

SUSPENSION, REDUCTION, WITHDRAWAL AND RE-INSTATEMENT OF ACCREDITED ORGANIZATIONS

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document describes the procedure to be followed when organizations are to be suspended for:

- a) Non-compliance with requirements.
- b) Exceeding the corrective action timeframe.
- c) Non-payment of fees.
- d) Change of physical location or loss of approved signatories.

It also addresses the procedure to be followed to re-instate the organizations.

Note: This procedure applies to all accredited laboratories, inspection and certification bodies.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Suspension of Accreditation: accreditation is temporarily made invalid for the full scope of accreditation of a facility or part thereof.
- 2.2 Reduction of Accreditation: Accreditation is cancelled for part of the scope of accreditation.
- 2.3 Withdrawal of accreditation: Accreditation is permanently made invalid for the full scope of accreditation or part thereof.

3. TYPES OF SUSPENSION OF ACCREDITATION

- 3.1.1 **Voluntary Suspension:** An organization may apply to the Technical Manager (TM) in writing with valid reasons to be placed on suspension. Accredited organizations that are placed in voluntary suspension shall give an undertaking to adequately address the circumstances that caused the request for suspension within three months of the date of suspension. Accredited organizations in voluntary suspension for longer than three months are required to apply in writing to SADCAS for permission for a continuation of the voluntary suspension of each further one-month period. Suspension period shall not exceed six months.
- 3.1.2 The decision to grant a voluntary suspension shall be made by the TM based on the recommendation of the Scheme Coordinator (SC). The decision shall be formalized through the issuance of a Suspension Notification (SADCAS SL 26)
- 3.1.3 **Enforced Suspension:** The decision to impose suspension of accreditation shall be made by the Accreditation Approval Committee (AAC). The decision shall be formalized through the issuance of a Suspension Notification (SADCAS SL 26). The notification letter shall detail the maximum length of the suspension (six months) and it shall also detail that fees are payable in full during such a period of suspension.

- 3.1.4 ***Partial suspension:*** Only part of the scope of accreditation is suspended.
- 3.1.5 Suspended organisations are required to submit an action plan/programme of action to SADCAS indicating actions (with timelines) to be taken to address reasons for suspension. SADCAS shall evaluate the plan and monitor to ensure that a decision on reinstatement is made before the end of suspension period.
- 3.1.6 The suspension period shall not exceed six months, except where a controlled extension has been granted in accordance with Clause 6.7.

4. **REASONS FOR SUSPENSION OF ACCREDITATION**

4.1 **Suspension for Non-compliance with Requirements**

- 4.1.1 On the recommendation of the assessment team and approval by the Accreditation Approvals Committee (AAC) an accredited organization may be suspended for non-compliance with requirements.
- 4.1.2 If, after investigation resulting from a complaint, an organization is found to be non-compliant it may also be suspended.
- 4.1.3 The assessment team shall inform the organization of the corrective action required and how SADCAS would verify implementation of corrective action.
- 4.1.4 The suspension of an organization's accreditation shall only be lifted after all findings that led to the suspension have been satisfactorily addressed and the reinstatement has been approved by the AAC.

4.2 **Suspension for Exceeding the Corrective Action Timeframe**

- 4.2.1 An accredited facility may be placed on suspension if the deadline for submitting corrective actions has been exceeded. The deadline for submission of corrective actions is communicated to the accredited organization by the Team Leader during the close-out meeting and recorded on the Recommendation Report (SADCAS F 61 c).

4.3 **Suspension for Non-payment of Fees**

- 4.3.1 An accredited organization may be suspended for non-payment of fees on the recommendation of the Technical Manager or Scheme Coordinator.
- 4.3.2 An accredited organization that has neither paid its fees nor made an alternative arrangement with the Finance and Administration Manager within 60 days of the date of the original invoice may be suspended thereafter.

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- 4.3.3 Should an accredited organization pay all outstanding amounts during the suspension, the suspension will be lifted immediately.
- 4.3.4 Should an accredited organization fail to settle all outstanding amounts within the six-month suspension period, its accreditation may be withdrawn. To regain accreditation, the organization shall be required to submit a new application to SADCAS and pay all applicable fees. The application shall be processed as that of a new applicant organization.
- 4.3.5 The organization shall settle all outstanding fees relating to its previous accreditation or compliance status, in addition to the applicable fees for the new application, prior to the processing of the application.
- 4.3.6 An accredited organization with outstanding fees owed to SADCAS shall not be eligible for continuation of its accreditation into the next financial year until all outstanding amounts have been settled.
- 4.4 Suspension due to Change of Physical Location or Loss of Approved Signatories**
- 4.4.1 Accredited organizations intending to relocate their facilities (change of physical location) or anticipating the loss of approved signatories shall notify SADCAS at least four (4) weeks prior to the effective date of the change.
- 4.4.2 A change in physical location may mean a change from one room to another or from one building to another. The accredited organization shall take into consideration the impact the change in location will have on its ability to produce reliable results.
- 4.4.3 Failure to notify SADCAS within the stated period will result in a penalty of 25% of the annual fee and possibly re-assessment by SADCAS.
- 4.4.4 In the event of change of location, the accredited organization shall be placed under suspension for a period not exceeding 6 months, unless a controlled extension is granted in accordance with Clause 6.7. The organization shall demonstrate and provide objective evidence of its capability to operate in accordance with its accredited scope at the new location. Such evidence shall include satisfactory comparative data generated before and after the change of location, as well as records of checks performed to confirm the suitability of environmental conditions. SADCAS may conduct an assessment, where deemed necessary.
- 4.4.5 The suspension shall only be lifted following review of the submitted evidence, and where applicable the results of the assessment, and a decision by SADCAS that the organization is competent to continue operating within its accredited scope at the new location.
- 4.4.6 Where an accredited organization loses an approved Technical Signatory for a particular scope of accreditation, it shall cease issuing accredited reports or certificates within that scope. Where the

organization has a single (1) Technical Signatory responsible for its entire accredited scope, it shall promptly notify SADCAS and apply for voluntary suspension. The suspension shall remain in effect until the organization has nominated a replacement Technical Signatory and SADCAS has evaluated the individual's competence.

5. WITHDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION

- 5.1 Withdrawal of accreditation may be voluntary, in which case the organization is required to give SADCAS ninety (90) days' written notification based on whatever reason. This notice period may be decreased in exceptional circumstances by mutual agreement.
- 5.2 Decisions on voluntary withdrawal shall be made by the TM on recommendation by the SC
- 5.3 Decisions on enforced withdrawal of accreditation shall be made by the AAC.
- 5.4 Such a decision shall be formalized by issuance of Withdrawal Notification(SADCAS SL 25)
- 5.5 Withdrawal of accreditation may result from:
 - 5.5.1 Failure by an accredited organization to satisfactorily address nonconformities identified during an assessment or complaint investigation within the period of suspension, without an approved request for an extension of the suspension period.
 - 5.5.2 Failure of an organization to settle outstanding fees during a suspension period and without a request for extension of suspension.
 - 5.5.3 Failure of an organization to demonstrate adequate verification of data during a period of suspension due to change of physical location and without a request for extension of suspension.
 - 5.5.4 The absence of technical signatories for the relevant scopes of accreditation which could not be rectified during the period of suspension.
 - 5.5.5 Failure of an organization to comply with the terms of the SADCAS F 44 - Accreditation Agreement.
 - 5.5.6 Where there is evidence of fraudulent behavior of the conformity assessment body intentionally provides false information or conceals information.

6. CONDITIONS OF SUSPENSION, REDUCTION OR WITHDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION

- 6.1 An accredited organization shall, upon suspension or withdrawal of SADCAS accreditation, immediately discontinue its use of any reference to its accreditation. In the case of partial suspension, reports shall clearly identify the scopes for which accreditation cannot be claimed. Failure to comply with this requirement is a criminal offence and can result in prosecution. (Refer to SADCAS TR 01: Part 1 and SADCAS TR 01: Part 2).

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- 6.2 The CAB shall inform its affected clients of the suspension, reduction or withdrawal of its accreditation and the associated consequences without undue delay.
- 6.3 Once an accredited organization has been placed on suspension or its accreditation withdrawn for any reasons as stipulated in sections 4 and 5, the organization's certificate and schedule of accreditation will be removed from SADCAS website. SADCAS will update the accreditation status of the CAB on the SADCAS website including the applicable dates of the suspension or withdrawal of the affected scope(s). The withdrawal status of the CAB will be shown on the website for a period of 3 months after which all details of the CAB will be removed.
- 6.4 An organization may not be in suspension for longer than six months, except where a controlled extension has been granted in accordance with Clause 6.7. Failure to address the cause(s) of suspension within six months may result in withdrawal of accreditation resulting in the facility having to re-apply for accreditation as a new applicant with the associated costs and penalties. (Refer to SADCAS AP 02 - SADCAS Service fees).
- 6.5 All costs associated with the implementation of a suspension shall be for the account of the accredited organization. The organization shall remain liable for all applicable SADCAS fees while under suspension. Where accreditation is withdrawn within the first six (6) months of the financial year (i.e. before September), and no assessment has been conducted during that financial year, the organization shall remain liable for a pro rata portion of the annual fees payable to SADCAS.
- 6.6 SADCAS do not refund any fee or part thereof to facilities that have been suspended or whose accreditation has been withdrawn.
- 6.7 Notwithstanding the maximum suspension period of six (6) months stipulated in this procedure, SADCAS may, in exceptional and justified cases, grant a controlled extension of suspension. Such extensions shall:
- Be considered only under special circumstances where objective evidence demonstrates that the accredited organization is making satisfactory progress towards resolution of the causes of suspension.
 - Be time-bound and granted for a defined period with clearly specified conditions and milestones.
 - Be subject to formal review and approval by both the Technical Manager (TM) and the Quality Manager (QM).
 - Require the accredited organization to submit an updated action plan with measurable deliverables for the extended period.

Failure to meet the agreed conditions during the extension period shall result in withdrawal of accreditation in accordance with Section 5 of this procedure.

All decisions regarding such extensions shall be documented and justified, including the basis for approval and any associated risks.

7 RE-INSTATEMENT OF SUSPENDED ORGANIZATIONS

- 7.3 Once an organization has satisfactorily addressed the issues which resulted in suspension of accreditation, accreditation may be re-instated on approval by the TM or AAC depending on the reason (s) for suspension.
- 7.4 A facility that is in suspension may be required to undergo an on-site assessment before its accreditation can be reinstated. A positive recommendation resulting from the assessment shall be required prior to re-instatement of accreditation. The extent of this assessment shall be determined by the Technical Manager, taking into consideration the reasons for the suspension and the associated level of risk. All costs associated with the assessment shall be borne by the facility
- 7.5 Prior to re-instatement, the TM shall notify the Financial Administration Unit of the re-instatement in order to ensure that all outstanding fees have been paid.
- 7.6 Re-instatement after withdrawal of accreditation will require the organization to re-apply for accreditation and the entire process followed as for a new application. The previous accreditation number will remain obsolete. Upon successful accreditation, the organization shall be issued with a new SADCAS accreditation number.
- 7.7 Notification of accreditation shall be issued to the organization and shall clearly specify the scope of accreditation granted.
- 7.8 The organization's details and certificate shall be uploaded on the SADCAS website.

8 REFERENCES

- SADCAS F 44 - SADCAS Accreditation Agreement
- SADCAS F 61 (c) - Assessment Recommendation Report
- SADCAS AP 02 - SADCAS Service Fees
- SADCAS TR 01: Part 1 - Conditions for the use of SADCAS Accreditation Symbol
- SADCAS TR 02: Part 2 - Use of Combined Accreditation Symbol and ILAC MRA/IAF MLA Mark
- SADCAS SL 25: Withdrawal of Accreditation Notification
- SADCAS SL 26: Suspension of Accreditation Notification

APPENDIX – AMENDMENT RECORD

Revision Status	Change			Approved by	Effective Date
	Page	Clause/ Sub clause	Description of Change		
Issue 1	1		Title: Added “REDUCTION, WITHDRAWAL” between “Suspension” and “Reinstatement”		
		3.1.1	Lines 2 and 4: Deleted “Facilities” and substituted with “accredited organizations”		
		2.2	New clause added: “Reduction of Accreditation: Accreditation is cancelled for part of the scope of accreditation.		
		4.1.1	Lines 2: Deleted “Facility” and substituted with “an accredited organization”		
	4	4.2.1	- Line 2: Deleted “Facility” and substituted with “an accredited organization” - Line 3: “Lead Assessor” deleted and substituted with “Team Leader”		
		4.3	For all sub-clauses: Deleted “Facility” and substituted with “organization”		
		4.4.1	Line 1: Added “accredited” before “organizations”		
		4.4.2	Line 2: Added “accredited” before “organizations”		
	5	4.4.4	Line 1: Added “accredited” before “organizations”		
		4.4.5	Lines 1 and 2: Added “accredited” before “organizations”		
	6		Added “REDUCTION” between “SUSPENSION” and “WITHDRAWAL”		
	6.1		Line 2: Added “discontinue its use of any reference to its accreditation” after “immediately”		
	6.2		New clause added: discontinue its use of any reference to its accreditation. Subsequent clauses renumbered		

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	Page	Clause/ Sub clause	Description of Change		
	6	6.3	- Line 1: Added “accredited” before “organization” - Line 2: “details” deleted and substituted by “certificate and schedule of accreditation” - Added: “SADCAS will update the accreditation status of the CAB on the SADCAS website including the applicable dates of the suspension or withdrawal and affected scope(s). The withdrawal status of the CAB will be shown on the website for a period of 3 months after which all details of the CAB will be removed.”		
Issue 2	6	New Subclause 5.3.6	Added new subclause which reads “Where there is evidence of fraudulent behavior of the conformity assessment body intentionally provides false information or conceals information”	CEO	2019-03-04
Issue 3	4	3.2	Added new subclause which reads “Suspended organisations are required to submit an action plan/programme of action to SADCAS indicating actions (with timelines) to be taken to address reasons for suspension. SADCAS shall evaluate the plan and monitor to ensure that a decision on reinstatement is made before the end of suspension period”.	CEO	2023-09-22
		4.3.1	- Deleted “Financial Administrator” and substituted with “Scheme Coordinator” - Added “. The suspension period shall not exceed six months” at the end of the paragraph.		

Revision Status	Change			Approved by	Effective Date
	Page	Clause/ Sub clause	Description of Change		
Issue 3	5	4.3.4	Deleted “3 months” and substituted with “6 months”.	CEO	2023-09-22
		4.4.4	Added “for a period not exceeding 6 months”		
	6	6.4	Clause amended to read “An organization may not be in suspension for longer than six months. Failure to address the cause(s) of suspension within six months may result in withdrawal of accreditation resulting in the facility having to re-apply for accreditation as a new applicant...”		
Issue 4			Comprehensively revised the procedure to reflect current practices and improve alignment with operational requirements.	CEO	2026-09-07