



AUDITOR REQUIREMENTS

Version 1.0 (2026-01)

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These requirements are aligned with those set by the Sustainable Leather Foundation (SLF) Certification Scheme for auditors. They are adopted by SLF Auditing Services as an approved Certification Body for the SLF Certification Scheme. They may be updated or amended in line with changes to the requirements set by the SLF Certification Scheme.

Audits must be undertaken by an auditor who has been approved by demonstrating they have met and continue to meet the SLF Auditor Requirements for the module being audited.

Where more than one auditor is present during an audit, at least one must be an approved auditor for the module(s) being audited who shall act as the lead auditor for that module.

Purpose

This document sets out the requirements for auditors undertaking conformity assessments under the SLF Certification Scheme. These are structured to ensure that the auditor has the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to undertake an assessment against the respective SLF Scheme standards and requirements.

These recognise the differing requirements for the undertaking of assessments against the respective Environmental, Social and Governance modules and are structured accordingly.

Scope

These requirements are applicable to all auditors undertaking conformity assessment under the SLF Certification Scheme regardless of geography or audit scope.

Auditor Approval

SLF Auditing Services as the Certification Body is responsible for the approval of an auditor for the respective modules of the SLF Scheme. Due to the different technical, knowledge and experience requirements required to effectively undertake an audit of the different modules, an auditor may be approved for one or more modules of the SLF Scheme.

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All Auditors approved for the SLF Certification Scheme

All auditors shall abide by the four Core Principles set out in the Chartered Quality Institute (CQI) and International Register of Certificated Auditors (IRCA) Professional Code of Conduct & Ethics to ensure the highest ethical standards and integrity.

All auditors must be able to demonstrate good command of English in addition to their mother tongue, in order to be able to communicate effectively through report writing and verbal communication.

Auditors shall ensure no conflict of interest, including through the undertaking of non-audit activities, e.g. consultancy or training. Where any perceived conflict of interest could arise, auditors should seek advice and declare any potential conflict with the respective Certification Body prior to undertaking any audit.

Ensure continued professional development (CPD). All auditors and trainers are expected to maintain their CPD through membership of an accredited body (such as CQI, IRCA or ISEP). SLF shall ensure CPD in relation to the SLF Audit Standard.

All approved auditors must hold a relevant qualification in their respective field (for example, leather technology, chemistry, sustainability or environmental science, etc) or have relevant and sufficient experience within a leather manufacturing environment or associated facility.

All approved auditors must be qualified for the specific specialist areas:

Environmental Module

Environmental Lead Auditor 14001 training, or equivalent, through an accredited provider in advance of approval.

Social Module

SA8000 Social Systems Lead Auditor, or equivalent, through an accredited provider in advance of approval.

Governance Module

Either of the above and/or ISO45001 Lead Auditor, through an accredited provider in advance of approval.

Auditor Approval Retention

SLF Auditing Services is responsible for the management of auditor performance. This is an ongoing process to ensure that auditor performance is in keeping with the SLF Scheme and SLF Auditing Services requirements. Failure by the auditor to maintain performance in accordance with the requirements may result in the revocation of their approval.

For an auditor to retain approval, they must as a minimum, maintain the respective technical and professional qualifications and undertake at least one audit per annum for each module for which they are approved.