

Annex 21: Certification Regulation for IFS Food

Standard or Certification scheme:	IFS Food	Accreditation Standard:	ISO17065:2012
Audit preparation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The company has read the current versions of the two normative documents (IFS Food Standard and the IFS Food Doctrine) - If there is a need of translation, TÜV Austria will provide an interpreter not affiliated with the company. - In case of renewal audit the expected dates are verified by the TÜV Austria via the IFS audit portal. - The audit details are announced in the IFS Audit portal, by TÜV Austria - The audit result is uploaded in the IFS Audit Portal <p>Note: See detailed process steps in the flow chart below</p>		
Audit duration:	<p>The audit duration is calculated based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - total number of people (part time workers, shift workers, temporary staff, administrative people, etc.) considering the total maximum number of employees over a year, - number of product scopes, - number of processing steps ("P" steps). <p>Calculation is made by using the tool provided by IFS and is available in the IFS Audit portal. The minimum IFS Food Assessment duration is two (2) days (16 hours). At least 50 % of the total IFS Assessment duration shall be allocated to the on-site evaluation (within the production areas of the physical site).</p> <p>A number of factors, such as physical size of the logistics site, the type of services offered, the audit scope, the number of transport or storage units involved, total number of employees, the number of non-conformities identified during previous audits.</p>		
Evaluation of requirements	<p>Every requirement of the IFS Food standard is evaluated by the auditor during the audit. The auditor assesses the nature of deviation or non-conformities. If C and / or D scorings of requirement(s) are still present from one Assessment to the next, or if the scorings deteriorate, the auditor shall assess the situation in accordance with chapter 5.11 of the Assessment checklist, Part 2.</p> <p>Note 1: See the full scoring system in Annex – Chart 1</p> <p>Note 2: In case of one or several KO or one or several Major non-conformity(ies) is/are issued during the audit, the current IFS certificate shall be suspended in the IFS audit portal by the certification body as soon as possible and a maximum 2 working days after the audit date. All users having access to the IFS audit portal and having mentioned the respective company in their favourites list will get an e-mail notice (with explanations about the identified non-conformity(ies)) from the IFS audit portal that the current certificate has been suspended.</p> <p>Note 3 The realisation of the IFS Food Assessment shall always take into account the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Assessment shall take place at a time when the products included in the Assessment scope are being processed. - The production lines shall be operational during the IFS Assessment. If production lines are not operating during the IFS Assessment, they shall not be included in the scope of the Assessment unless they have the same HACCP plan and they involve the same products and technology scopes as the ones included in the Assessment scope. If the non-operating production lines involve a different HACCP plan and different product and/or technology scopes, two (2) options are possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The production line(s) can run later during the Assessment and are included in the scope of the "main" Assessment. - The production line(s) cannot run later during the Assessment and an extension Assessment shall be performed. For further information on extension Assessment, see chapter 2.3.4, Part 1 of IFS Food V7. 		
Certification cycle	<p>The certification shall be valid from the date of issue stated on the certificate.</p> <p>For an announced Assessment, the validity of the IFS Food Certificate is defined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it starts from the date of issue of the certificate, - it ends on the last day of the initial Assessment date + eight (8) weeks – 1 day + 1 year. <p>The time window to schedule the announced recertification Assessment is calculated as follows: – eight (8) weeks; + two (2) weeks] from the last day of initial Assessment. Companies are responsible for maintaining their certification.</p> <p>The time between the date of the audit and the awarding of certificate is determined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A maximum of two (2) weeks shall be allocated for the auditor to send the provisional report and provisional action plan for completion to the company A maximum of four (4) weeks) shall be allocated for the company to provide evidence that corrections have been implemented and respond to the deviations and non-conformities 2 weeks for the auditor to check the proposed corrective actions, for the certification decision and upload of the audit report, the action plan and the certificate to the audit portal <p>The timeline is six (6) weeks (as a target time) or eight (8) weeks (as a maximum time) between the date of Assessment and the upload of the Assessment report in the IFS Database / issue of the certificate.</p>		

Example

Initial audit date:	01. October, 2021
Date of issue of certificate:	26. November, 2021
Certificate valid until:	25. November, 2022
Recertification Assessment date:	25. September, 2022
Certificate valid until:	25. November, 2023 (independently from the renewal audit date)
Time window to schedule the recertification for an announced Assessment	6 th of August –15 th of October
Time window to schedule the recertification for an unannounced Assessment	11 th of June –15 th of October (16 weeks before Assessment due date; + two (2) weeks after Assessment due date)

If the announced recertification Assessment is not scheduled on time, or if the steps of the certification process were not completed in time, this will lead to a break in certification and only a new initial certificate can be issued.

The validity of the IFS Certificate remains the same each year and is determined by the date of the initial Assessment. The date of the recertification Assessment shall be calculated from the initial Assessment date and not from the date of issue of the certificate. If the recertification Assessment takes place later than the above-mentioned time window, the certification of the company will not be visible anymore. If the company has no further active certificates, the COID will be automatically set to an inactive status in the IFS Database.

Unannounced audits

At least one IFS Food Assessment is performed unannounced every three (3) years. The unannounced Assessment is performed within a time window of [– 16 weeks before Assessment due date; + two (2) weeks after Assessment due date] and shall take place without prior notification of the date to the company. If a company denies the auditor access (apart from “force majeure”), the currently valid IFS Certificate shall be suspended by the certification body within a maximum of two (2) working days of the Assessment date. The company will notify TÜV Austria of the registration for an unannounced Assessment at latest four (4) weeks before the start of the Assessment time window, in order to register it in the IFS Database. For Unannounced Assessments, the relevant schedule will be shared during the opening meeting. It might also be modified or adapted due to the availability of the participants to be assessed and the current processing times.

Extension Assessment

An Extension Assessment is possible if new processes or products different to those included in the scope of the current IFS Assessment are implemented between two (2) certification Assessments (e.g. seasonal products). The client shall communicate with TÜV Austria and submit the relevant application. A new on-site extension Assessment during the validity period of the existing certificate (on-going certification cycle). TÜV Austria determines the relevant requirements to be assessed and the relevant Assessment duration necessary to assess these requirements thoroughly. The extension Assessment report is generated as a single report and shall be provided as an annex to the current Assessment report. If the extension Assessment demonstrates compliance, the certificate shall be updated with the new scope and uploaded to the IFS Database together with the extension Assessment report. The updated certificate shall keep the same expiry date as the current certificate. In the event of a Major non-conformity, a D evaluation of a KO requirement or a total scoring <75% after an extension Assessment, the full Assessment (including the main one) is failed, and the current certificate shall be suspended. Concerning seasonal products, an extension Assessment shall be performed to assess products which could not be assessed while operating during the main Assessment. The certificate shall then specify all the assessed.

Notification of factors affecting the certification

The Client informs within 3 business days for incidents and/or cases of withdrawal or recall of products and/or legal proceedings with respect to safety and legality, etc included in the certification scope.

Use of IFS logo

The copyright of IFS Food, and the registered trademark is fully owned by the IFS Management GmbH. The IFS Food logo, must be downloaded via the secured section of the IFS audit portal. The company accepts the Terms and conditions for using the IFS Logos and communication about the IFS Food certification / application available at <https://www.ifs-certification.com/index.php/en/tuc-ifs-logo>. Terms and conditions are checked by TÜV Austria and the auditor during the audit. Only the latest version of the IFS Logos shall be used. When used, the IFS Logo(s) shall comply with the form and colour of the scale drawing. Companies shall only use the Logo of the standard that they are certified for. The IFS Food Logo shall not be displayed on the product itself, primary packaging of the product, or any kind of advertising document likely to reach the end-consumer. The logo can only appear on a website section related to quality management or to quality and safety in general. The general IFS Logo for promotional reasons and publish information about IFS Certification. The IFS Food Logo shall not be used in any way that may imply that IFS Management GmbH is responsible for the certification decision. In case of suspension or withdrawal of the IFS Food Certificate, the assessed production site and company have to immediately stop including the IFS Logos on their documents and / or website. In case of exclusion regarding the Assessment scope, the details about exclusions shall be available upon request. The IFS Food Logo can be used, but the following claim shall be written at the bottom: “some products are excluded from the scope of the IFS Food Assessment and exclusion details can be provided upon request”.

	<p>All the above-mentioned rules apply to any communication regarding IFS Food. This also means that the use of the wordmarks “IFS”, “International Featured Standards”, or “IFS Food” or similar is not allowed to be communicated on finished products which are available to the end consumer.</p>
<p>IFS Integrity Program / Accreditation body assessments</p>	<p>The IFS Integrity Program includes different measures to assure the quality of the IFS Standards by reviewing IFS Assessment Reports of certified companies and also by using several measures to analyse and improve the performance of certification bodies and auditors. The IFS Integrity Program strengthens the reliability of the IFS Standards by surveilling their implementation in practice. The IFS Integrity Program is mainly involved in the following activities:</p> <p>IFS complaint management Retailers or any other interested parties have the right to forward any possible complaint or issue to IFS for investigation as part of the Integrity Program. The IFS Integrity Program will gather all necessary information in order to investigate the cause of the complaint and to establish if there are deficiencies in meeting IFS requirements by certified companies, accredited certification bodies or IFS Auditors. Appropriate steps will be taken to fully investigate a complaint. Finally, the IFS Quality Assurance Management department will decide which approach will be followed in order to solve the complaint. This might also be to plan an Integrity on-site check at the IFS certified company to investigate the case on-site or to organise an Integrity witness audit for an IFS Auditor involved in the complaint case. Based on the complaint, the Integrity on-site check will mainly be performed on an unannounced basis (announcement 30 minutes before the start of the Integrity on-site check). In some special cases, the Integrity on-site check might also be performed on an announced basis (generally announced about 48 hours before).</p> <p>Risk based approach and monitoring of IFS Quality Assurance In order to care for the correct implementation of all procedures described in IFS Standards and respective regulatory documents, the IFS Integrity Program carries out regular office audits at certification bodies. During these office audits, work performance of IFS Auditors and certification bodies are checked by means of examples of several reports and by database analysis. If special topics have to be clarified during these Integrity certification body office audits, this could also lead to Integrity witness audits of IFS auditors or to Integrity on-site checks at companies certified by the respective certification body. Additionally — taking the risk based approach into account — reports of certified companies are analysed and read by IFS Quality Assurance Management staff. Companies with a valid IFS Certificate have to accept an unannounced / announced Integrity on-site check and have to give access and support to the commissioned Integrity auditor.</p> <p>Sanctions If a deficiency has been found to be the fault of a certification body and / or an auditor, following a complaint or following the risk based approach / monitoring quality assurance actions, IFS will forward all necessary information anonymously to an independent sanction committee which can impose sanction to the certification body or/and certification body auditors. The accreditation body may also carry out an unannounced assessment of TÜV Austria at its head office or other locations also by means of a witness assessment at the client, on the basis of the audit programme received by TÜV Austria. In the case of witness assessments, the visit is carried out by TÜV Austria's auditors whilst the accreditation body assessors/experts act as “observers”, avoiding (as much as possible) any interventions in the performance of the audit so as not to influence the audit activities. A market surveillance visit is carried out directly by the accreditation body's assessors and not those of TÜV Austria. The assessment takes place also by using a questionnaire and in the presence of the organization's personnel (usually only the Quality Manager) and of TÜV Austria (if possible with the participation of a member of the audit team who performed the most recent audit). This audit/verification does not coincide with a surveillance or renewal audit conducted by TÜV Austria which takes place on a separate day.</p>
<p>Appeals and complaints management</p>	<p>TÜV Austria's relevant procedure can be found on our website. Especially for IFS the following additional rules apply: Appeals will be finalised within 20 working days of receiving information from the auditee. For complaints, an initial response will be given within ten (10) working days of receiving it. A letter confirming receipt of the complaint will be issued within a maximum of five (5) working days. A full written response will be given after the completion of a full and thorough investigation into a complaint. If the complaint relates to the quality of the content of IFS audits or IFS audit reports, IFS offices requires that TÜV Austria provide a statement on the cause and the measures introduced to rectify the problem within 2 weeks. If the complaint relates to administrative errors, IFS offices ask TÜV Austria to provide a statement and rectify the problem within one (1) week. The statement shall be issued in writing by email or post.</p>
<p>Outsourced processes</p>	<p>Partly outsourced process: a production step or part of a production process (including primary packaging and labelling) that is carried out off-site by a third-party on behalf of the IFS Food certified production site. This also includes processes which are partly outsourced by a sister company within the same company group. Fully outsourced product: a product manufactured, packaged and labelled under the own company brand or customer brand by a different company than the assessed one. Traded product: a product manufactured, packaged and labelled by and under a different company name to the company being IFS Food certified. Outsourced processes are managed as described in Part 1 – 2.2.1 of IFS Food Standard.</p>

Action Plan

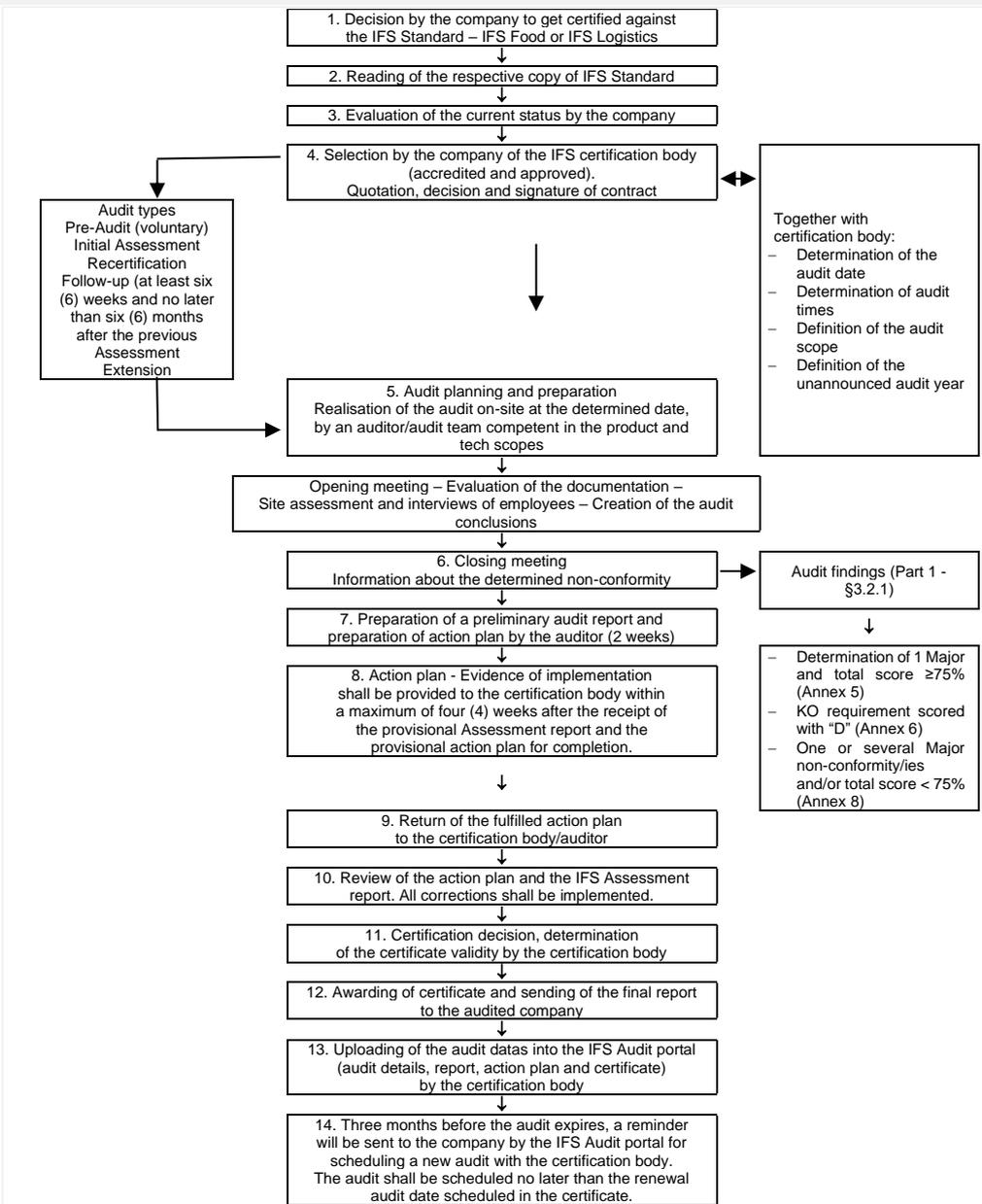
The company shall provide the following in the action plan:

- proposed corrections and corrective actions for all deviations (C, D), KO requirements scored with a C and for non-conformities (Major or D evaluation of a KO requirement) listed by the auditor
- responsibilities and implementation deadlines for both corrections and corrective actions

Corrections	Corrective actions
Evidence of implementation shall be provided to the certification body within a maximum of four (4) weeks after the receipt of the provisional Assessment report and the provisional action plan for completion.	Relevant for a sustainable and successful implementation (may take longer than the deadline for issuing the certificate, need to be reasonably justified by the company). Implemented before the recertification Assessment at the latest.

If the above deadline is not adhered to, the company shall undergo a full initial or recertification Assessment. An IFS Certificate shall not be issued, unless all corrections are implemented. Corrections and corrective action(s) shall be translated into English. In the case of one Major non-conformity and a total scoring < 75 % or several Major and / or KO non-conformity / ies, the certificate will not be issued, the report shall be uploaded in the IFS Database and a new Assessment shall be organised. The action plan shall be validated by the auditor and the technical reviewer during the certification decision process.

Certification process (flow chart)



Annex: Scoring system

Chart N° 1: Scoring

Result	Explanation	Points
A	Full compliance	20 points
B (deviation)	Point of attention as it may lead to a future deviation.	15 points
C (deviation)	Part of the requirement is not implemented.	5 points
D (deviation)	The requirement is not implemented	-20 points
Major (non-conformity)	A Major non-conformity can be given to any regular requirement (which is not defined as a KO requirement). Reasons for Major rating are: – There is a substantial failure to meet the requirements of the standard, which includes but is not limited to food safety and / or the legal requirements of the production and / or destination countries. – A process is out of control which might have an impact on food safety.	Major non-conformity will subtract 15 % of the possible total amount; the certificate cannot be issued.
KO requirement scored with a D (non-conformity)	The requirement is not implemented	KO non-conformity will subtract 50 % of the possible total amount; the certificate cannot be issued.

Chart N° 2: Scoring for KO requirement

Result	Explanation	Awarded scores
A	Full compliance	20 points
B (point of attention))	Point of attention as it may lead to a future deviation.	No "B" scoring is possible
C (deviation)	Part of the requirement is not implemented	5 points
KO (= D)	Requirement has not been implemented	KO non-conformity will subtract 50 % of the possible total amount, the certificate cannot be issued.

In IFS Food the following 10 requirements are defined as KO requirements:

- 1.2.1 Governance and commitment
- 2.2.3.8.1 Monitoring system of each CCP
- 3.2.2 Personnel hygiene
- 4.2.1.3 Raw material specifications
- 4.2.2.1 Product and recipe compliance
- 4.12.2 Foreign material risk mitigation
- 4.18.1 Traceability
- 5.1.1 Internal audits
- 5.9.2 Procedure for withdrawal and recall
- 5.11.2 Corrective actions

Chart N° 3: Scoring and awarding of certificates

Audit result	Status	Action company	Report form	Certificate
At least 1 KO scored with D	Not approved	Actions and new initial audit to be agreed upon	Report gives status	No
> one Major and / or total score is < 75 %	Not approved	Actions and new initial audit to be agreed upon	Report gives status	No
Maximum one Major and total score is ≥ 75 %	Not approved unless further actions taken and validated after follow-up audit	Send completed action plan within 4 weeks of receiving the preliminary report. Follow-up audit max. 6 months after the audit date	Report including action plan gives status	Certificate at foundation level, if the Major non-conformity is finally solved during the follow-up Assessment. The certificate shall only be issued when the corrections are closed.

	Total score is < 75 %	Not passed	Actions and new initial Assessment to be agreed upon (no earlier than six (6) weeks after the Assessment where the final score was < 75 %).	Report provides status	No
	Total score is ≥ 75 % and <95 %	Approved at foundation IFS Food level after receipt of the action plan	Send completed action plan within 4 weeks of receiving the preliminarily report.	Report including action plan provides status	Yes, certificate at foundation level, 12 months validity. The certificate shall only be issued when the corrections are closed.
	Total score is ≥ 95 %	Approved at higher IFS Food level after receipt of the action plan	Send completed action plan within 4 weeks of receiving the preliminarily report.	Report including action plan provides status	Yes, certificate at higher level, 12 months validity. The certificate shall only be issued when the corrections are closed.