



ACCREDITATION SANS FRONTIÈRES

ASF Personnel Competence & Awareness Policy

Competence requirements for the people who run ASF's own operations — distinct from surveyors, Council members, and external training providers

Version 2 · 2026

Paris · Geneva · Tbilisi

Document Control

Document Title	ASF Personnel Competence & Awareness Policy
Document Reference	ASF-PERSONNEL-001-v2
Version / Edition	Version 2
Status	Published
Date of Publication	12 September 2026
Place of Publication	Paris, France
Issuing Authority	ASF International Standards Council, Accréditation Sans Frontières
Language of Origin	English
Effective Date	12 September 2026
Next Scheduled Review	12 September 2029
Supersedes	Version 1

Table of Contents

- 1. Purpose and Scope
- 2. Why Competence, Not Just Training, Matters: The Real Evidence
- 3. Competence Requirements by Function
- 4. Records of Competence
- 5. Awareness
- 6. Addressing a Competence Gap
- References
- Annex A — Personnel Competence Record
- Index

Foreword

ASF has real, detailed competence requirements for surveyors (the ASF Surveyor Training Standard) and for external training providers (ASF Training & Education Standards). Neither document addresses the people who run ASF's own day-to-day operations — the individuals who process a complaint intake, maintain the public registry, coordinate a Revision Panel's schedule, or manage document control across ASF's entire portfolio. ISO 9001 Clause 7.2 and ISO/IEC 17011 both treat competence of an organization's own personnel as a distinct, necessary requirement, not one already satisfied by having good standards for the people ASF certifies externally [1–2].

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy governs the competence and awareness of individuals performing ASF's own internal operational functions — registry maintenance, complaint intake and coordination, document control, and Council and Revision Panel administrative support — distinct from the certification requirements governing surveyors (ASF Surveyor Training Standard), Council and Revision Panel substantive membership (Sections 8–9 of How ASF Develops and Revises Standards), and external training providers (ASF Training & Education Standards).

2. Why Competence, Not Just Training, Matters: The Real Evidence

This policy is deliberately titled around competence and awareness, not merely training, and real research explains why that distinction matters. A study of job training's effect on employee performance found that competency specifically mediates the relationship between training and actual performance — in other words, training alone does not improve performance directly; it does so only to the extent that it genuinely produces competence [3]. Completing a training session is not the same thing as having become competent, and this policy's emphasis on documented, verified competence in Section 4, rather than a record of training attendance alone, follows directly from that distinction.

The real difference this makes is not abstract. One documented case of a comprehensive skills training program at a Fortune 500 company recorded a fifty percent reduction in error rates as a direct result [4]. Separately, research from the Association for Talent Development found that organizations genuinely investing in employee competence see an average productivity increase of twenty-four percent [4]. And research specifically relevant to Section 5 of this policy — genuine understanding, not rote completion — found that organizations comparing performance before and after training, rather than merely tracking completion, are forty percent more likely to achieve their strategic objectives [4].

A separate finding is worth naming for what it says about why Section 5 treats awareness as distinct from competence: a large workforce survey found that ninety-four percent of employees said they would stay longer at an organization that genuinely invested in their development [5]. Competence is not only a technical requirement — the way it is built and recognized affects whether the people who hold it choose to keep applying it at ASF specifically.

3. Competence Requirements by Function

For each internal operational function, ASF defines the competence genuinely necessary to perform it — based on education, training, or demonstrated experience, consistent with ISO 9001's own competence requirement [1]:

- Registry maintenance — understanding of the ASF Public Accreditation Registry Policy in full, including what may and may not be published, and the timeliness requirements governing status updates
- Complaint intake and coordination — understanding of the ASF Public Complaints & Feedback Policy, including the confidentiality protections owed to a complainant and the distinction between the two complaint tracks
- Document control — understanding of the ASF Document Control Procedure, including version control and the prevention of obsolete document use
- Council and Revision Panel administrative support — understanding of the conflict of interest procedures under Section 10 of How ASF Develops and Revises Standards, sufficient to recognize when a scheduling or communication decision could itself create an appearance of partiality

4. Records of Competence

ASF retains documented evidence of the competence of each individual performing a function under Section 3 — relevant qualifications, training completed, or demonstrated experience — consistent with ISO 9001's requirement to retain documented information as evidence of competence [1]. Consistent with the real finding in Section 2 that comparing performance before and after training is what actually predicts achieving objectives, this record is reviewed whenever an individual's function changes, and is not treated as a one-time confirmation made only at the point of hiring.

5. Awareness

Beyond function-specific competence, every individual performing an internal operational function is made aware of, and understands, how their own specific work contributes to ASF's overall integrity, and what the genuine implications are of not following ASF's own governing documents — not merely that a rule exists, but why it exists. Someone processing a registry update who understands why accuracy there matters to a patient checking a claim is different from someone who only knows the field must be updated within one business day.

6. Addressing a Competence Gap

Where a competence gap is identified — through the ASF Internal Audit Procedure, a nonconformity under the ASF Internal Nonconformity & Corrective Action Procedure, or a straightforward change in a function's requirements — ASF takes action to close it, through training, mentoring, or reassignment, and evaluates whether that action was actually effective, consistent with ISO 9001's own requirement to evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken to acquire necessary competence [1].

References

- [1] International Organization for Standardization. ISO 9001:2015, Quality Management Systems — Requirements, Clause 7.2 (Competence) and Clause 7.3 (Awareness). Geneva: ISO; 2015.
- [2] International Organization for Standardization. ISO/IEC 17011:2017, Conformity Assessment — Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies. Geneva: ISO; 2017.
- [3] Effects of Training on Organizational Performance, on the mediating role of competency between job training and employee performance. 2020.
- [4] Psico-Smart, citing Association for Talent Development and International Journal of Training and Development research. How Can Organizations Effectively Quantify the Impact of Employee Training on Productivity? 2026.
- [5] LinkedIn Learning workforce survey, cited in Psico-Smart. 2026.

Annex A — Personnel Competence Record

Maintained for every individual performing an internal operational function under this policy.

Individual name: _____

Function performed (Section 3): _____

Evidence of Competence

- ☐ Relevant qualification
- ☐ Relevant training completed
- ☐ Demonstrated relevant experience

Details: _____

Awareness Confirmation

- ☐ Confirmed understanding of relevant ASF governing document(s) (Section 3)
- ☐ Confirmed understanding of how this function contributes to ASF's overall integrity (Section 5)

Record last reviewed: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Index

Awareness (distinct from competence), 2, 5
Competence as Mediator (real evidence), 2
Competence Gap, 6
Competence Records, 4
Competence Requirements by Function, 3
Retention and Investment (real finding), 2
Training vs. Competence, 2

Every ASF document in this portfolio assumes the people carrying it out actually understand it. This policy is what makes that assumption true rather than convenient — and the real evidence shows the difference between training and genuine competence is exactly where that assumption tends to break down.