

IMPARTIALITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C's commitment to impartiality and confidentiality in all its certification activities related to products, processes, and services. It ensures compliance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 (Conformity assessment) Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services, and reflects the organization's dedication to fairness, objectivity, non-discrimination, and the protection of sensitive information.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all personnel, committees, subcontractors, and external bodies acting on behalf of MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C.

This policy covers all activities performed by MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C, including but not limited to:

- Application review
- Evaluation (testing, inspection, auditing)
- Review and certification decisions
- Surveillance
- Handling of complaints and appeals
- Management of records and client information

3. DEFINITIONS

Impartiality: The presence of objectivity, ensuring that conflicts of interest do not exist or are resolved so as not to adversely influence certification activities.

Confidential Information: Any non-public information obtained or created during certification activities, including client data, technical details, test results, and internal assessments.

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Certification Body: MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C, operating as a legal entity responsible for product, process, and service certification.

Client: Any organization or person responsible to MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C for fulfilling certification requirements.

4. COMMITMENT TO IMPARTIALITY

4.1. General Principles

MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C conducts all certification activities impartially, without allowing commercial, financial, or other pressures to compromise its objectivity.

All MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C personnel (either internal or external) or committees who could influence the certification activities shall act impartially.

4.2. Safeguarding Mechanisms

MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C has established a formal Impartiality Committee that includes balanced representation from significantly interested parties (e.g., clients, consumers, regulators, industry representatives) to monitor and advise on impartiality matters. Refer to Impartiality Committee and mechanism Procedure (MQS-ICM).

Top management of MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES demonstrates ongoing commitment to impartiality and ensures that no single interest predominates within governance structures.

4.3. Prohibited Activities and Conflict of Interest

MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C or any part of the legal entity of which it forms a part, shall not be involved in the following activities for a product, process, or service it certifies:

- Design, manufacture, installation, distribution, or maintenance of the studied product.
- Management system consultancy or internal auditing.
- Propound or deliver consultancy to its customers.
- Link certification services with consultancy offerings in marketing or communications.

4.4. Personnel Obligations

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All personnel involved in certification activities must:

- Declare any current or prior association with a client or competitor;
- Disclose any situation that may present a conflict of interest;
- Refrain from participating in certification decisions for clients for whom they provided consultancy within the past two years.

4.5. Impartiality Risk Management

- Identification: MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES shall identify and document risks to its impartiality on an ongoing basis. This analysis shall cover risks arising from all its certification activities, from its relationships (including contracts, governance, marketing, and payment of sales commission), and the relationships of its personnel.
- Minimization: Where a risk to impartiality is detected, MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES shall act to eliminate or minimize the risk. If a risk is not eliminated, MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES will document how it has been minimized to an acceptable level to allow certification to proceed.
- Review: Risk evaluation shall be performed frequently by the MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES Impartiality Committee as part of a constant risk assessment effort.
- MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES takes action to respond to any risks to its impartiality, arising from the actions of other persons, bodies or organizations, of which it becomes aware.

4.6. Consultancy and Personnel Restriction

- No Linkage: MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES's certification activities shall not be marketed or offered as linked with the activities of an organization that provides consultancy. MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES shall not claim or indicate that the certification process would be smoother, quicker, or cheaper if a specified consultancy organization were used.
- Personnel Restriction: Personnel shall not be used to review or make a certification decision for a product, process, or service for which they have provided consultancy. This restriction shall apply for a minimum period of two years from the date the consultancy was completed.

5. COMMITMENT TO CONFIDENTIALITY

5.1. General Obligations

MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C treats all information obtained or created during certification activities as confidential, except where:

- The client has made the information public;

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- Disclosure is agreed upon with the client (e.g., for complaint resolution);
- Disclosure is required by law or statutory authority.

Protection of Information: All information obtained from the client during the process is considered proprietary information and shall be treated as confidential.

Non-Disclosure: Confidential information shall not be disclosed to any third party without the client's express written consent.

Exceptions: When MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES is required by law or pursuant to an order of a Court or statutory authority to release confidential information, the client concerned shall be promptly notified of the information provided, unless prohibited by law.

Security and Storage: Electronic and physical records shall be stored securely to prevent unauthorized access, loss, or misuse, and accessed only by authorized personnel. The obligation of maintaining confidentiality will continue even after the end of the period of employment or engagement.

5.2. Handling of Information

All personnel must:

- Use confidential information only for the purpose of performing their duties;
- Disclose information only on a “need-to-know” basis to authorized individuals who are also bound by confidentiality;
- Securely store, transmit, and dispose of confidential data to prevent unauthorized access.

5.3. Legal Disclosure

If legally compelled to disclose confidential information (e.g., by court order), the employee must promptly notify MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C to allow the organization to take protective measures, unless prohibited by law.

5.4. Media and Public Communication

No confidential information may be shared with the media or public without written authorization from senior management.

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6. PERSONNEL COMMITMENTS

All MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES personnel, including internal employees and subcontractors, shall sign a contract or commitment document (such as a legally binding agreement for subcontractors) by which they commit themselves to the following:

- To comply with all rules and procedures defined by MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES, including those relating to impartiality and confidentiality.
- To declare any prior and/or present association with any supplier, designer, provider, or developer of the products, processes, or services they are assigned to evaluate or certify.
- To reveal any situation known to them that may present them or MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES with a conflict of interest.

7. PUBLICLY AVAILABLE AND NON-DISCRIMINATORY CONDITIONS

Non-Discrimination: The policies and procedures under which MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES operates are non-discriminatory. Access to the certification process is not conditional upon the size of the client, membership of any association or group, or the number of certifications already issued.

Public Information: MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES shall maintain and make publicly available (e.g., on its website or upon request) relevant information about its certification activities, including:

- Information about the certification schemes it operates.
- The certification process.
- Information about the grounds for granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending, or withdrawing certification.
- A directory or list of the status (granted, suspended, withdrawn) of certified clients, including the certified products, processes, or services and the standards to which they are certified.

8. GOVERNANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

- Breaches of this policy whether intentional, accidental, or repeated, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract.
- External parties (e.g., subcontractors) found in violation may face contract termination and legal consequences.

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- This policy is integrated into employment contracts, appointment letters, and subcontractor agreements

9. REVIEW AND JURISDICTION

- This policy shall be reviewed annually as part of the management review process.
- Any disputes arising from this policy shall be governed by the laws of the Sultanate of Oman, with exclusive jurisdiction granted to its courts.

Approved by:

On behalf of MUSCAT QUALITY SERVICES S.P.C

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hamed Al-Azizi', is written over a horizontal line.

Hamed Al-Azizi

Date: 30 October 2025

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