E-ISSN: 2997-9439

American Journal of Education and Evaluation Studies

https://semantjournals.org/index.php/ AJEES

| Research Article

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Improving the Implementation of the Product Management System in the Republic of Uzbekistan Based on the International Accreditation Framework

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Abstract: This article analyzes the current certification system in Uzbekistan, including national accreditation bodies and legislation-based processes. It identifies existing limitations and potential directions for development. To further improve the certification system, the article proposes measures such as modernizing legislation, developing technical infrastructure, strengthening international cooperation, enhancing the qualifications of specialists, and introducing innovative technologies. The article concludes by exploring alternative models based on international experience, outlining expected outcomes and their potential impact on the country's economy and export capacity.

Keywords: International accreditation, certification system, Uzbekistan, international standards, legislation, technical infrastructure, international cooperation, innovative technologies.

Accreditation

Accreditation is a process by which an organization or facility is evaluated in accordance with a set of standards to ensure its competence to perform certain types of activities or services. It is often used to ensure that the quality and competence of organizations or facilities performing specific activities or services meet established standards. There are various types of accreditation programs, each designed to evaluate organizations or facilities engaged in specific types of activities. For example, accreditation programs exist for testing laboratories, schools and universities, healthcare institutions, and many other types of organizations.

Accreditation is the formal recognition of competence in accordance with European and international standards. It has been used as the final instrument for assessing organizations for over 50 years and is currently implemented by all major global economies and many developing countries.

According to ISO/IEC 17011, accreditation is defined as "the third-party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks."

Due to trade liberalization and growing demands from consumers, companies, and legislators, the requirements for the quality of goods and services are continuously increasing.

Key Principles of the International Accreditation System

The international accreditation system is designed to evaluate the activities of conformity assessment bodies (certification, inspection, and testing laboratories) and to confirm their compliance with international standards. This system is based on the following core principles:

Independence and Impartiality

- Accreditation bodies must carry out their activities independently and impartially, without any external influence.
- Conformity assessment organizations (such as laboratories and certification bodies) must also avoid conflicts of interest.

Transparency and Reliability

- ✓ The accreditation process must be based on clear criteria and be open to all stakeholders.
- ✓ Accreditation results and decisions should be made transparently.
- ✓ The activities of accredited organizations must be regularly monitored.

International Recognition

- ✓ Accreditation results must be recognized and accepted internationally.
- ✓ Accreditation bodies should cooperate with international organizations such as ILAC and IAF.
- ✓ To ensure mutual recognition of certificates and test results among countries, international agreements must be adhered to.

Legality and Compliance with Regulatory Documents

- ✓ The accreditation process must be conducted in accordance with international standards set by ISO, IEC, ILAC, and IAF.
- ✓ Each accredited organization must comply with relevant technical regulations and legal requirements.

Flexibility and Continuous Development

- ✓ The accreditation system must be adaptable to changes in new technologies and international requirements.
- ✓ Best international practices should be applied in the accreditation process.
- ✓ Accreditation bodies should continuously work on improving their qualifications and implementing new standards.

In accordance with the laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Certification of Products and Services" and "On the Safety and Quality of Food Products," aimed at protecting the domestic market from low-quality and hazardous products, the necessary infrastructure has been established, forming a national certification system which is now being developed in alignment with international standards.

Among the activities carried out by the "Uzstandard" Agency to improve the fields of certification and testing are:

- Developing and implementing systems for conformity confirmation and accreditation in accordance with international requirements.
- Organizing efforts in testing and certification to support Uzbekistan's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), including the modernization of existing testing laboratories with advanced testing equipment.
- Training highly qualified specialists and internationally recognized expert-auditors in the field of certification and testing.

A National Certification System has been established in the country, and independent accreditation is being carried out in accordance with international rules. To inspect imported products, international firms such as Switzerland's SGS and the UK's ITS, as well as their laboratories in the USA, UK, Germany, France, Hong Kong, India, and Switzerland, have been accredited within the national system. The certificates issued by these organizations are recognized in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Furthermore, a mutual recognition agreement on certification results is in effect with the Turkish Standards Institution. Several interstate product standards are being revised in line with international requirements, including safety indicators, such as those for food products, based on FAO/WHO standards.

Unified certification systems for the same type of products are being developed to ensure standard rules for all participants of the system. National centers for testing, certification, and metrology services have been established. An Interdepartmental Council composed of leaders from ministries, agencies, and economic associations is functioning to support the development of standardization, metrology, certification, and quality management in the country.

Regulatory Documents Related to Quality Management Systems in the Republic of Uzbekistan

Standard Designation	Standard Title
O'z DSt ISO 9000:2002	Quality Management Systems – Fundamentals and Vocabulary
O'z DSt ISO 9001:2002	Quality Management System – Requirements
O'z DSt ISO 9004:2002	Quality Management System – Guidelines for Performance Improvement
O'z DSt ISO 19011:2002	Guidelines for Auditing Environmental and/or Quality Management Systems
O'z Rh 51-014-2006	Quality Expert Auditors – Requirements, Training and Evaluation
O'z DSt ISO/TR 10013:2006	Guidelines for Developing Quality Manuals
O'z DSt ISO 10006:2005	Quality Management – Guidelines for Quality Management in Projects
O'z DSt ISO 10007:2004	Quality Management – Guidelines for Configuration Management
O'z DSt ISO/TR 10013:2004	Guidelines for Developing Quality Manuals
O'z DSt ISO/TR 10014:2004	Guidelines for Managing the Economics of Quality
O'z DSt ISO 10015:2003	Quality Management – Guidelines for Training
O'z DSt ISO 10017:2005	Guidance on Statistical Techniques for ISO 9001:2002
O'z DSt ISO 14001:2002	Environmental Management Systems – Specification with Guidance for Use

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