Qualification and Experience Requirements for TL 9000 Certification Body Auditors

This document is a product of the Oversight Work Group of Telecommunications Industry Association QuEST Forum (TIA QF). It is subject to change by the Oversight Working Group with the latest version always appearing here. The purpose of this document is to define the qualifications and experience for the specified TL 9000 auditor levels: 1) TL 9000 Auditor, 2) TL 9000 Lead Auditor; and 3) Telecom or information & communications technologies Industry Experience Auditor (TIEA).

Section 1: General

Auditors of quality management systems shall, at a minimum, meet the education, training, work experience, audit experience of ISO/IEC 17021, and have the following:

a) **Auditing Experience:** Participation in at least four audits for a minimum of 20 days that cover all the elements of the ISO 9001 standard within the last three years and have the ability to cover all the elements as determined by the CB's audit program manager or equivalent person.

b) **Education:** Conform to the Certifications Body's requirements for maintenance of qualifications, which must include the current version of the TL 9000 Quality Management System Requirements Handbook and TL 9000 Quality Management System Measurements Handbook.

c) **Industry Experience:** TIA QF utilizes IAF Informative Document for QMS and EMS Scopes of Accreditation, IAF Scope Codes describe an organization's type of business. Not all auditors are competent in all areas; it is the CB's responsibility to assign qualified auditors for the applicable IAF Scope codes for each organization.

Section 2: Qualification Requirements for TL 9000 Auditors:

a) Meet the requirements for auditors noted in Section 1

b) Completed and passed TIA QF sanctioned TL 9000 Quality Management System Requirements and Measurements Auditing training, any required pre-requisite courses, and any supplemental required training.

c) Complete TL 9000 Auditor Apprenticeship Program for Measurements as defined below:

   i. Each CB Auditor Apprentice shall observe a TIEA or TL 9000 Lead Auditor conducting a full audit of the collection, validation, and reporting of all measurements applicable to a certified organization as outlined in TL 9000 RHB Table 3.2-1 *Registration Requirements by Specialty Areas*.

   ii. After observation is completed by the Apprentice, the Apprentice is required to conduct or lead an audit for a measurement specialty witnessed by a TIEA or TL 9000 Lead Auditor.

   iii. The apprentice observation record and witness record must be approved by the respective TIEA or TL 9000 Lead Auditor and the respective CB. Upon verification of completion of the Apprenticeship Program by the auditor, the CB shall provide the auditor with the Apprenticeship Completion record. The record of completion will be recognized by all other TL 9000 CBs.

d) Maintenance Requirements for TL 9000 Auditors:

   i. participating in at least three TL 9000 audits per three-year period,

   ii. completing a minimum of 2.0 CEUs in topics related to the telecommunications or information & communication technologies industry per three-year period, including any additional courses required by TIA QF and, if desired, participation in TIA QF Forum Conferences and / or work group meetings.

See Appendix A below for qualifying CEU activities.

Section 3: Qualification Requirements for TL 9000 Lead Auditors:

For auditors to be TL 9000 qualified to lead TL 9000 audits, they shall:

a) meet all of the requirements for auditors as noted in Sections 1 and 2 above, and

b) meet the CB's qualifications for leading audits.

c) Maintenance Requirements for TL 9000 Lead Auditors:

    i. participating in at least six TL 9000 audits per three-year period, acting as audit team leader in at least two of these audits

    ii. completing a minimum of 3.0 CEUs in topics related to the telecommunications or information & communications technologies industry per three-year period, including any additional courses required by TIA QF, and, if desired, participation in TIA QF Forum Conferences and / or working group meetings

    iii. acting as the audit team leader in an audit witnessed by a TIEA or an Accreditation Body (AB) during the first 12 months of each new three-year period*. TL 9000 Lead Auditors are required to be witnessed during the entire audit.

Example:

First Cycle:
January 1st 2021: Auditor A qualified by CB to meet Section 3 a) and b)
January 1st 2021 to December 31st 2023: to Maintain Auditor A must meet Section 3 c)i and c)ii

Second Cycle:
*The next new period begins in the month the witness audit occurred.
In the new period they must be witnessed in first year acting as a team leader to meet Section 3 c)iii [January 1st 2024 to December 31st 2024].
January 1st 2024 to December 31st 2026 to Maintain Auditor A must meet Section 3 c)i and c)ii

Third Cycle:

If an auditor was witnessed in December of 2024 (last month in the 12-month grace period), that is when the clock restarts.

Then the new 3-year period ends in December 2027.

The auditor has to be witnessed between December 2027 and December 2028 which is the first 12-month period in the new cycle.

See Appendix A below for qualifying CEU activities.

Section 4: Qualification Requirements for TIEA:

a) Compliance with the requirements for TL 9000 Auditor (Section 2) and TL 9000 Leader Auditor (Section 3).

b) Actively participate in at least three (3) TIA QF activities (see Appendix B) during the most recent six months.

c) Must have at least two years within the last 5 years of relevant workplace experience (*as defined by the NACE code or equivalent method used by the CB*) in the Telecommunications/ Information & Communications Technology industries, OR

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    d) Performed the role of Lead Auditor in a minimum of 10 TL 9000 audits (*certifications, re-certifications, or surveillances audits covering each H, S, and/or V specialty/(ies) at least twice*), within the past 5 years, with at least one audit in the previous 12 months.

    e) Maintenance Requirements for TIEAs:

        i. participating in at least six TL 9000 audits per three-year period to include where TIEA conducts witness audits;

        ii. TIEAs be witnessed either by a TIEA or an AB during the first 12 months of each new three-year period; TIEAs are required to be witnessed during the entire audit in the lead auditor role. The observer (AB or TIEA) of the TIEA cannot be on the audit team.

        iii. acting as audit team leader in at least three of the six audits,

        iv. continuing to actively (see Appendix B) participate in TIA QF conference and/or Working group meetings/activities. At a minimum, a TIEA is required to participate in six activities per year with no two-quarter gap in participation; and

        v. completing a minimum of 4.0 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in topics related to the telecommunications or information & communications technologies industry per three-year period, including:

            a. any additional courses required by TIA QF, and

            b. participation in TIA QF Conferences and/or working group meetings.

See Appendix A below for qualifying CEU activities.

Section 5: Failure to Maintain Qualifications

Any individual that fails to meet the maintenance qualifications for their classification shall be re-classified based on the qualifications that are met. They must fulfil the requirements not met to re-qualify and shall not audit at that auditor level until re-qualified. See examples below:

1. Failure to meet TL 9000 auditor requirements will result in the need to retake the training and exams specified in Section 2b and fulfil the requirements in Section 2a and 2c.

2. If a TL 9000 Lead Auditor does not meet the criteria for leading TL 9000 audits (misses TIEA witness in first year), s/he must be witnessed by a TIEA to requalify. All other requirements must continue to be met.

3. If a TIEA does not meet TIA QF activities but meets all other requirements, they must then meet TIA QF activity requirements.

Reassessment of these qualifications shall be conducted annually. The process shall be the responsibility of the CBs and overseen by the ABs.

Section 6: Implementation Guidelines

Any classified TL 9000 Auditors as of the effective date of this document are exempt from having to meet the Apprenticeship requirements.

New auditors as of the effective date of this document must meet the requirements.

IAF Mandatory Document (MD4) for the Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Auditing/Assessment Purposes may be applied when maintaining TL 9000 Auditors and TL 9000 Lead Auditors.

Appendix A – Example Continuing Professional Development Activities

Communications CEU Activity	TL Auditor CEUs allowed
TIA QF Sanctioned Training	Actual CEUs credited on certificate
Technical communications training courses	Actual CEUs credited on certificate
Advanced auditing training courses	Actual CEUs credited on certificate
TIA QF Working Group, Regional Working Group, or Qualifying Sub-team meeting (including teleconferences) Participation	0.1 CEUs per Group per meeting, 0.9 CEUs max per group per year
TIA QF Best Practice Conference	0.1 CEUs per Conference Hour
TIA QF Sponsored Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings	0.1 CEUs per Meeting Hour
Conducting a TIA QF/TL 9000 readout or training session (note that you can only receive credit one time for each class, not for each time the class is delivered)	0.1 CEUs per Meeting Hour
Attendance at TIA QF/TL 9000 readouts or training sessions conducted by your TIA QF representative	0.1 CEUs per Meeting Hour

Completion or Attendance Certificate documenting any CEU activity is, of course, required.

Appendix B –TIA QF Participation Activities

Examples of TIA QF activities:

- Attendance at TIA QF conference, Working Group, or Regional meetings
- Meeting Attendance at AB/CB, Training, KPI, or other active sub-team
- Contribution to all online discussions AND other activities on a virtual sub-team, such as the Product Category Table sub-team,
- Any participation in IGQ RHB and MHB sub-teams count as double activities.
- Attendance at Executive Board strategic initiative team
- Providing support to the Translation sub-team
- Other participation in TIA QF activities that would warrant recognition in the TL 9000 Handbook
- TIA QF Webinars
- Auditor User Group and Workshops

Change History:

Date	Change	Version
Aug 4, 2014	R4.0 of this document has been released. The only change to the requirements in this edition is the addition of item c) in Section 2 which adds a measurements auditing training program for anyone qualifying to become a TL 9000 Auditor. The new item reads – d) Complete TL 9000 Auditor Apprenticeship Program for Measurements as defined below: i. Each CB Auditor Apprentice shall observe a TIEA or TL 9000 Lead Auditor conducting a full audit of the collection, validation, and reporting of all measurements applicable to a certified organization as outlined in TL 9000 RHB Table 3.2-1 Registration Requirements by Specialty Areas. ii. After observation is completed by the Apprentice, the Apprentice is required to conduct or lead an audit for a measurement specialty witnessed by a TIEA or TL 9000 Lead Auditor. iii. The apprentice observation record and witness record must be approved by the respective TIEA or TL 9000 Lead Auditor and	4.0

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	the respective CB. Upon verification of completion of the Apprenticeship Program by the auditor, the CB shall provide the auditor with the Apprenticeship Completion record. The record of completion will be recognized by all other TL 9000 CBs. TL Lead Auditors and TIEAs are not required to complete this requirement unless they let their qualification lapse.	
March 9, 2015	The major change in this edition is to move a statement from Appendix A to Section 4 item e) sub-item iii). The statement reads "At a minimum, a TIEA is required to participate in six activities per year with no two-quarter gap in participation". It was added in R4.0 to clarify what is meant by "actively participate in QuEST Forum". There are no other changes in R4.1 other than grammatical and style corrections.	4.1
Aug 18, 2017	Clarified the requirement for TIEA QuEST Forum most recent active participation to at least three (3) QuEST Forum activities during the most recent six months.	4.2
Nov 15, 2019	Modified to allow MD4 application for maintaining TL Auditor and TL Lead Auditor. Replaced QuEST Forum with TIA's BPC. Corrected CEUs for working group participation in Appendix A to 0.1 CEUs per Group per meeting, 0.9 CEUs max per group per year. (Previously it was 1.5 CEUs per Group per year.)	5.0
December 17, 2020	Update to include Industry Experience and replace TIA's BPC with TIA QuEST Forum.	6.0
September 16, 2021	Provide example for TL 9000 Lead Auditor in Section 3. Add new requirement in Section 5, #2 for TL 9000 Lead Auditor requalification. Approved by OSWG Teleconference 9/16/21.	7.0
April 1, 2024	Explicitly added to TIEA maintenance the requirement for witness in the first 12 months during every new three-year period (noting that this requirement already existed in TL 9000 Lead Auditor maintenance requirement that TIEAs were required to meet. Updated TIEA maintenance requirements e) i. participating in at least six (no longer 9) TL 9000 audits per 3-year period to include where TIEA conducts witness audits) ii. TIEAs must act as an audit team lead in at least 3 of the six audits (no longer 9). Since the OSWG approval was June 21, 2023 but document was not posted until October, the effective date was reset to April 1, 2024.	8.0
January x, 2024	Clarified the TIEA witness requirements in Section 4.e.ii. – No change to requirements.	8.1