

**Global Certification and**  
**Monitoring Services**

**CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

*HQMS-03, version 1, approved 01/05/2025*  
Global Certification and Monitoring Services

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## SCOPE

This procedure was prepared by the Top Management of Global Certification and Monitoring Services (hereafter GCMS) and defines the Halal Certification procedure followed by all GCMS personnel.

### 1. APPLICATION

#### 1.1 Halal Certification Application Form

- 1.1.1 The Client fills in the Halal Certification form providing all information requested in it.
- 1.1.2 Application is reviewed by the Certification Manager, and, if it is accepted, a commercial proposal is sent to the Client via email.
- 1.1.3 If the commercial proposal is suitable, the Client signs it and sends it back to GCMS via email together with additional requested documents (HACCP plan, company registration document, etc).

#### 1.2 Invoice

- 1.2.1 The Client is issued the invoice for the Halal Certification services.
- 1.2.2 Once the invoice is paid GCMS prepares and sends a Halal Certification Agreement to the Client.
- 1.2.3 After the Agreement is signed the Halal Certification process officially begins.

### 2. AGREEMENT

2.1 GCMS and its Clients enter into a Halal Certification Agreement. A separate Agreement has to be signed for each separate product category (even if a legal entity is the same). The Agreement is legally binding, outlines the responsibilities of GCMS and the Client and requires that both parties comply with all certification and continuous monitoring responsibilities. GCMS requires that its Clients:

- a. Comply with all requirements stated in selected certification standards, the Agreement, the Certification Scheme and the Halal Certification Application form. In the event of a change in GCMS's requirements, Clients undertake the responsibility to make the necessary changes in their activities/production in accordance with the new (modified) requirements within the timeframe pre-agreed with GCMS.
- b. Make necessary arrangements for the conduction of surveillance and certification audits (with the participation of observers, leading persons, interns and auditors under trainings, if necessary), which include the inspection of the production facility, staff interviewing and checking documents (including analysis of complaints/appeals received) and the inspection of the Client's subcontractors. In addition, the Client has to agree to surveillance and sudden evaluation visits conducted by GCMS's representatives.

- c. Agree that certified products will be constantly manufactured to conform with the scope of certification and the certification Standard, stated in the Halal certificate.
- d. Use the issued Halal certificate and Halal logo/mark only for certified products and do not use the Certificate in misleading or unauthorised ways or ways that could negatively affect the activities and/or reputation of the GCMS.
- e. Make sure that the all the links and references to product certification in the media comply with the requirements of GCMS.
- f. Discontinue the use of the Halal Certificate and the Halal logo/mark, as well as the spread of information about the availability of the Halal Certificate immediately after the expiration/suspension or revocation of the Halal Certificate.
- g. If the case of a change in the Halal certification scope, to accordingly change the information on Halal Certification in all the sources that contain information on Halal Certification;
- h. Immediately inform GCMS of any changes that may affect its ability to conform with the Halal Certification requirements;
- i. When providing a copy of the Halal Certificate to others, provide a copy exactly corresponding to the original of the issued Halal Certificate.
- j. When using and distributing information on the issued Halal Certificate or the copies of the Halal Certificate and/or the Halal Mark, use this information exactly as it is provided in these documents;
- k. Comply with all the requirements that are prescribed in the certification scheme and/or the Certification Agreement regarding the use of Halal mark/logo and information related to the certified product;
- l. The Client's responsibilities include keeping records of all complaints/appeals received in relation to the compliance with the Halal requirements and recording all actions taken regarding complaints/appeals received. Documentation on complaints/appeals should be provided to the GCMS upon the request.

2.2 The duration of the Halal Certification Agreement does not exceed three years.

### **3. INGREDIENTS FORM**

- 3.1 If the produced product has more than one ingredient, the Client is asked to fill in the 'ingredients description form' and provide all the documents requested in it.
- 3.2 Once all information and documents are provided and ingredients are checked and confirmed, the audit date and time are agreed with the Client.

## 4. AUDIT PROCESS

### 4.1 Audit team

- 4.1.1 Audit team is selected by the Certification Manager of GCMS taking into account the competence needed to achieve the objectives of the audit. The audits are carried out by at least 2 auditors, one of them is a technical auditor (having a lead auditor qualification) and another is a Shariah auditor.
- 4.1.2 In deciding the size and composition of the audit team, as well as choosing the lead auditor, consideration is given to the following:
- a. Audit objectives, scope, criteria and estimated audit time;
  - b. Whether the audit is combined, joined or integrated;
  - c. The overall competence of the audit team needed to achieve the objectives of the audit;
  - d. Requirements of the applicable certification standard (including any applicable statutory, regulatory or contractual requirements);
  - e. Language and culture.
- 4.1.3 The necessary knowledge and skills of the audit team leader and auditors may be supplemented by technical experts, translators and interpreters who shall operate under the direction of a lead auditor. Where translators or interpreters are used, they are to be selected such that they do not unduly influence the audit.
- 4.1.4 Interns may participate in the audit, provided a qualified auditor is appointed as an evaluator. The evaluator shall be competent to take over the duties and have final responsibility for the activities and findings of the intern.
- 4.1.5 The audit team leader, in consultation with the audit team, assigns to each team member responsibility for auditing specific processes, functions, sites, areas or activities. Such assignments take into account the need for competence, and the effective and efficient use of the audit team, as well as different roles and responsibilities of auditors, interns and technical experts. Changes to the work assignments may be made as the audit progresses to ensure achievement of the audit objectives.
- 4.1.6 Where multi-site sampling is used for the audit of a Client's production covering the same activity in various locations, the audit team develops a sampling programme to ensure the proper production audit. The rationale for the sampling plan is documented for each Client.
- 4.1.7 The tasks given to the audit team are defined, are made known to the Client and require the audit team to:
- a. examine and verify the structure, policies, processes, procedures, records and related documents of the Client relevant to the production;
  - b. determine that these meet all the requirements relevant to the intended scope of certification;

- c. determine that the processes and procedures are established, implemented and maintained effectively, to provide a basis for confidence in the Client's production;
- d. communicate to the Client, for its action, any inconsistencies between the information provided by the Client on its production and the actual results.

4.1.8 GCMS provides the name and, if requested, makes available background information on each member of the audit team, with sufficient time for the Client to object to the appointment of any particular auditor or technical expert and for the GCMS to reconstitute the team in response to any valid objection.

## **4.2 Audit program**

4.2.1 The certification audit program is prepared by the selected audit team and demonstrates the actions necessary to establish the compliance of the Client's production with Halal production requirements and the certification standard. The audit program covers all points of the requirements.

4.2.2 The audit program always includes a two-stage initial certification audit, surveillance audits (not rarer than every 12 months), and a certification audit before updating the Halal certificate. The audit program depends on the size of the Client's company, the scope and complexity of the certified production, production shifts, the selected standard and the results of previous audits (if any).

4.2.3 If the certification already granted to the Client is taken into account, the audit team obtains and retains sufficient evidence such as reports and documentation on corrective actions to any non-conformance. The documentation shall support the fulfilment of the requirements of the Halal certification standard. Based on the information obtained the audit team shall justify and record any adjustments to the existing audit program and follow up the implementation of corrective actions concerning previous non-conformances.

4.2.4 If the Client operates shifts, the activities that take place during shift working are considered when developing the audit program and audit plans.

4.2.5 Each individual production site is evaluated and certified separately.

## **4.3 Audit planning**

4.3.1 The audit date is selected by reaching a mutual agreement between the audit team and the Client, by choosing the most suitable day to ensure the most complete audit team's access to the production process of the certified product, personnel and Client's documentation as well as a representative number of product lines, categories and sectors covered by the scope. The presence and functions of observers, interns, technical experts and guides is also agreed with the Client prior to the audit.

4.3.2 The duration of the 1st stage of the audit does not exceed 20% of the total duration of the audit.

- 4.3.3 The audit objectives are set by the audit team. The scope and criteria of the audit (including any changes) are established by the audit team after agreement with the Client.
- 4.3.4 The objectives of the audit describe what should be accomplished during the audit and include the following:
- a. Compliance of certified products with the audit criteria;
  - b. Determination of the possibility of conformity of production with applicable regulatory measures and requirements of the Agreement;
  - c. The prospect of bringing production into the line with the necessary requirements
- 4.3.5 The scope of the audit describes the extent and scope of the audit: audited production facilities, processes and products.
- 4.3.6 Audit criteria should be used as a reference to determine the conformity of production and include:
- a. Halal production requirements and selected certification standard;
  - b. Scheme and production process of certified products.

#### **4.4 Audit time**

- 4.4.1 Audit time is calculated by the formula provided in the certification standard.
- 4.4.2 When determining the audit time, the following criteria are taken into account:
- a. requirements of the certification standard;
  - b. the complexity of the production and compound of certified products;
  - c. technological and regulatory context;
  - d. the participation of subcontractors in the production of products;
  - e. results of previous audits;
  - f. size and number of production facilities, production at several facilities;
  - g. risks associated with certified products, processes of their production and activities of the Client;
  - h. whether the audit is joined, combined or integrated.
- 4.4.3 Each site of a multisite organisation is assessed and certified separately.
- 4.4.4 Records about the duration of the audit and its justification are kept in the Client's file.
- 4.4.5 Time spent by any team member that is not assigned as an auditor (e.g. technical experts, translators, interpreters, observers or interns) does not count in the determined audit time.

## 4.5 Audit plan

4.5.1 The audit plan is established for each audit identified in the audit program to provide the basis for agreement regarding the conduct and scheduling of the audit activities and includes:

- a. Audit objectives;
- b. Audit criteria;
- c. Audit scope, including audited processes and production;
- d. Audit dates and production sites;
- e. Production audit duration;
- f. Roles and responsibilities of auditors and accompanying persons (if any).

4.5.2 The audit plan is sent to the Client after agreeing the date and time of the audit. The audit plan indicates the data of all audit participants (including their names, surnames and positions).

4.5.3 The audit objectives for the audit team include:

- a. determination of the conformity of the Client's production with audit criteria;
- b. evaluation of the Client's ability to ensure the production meets applicable statutory, regulatory, contractual and certification requirements;
- c. verification of all documents and certificates of the Client: journals for instructing staff on the Halal production requirements; documentation of cleaning agents and disinfectants used in the production; certificates of compliance of the Client with veterinary requirements and international requirements for production safety and management system; registration of complaints and appeals received by the Client; necessary Halal certificates for ingredients;
- d. presence of all the required documents, registrations, licenses, diplomas, related certification, and their validity;
- e. review of laboratory test analyses (if necessary) with regard to the Halal status of the product;
- f. interviews with staff – questions about the production process, company activities, its effectiveness. Checking if the answers of all employees match;
- g. detailed inspection of all ingredients, raw materials and products directly or indirectly involved in the production process. Comparing them with the information provided in the Application and determining their compliance with the requirements for the production of Halal products;
- h. throughout the verification of the production process – checking whether the production line is intended only for a certified product, if there are any risks of cross-contamination with non-Halal products at any stage of production, storage or transportation;
- i. a full check of the production line of certified products: from the receipt of ingredients at the warehouse to the finished products storage;

- j. as applicable, identification of areas for potential improvement of the production;
- k. If necessary, auditors have the right to take samples of products/ingredients/other materials during audits.

#### **4.6 Audit stages**

4.6.1 A certification audit is carried out in two stages: Stage 1 and Stage 2. Any part of the product safety management system that was verified at the stage 1 of the audit and defined as fully implemented, effective and consistent with the requirements does not need to be checked again at stage 2. However, GCMS needs to make sure that the already tested parts of the product safety management system continue to meet certification requirements.

##### **4.6.2 Stage 1**

4.6.2.1 The objective of stage 1 audit is to provide an illustration for planning stage 2 audit by gaining an understanding of the product safety management system in the context of the Client's food safety hazard identification, analysis, HACCP plan and PRPs, policy and objectives, and, in particular, the Client's state of preparedness for audit by reviewing the extent to which:

- a. the organization has identified PRPs that are appropriate to the business (e.g. regulatory and statutory requirements);
- b. the product safety management system includes adequate processes and methods for the identification and assessment of the Client's safety hazards, and subsequent selection and categorization of control measures (combinations);
- c. safety legislation is in place for the relevant sector(s) of the organization;
- d. the product safety management system is designed to achieve the Client organisation's safety policy;
- e. the product safety management system implementation program justifies for the audit (stage 2);
- f. the validation, verification and improvement programs conform to the requirements of the product safety management system standard;
- g. the product safety management system documents and arrangements are in place to communicate internally and with relevant suppliers, customers and interested parties;
- h. any additional documentation that require revision and/or knowledge that need to be obtained in advance.

4.6.2.2 Stage 1 is always carried out in the Client's production facility and includes:

- a. review and analysis of Client documents, determination of their compliance with the information specified in the Application;
- b. assessment of the Client's production conditions and discussion with the Client's staff about the readiness of production for the second stage of the audit;
- c. evaluation of product safety management system;

- d. if there are external measures to control production and/or safety, assessment of documentation and its compliance with the requirements of the selected Halal certification scheme;
- e. assessment of the status of the Client, his understanding of the requirements of the standards;
- f. identification of critical moments;
- g. obtaining the necessary information on the production facility, processes and equipment, production control and regulatory requirements in the declared scope of certification;
- h. reviewing the allocation of resources for the second stage of the audit and discussing the details of the second stage of the audit with the Client;
- i. determination of the main aspects of the second stage of the audit by collecting information about the production of the Client, understanding of its activities and determining the readiness of production for the second stage of the audit;
- j. assessment of the results of internal audits, course and briefing journals, as well as the system for managing incoming complaints and appeals;
- k. evaluation of the available certificates of assessment of management systems and quality, a superficial assessment of the compliance of production with the requirements of the standards specified in these certificates.

4.6.2.3 When part of the production process is outsourced, stage 1 audit reviews the documentation included in Halal requirements and/or the product safety management system to determine if the combination of control measures is suitable for the Client and conform to requirements of Halal standards.

4.6.2.4 A detailed report on the stage 1 of the audit showing the audit results (consistent with the Client's production objectives for the stage 1 of the audit) as well as potential areas of concern that can be identified as non-conformances during the stage 2 of the audit is granted to the Client and after that the date of the stage 2 of the audit is agreed with the Client. If there are serious non-conformances during the first stage of the audit, the Client is given some time to correct these non-conformances and the stage 1 of the audit is repeated. In this case, the stage 2 of the audit is postponed. The stage 2 of the audit is possible only after the Client has successfully passed the first stage of the audit.

4.6.2.5 The interval between the stage 1 and stage 2 of the audit is established taking into account the interests of the Client and giving them time to correct potential non-conformances (but cannot exceed 6 (six) months). If non-conformances are not eliminated and/or this elimination is not accepted by GCMS within this period, the Stage 2 audit is cancelled.

### **4.6.3 Stage 2**

4.6.3.1 The purpose of the stage 2 of the audit is to check the effectiveness of implementation of the requirements for the production of Halal products by the Client and verification of compliance

with the stated standards. The stage 2 is always carried out in the Client's production facility and includes the following:

- a. collection of information and evidence of compliance of production with Sharia Law and the requirements of the declared standards;
- b. monitoring, measuring, reporting and reviewing of compliance with the basic requirements and objectives of the stated standard;
- c. verification of the production ability to comply with regulatory and legal requirements and the requirements specified in the Halal Certification Agreement;
- d. internal auditing and management review;
- e. management responsibility for the Client's policies
- f. links between the normative requirements, policy, performance objectives and targets (consistent with the expectations in the applicable certification standard or other normative document), any applicable legal requirements, responsibilities, competence of personnel, operations, procedures, performance data and internal audit findings and conclusions;
- g. verification of Halal production control products;
- h. checking of the non-conformances/faults management system.

4.6.3.2 The audit team analyses the results and evidence gathered during both phases of the certification audit to review the audit findings, agree on the audit conclusions and draw up an audit report.

## **4.7 Production audit**

### **4.7.1 Opening meeting**

A formal opening meeting should be held with the management of the Client and the personnel responsible for the quality of production. The purpose of this meeting, which is conducted by the head of the audit team is to explain the objectives of the audit and the audit process. Opening meeting includes:

- a. presentation of the members of the audit team, their roles;
- b. confirmation of the scope of certification;
- c. confirmation of the audit plan (including the type of audit, its scope, goals and criteria), any changes in the audit plan and any other arrangements with the Client, such as the date and time of the meeting, any intermediate meetings with the management of the Client;
- d. setting formal methods of communication between the audit team and the Client;
- e. confirmation that all resources and facilities required by the auditors are available;
- f. confirmation of confidentiality issues;
- g. definition of work safety procedures, emergency situations and security procedures for the audit team;
- h. roles and functions of observers;

- i. reporting method, including any assessment of audit results;
- j. informing on the conditions under which the audit may be interrupted earlier than the established time;
- k. confirmation that the audit team (including the head) is responsible for conducting the audit and monitoring the implementation of the audit plan;
- l. information on the status of the results of previous audits/inspections;
- m. informing on the methods and procedures to be used during the audit;
- n. establishment of the language to be used during the audit;
- o. confirmation that throughout the audit the Client will be informed about the progress of the audit;
- p. providing opportunity to the Client to ask questions.

#### **4.7.2 Communication during the audit**

- 4.7.8.1 During the audit, the audit team should periodically evaluate the progress of the audit and exchange information. The audit team lead should distribute the work among the auditors and periodically inform the Client about the progress of the audit and areas of concern.
- 4.7.8.2 In cases where the evidence gathered indicates that the audit objectives are unattainable or there is an immediate and significant risk (for example, a security risk), the audit team lead should inform the Client and, if possible, the Certification Manager, to determine the necessary actions. Such actions may include making changes to the audit plan, changing the objectives or scope of the audit, and terminating the audit. The audit team lead must inform the Client and the Certification Manager about the actions taken.
- 4.7.8.3 The audit team lead should review with the Client the need to make changes to the audit scope that arose during the audit and inform the Certification Manager about the changes.

#### **4.7.3 Collection and confirmation of information**

- 4.7.3.1 During the audit, information related to the objectives, scope and criteria of the audit should be collected by observation, collection of samples and their processing for them to become evidence.
- 4.7.3.2 Information sampling methods include:
  - a. Interview;
  - b. Supervision of the production process;
  - c. Revision of documentation and records.
- 4.7.3.3 Product samples (if necessary) should be collected in accordance with international practices and submitted for analysis to laboratories accredited on OIC/SMIIC 35 and / or ISO 17025 and conducting the tests necessary to establish compliance of products with Halal certification

requirements and certification standards. When independent testing facilities are not available, GCMS shall ensure that the specified controls are in place at the supplier's testing facilities, and are managed in a manner which provides confidence in the results obtained and that records are available to justify the confidence.

- 4.7.3.4 Inspections and tests on the Halal product shall be determined in accordance with the relevant requirements of the Halal product and the national and/or regional or international legal provisions.
- 4.7.3.5 If certification of Halal products is based on testing/inspection of batches of the Halal product, the sampling is done in accordance with a defined sampling scheme utilising statistically proven techniques with stated confidence levels.

#### **4.7.4 Definition and documentation of audit results**

- 4.7.4.1 Audit results that summarize compliance and detail non-compliances should be identified, classified and documented to make an informed decision on Halal certification.
- 4.7.4.2 Opportunities for improvement can be identified and documented (unless the selected certification standard prohibits this).
- 4.7.4.3 The found non-conformity should be documented with respect to the relevant requirement and should contain complete information about the discovered non-conformity and evidence supporting it. All discrepancies found are discussed with the Client to ensure that the evidence collected is accurate and that the details of the discrepancy are clear to the Client. At the same time, the auditors do not comment or suggest the reasons for the inconsistencies and do not propose solutions to correct the inconsistencies found.
- 4.7.4.4 The audit team lead seeks to resolve any disputes and misunderstandings between the audit team and the Client regarding the audit results and the evidence gathered. If no solution is found, the details of the dispute/misunderstanding are documented.

#### **4.7.5 Preparation of audit findings**

Prior to the closing meeting, the audit team:

- a. Reviews the audit findings and all information collected during the audit regarding the objectives and criteria of the audit and classifies non-conformities;
- b. Comes to an agreement regarding the audit findings, taking into account the uncertainty inherent in the audit process;
- c. Comes to an agreement regarding the necessary follow-up actions;
- d. confirms the appropriateness of the audit program or identifies any modification required (e.g. scope, audit time or dates, surveillance frequency, competence).

#### **4.7.6 Closing meeting**

- 4.7.6.1 A formal closing meeting, taking into account all participants, should be held with the management of the Client and the personnel responsible for the production quality. The purpose of this meeting, which is conducted by the audit team lead, is to present the audit findings including an explanation of the non-conformances found. During the closing meeting, the audit team and the Client come to an agreement regarding the time frame for correcting the discovered inconsistencies.
- 4.7.6.2 The final meeting also includes:
- a. Notification to the Client that the evidence collected during the audit is based on information samples, thus taking into account the element of uncertainty;
  - b. Method and time frame for reporting, including classification of audit results;
  - c. The process of processing non-conformities by the GCMS, including any consequences related to the certification status of the Client;
  - d. The time frame for the Client's provision of a plan for the implementation of measures to eliminate non-conformities discovered during the audit;
  - e. Actions of the GCMS after the audit;
  - f. Information on the complaints and appeals process.
- 4.7.6.3 The Client is given an opportunity for questions. Any diverging opinions regarding the audit findings or conclusions between the audit team and the Client are discussed and resolved where possible. Any diverging opinions that are not resolved are recorded and referred to GCMS.
- 4.7.6.4 If one or more non-conformances have arisen and if the Client expresses interest in continuing the Certification Process, audit team provides information regarding the additional evaluation tasks needed to verify that non-conformances have been corrected.
- 4.7.6.5 If the Client agrees to completion of the additional evaluation tasks, the production audit and/or document evaluation process shall be repeated to complete the additional evaluation tasks.
- 4.7.6.6 The results of all evaluation activities shall be documented prior to review.

#### **4.7.7 Audit report**

- 4.7.7.1 The audit team provides the Client with a written report on each audit. The report describes inconsistencies found and opportunities for improvement but does not provide advice on correcting inconsistencies. Ownership of the audit report is always maintained by GCMS.
- 4.7.7.2 If the product is in the food-chain operations, the report shall include references to issues relevant to FSMS (Food Safety Management System).
- 4.7.7.3 The audit team is responsible for the preparation and content of the audit report. The audit report should contain correct, understandable and concise information about the audit in order to make an informed decision on Halal certification. The audit report contains the following information:
- a. details of the GCMS;

- b. details of the Client (name, address) and its representative (name, surname);
- c. type of audit (certification, surveillance);
- d. audit criteria;
- e. audit objectives;
- f. audit scope (certified products, audited production facilities, processes and audit time);
- g. any deviations from the audit plan and their reasons;
- h. any significant factors affecting the audit process and program;
- i. the details of the audit team members, the head of the audit team and all accompanying persons;
- j. the date(s) and place(s) where audit activities were conducted;
- k. audit results, links to evidence and conclusions in accordance with the requirements of the selected standard;
- l. any significant changes in the Client's activity and/or production of products that have occurred since the last audit (if applicable);
- m. any unresolved issues/misunderstandings;
- n. a statement that the audit results are based on samples of information available during the audit;
- o. confirmation of compliance of production with Halal requirements and the selected certification standard;
- p. conclusions regarding the selected certification area and recommendations from the audit team;
- q. confirmation of the achievement of audit objectives;
- r. if the Client is effectively controlling the use of the certification documents and marks;
- s. assessment of the effectiveness of measures to eliminate previous non-conformances conducted by the Client (if applicable).

4.7.7.4 The Client shall be informed if an additional full audit, an additional limited audit, or documented evidence (to be confirmed during future surveillance audits) will be needed to verify effective correction and corrective actions.

#### **4.7.8 Analysis of reasons for non-conformance**

4.7.8.1 GCMS obliges its Clients to analyse the reasons for the discovered non-conformances and to describe the measures to eliminate these non-conformances that will be taken within the agreed period.

4.7.8.2 In case of non-conformances found during the audit, the Client has to make a declaration, before renewal of application, that all the non-conformances detected in the audit were fully removed.

In case of an unsuccessful Certification process, the new application is only accepted if the Client makes such a declaration. If the first Application for Certification is unsuccessful and the Client wishes to approach another certification body, then the Client shall make available detailed information regarding its first Application for Certification.

#### **4.7.9 Effectiveness of Corrective Actions**

- 4.7.9.1 The audit team analyses the causes of non-conformances established by the Client and the planned measures to eliminate these non-conformances developed by the Client and determines whether they are acceptable. The audit team must confirm the effectiveness of each corrective action. The audit team documents evidence obtained in support of correction of all conformances. The Client is informed of the results of the review and approval of measures to eliminate non-conformances. The Client is also informed about the need for an additional full or partial audit and/or provision of documentation to confirm the measures taken to eliminate non-conformances and their effectiveness.
- 4.7.9.2 After the implementation of all necessary changes, an official confirmation from the Client on taking measures to eliminate all non-conformances and verification of the effectiveness of these measures by the audit team, the documents are handed to the Certification Manager for the evaluation. The audit team makes recommendations for a certification decision based on the gathered evidences.
- 4.7.9.3 The Decision Committee of GCMS reviews all information and results related to the evaluation as well as the recommendation on the certification provided by the audit team. The Decision Committee of GCMS makes a decision on Halal certification based on all the documents and the results of the evaluation, its review and any other relevant information.

### **5. CERTIFICATION DECISION**

- 5.1 All decisions on granting, suspension, revocation and refusal of certification, as well as expanding or reducing the scope of certification are made by the Decision Committee of GCMS.
- 5.2 GCMS has a developed procedure on granting, suspension, revocation and refusal of certification, as well as expanding or reducing the scope of certification.
- 5.3 The procedure includes:
- a. assessment of the sufficiency of the information provided by the audit team of GCMS to make a decision on Halal certification;
  - b. verification of the assessment of all detected non-conformances, their analysis and documentation, consideration and approval of measures to eliminate them;
  - c. verification of the assessment of non-conformance measures.
- 5.4 In order to make a decision regarding Halal Certification, the Decision Committee of GCMS shall be provided with the following information:

- a. audit report;
- b. comments regarding detected non-conformances and, if applicable, measures to eliminate these non-conformances undertaken by the Client;
- c. report on the analysis of information provided in the Client's Application;
- d. confirmation of the information provided to GCMS used in the application review;
- e. confirmation of the achievement of audit objectives;
- f. recommendations regarding a Halal certification decision, including special conditions and observations.

5.5 Decision Committee of GCMS shall confirm, prior to making a decision, that:

- a. the information provided by the audit team is sufficient with respect to the certification requirements and the scope for certification;
- b. it has reviewed, accepted and verified the effectiveness of correction and corrective actions, for all non-conformances that represent failure to fulfil one or more requirements of the certification standard, or a situation that raises significant doubt about the ability of the Client to achieve its intended outputs;
- c. it has reviewed and accepted the Client's planned correction and corrective action for any other non-conformances.

5.6 Decision Committee of GCMS makes the certification decision on the basis of an evaluation of the audit findings and conclusions and any other relevant information (e.g. public information, comments on the audit report from the Client).

5.7 If the Client's non-conformance measures were not taken within the specified time, the certification process is cancelled and if the Client wishes to continue the certification process, it must be restarted.

5.8 In case of a refusal to provide a Halal certificate, the Decision Committee of GCMS provides a report indicating the reasons for the refusal and the Halal Certification Unit of GCMS informs the Client in writing of the decision with the reasons for the refusal.

## **6. CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS**

6.1 If all certification requirements are fulfilled and a positive decision on the provision of Halal certificate is made, GCMS issues the Halal Certificate. Halal Certificate is issued by GCMS on the basis of the requirements specified in the Halal Certification Agreement and the selected standard. Same as the Halal Certification Agreement a separate Halal Certificate is issued for each different product category. The issued Halal certificate contains the following information:

- a. the name and address of GCMS;
- b. GCMS's logo;

- c. the date the Halal Certificate is issued (the cannot precede the date on which the certification decision was completed);
  - d. the name and address of the Client;
  - e. the scope of certification (provided in the Halal Certificate or its Annex);
  - f. the standard, according to the requirements of which the Client is certified;
  - g. the expiry date of the Halal Certificate
  - h. the unique identification code of the Certificate;
  - i. the unique identification number of the Client.
- 6.2 The validity of Halal certificate is 3 (three) years.
- 6.3 All Halal Certificates are signed by the CEO of Global Certification and Monitoring Services.

## **7. POST-CERTIFICATION ACTIVITIES**

After the Halal Certificate is issued the post-certification monitoring begins. The Client's compliance to the Halal Certification standards is regularly evaluated:

- a. during the surveillance and special audits
- b. continuously monitored through ingredient and raw material control
- c. may be performed via the supply chain monitoring (if the Client is related to other companies certified by GCMS)
- d. through market research and surveillance (monitoring of public Client activities and reputation)

## **8. SURVEILLANCE AND SPECIAL AUDITS**

- 8.1 The activity of the Client must be constantly monitored. The onsite audits must be conducted as often as it is specified in the Halal Certification Agreement (at least once a year) giving due regard to the requirements of the Halal certification standard to which the certification has been conducted and taking account of the nature of Halal product in question, requirements of the certification, any non-conformances detected in the Halal product or Halal production premises or any complaints received with regard to certified Halal product.
- 8.2 GCMS develops its surveillance activities so that representative areas and functions covered by the scope of the certification are monitored on a regular basis and takes into account changes to its certified Client and its production.
- 8.3 These audits are divided into three types: surveillance audits, audits to expand the scope of certification, and audits that the Client is noticed about shortly before the audit. These short-notice audits are aimed for checking the integrity of the Client, investigation of complaints, performed changes, or for follow up of suspended Clients. GCMS describes and makes known in advance to the Clients the conditions under which these short notice visits are to be

conducted and exercises additional care in the assignment of the audit team because of the lack of opportunity for the Client to object to audit team members.

- 8.4 Regular surveillance audits are carried out on the same principle as certification audits, but the audit duration can be much shorter, depending on the complexity of the audited production, the results of previous audits and the established frequency of surveillance audits. Surveillance audits are on-site audits, but are not necessarily full system audits, and are planned together with the other surveillance activities so that GCMS can maintain confidence that the certified production continues to fulfil requirements between recertification audits. The surveillance audit programme shall include, at least:
- a. a review of actions taken on nonconformities identified during the previous audit;
  - b. treatment of complaints;
  - c. effectiveness of the production with regard to the chosen certification standard;
  - d. progress of planned activities aimed at continual improvement;
  - e. continuing operational control;
  - f. review of any changes
  - g. the use of Halal logo and/or any other reference to certification.
- 8.5 When production premises are audited and if non-conformances that directly affect Halal product safety are detected samples may be taken for the surveillance purposes.
- 8.6 GCMS also regularly reviews the documentation provided by the Client, and upon the expiration of the certificates provided, requests the new ones. The Client is given a certain amount of time to provide the updated certificates. If the renewed certificates are not provided at the set time, the validity of the Halal Certificate issued is suspended or revoked.
- 8.7 In all cases, the procedures with regard to reports issued as a result of surveillance shall be determined by the Decision Committee of GCMS.

## **9. REMOTE AUDITS**

### **9.1. General**

- 9.1.1. Remote audits may be considered when on-site audits are not possible, aligning with the relevant version of IAF MD 4 and ensuring the reliability of audit outcomes.
- 9.1.2. In accordance with IAF ID 12 GCMS ensures that remote audits are planned, managed, and conducted in a manner that maintains the integrity and credibility of the certification process. Remote audits are treated with the same rigor as on-site audits, and decisions to conduct them are based on risk assessment, feasibility, and the ability to achieve audit objectives remotely. Considerations include technological readiness, the complexity of the scope, previous audit performance, and regulatory constraints.

- 9.1.3. All remote audits shall be conducted in accordance with the audit procedure described in this document. Audit program and plan (including audit time) shall be the same as for the on-site audits.
- 9.1.4. A remote audit shall be conducted by a technical and a Shariah auditor from GCMS. To prepare for the remote audits the auditors shall ask a Client to fill in a specifically designed questionnaire prior to the audit and ask a Client to fulfil the technical requirements for remote audits.
- 9.1.5. The principles and risk considerations described in IAF ID 12 shall be followed throughout the remote audit lifecycle to ensure transparency, competence, and confidence in the certification process.

## **9.2. ICT use in remote audits**

- 9.2.1. GCMS uses Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), such as video conferencing, file sharing, remote desktop, and real-time streaming tools, in accordance with the relevant version of IAF MD 4. The audit team determines the appropriate use of ICT based on audit objectives, scope, risks, and technical feasibility.
- 9.2.2. Prior to each remote audit, a risk assessment is performed to determine the suitability and limitations of ICT use. The assessment includes consideration of confidentiality, data protection (including GDPR), and reliability of internet and communication tools.
- 9.2.3. The use of ICT does not reduce the effectiveness of the audit. If audit objectives cannot be met via remote means, an on-site audit or a hybrid solution is implemented. The audit report clearly identifies all ICT tools used and their purpose during the audit process.
- 9.2.4. All remote audits shall be done online via applicable ICT tool (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams).
- 9.2.5. Both the Client and the representatives of GCMS shall ensure the proper internet stream and quality, so that the audit can be conducted smoothly.
- 9.2.6. It is strongly recommended to the Client to have parallel filming of the production site during the audit with a minimum 720p quality, to be able to immediately share the video with the audit team in case of internet interruption in the production premises.

## **9.3. Audit conduction and conclusions**

- 9.3.1. The Client is obligated to ensure the proper demonstration of all production premises to the auditors of GCMS and fulfilment of all requests related to the audit.
- 9.3.2. Prior to the audit GCMS audit team shall get a written and signed consent from the Client that they agree for the audit to be broadcasted via online meeting platforms and there are no production areas that will be forbidden for live broadcast. In case of partially-online (e.g. during the accreditation witnessing audits or if part of the audit team is conducting the audit online) the same consent shall be provided by the Client.

9.3.3. The auditors of GCMS are obligated to strictly follow the audit plan and to check the production throughout. All remote audit's materials (videos, questionnaires, findings) shall be collected and stored on the GCMS's sharepoint.

## **10. CHANGES AFFECTING CERTIFICATION**

- 10.1 The Halal Certification requirements are established through the properly published certification standards, and the Certification Scheme. If the requirements of the standards or their interpretations change, GCMS's Clients will be informed through the GCMS's website and in writing.
- 10.2 All changes affecting certified products shall be assessed and evaluated to ensure the continued compliance with the Certification Scheme. Types of changes include:
- a. revision of the certification scheme or standards. GCMS quality manager evaluates the changes of the appropriate published standards to determine the time period for the Client to meet the additional requirements if applicable. Each GCMS subsidiary verifies the implementation of changes by its Clients and takes actions required by the Certification scheme.
  - b. request for approval of changes to the certified products. A Client shall make a written request and provide documentation showing these changes.
  - c. unapproved changes to the certified products. Unapproved changes discovered during surveillance activities are treated as non-conformances and shall follow the relevant procedures.
  - d. certification scope extensions. Requests for the extension of Halal certified product's scope shall follow the procedures for initial Halal Certification Application.
- 10.3 Halal Certification Unit of GCMS reviews all change requests in accordance with the appropriate procedures and standards. It then evaluates all applicable documents detailing the changes and makes a decision regarding additional inspections and approval. Documented rationale shall be provided for the approval of changes and enclosed into the product directory. In the event of any changes regarding Halal certification, a formal decision from the Decision Committee of GCMS is required.
- 10.4 The Client shall not produce the modified product with the Halal logo until an official letter of permission approving the change and/or an updated Halal Certificate is received from GCMS. This letter states the rationale for allowing this change and a document's copy is placed in the Client's file.
- 10.5 Upon the approval of scope's extensions, the amended Halal Certificate or Annex to the Halal Certificate is issued.

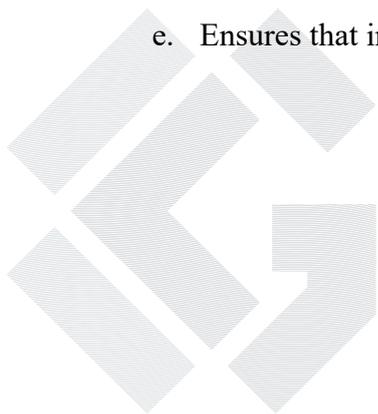
## 11. HALAL CERTIFICATE RENEWAL

- 11.1 GCMS warns the Client that the certificate is coming to an end 6 months before the expiration of the issued Halal Certificate.
- 11.2 GCMS also informs the Client that if the Client decides not to renew the Halal Certificate or does not manage to go through the Halal Certificate renewal procedure before the current Halal Certificate expiry date, from the moment the Certificate expires, the Client does not have the right to use the GCMS's Halal logo on its products and must remove all information about the Halal certification from all sources.
- 11.3 The Client must inform GCMS of their decision to renew the Halal certificate. If the Client decides to extend the validity of the Halal Certificate, they must go through all the Halal Certification procedure.
- 11.4 A recertification audit is planned and conducted to evaluate the continued fulfilment of all of the requirements of the relevant Halal certification standard. The purpose of the re-certification audit is to confirm the continued conformity and effectiveness of the production as a whole, and its continued relevance and applicability for the scope of certification.
- 11.5 The re-certification audit considers the performance of production over the period of certification and includes the review of previous surveillance audit reports.
- 11.6 Re-certification audit activities may need to have a stage 1 audit in situations where there have been significant changes to the production system, the Client, or the context in which the production is operating (e.g. changes to legislation).
- 11.7 In the case of multiple sites or certification to multiple standards, the planning for the audit shall ensure adequate on-site audit coverage to provide confidence in the certification.
- 11.8 The re-certification audit includes an on-site audit that addresses the following:
  - a. the effectiveness of the production in its entirety in the light of internal and external changes and its continued relevance and applicability to the scope of certification;
  - b. demonstrated commitment to maintain the effectiveness and improvement of the production in order to enhance overall performance and compliance to the chosen certification standard;
  - c. whether the operation of the certified production contributes to the achievement of the compliance to the chosen certification standard.
- 11.9 If during a re-certification audit instances of non-conformance or lack of evidence of conformance are identified, GCMS defines time limits for correction and corrective actions to be implemented prior to the expiration of Certification.
- 11.10 GCMS makes decisions on renewing Certification based on the results of the recertification audit, as well as the results of the review of the whole production system and documentation over the period of certification and complaints received from users of Certification.
- 11.11 If the Client decides not to renew the Halal certificate, on the expiration date of the Halal Certificate, GCMS informs the Client that from this day the Client has no right to use the

GCMS Halal logo on their products and in their premises/documentation and is obliged to remove all information on Halal certification from all the sources.

## **12. EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES**

- 12.1 GCMS ensures full compliance with IAF ID 3 requirements for the management of extraordinary events or circumstances affecting GCMS or its Clients. When extraordinary events such as natural disasters, war, political instability, pandemics, or other force majeure situations occur, GCMS:
- a. Assesses the potential impact on certified Clients.
  - b. Determines the appropriate response including potential postponement, rescheduling, or modification of certification activities.
  - c. Communicates clearly with Clients regarding any changes in audit schedules or requirements.
  - d. Documents all decisions and justifications taken in response to the event.
  - e. Ensures that impartiality and the integrity of certification are not compromised.



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## ANNEX 1 - CERTIFICATION OF MULTI-SITE, MULTI-CATEGORIES AND / OR MULTI-STANDARDS

| Type of Client                    | 1 production site<br>1 category<br>1 standard | 1 production site<br>x-category<br>1 standard | 1 production site<br>1 category<br>x-standard | 1 production site<br>x-category<br>x-standard               | x-production site<br>1 category<br>1 standard | x-production site<br>x-category<br>1 standard           | x-production site<br>1 category<br>x-standard | x-production site<br>x-category<br>x-standard                                   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. of Application                | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |
| No. of Agreements                 | 1   | As much as the number of categories           | As much as the number of standards            | As much as the number of standards and number of categories | 1   | As much as the number of categories                     | As much as the number of standards            | As much as the number of standards and number of categories                     |
| No. of Audits and Audit-documents | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | As much as the number of sites                | As much as the number of sites                          | As much as the number of sites                | As much as the number of sites  |
| No. of Certificates               | 1   | As much as the number of categories           | As much as the number of standards            | As much as the number of categories and number of standards | As much as the number of sites                | As much as the number of categories and number of sites | As much as the number of sites and standards  | As much as the number of sites and number of categories and number of standards |

**x-: specific number different than 1 (Multiple);** For example: Client with 2 production sites must have 2 audits and must have 2 certificates.

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### **References:**

#### **“GSO 2055-2”**

9.1.6 Each site of a multi-site establishment needs to be assessed and certified separately.

Annex B (Time): Some categories are subject to multi-site sampling, and this can be taken into consideration when calculating audit time.

#### **“OIC/SMIIC-2”**

9.1.6 Each site of a multisite organization to be certified needs a separate assessment and certification.

Annex B (Time): The use of multi-site **sampling is only possible for categories A, B, E, F and G**

#### **“ISO 22003”**

The use of multi-site **sampling is permitted for categories A and B**

The use of multi-site **sampling is permitted for categories F and G, and for category E only for facilities with limited preparation or cooking (e.g. re-heating, frying)**

The use of **multi-site sampling is not permitted for any other categories** identified in Annex A

For organizations **with 20 sites or fewer, all sites shall be audited.**

**“IAF ID14”**

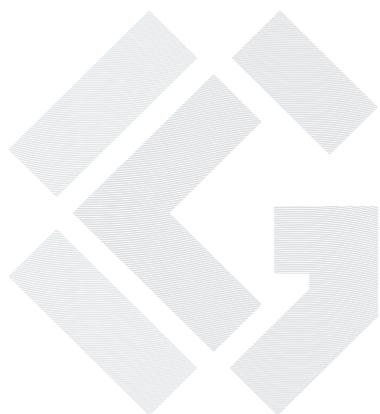
- multi-site **sampling is possible for cat. A, B, E, F and G** and **companies with > 20 sites operating similar processes** within these categories.
- multi-site **sampling is not possible for cat. C, D**



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## ANNEX 2 – VERSION HISTORY

| <u>Version, date</u> | <u>Responsible person</u> | <u>Clause</u> | <u>Amendments</u>        |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| V1,<br>01/05/2025    | Jekaterina<br>Azimova     | -             | Initial document created |



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