1. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The objective of this guideline is to define the personal and professional competencies of the personnel assigned by the Halal Conformity Assessment Bodies (HCAB) for the halal certification processes (e.g., determining audit time, conducting audits, taking decisions etc.).

This guideline- crafted pursuant to the relevant articles of OIC/SMIIC 2:2019, covers the competence requirements for the personnel of the HCABs requesting halal accreditation from HAK and includes the procedures and principles regarding the criteria for evaluating these requirements.

2. TERMS DESCRIBTIONS AND DEFINITONS

Halal Conformity Assessment Body (HCAB): Body that performs halal conformity assessment activities according to the national and internationally accepted technical criteria

Halal Competent Authority: Institutions conducting the functions of supervision, regulation, research, development, and other administrative activities related to halal, pursuant to OIC/SMIIC standards and the principles defined within the context of these standards, in its resident country

Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs, Halal Accreditation Agency (HAK), Turkish Accreditation Agency (TÜRKAK), Turkish Standardization Institution (TSE), Council of Higher Education (YÖK) affiliated faculties, research centres and institutions conducting academic research on halal issues or foreign higher education institutions recognized by YÖK are covered within the scope of "Halal Competent Authority" in Turkey.

Legal institutions conducting the functions of supervision, regulation, research, development and other administrative activities related to halal are covered within the scope of "Halal Competent Authority" in other countries. HAK evaluates the competence of such institutions in this manner, in collaboration with the relevant authorities outside of Turkey.

Islamic Affairs Expert: A Muslim with profound and comprehensive knowledge and competence of Islamic rules in the subject of halal and non-halal whose competency has been approved by the halal competent authority and who is appointed by HCAB.

Certification Contract: A legally binding agreement between HCAB and its client firm, in which both sides declare to comply with the rights and obligations, during the halal certification process and certification cycle.

3. NORMATIVE REFERENCES

OIC/SMIIC 2:2019

ISO 19011 Guidelines for Auditing Management Systems

ISO 22000 Food safety management systems — Requirements for any organization in the food chain

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ISO 22716 Cosmetics — Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) — Guidelines on Good Manufacturing Practices

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Pursuant to OIC/SMIIC 2: 2019 Standard, personnel assigned by HCABs can involve in the following positions & processes:

- Contract Review
- Audit Time Determination and Selection of Audit Team
- Technical Auditor
- Technical Expert
- Islamic Affairs Expert
- Audit Report Review and Halal Certification Decision

4.1. General Requirements

Education, experience, and technical skills needed to conduct abovementioned processes can vary. However, the HCAB shall ensure that all its personnel involving in different processes meet the following minimum requirements:

- HCAB shall employ, or have access to, a sufficient number of competent personnel to conduct the halal certification activities efficiently

- HCAB shall employ auditors as full-time or contract basis

- HCAB shall be responsible for the performance of all its personnel

- HCAB shall have documented procedures for defining the competence criteria of its personnel involving in different stages of halal certification.

Annex-C of the OIC/SMIIC 2:2019 shall constitute the basis for the definition and classification of both the functions of halal certification and the competence criteria required for each of these functions.

HCABs' procedures to be crafted within this context are expected to include/provide the following:

- o Defining the tasks, authorities, and responsibilities of the personnel for the processes they involve in

- o Defining procedures and principles for electing, training, and assigning the personnel

- o Enabling the personnel to have access to HCAB's up-to-date halal certification documents

- o Enabling personnel to understand and implement the rules and requirements of HCAB's certification scheme

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o Identifying the training needs of personnel and providing access to specific trainings (if necessary)

o Monitoring the competence and performance of the personnel periodically

HCAB shall consider the frequency of the personnel usage and the level of risk linked to their activities while monitoring the competence and performance of all its personnel periodically

For monitoring the competence and performance of the personnel, HCAB shall utilise a combination of different techniques such as on-site evaluation, review of audit reports and feedback from clients.

HCAB shall maintain the records on the competence, education, and on-site experience of all its personnel (full or part time or outsourced) assigned for different functions and make these records accessible when requested by HAK

HCAB shall ensure all its personnel, involved in the halal certification, to provide written commitment for the following:

o to comply with the rules defined by the HCAB, including those related to confidentiality and independence from commercial interest.

o to declare any prior and/or present association on their own part, or on the part of their employer, with a designer, producer, or supplier of products to the halal audit or certification of which they are to be assigned.

4.2. Personnel Carrying out Contract Review

The competence criteria for the personnel carrying out contract review is defined as follows:

4.2.1. Education

The personnel carrying out contract review shall have the knowledge corresponding to at least secondary education.

4.2.2. Trainings

It is required that HCAB's personnel carrying out contract review shall have successfully completed the following training/trainings:

1. OIC/SMIIC halal standard and related documents for halal certification,
2. quality management system and product certification,
3. relevant management system standards (e.g., ISO 22000, ISO 22716).

Trainings on "OIC/SMIIC halal standard and related documents for halal certification", can be received from HAK as well as Turkish Standardization Institute (TSE), SMIIC or any other institutions/organizations authorized by SMIIC.

HAK may request HCAB's documents and records of the trainings received from abovementioned institutions and organizations during the accreditation assessments, if deemed necessary.

4.2.3. Audit Experience

It is required that the personnel carrying out contract review have successfully completed training in audit processes based on the guidance given in ISO 19011

It is not mandatory for personnel carrying out contract review to have or to maintain audit experience, yet it is necessary to complete the abovementioned training.

4.2.4. Other Competences

HCAB's personnel shall demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and skills for on-site cases. The abilities for personnel carrying out contract review are defined as follows:

- o Classification of product/product groups after which halal accreditation is sought,
- o Determination of audit time
- o Knowledge of HCAB's policies and procedures related to contract review

4.3. Audit Time Determination and Audit Team Selection

HCAB shall appoint an audit team, consisting of at least two (2) personnel: one of them shall be technical auditor who has lead auditor qualification and authorization, and the other person shall be an Islamic affairs expert.

It is necessary for the appointed audit team to have knowledge on the products/product categories (Annex-A of OIC/SMIIC 2:2019) to be audited as a whole.

HCAB's personnel involving in audit time determination and audit team selection shall have the same competences as those involved in contract review.

The personnel involving in audit time determination and audit team selection shall also demonstrate the ability to detect the necessary qualifications of auditors for products/product categories to be audited.

4.4. Technical Auditor

Technical auditors shall have a general knowledge on Islamic rules applicable to products/product categories to be audited.

4.4.1. Education

Technical auditors;

- shall have the knowledge, the higher or corresponding to a post-secondary education that includes courses in the related products/product categories **or**

- shall have at least ten (10) years of experience in laboratory/inspection/product or management system certification applicable to products/product categories to be audited.

4.4.2. Trainings

It is required that technical auditors have successfully completed basic trainings in following:

1. OIC/SMIIC Halal standards and guidelines
2. Certification against OIC/SMIIC Halal standards

The abovementioned trainings can be received from HAK as well as Turkish Standardization Institute (TSE), SMIIC or any other institutions/organizations authorized by SMIIC.

3. Training in audit techniques based on ISO 19011

Technical auditors can complete trainings in audit techniques based on ISO 19011 or any other internationally recognized training or other trainings in audit techniques based on certification programs.

4. relevant management system or GMP standards (e.g. ISO 22000, ISO 22716),

HAK may request HCAB's documents and records of the trainings during the accreditation assessments, if deemed necessary.

4.4.3. Work experience

For being technical auditor, at least 4 years of work experience is required and at least two (2) years shall have been carried out in the field of halal certification or halal conformity assessment.

4.4.4. Audit Experience

Within last three (3) years, the following are necessary for technical auditors:

- to perform at least ten (10) certification audit days (like FSMS or product/service/process certification systems) in at least three (3) organizations as a third-party auditor or under the leadership of a qualified auditor acting as a third party or as second party auditor.

4.4.5. Other Competences

Technical auditors shall demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- To apply audit principles, procedures and techniques in different situations thus, to effectively and systematically conduct the audit
- To determine the scope of audit and apply audit criteria based on their knowledge on product and management system certification and other relevant documents
- To gain a sufficient understanding of the client's operational structure
- To be aware of the legal requirements applicable to the client

Additionally, technical auditors shall demonstrate the ability to apply terminology, knowledge and skills related to product categories subjected to halal certification (Annex-A of OI/SMIIC 2:2019) in following areas:

- Products, processes and practices
- Product and service standards
- Relevant halal requirements
- Relevant management system requirements if applicable,

4.5. Technical Expert

The following competences are necessary for the personnel providing technical expertise in the audit team:

4.5.1. Education

Technical experts;

- shall have the knowledge, the higher or corresponding to a post-secondary education that includes courses in the related products/product categories **or**
- shall have at least ten (10) years of experience in laboratory/inspection/product or management system certification applicable to products/product categories to be audited.

4.5.2. Work Experience

Technical experts shall have at least four (4) years of work experience in their technical area/product categories/industries.

4.5.3. Other Competences

Technical experts shall demonstrate the ability to provide expertise in their technical area/product categories/industries.

4.6. Islamic Affairs Expert

Islamic affairs experts, involving in halal certification audits or decision-making, shall be Muslim personnel with profound and comprehensive knowledge in halal and non-halal issues.

The competency of these experts shall be approved and authorized by the halal competent authority resident in the country.

4.6.1. Education

It is required that Islamic affairs experts;

- hold at least post-secondary degree in the Islamic rules **or**
- have the knowledge corresponding to at least post-secondary education in the Islamic rules.

4.6.2. Work Experience

For being Islamic affairs expert, at least two (2) years of work experience in the Islamic work area is required.

The abovementioned "Islamic work area" covers managerial/academic/scientific works related with "Halal" issues along with actual involvement in halal certification audits too.

4.7. Halal Certification Decision and Audit Report Review

HCAB shall have a mechanism (equivalent to a committee) consisting minimum of three (3) persons, at least one to be employed by the HCAB and at least one of whom is an Islamic affairs expert. Halal certification decisions shall be taken unanimously, not by majority of votes.

The competence criteria for the personnel reviewing the audit report and granting halal certification are defined as follows:

4.7.1. Education and Trainings

It is required that at least one (1) member of the decision-making mechanism:

- shall complete the trainings in product categories related to halal certification mentioned in the Clause 4.4.2 of this Guideline
- shall have the knowledge, the higher or corresponding to a post-secondary education that includes courses in the related products/product categories **or** have at least three (3) years of experience in laboratory/inspection/product or management system certification applicable to products/product categories to be certified.

4.7.2. Other Competences

Decision makers shall have and demonstrate the ability to apply the knowledge and skills for on-site cases in the following areas:

- current principles of OIC/SMIIC for halal certification (halal food and halal slaughter in particular),

- Islamic rules related to halal certification,

- current principles and understanding of relevant management systems,

- identification and assessment of risks for halal requirements,

- corrections and corrective actions to be taken with regards to halal matters and assessment and review of the effectiveness of corrective actions,

- laws and regulations relevant to the halal product/service/process,

- assessment and review of an audit report for accuracy and completeness.

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