sufficient Evidence

This relates to the amount of evidence.

Examiners must collect enough evidence to satisfy that the person being assessed is competent across all elements according to the performance criteria, taking into account the Range of Variables.

To ensure enough evidence of competence is collected, it may be necessary or desirable to use a supplementary source of evidence such as oral or written questioning case studies or third party reports.

Current Evidence

An examiner needs to determine the recency of the evidence of competence.

The focus is on whether the person being examined has current competencies in examination.

The issue of currency of evidence is of particular concern when examining for the purposes of recognition of current competencies.

Authentic Evidence

Evidence needs to be checked for authenticity – that is, it actually relates to the performance of the person being assessed, and not that of another person.

To determine authenticity, validation of the evidence by a third party may be necessary.

AUDITING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS - GENERAL

Competency

Examination methods

Knowledge:

- Reference standard;
- ISO 19011

1. Written exam

Skills:

- Audit preparation;
- Audit (on-site);
- Audit reporting;
- Audit follow-up.

All these skills require demonstration of:

- Understanding documentation;
- Sampling techniques;
- Context (religion, culture, social)

1. Live audit
2. Simulated audit
3. Practical activities
4. Written exam

Personal attributes:

- Communication (oral and written);
- As per ISO 19011 clause 7.2

1. Live audit
2. Simulated audit
3. Oral exam (interview)
4. Written exam

THANK YOU

ganas@iasonline.org

