Personnel Certification Body Accreditation Procedure

This document outlines PJLA's specific requirements and procedures for accrediting Personnel Certification Bodies (PCBs) under ISO/IEC 17024. **This is a Supplemental Procedure to PJLA's Accreditation Procedure (SOP-1). Both procedures shall be followed for the entirety of this accreditation program.**

1.0 SCOPE/PURPOSE

1.1 PJLA's Personnel Certification Body (PCB) Accreditation Program is based on ISO/IEC 17024:2026, ISO/IEC 17011:2017, applicable Global ACI mandatory documents, SOP-1 General Accreditation Procedure, PJLA PL-4 Scopes of Accreditation Policy, PJLA SOP-3 Use of Accreditation Claims and Symbols, ISO/IEC 17011:2017.

1.2 This supplement defines PCB-specific requirements for quotation review, scheme acceptance, assessment planning, accreditation assessment, witnessing, and scheme change control. General accreditation requirements established in SOP-1 are not repeated.

1.3 PJLA shall proceed to accreditation assessment only for certification schemes accepted through the applicable process defined in this procedure.

1.4 CABs are expected to comply with ISO/IEC 17024:2012 or 2026, PJLA PL-4 Scopes of Accreditation Policy, PJLA SOP-3 Use of Accreditation Claims and Symbols and GLOBAL ACI Mandatory (M) Documents as referenced below.

2.0 REFERENCES

2.1 ISO/IEC 17024:2026, Conformity assessment - General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons.

2.2 ISO/IEC 17024:2012, Conformity assessment - General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons.

2.3 ISO/IEC 17011:2017, Conformity assessment - Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.

2.4 Global ACI TECH-3-009(M), Accreditation Assessment of Conformity Assessment Bodies with Activities in Multiple Countries.

2.5 Global ACI TECH-3-019(M), Criteria for Evaluation of Conformity Assessment Schemes.

2.6 GLOBAL ACI TECH-3-003(M), Mandatory Document for the Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Conformity Assessment Purposes.

2.7 GLOBAL ACI TECH-3-025(M), Harmonization of Sanctions.

2.8 ISO/IEC 17067:2026, Conformity assessment - Fundamentals of and guidelines for conformity assessment schemes, where referenced as guidance in PJLA scheme-review documents.

2.9 SOP-1, Accreditation Procedure.

3.0 APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION

3.1 Scheme Information and Review Before Quotation

3.1.1 LF-21-Supplement-17024 shall be utilized with the applicable application information to obtain the scheme and PCB operating information needed to determine whether PJLA can offer accreditation and issue a quotation.

3.1.2 The applicant shall complete the applicable sections of LF-21-Supplement-17024 for each certification scheme included in the initial application and/or scope expansion request, or notification of a scheme change. The applicant shall identify the Scheme Owner, applicable scheme documents and versions, assessment or examination methods, locations, languages, remote personnel, technology used, and applicable scheme-specific requirements.

3.1.3 The applicant shall indicate whether the scheme:
a) is included or invoked by legislation or regulation;
b) is developed by a national, regional, or international standardization body; or
c) is endorsed by Global ACI, where applicable.

3.1.4 The applicant shall provide detailed reference and supporting information for the claimed status.

3.1.5 For a scheme within one of the categories identified in 3.1.3, PJLA shall verify the basis of the claimed status and review the information necessary to determine that the scheme is suitable for accreditation under ISO/IEC 17024. Satisfactory objective evidence is sufficient for documented scheme acceptance without repeating scheme-development validation that has been established through the applicable accepted mechanism. If the status evidence is insufficient, PJLA shall determine the additional review required. For all other schemes, PJLA shall review LF-21-Supplement-17024 and the supporting scheme documentation to determine whether the scheme is suitable for accreditation under ISO/IEC 17024 and satisfies the applicable Global ACI TECH-3-019(M) criteria.

3.1.6 The review shall address, as applicable:

a) Scheme Owner identification, authority, and authorization arrangements;
b) the purpose, scope, and public availability of the scheme;
c) scheme development, validation, and periodic review;
d) competence requirements and prerequisites;

e) assessment and examination methods, including examination validation;
f) initial certification, recertification, surveillance, suspension, withdrawal, and scope-change requirements;
g) certificates, certification marks, professional designations, and other certification claims;
h) complaints and Scheme Owner monitoring;
i) requirements placed on the PCB or PJLA;
j) scheme changes and transition requirements; and
k) automated technologies, artificial intelligence, and digital or remote assessment or proctoring tools.

3.1.7 PJLA shall also determine whether it has the competence and resources necessary to perform the requested accreditation activities.

3.1.8 Where information is incomplete or correction is required, PJLA shall communicate the required information or action to the PCB and/or Scheme Owner. The review shall remain open until sufficient objective evidence is provided.

3.2 Scheme Evaluation by or with Other Accreditation Bodies

3.2.1 PJLA may collaborate with another Accreditation Body in the evaluation of a scheme or use another Accreditation Body's scheme-evaluation results.

3.2.2 Where another Accreditation Body's evaluation results are used, PJLA shall retain responsibility for its scheme acceptance decision and shall ensure that applicable PJLA, Global ACI and ISO/IEC 17011 requirements are satisfied.

3.2.3 Significant differences between evaluation results shall be discussed with the other Accreditation Body and, where necessary, the Scheme Owner and/or Global ACI Technical Committee 3.

3.3 Scheme Acceptance and Quotation

3.3.1 PJLA shall document the scheme-review result and acceptance decision in LF-21-Supplement-17024.

3.3.2 A positive initial scheme acceptance decision is required before PJLA issues a quotation for the affected scheme. Initial acceptance for quotation does not replace assessment of the PCB's implementation of the accepted scheme and therefore it does not indicate final compliance or accreditation.

3.3.3 Where a scheme is not accepted, PJLA should inform the applicant and shall not issue a quotation for that scheme.

3.3.4 Closure of the application, or authorization to submit a revised scheme and restart the scheme-review process, shall be determined by the PJLA President.

3.4 Application and Scope Information

3.4.1 LF-1 and LF-65 PCB shall define the applicant, the requested accreditation program and the requested scope. LF-21-Supplement-17024 shall provide the scheme, examination-location, language, remote-personnel and other operating information needed for scheme review and assessment planning.

3.4.2 For PCBs operating in multiple countries, the information required by Global ACI TECH-3-009(M) shall be obtained through LF-21-Supplement-17024 and used for assessment planning.

3.4.3 The PCB shall notify PJLA of any significant changes to scheme content or ownership, assessment/examination methods, locations, outsourcing, ICT, AI, or other factors that can affect scheme acceptance or assessment planning.

3.5 New Schemes and Scheme Changes

3.5.1 A PCB requesting accreditation for an additional certification scheme shall submit the applicable application information and LF-21-Supplement-17024.

3.5.2 A significant change to an accepted scheme that can affect accreditation shall be submitted to PJLA before the changed scheme is used under accreditation.

3.5.3 PJLA shall evaluate the proposed change(s) and determine whether:

a) the existing scheme acceptance remains valid;
b) an additional focused or full scheme review is required;
c) additional assessment is required; and/or
d) the accredited scope requires revision.

3.5.4 Where a scheme change affects the output of the conformity assessment scheme, PJLA shall review the applicable validation evidence in accordance with Global ACI TECH-3-019(M).

4.0 ASSESSMENT PLANNING

4.1 Assessment planning shall begin only after each scheme in the requested scope has been accepted, the quotation has been accepted, and the required application and scope information is complete.

4.2 PJLA shall plan the assessment in accordance with SOP-1 and, where applicable, Global ACI TECH-3-009(M), using the accepted scope, LF-21-Supplement-17024 activity/location data, scheme-review results, LF-65 scope information, and prior performance.

4.3 The assessment plan shall address representative sampling of schemes, records, locations and certification activities. Planning shall take into account:

a) scheme complexity,
b) examination/assessment methods,
c) the extent of examiner judgment,
d) locations and languages,
e) remote personnel and outsourced activities
f) technology, and Artificial Intelligence
g) changes affecting the schemes, scope, organizational structure or certification activities, and
h) relevant performance indicators.

4.4 For PCBs operating in multiple countries or using remote personnel across different jurisdictions, assessment planning should include risk-based sampling of applicable fixed office locations, examination centers, and remote personnel. The assessment program shall provide representation coverage of relevant languages, regulatory environments, operating arrangements, and cultural contexts as required by Global ACI TECH-3-009(M).

4.5 PJLA shall select appropriate examinations for on-site or virtual witnessing using a representative sample sufficient to cover significant differences in competence domain, assessment method, examiner judgment and scheme risk.

4.6 If different schemes use the same computer-based examination platform, administration process, security controls and proctoring arrangement, PJLA may plan representative witnessing of the common system rather than separate witnessing for every scheme. Scheme-specific content, validation, scoring and other significant differences shall be covered by appropriate document and record sampling.

5.0 ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENT

5.1 Assessment of Implementation

5.1.1 PJLA shall use the LF-56 PCB Supplement in conjunction with the applicable LF-56 Working Document to document the technical

assessment of sampled personnel certification schemes and applicable scheme-specific requirements. The assessment shall not repeat the scheme-acceptance review performed under Section 3.

5.1.2 PJLA shall assess conformity with ISO/IEC 17024 and the accepted certification scheme(s) and verify the PCB's competence and effective implementation of the certification process.

5.1.3 Assessment evidence shall be selected from activities relevant to the scope and shall include sufficient records to evaluate personnel competence and authorization, application/eligibility review, assessment and examination controls, security, scoring/evaluation, certification decisions, recertification, complaints/appeals, outsourcing and implementation of scheme changes, as applicable.

5.1.4 If a significant difference is identified between the scheme as implemented and the scheme accepted by PJLA, the scheme shall undergo further review before accreditation for the affected scheme is granted or continued.

5.2 Assessment and Witnessing of Certification Activities

5.2.1 PJLA shall assess certification activities under actual operating conditions to the extent necessary to establish the PCB’s competence and effective implementation of ISO/IEC 17024 and the accepted certification scheme.

5.2.2 PJLA shall appropriate examination activities on-site or virtually using representative sampling sufficient to provide confidence in the reliability of implementation across the applicable scope.

5.2.3 For computer-based examinations, each scheme need not be witnessed separately when the schemes use the same validated platform, examination administration process, security controls, and proctoring arrangements. PJLA shall assess the common system through sampling and separately evaluate any significant differences specific to individual schemes.

5.2.4 Other assessment methods shall be witnessed where necessary to verify implementation, examiner judgment, security, fairness, validity or reliability.

5.2.5 A simulated or mock certification activity alone may not provide sufficient evidence when observation of an actual activity is necessary to demonstrate competence and effective implementation. PJLA shall determine whether, and to what extent, simulated evidence is acceptable,

taking into account the certification method, available objective evidence, and accreditation risk.

5.3 Technology Used in Certification

5.3.1 Where Information and Communication Technology (ICT), remote assessment/proctoring, automated technologies, or Artificial Intelligence (AI) are utilized, PJLA shall assess compliance with ISO/IEC 17024 and GLOBAL ACI TECH-3-003(M) requirements.

5.3.2 PJLA shall verify that automated scoring tools, grading algorithms, and artificial intelligence driven proctoring systems are validated and monitored for their intended use.

5.3.3 The assessment shall address reliability, validity, security, data confidentiality and privacy, personnel competence, human oversight, and controls for impartiality and bias risks.

5.3.4 Where virtual sites [*online environment through which an organization performs work or provides services, allowing people to carry out processes regardless of their physical location*] are included in the requested or accredited scope, PJLA shall evaluate the activities performed through those sites and take them into account when determining assessment coverage and duration. Activities requiring a physical environment, including applicable hands-on practical evaluations, shall not be represented as exclusively virtual activities.

6.0 Fraudulent Behavior and Sanctions

6.1 In accordance with GLOBAL ACI TECH-3-026(M), where there is evidence of fraudulent behavior, or where the PCB intentionally provides false information, conceals information, or deliberately violates accreditation rules, PJLA shall immediately initiate its process for the withdrawal of accreditation or termination of the application.

6.2 PJLA shall receive and validate allegations of fraudulent behavior involving accredited PCBs and/or their certified clients, take appropriate action, and communicate relevant information to interested parties and to the Global ACI Secretariat.