

ASF-OPS-002

Surveyor Competency, Selection and Training Policy

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Approved by	Prof. Giorgi Pkhakadze, MD, MPH, PhD President, Accréditation Sans Frontières
Applies to	All ASF Lead Surveyors and Associate Surveyors — whether employed, contracted, or volunteering
Related documents	ASF-GOV-003 Impartiality Policy ASF-GOV-004 Confidentiality Policy ASF-GOV-005 Complaints and Appeals Procedure ASF-OPS-001 Accreditation Decision Framework ASF-OPS-009 Surveyor Training and Examination Programme ASF-OPS-010 Surveyor Role Specifications
Supersedes	ASF-OPS-002 V2.0 (2026-11-23)
Next review	December 2031, or earlier on trigger

Version History

Version	Date	Nature of change	Approved by
V0.1	2026-10-30	Initial draft for internal review	—
V1.0	2026-11-13	SDC review and comment	Standards Development Committee
V2.0	2026-11-23	Approved and published	Prof. G. Pkhakadze, ASF President
V3.0	2026-12-01	Expanded to full policy; 6-domain competency framework table, selection criteria, training pathway with examination requirements, 6-trigger performance monitoring matrix, register management and removal procedure added	Prof. G. Pkhakadze, ASF President

1. Purpose

1.1 The quality and credibility of ASF's accreditation programme depend directly on the competence, professionalism, and impartiality of its surveyors. This policy establishes the standards ASF applies to the selection, training, ongoing competency assurance, and performance management of all ASF surveyors — Lead (Coordinators) and Associate (Monitors).

1.2 This policy defines:

- (a) the two surveyor roles and their relationship;
- (b) the eligibility criteria for surveyor appointment;
- (c) the competency framework against which all surveyors are assessed;
- (d) the selection and appointment process;
- (e) the training and examination pathway (in conjunction with ASF-OPS-009);
- (f) the ongoing performance monitoring system;
- (g) the surveyor register and the process for suspension or removal from the register.

1.3 This policy is read alongside ASF-OPS-009 (Surveyor Training and Examination Programme), which sets out the detailed module content and examination requirements, and ASF-OPS-010 (Surveyor Role Specifications), which defines the domain coverage assigned to each role.

2. Two Surveyor Roles

2.1 ASF operates two surveyor roles:

- (a) Lead Surveyor (Coordinator) — the senior member of the survey team, accountable for the overall quality, consistency, and completeness of the assessment and for the survey report. May lead surveys independently once all requirements of this policy are met.
- (b) Associate Surveyor (Monitor) — conducts assigned assessment activities within their domain of expertise under the direction of the Lead Surveyor. May not lead a survey independently until meeting the requirements for promotion to Lead Surveyor.

2.2 Every ASF survey team must include at least one Lead Surveyor and one Associate Surveyor. The minimum team size reflects ASF's commitment to peer review within the survey process and to adequate domain coverage.

2.3 Both roles carry the same fundamental obligations under this policy, ASF-GOV-003 (Impartiality), and ASF-GOV-004 (Confidentiality). The difference between the roles is one of seniority and accountability, not of the standards of conduct required.

3. Eligibility Criteria for Surveyor Appointment

3.1 Lead Surveyor

3.1.1 A candidate for appointment as a Lead Surveyor must meet all of the following eligibility criteria at the time of application:

- (a) holds a recognised professional qualification in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, allied health, health management, public health, or a directly related field;

- (b) has a minimum of seven years' post-qualification professional experience in healthcare delivery, healthcare quality management, healthcare regulation, or healthcare accreditation;
- (c) has direct experience of healthcare quality assessment — including internal audit, external inspection, accreditation survey activity, or regulatory inspection — at a level sufficient to demonstrate proficiency in evidence collection, documentation review, and criterion-based assessment;
- (d) has successfully completed the ASF Surveyor Training and Examination Programme (ASF-OPS-009) with a minimum pass mark of 75%;
- (e) has completed a minimum of two supervised assessment activities as an Associate Surveyor under the direct oversight of an approved ASF Lead Surveyor, with satisfactory written feedback from the supervising Lead Surveyor on each;
- (f) has no undisclosed conflict of interest in relation to any facility currently seeking or holding ASF accreditation;
- (g) meets all impartiality requirements in ASF-GOV-003.

3.2 Associate Surveyor

3.2.1 A candidate for appointment as an Associate Surveyor must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- (a) holds a recognised professional qualification in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, allied health, health management, public health, or a directly related field;
- (b) has a minimum of five years' post-qualification professional experience in healthcare delivery, healthcare quality management, or a directly related field;
- (c) demonstrates current expertise in at least one of the assessment domains specified in ASF-OPS-010 (Surveyor Role Specifications);
- (d) has successfully completed the ASF Surveyor Training and Examination Programme (ASF-OPS-009) with a minimum pass mark of 75%;
- (e) meets all impartiality requirements in ASF-GOV-003.

3.2.2 An Associate Surveyor who subsequently meets the requirements in §3.1 may apply for promotion to Lead Surveyor. Promotion is not automatic and requires a formal application and review by ASF.

3.3 Language Requirements

3.3.1 All surveyors must be proficient in the language of the survey (the working language of the facility being assessed). Where a surveyor does not meet the language requirement for a specific assignment, ASF arranges for a qualified interpreter. The interpreter is subject to the same confidentiality obligations as a surveyor.

4. Competency Framework

4.1 All ASF surveyors are assessed against a six-domain competency framework. The framework applies equally to Lead and Associate Surveyors, with the domain expertise requirements calibrated to the scope of each role as defined in ASF-OPS-010.

Competency domain	Description	Assessment method
Knowledge of ASF standards	Thorough understanding of the applicable ASF accreditation standard: structure, chapter organisation, criteria classification, scoring methodology, and the evidence base underpinning key requirements.	Written examination (75% pass mark); annual update briefing attendance
Assessment and evidence skills	Ability to plan and conduct a systematic assessment using document review, staff interviews, and direct observation; to triangulate evidence from multiple sources; and to identify and document nonconformances with precision and specificity.	Written examination; supervised assessment(s) with Lead Surveyor feedback
Report writing	Ability to produce a complete, accurate, and professionally written survey report — including nonconformance descriptions that are factual, specific, and directly linked to the criterion not met.	Assessed during training module 3; survey report quality review by ADC Chair
Professional conduct	Maintenance of confidentiality obligations (ASF-GOV-004); impartiality and conflict-of-interest management (ASF-GOV-003); professional demeanour during surveys; and ability to manage sensitive situations constructively.	Module 4 training; declaration of impartiality per survey; annual review
Clinical or management domain expertise	Demonstrated professional expertise in the specific clinical or management domains to which the surveyor will be assigned, as defined in ASF-OPS-010 (Surveyor Role Specifications).	Credential verification at appointment; CV and references review; domain allocation aligned to expertise
Facilitation and communication	Ability to conduct an opening conference, present preliminary findings professionally at a closing conference, and communicate with facility staff and leadership in a manner that is respectful, constructive, and consistent with ASF's values.	Observed during supervised assessments; participant feedback from facilities

4.2 The competency framework is applied at three points in the surveyor lifecycle: (a) at initial appointment — through the training programme, examination, and supervised assessments; (b) annually — through the annual calibration exercise and update briefing; and (c) on trigger — when a specific concern is identified (see Section 7).

5. Selection and Appointment Process

5.1 Surveyor candidates are identified through: open expressions of interest published on france-asf.fr; direct nomination by existing ASF surveyors or committee members; or targeted outreach to healthcare professionals in specific domains or jurisdictions.

5.2 All candidates complete a formal written application including: professional qualifications and registration details; employment history; evidence of healthcare assessment experience; a statement of domain expertise relative to ASF standards; and a completed Declaration of Impartiality (Annex A of ASF-GOV-003).

5.3 Applications are reviewed by ASF against the eligibility criteria in Section 3. Shortlisted candidates are invited to a structured interview conducted by the SDC Chair or a delegated assessor. The interview assesses the candidate's understanding of accreditation principles, knowledge of relevant healthcare quality systems, and commitment to ASF's values of impartiality, confidentiality, and professional conduct.

5.4 Successful candidates are offered a conditional appointment, subject to: completion of the ASF Surveyor Training and Examination Programme (ASF-OPS-009); passing the examination with a minimum score of 75%; and satisfactory completion of supervised assessments.

5.5 Full appointment to the ASF Surveyor Register is confirmed on completion of all training requirements and on the ASF President's counter-signature of the Surveyor Engagement Agreement. The Surveyor Engagement Agreement sets out the terms of the surveyor's engagement with ASF, including: role; fee arrangements; confidentiality obligations; impartiality obligations; obligations under this policy; and the conditions under which the engagement may be suspended or terminated.

The ASF Surveyor Register records all approved surveyors — Lead and Associate — with their approval date, current status, domain expertise, examination results, survey history, and any conditions on their approval. The register is maintained by ASF and is not publicly accessible.

6. Training and Examination

6.1 All newly appointed surveyors must complete the ASF Surveyor Training and Examination Programme (ASF-OPS-009) before conducting any independent assessment activity. The programme is a four-module, four-day course covering: ASF standards and methodology; survey process and tools; documentation and report writing; and professional conduct and impartiality. It concludes with a written competency examination on day 4.

6.2 The minimum pass mark for the written examination is 75%. Candidates who do not achieve 75% may re-sit the examination once, no earlier than 30 days after the first attempt. A candidate who does not achieve 75% on the second attempt is not eligible for active surveyor status. They may reapply for training after a further development period of at least 6 months.

6.3 Lead Surveyor candidates must additionally complete a minimum of two supervised assessment activities as an Associate Surveyor under direct oversight of an approved Lead Surveyor. The supervising Lead Surveyor provides written feedback after each supervised assessment, which is retained in the surveyor's record.

6.4 Annual update briefings are required for all active surveyors. Update briefings cover changes to ASF standards or methodology, findings from post-implementation monitoring relevant to survey

conduct, and updates to governance or operational policies. A surveyor who does not attend an annual update briefing is placed on inactive status until the briefing is completed.

6.5 An annual calibration exercise is conducted by ASF. All active surveyors participate. The exercise presents a standardised survey scenario and requires surveyors to independently assess a set of criteria and document their findings. Agreement rates across the surveyor cohort are analysed; significant divergence from the cohort consensus is flagged and discussed individually with the surveyor concerned.

7. Performance Monitoring

7.1 ASF monitors surveyor performance on an ongoing basis, drawing on: survey report quality reviews conducted by the ADC Chair after each survey; structured facility feedback collected after each survey; calibration exercise results; complaint records (ASF-GOV-005); and the annual update briefing attendance record.

7.2 Performance concerns are addressed through the following graduated framework:

Trigger	Review process	Possible outcomes
Routine — annual	Annual review of all survey activity; calibration exercise participation; update briefing attendance confirmed	Status confirmed; further development needs identified; or escalation to formal review
Complaint upheld against surveyor	Investigation as per ASF-GOV-005; root cause analysis	Formal guidance; remedial training; suspension from surveys; or removal from register
Survey report quality concern raised by ADC	ADC Chair discusses with surveyor; gap identified	Targeted guidance; supervised survey; or formal review
Calibration exercise score below threshold (below 70% agreement)	Surveyor invited to review calibration discussion; re-sits calibration if required	Targeted training; or formal competency review
Inactivity — no survey in 24 months	Refresher module required before next assignment	Refresher completed → active status reinstated; not completed → inactive status
Formal competency review	Full review by SDC Chair or delegated assessor: records, survey reports, feedback, calibration results	Cleared; performance improvement plan; suspension; or removal from surveyor register

7.3 A surveyor who is the subject of a formal competency review continues to hold active status unless the review determines that a suspension is warranted to protect the integrity of ongoing surveys. Suspension during a review is a precautionary measure and does not constitute a finding of incompetence.

8. Surveyor Register and Removal

8.1 The ASF Surveyor Register records:

- (a) surveyor name, contact details, and professional qualifications;
- (b) surveyor role (Lead or Associate) and any domain conditions;
- (c) appointment date and current status (Active, Inactive, Suspended, Removed);
- (d) training and examination records;
- (e) survey history — surveys assigned, dates, and outcomes;
- (f) calibration exercise records;
- (g) any formal performance actions.

8.2 A surveyor is removed from the register in the following circumstances:

- (a) voluntary resignation, with written notice to ASF;
- (b) failure to maintain active status — not completing the annual update briefing within 6 months of the due date, and not completing the required refresher module after 24 months of inactivity;
- (c) a finding following a formal competency review that the surveyor is no longer competent to conduct ASF surveys;
- (d) a knowing breach of the impartiality policy (ASF-GOV-003), which requires permanent removal (see ASF-GOV-003, §9.3);
- (e) a serious breach of the confidentiality policy (ASF-GOV-004) resulting in a determination that continued engagement poses an unacceptable risk;
- (f) conduct inconsistent with ASF's professional standards that, in the judgement of the ASF President, warrants removal.

8.3 Removal from the register is communicated to the surveyor in writing with the reasons. The surveyor may appeal the removal decision under ASF-GOV-005 within 30 calendar days. Pending the outcome of an appeal, the surveyor is placed on Suspended status.

8.4 A surveyor removed under clause 8.2(b) (failure to maintain active status) may reapply for surveyor status after completing the refresher module and passing the examination.

9. ISQua EEA Alignment

9.1 This policy is designed to meet the requirements of ISQua EEA Principle 5 (Surveyors), which requires that an accreditation programme has: a defined and published competency framework for assessors; a selection process that verifies eligibility; a training programme that equips assessors with the knowledge and skills required; a system for ongoing performance monitoring; and a register of approved assessors. The ASF ISQua EEA Crosswalk (ASF-EV-004) maps the provisions of this policy to the applicable EEA criteria.

10. References

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Formal Approval

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