

UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICE

POLICY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Agreed minutes of 10th Meeting Held on Thursday 13th November 2014 at UKAS, Feltham

Present

Ron Gainsford (Chairman)	Trading Standards Institute (TSI)
David Armstrong	Chartered Quality Institute (CQI) (Item 7 only)
David Bell	British Standards Institution (BSI)
Chris Elliott	Ministry of Defence (MoD)
Dr Stefan Kukula	Engineering Equipment and Materials Users' Association (EEMUA)
John Mortimer	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
Trevor Nash	Association of British Certification Bodies (ABCB)
Prof Adrian Newland	Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
Mike Pearson	Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
Peter Russell	British Measurement and Testing Association (BMTA)
Prof Ian Sharp	Public Health England (PHE)
Sarah Veale	Trades Union Congress (TUC)
Paul Stennett	UKAS
Lorraine Turner	UKAS
Malcolm Hynd (Secretary)	UKAS

1- Welcome, Apologies

The Chairman welcomed members to the 10th meeting of the UKAS Policy Advisory Council. Apologies were received from Daniel Mansfield of BSI (David Bell deputising), Dr Jeff Llewellyn of BMTA (Peter Russell deputising), Sue Brand of Care England and Kevin Walkin of HSE. Lorraine Turner was attending for UKAS in addition to the Chief Executive and the PAC secretary. David Armstrong would attend for Item 7 only to provide a presentation on the current work of CQI.

2- Minutes of 9th Meeting of the UKAS Policy Advisory Council PAC/19/14

The Chairman advised that there had been no requests for amendment to the draft minutes circulated. Paul Stennett advised that no action had been taken on Item 3.2 regarding private pathology laboratories considering that pressure would be needed from the Care Quality Commission to precipitate action in this sector. There were no other comments and the minutes were agreed.

3- Matters arising

3.1 Revision of customer agreement (Item 3.1)

Lorraine Turner reported that there has been good progress on the customer agreement since the last meeting with discussions with the stakeholder organisations completed. However, the discussions have identified one or two legal points that need to be resolved before the new agreement can be rolled out to customers. The main issue relates to organisations accredited by UKAS which also offer other types of accreditation which may conflict with UKAS accreditation or cause confusion. A meeting with BIS will be scheduled to discuss.

3.2 Pathways to certification (Item 3.2) PAC/27/14

The Chairman thanked Mike Pearson for his paper (the Annex to PAC/27/14).

Mike Pearson reported the main concern relates to the negative and occasionally disparaging attitudes of certification body auditors towards small businesses which discourage the vast majority to opt voluntarily for ISO 9001. He would like to find ways of explaining that ISO 9001 can be good for businesses but this needs to go alongside a change in attitude by certification body auditors. If this could be achieved, he thought there would be a resulting improvement in take up that would also help to restrict the activities of non-accredited certification bodies.

Paul Stennett referred to the UKAS programme to consider pathways to accreditation but was also interested in the issues discussed in the paper which he has discussed with Mike Pearson and Trevor Nash. He thought there could be business opportunities for certification bodies (CBs) if the difficulties raised in the paper could be resolved. He would like to encourage a group of CBs to give attention to this to provide an easier route to certification. They would still need to meet the accreditation requirements in ISO/IEC 17021 but there could be scope for action.

John Mortimer asked what role was envisaged for BIS. Paul Stennett suggested mostly awareness and publicity. There would be a larger role for CQI/IRCA (International Register of Certificated Auditors).

Trevor Nash thought there were a number of strands to consider but agreed there could be scope for better training of auditors in how they relate to small businesses.

Stefan Kukula thought that there needs to be interest in the supply chain and suggested that he would like to be involved in any further discussions. Chris Elliott agreed that any concept developed needs to retain the confidence of procurers and specifiers. David Bell advised that the work should take into account the revision of ISO 9001, which is due to be completed by September 2015.

The Chairman concluded that there is general support for the project and suggested that Trevor Nash should investigate the interest of CBs as the next step.

3.3 Outcome of BIS funding requests (Item 4.1)

John Mortimer advised that BIS funding towards the UKAS awareness campaign has been confirmed at £87k for 2014/15. Paul Stennett commented that this is a slight increase from the previous year so is much appreciated.

3.4 Reputational Risk Management (Item 6.3)

Paul Stennett reported that, since the last meeting, he has met with John Mortimer to explain in more detail the UKAS approach to Reputational Risk Management. John Mortimer confirmed that he is happy with the information provided and the approach taken.

4- Members Issues

4.1 Better Regulation Strategy Group (BRSG)

Sarah Veale reported on developments in the BRSG and particularly on the meeting held on 21 October at which there was a discussion on 'alternatives to regulation'. Lord Lindsay also attended. The Group discussed three main issues. Review of the Government programme to have less regulation when they leave office than when they arrived. BRE thought they were on target to achieve this target. The Small Business Bill and particularly the requirement for business appeals champions in each regulator which was welcomed. Discussion of alternatives to regulation. She reported that BRE is slightly sceptical about the benefits of alternatives and it was acknowledged that some areas are not suitable for alternatives eg the response to the difficulties at Mid Staffs NHS Trust. The group recognised the cultural barriers holding back the use of alternatives. Lord Lindsay mentioned the benefits of considering alternatives early in the policy making process. Some members were concerned about the costs of alternatives as identified in the recent British Retail Consortium report. There was also a desire for evidence of benefits other than contracting out public services. Lord Curry (BRSG Chair) encouraged the development of good case studies including by UKAS.

David Bell referred to a BSI project on the use of standards to support regulation and **agreed to provide details for PAC members.**

Malcolm Hynd said that UKAS had developed good contacts with BRE although discussions had indicated that accreditation may be more suited to support regulation rather than provide an alternative. Paul Stennett agreed that evidence of benefits was important but was difficult to find. He suggested that UKAS might need to do some further work on this in the future.

Secretary's note: BSI has advised that the goal of the project mentioned is to enable BSI better to engage with government in order to increase officials' understanding of the value and use of standards to deliver government policy.

The project objectives are:

- To articulate the types of policy challenges that government departments face
- To outline the different means and map the process by which instruments are selected to deliver policy
- To analyse in detail how standards can be of use in the delivery of specific policy challenges (including benefits and limitations)
- To make recommendations to BSI about how to explain to government the benefits of standards as a policy delivery tool.

BSI will keep UKAS informed as the project develops given the clear relevance to UKAS' own programme to engage Government and particularly its work with BRE.

4.2 Draft EA paper on the Recognition of Accreditations issued outside the framework of Regulation 765/2008 – Trevor Nash **PAC/26/14**

Trevor Nash explained that this paper was tabled at the recent IAF meeting and, if adopted by EA, would cause particular problems for multi-national certification organisations. There was also a risk that EA would be suspended from the IAF and ILAC MLAs. It was clear that a number of European ABs did not agree with the paper. He acknowledged that Regulation 765/2008 requires CABs to be accredited by their National Accreditation Body but it does not prohibit other accreditations or recognition of other accreditations.

Peter Russell and David Bell advised that discussion in the European Accreditation Advisory Board confirmed that the paper would be reconsidered.

Paul Stennett suggested that the tabling of the paper at IAF was premature as it had not been agreed in EA. He agreed that there does not seem to be a legal basis for the paper and confirmed that UKAS did not support it and would argue against it. John Mortimer agreed.

5- UKAS Issues

5.1 Agreements with related bodies

5.1.1 Agreement with OFTEC **PAC/21/14**

Malcolm Hynd reminded members that ISO/IEC 17011 requires accreditation bodies to consult stakeholders when they are about to enter into formal agreements with third parties (related bodies).

John Mortimer asked whether there was a conflict of interest in UKAS using OFTEC assessors for this scheme whilst also accrediting OFTEC as a certification body. Trevor Nash advised that competing CBs have confirmed that they do not have a problem with the situation. Lorraine Turner said that UKAS is satisfied that there is sufficient separation, including geographical, between the different parts of OFTEC.

With these comments, the paper was agreed.

5.2 Addition to the list of management standards covered by UKAS accreditation

5.2.1 PAS 7: 2013, Fire Risk Management **PAC/22/14**

Malcolm Hynd reminded members that, before commencing any new accreditation activity, UKAS must be satisfied that it is in the public interest for it to do so. Because of the wider potential impact of management system standards, UKAS has agreed to consult PAC before offering accreditation for the certification of any new management system standard that is not a recognised national or international standard. PAS 7 is not yet a recognised national or international standard but, as explained in the paper, has been developed with broad stakeholder representation.

Trevor Nash asked that the invitation for organisations to be accredited for this work should be open to all CBs. He also asked about user support for the specification. Malcolm Hynd drew attention to section 4.2 of the paper that illustrated the support of users, particularly large public sector organisations such as universities and hospitals. With this explanation, the paper was agreed.

5.3 Preparation for 2015 PAF meeting (format of meeting, possible discussion topics)

Paul Stennett acknowledged the feedback from the last PAF meeting indicating that members wanted less reporting from UKAS and more opportunity for discussion and feedback. He asked for suggestions of topics for discussion.

The Chairman suggested that some UKAS reporting is helpful. He also suggested that it would be good to hear how input received from PAF has been used and if the UKAS Chairman and non-executive directors could be included in PAF. He also commented that discussion at the UKAS AGM recognised the value of Health and Social Care Sub-group and questioned whether any other sub-groups could be valuable.

Mike Pearson thought that the breakout groups would benefit from facilitation by UKAS staff and PAC members and that advance notice of discussion topics would be helpful. Chris Elliott agreed that it would be helpful to demonstrate how the PAF input has been taken on board. Adrian Newland agreed that the Chief Executive's presentation is important and confirmed the value of the sub-group in coordinating interested organisations and involving those not currently involved. Ian Sharp recognised the need for topics that will be of interest to all.

Paul Stennett agreed to take note of these comments in preparing for the next PAF meeting.

5.4 New PAF members – United Kingdom Petroleum Industry Association (UKPIA), Welsh Government

Malcolm Hynd explained that good contacts had been made with UKPIA through one of the BRE's Focus on Enforcement exercises and they have expressed interest in being represented on PAF as many of their members use UKAS accredited services. UKAS has also been working to improve contacts with the Welsh Government and is encouraging them to take a place on PAF. It is not yet clear whether WG will be able to resource this but it would be helpful to offer them a place.

Stefan Kukula advised that all full members of UKPIA are also members of EEMUA but had no objections to them becoming members.

With these comments, the proposal was agreed.

5.5 Outcome of additional peer evaluation for medical laboratories

Lorraine Turner explained that UKAS has recently had an additional peer evaluation visit for the specific activity of the accreditation of medical laboratories to ISO 15189. She confirmed that the evaluation was successful.

Peter Russell reported that the BMTA/UKAS workshops for medical laboratories were very successful.

6- Reports

6.1 UKAS Board Report

Paul Stennett provided an oral report of the main items covered at the last Board meeting:

- Finance and accounts;
- Health and safety report;
- Transition of medical laboratories to ISO 15189;
- Review of the strategic plan with non-executive directors seeking to accelerate progress;
- Report on discussions in PAC;
- Review of strategy discussion at AGM including suggestions for PAF.

6.2 BIS International contract activity report (2014/2015 Q1)

PAC/23/14

Chris Elliott noted the increase in IAF work. Lorraine Turner agreed that some of the reported increase reflects the cyclical nature of IAF work but agreed there is a general increase in activity.

John Mortimer said he would provide comments and questions on this and the activity reports by correspondence.

Secretary's note: BIS letter circulated with these minutes. UKAS' response will be circulated separately.

6.3 UKAS activity reports

PAC/24/14

PAC/25/14

Stefan Kukula commented on the reference to the Engineering Inspection Advisory Committee and noted that it was, once again, not attended by HSE. He suggested this was symptomatic of the increasing pressure on regulators' time.

7- Any Other Business

7.1 Presentation by Chartered Quality Institute on their quality philosophy – David Armstrong, Head of Profession, CQI

Paul Stennett explained that UKAS and CQI have made a concerted effort to improve contacts with each other. Paul Stennett met with Simon Feary (CQI Chief Executive) in September when it was suggested that there would be benefit in CQI presenting to PAC details of its current work and priorities.

David Armstrong presented CQI's work on 'Repositioning the Quality Professional'.

Secretary's note: Summary slide set circulated with these minutes.

7.2 Discussion on how UKAS and CQI might work together; areas of synergy and common interest.

David Bell noted the references to the need for changes in corporate culture and ethics and asked how these elements could be measured. David Armstrong suggested that changes in culture and ethics etc need to be measured through the outcomes achieved.

Mike Pearson suggested that the certification of an organisation's management systems would be relevant to CQI's model but the nature of the system might need to change. Stefan Kukula agreed that all the principles raised were covered by the main management system standards but that the main difficulty would be measuring effectiveness.

Trevor Nash asked what CQI was doing to convince chief executives to adopt the new model. David Armstrong confirmed that CQI was working to raise awareness of the package and the profile of the quality profession. They were relying on an influential business panel to help.

Adrian Newland considered that, although the health sector does not operate to the same structure, the new model could be relevant to the general desire to improve quality.

The Chairman thanked David Armstrong for his presentation and agreed that UKAS and CQI should continue to build good channels of communication.

8- Next Meetings

The Chairman confirmed the next meetings as:

PAF/PAC	Tuesday 10 March 2015 at the BIS Conference Centre, London (PAF morning, PAC afternoon)
PAC	Thursday 9 July 2015 at the Lansdowne Club, London
PAC	Thursday 12 November 2015 at UKAS, Feltham