

ASF-OPS-004

Accreditation Mark Policy

Document code	ASF-OPS-004
Version	V3.0
Status	Published — effective 2026-12-01
Approved by	Prof. Giorgi Pkhakadze, MD, MPH, PhD President, Accréditation Sans Frontières
Applies to	All organisations holding or claiming ASF accreditation status, and any third party using the ASF accreditation mark
Related documents	ASF-OPS-001 Accreditation Decision Framework ASF-OPS-003 Accreditation Cycle Policy ASF-OPS-005 Post-Accreditation Obligations ASF-GOV-005 Complaints and Appeals Procedure
Supersedes	ASF-OPS-004 V2.0 (2026-11-25)
Next review	December 2031, or earlier on trigger

Version History

Version	Date	Nature of change	Approved by
V0.1	2026-11-02	Initial draft for internal review	—
V1.0	2026-11-15	ADC review	Accreditation Decision Committee
V2.0	2026-11-25	Approved and published	Prof. G. Pkhakadze, ASF President
V3.0	2026-12-01	Expanded to full policy; permitted/prohibited use table, visual identity specifications, licence terms, suspension/withdrawal removal timelines, misuse monitoring procedure, and references added	Prof. G. Pkhakadze, ASF President

1. Purpose

1.1 The ASF accreditation mark is the visible symbol of ASF accreditation. It communicates to patients, regulators, funders, and the public that a healthcare facility has been independently assessed against ASF's published accreditation standards and found to meet the required level of quality and safety performance. The integrity of the mark depends on its use being strictly limited to organisations that currently hold valid accreditation status and that use the mark only in the contexts and manner authorised by this policy.

1.2 This policy establishes: the conditions under which the ASF accreditation mark may be used; the form in which it must appear; the obligations of accredited organisations regarding its use; the process for removing the mark when accreditation lapses, is suspended, or is withdrawn; and ASF's arrangements for monitoring and enforcing compliance.

1.3 The ASF accreditation mark is a registered trademark of Accréditation Sans Frontières. Its use is a licence granted by ASF to the accredited organisation for the duration of the accreditation period only. The licence is personal to the accredited organisation and the accredited facility — it is not transferable to any other organisation, facility, or entity.

2. The Accreditation Mark Licence

2.1 On the issue of an accreditation certificate, ASF grants the accredited organisation a non-exclusive, non-transferable licence to use the ASF accreditation mark in connection with the specific accredited facility named in the certificate. The licence takes effect from the accreditation start date and expires automatically on the accreditation end date, without any further action required from either party.

2.2 The licence is subject to the conditions set out in this policy. Any use of the mark outside these conditions constitutes a breach of the licence and of ASF's intellectual property rights.

2.3 The licence covers only the specific facility named in the accreditation certificate. Where an organisation operates multiple facilities, each must hold its own valid accreditation and its own licence before displaying the mark. A group or network accreditation against ASF standards is not available; each facility is assessed individually.

2.4 The Accreditation Mark Licence is set out in a separate licence document issued alongside the accreditation certificate. The licence document identifies: the accredited organisation; the accredited facility name and address; the ASF standard under which accreditation was assessed; the accreditation period; and the permitted uses of the mark as defined in this policy.

3. Permitted and Prohibited Uses

3.1 The following table sets out the contexts in which the ASF accreditation mark may and may not be used:

Context	Use of the ASF accreditation mark
Facility entrance and reception signage	✓ Permitted — during the accreditation period

Context	Use of the ASF accreditation mark
Facility website (institutional pages)	✓ Permitted — with accreditation period dates displayed
Facility letterhead and official correspondence	✓ Permitted — during the accreditation period
Patient information materials and brochures	✓ Permitted — with statement: 'Accredited by Accréditation Sans Frontières'
Press releases and media communications	✓ Permitted — with accreditation period and standard stated
Job advertisements	✓ Permitted — with the accreditation period stated
After accreditation period expires or lapses	✗ Prohibited — mark must be removed within 14 calendar days
During suspension	✗ Prohibited — mark must be removed within 5 working days of suspension notice
Following withdrawal	✗ Prohibited — mark must be removed within 5 working days of withdrawal notice
In a context implying a higher status than granted	✗ Prohibited — e.g. using 'full accreditation' when Conditional Accreditation was granted
For products, services, or staff not within the accredited facility scope	✗ Prohibited
Modified, distorted, or recoloured versions of the mark	✗ Prohibited in all circumstances

3.2 In all permitted uses, the mark must appear alongside a statement identifying the accreditation period, in one of the following forms:

- (a) 'Accredited by Accréditation Sans Frontières [start year]–[end year]'; or
- (b) 'ASF Accredited [start year]–[end year]'; or
- (c) a QR code or web link directing the viewer to the facility's entry in the ASF public registry at france-asf.fr.

3.3 Where the accreditation decision was Conditional Accreditation, the statement must read 'Conditionally Accredited by Accréditation Sans Frontières [year]'. The unmodified 'Accredited' designation may not be used for Conditional Accreditation.

3.4 The Recognition Award does not carry a licence to use the ASF accreditation mark. Organisations holding a Recognition Award may state 'Recipient of the ASF Recognition Award [year]' in their communications but may not use the ASF accreditation mark.

4. Visual Identity Requirements

4.1 The ASF accreditation mark must be used in its approved form as supplied by ASF. The approved mark files (in vector and raster formats) are provided to the accredited organisation on issue of the licence. The following requirements apply:

- (a) Colour — the mark must be reproduced in the approved ASF colours (navy #14335C and gold #C9A227) on a white or light background; or as a reversed-out version (white mark) on a dark background. The colours may not be altered.
- (b) Minimum size — the mark must be reproduced at no less than 25mm in its smallest dimension in printed materials; no less than 80 pixels in digital contexts.
- (c) Clear space — a clear space equal to the height of the letter 'A' in the mark wordmark must be maintained around all edges of the mark.
- (d) Proportions — the mark must not be stretched, compressed, or distorted. It must be scaled proportionally.
- (e) Modification — the mark must not be modified in any way: no elements may be added, removed, or rearranged; no additional text may be embedded within the mark boundary; no effects (shadow, outline, transparency, rotation) may be applied.

4.2 Where an accredited organisation wishes to use the mark in a context not addressed by this policy — for example, in an architectural installation, in a co-branded publication, or in video or broadcast media — they must seek written approval from ASF before proceeding.

ASF provides a visual identity guide and approved mark files to all accredited organisations on issue of the licence. The guide includes worked examples of compliant and non-compliant uses. A copy of the current visual identity guide is available from ASF on request.

5. Removal of the Mark

5.1 The accredited organisation is responsible for removing the ASF accreditation mark from all contexts — digital, print, physical signage, and any other media — when:

- (a) the accreditation period expires and no renewal certificate has been issued — mark must be removed within 14 calendar days of the expiry date;
- (b) accreditation is suspended — mark must be removed within 5 working days of the suspension notice;
- (c) accreditation is withdrawn — mark must be removed within 5 working days of the withdrawal notice.

5.2 Where physical signage (such as a plaque or entrance display) cannot be removed within the required timeframe due to circumstances beyond the organisation's control — for example, a building access restriction — the organisation must notify ASF in writing within the required period, explaining the reason and committing to a specific removal date. ASF may grant a short extension at its discretion, provided the signage is physically obscured pending removal.

5.3 On removal of the mark, the organisation notifies ASF in writing (email to the ASF contact address on france-asf.fr) confirming that the mark has been removed from all material and digital contexts. This confirmation is retained as a controlled record.

5.4 Failure to remove the mark within the required timeframe constitutes a breach of the licence and may result in the enforcement actions set out in Section 7.

6. Monitoring of Mark Use

6.1 ASF monitors the use of its accreditation mark on an ongoing basis, including:

- (a) annual checks of accredited organisations' public-facing materials (website, signage where accessible) to confirm that the mark is being used in accordance with this policy;
- (b) checks following accreditation expiry, suspension, or withdrawal to confirm that the mark has been removed;
- (c) responding to reports from members of the public, patients, or other parties that the mark is being used incorrectly or without authorisation.

6.2 ASF maintains a public registry at france-asf.fr that allows any person to verify whether a named facility currently holds valid ASF accreditation and the status of that accreditation. The registry is updated within 5 working days of any accreditation decision (grant, renewal, suspension, withdrawal, or lapse).

6.3 Where ASF identifies a potential misuse of its mark — whether by an accredited organisation or a third party — it initiates the compliance review procedure set out in Section 7.

7. Enforcement

7.1 Where ASF identifies or receives a report of misuse of the ASF accreditation mark, the following procedure applies:

- (a) Stage 1 — Formal notice: ASF writes to the organisation concerned, identifying the specific misuse, referencing the applicable clause of this policy, and requiring the organisation to cease the misuse within 10 calendar days.
- (b) Stage 2 — Non-compliance: where the misuse has not ceased within 10 calendar days of the formal notice, ASF escalates the matter. For an accredited organisation: the breach is recorded in the accreditation record and may be considered at the next ADC review. For any organisation: ASF may take legal action to enforce its intellectual property rights.
- (c) Stage 3 — Legal action: ASF reserves the right to take legal action — including seeking an injunction and damages — against any organisation that continues to use the ASF accreditation mark without authorisation or in breach of its licence.

7.2 Where the misuse is by an accredited organisation, ASF also considers whether the misuse constitutes a breach of the Post-Accreditation Obligations (ASF-OPS-005) and whether it warrants a suspension or withdrawal decision under ASF-OPS-001, §4.7.

7.3 Claims of mark misuse by any third party may be reported to ASF using the contact details on france-asf.fr. ASF investigates all reports and responds to the reporter within 20 calendar days with a summary of the action taken.

8. ISQua EEA Alignment

8.1 This policy supports ISQua EEA Principle 10 (Accreditation Mark), which requires that an accreditation programme has documented requirements for the use and protection of the accreditation mark, including restrictions on use following lapse, suspension, or withdrawal. The ASF ISQua EEA Crosswalk (ASF-EV-004) maps the provisions of this policy to the applicable EEA criteria.

9. References

[1]	ISQua International Accreditation Programme (IAP). Principles for Standards. 6th Edition. ISQua External Evaluation Association, Dublin, Ireland, 2023.
[2]	Joint Commission International. JCI Accreditation Standards for Hospitals. 7th Edition. JCI, Oak Brook, IL, 2020. (Chapter: Use of Accreditation Marks and Seals)
[3]	Accreditation Canada. Qmentum Accreditation Program: Accreditation Mark Usage Policy. Ottawa, 2022.
[4]	International Organization for Standardization. ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 — Conformity Assessment: Requirements for Bodies Providing Audit and Certification of Management Systems. §8.4 Use of Certification Marks. ISO, Geneva, 2015.
[5]	International Organization for Standardization. ISO/IEC 17011:2017 — Conformity Assessment: Requirements for Accreditation Bodies. §7.6 Accreditation Symbols. ISO, Geneva, 2017.
[6]	World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Collective and Certification Marks. WIPO Publication No. 894(E). Geneva, 2021.
[7]	Institut National de la Propriété Industrielle (INPI). Marques de certification — Guide pratique. INPI, Paris, 2022.
[8]	HQACI. Accreditation Mark Policy. ISQua EEA Accredited Document, 2026.
[9]	Greenfield D, Braithwaite J. Health sector accreditation research: a systematic review. Int J Qual Health Care. 2008;20(3):172–183.
[10]	Directive 2004/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights. Official Journal of the European Union, L 157, 30 April 2004.
[11]	Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS). EQUiP National Accreditation Seal and Logo Policy. ACHS, Sydney, 2018.
[12]	Shaw CD, Braithwaite J, Moldovan M, et al. Profiling health-care accreditation organisations: an international survey. Int J Qual Health Care. 2013;25(3):222–231.

Formal Approval

Name and title	Signature	Date
Prof. Giorgi Pkhakadze, MD, MPH, PhD President, Accréditation Sans Frontières		2026-12-01

Document code: ASF-OPS-004 · Version: V3.0 · Effective: 2026-12-01 · Next review: December 2031