



International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI)

CMC Certification Scheme Manual (CMC001)

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The CMC Certification Scheme Manual (CMC001)

CONTENTS

- Section 1 The CMC Certification Scheme – General description**
- Section 2 The CMC Standard**
- Section 3 ICMCI CMC Certification Process Standard**
- Section 4 Accreditation of Member Institutes by ICMCI**

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Specimen CMC Competence Framework (CMC002)**
- Appendix 2 - CMC Competence Framework Range Statements (CMC002a)**
- Appendix 3 - Factors to Consider in a Code of Professional Conduct (CMC003)**
- Appendix 4 - Summary Common Body of Knowledge (CMC004)**
- Appendix 5 - Additional Pre-requisites (CMC005)**
- Appendix 6 - Matrix of Preferred and Acceptable Assessment Techniques (CMC006)**
- Appendix 7 - Glossary of Terms (CMC007)**
- Appendix 8 - General Requirements of ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Applying to the Management of the CMC Certification Scheme in Member Institutes (CMC008)**
- Appendix 9 – CMC Recertification Policy**

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
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1 The CMC Certification Scheme

1.1 Definition – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.1

In partnership with its members, the national certifying institutes, the mission of ICMCI is:

- To elevate the standards of management consultants worldwide, and to provide the international community with the confidence that these standards, combined with the certification process of its member institutes, will ensure that certified management consultants serve their clients with world-class competency and professionalism.
- To support the creation and development of national professional institutes throughout the world, as well as encourage information sharing, networking and reciprocity between institutes adhering to ICMCI international standards and its code of conduct.

To these ends ICMCI strives to earn recognition as the authoritative international organization for the development of world-class professional standards, and to create the CMC designation as the international benchmark for individual management consultants.

A Certified Management Consultant has met strict certification requirements of the Institute of Management Consultants in his or her country. The initials mean the consultant has met world class standards of competence, ethics and independence, and is eligible for reciprocity between ICMCI member institutes.

The CMC Certification Scheme is the means by which the ICMCI promulgates a consistent standard across all its member institutes for the certification of management consultants.

1.2 Scope and Purpose – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.2a

The objective of the Scheme is to achieve and promote globally the assurance that certified persons meet the requirements of the Certified Management Consultant (CMC) Standard through initial assessment and periodic re-assessments of competence.

The certification is based on the competence standard issued by the International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI). This scope may be extended to include other certification schemes during subsequent regular surveillance audits.

This scheme distinguishes why certification of consultants to management is justified and situations where other forms of qualification are more appropriate.

The CMC certification process conducts an impartial examination, which uses objective criteria and scoring to measure competence. CMC examiners have no conflict of interest.

This scheme facilitates CMC’s acceptance at national and international levels and establishes the environment for mutual recognition and the global exchange of personnel.

1.2.1 The target consultancy candidate population

For the purposes of this certification scheme a Management Consultant shall be defined as one who helps organisations to solve issues, create value, maximise growth and improve performance through the application of their knowledge, techniques and assets to provide objective advice, expertise and specialist skills which the organisation may be lacking. This definition shall include those consultants who work alone as a singleton, as a partner or employee of a practice or firm and those who work as internal consultants in an organisation or government body whose primary purpose is not management consultancy.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

1.2.2 CMC variants – Practicing, Emeritus, Profession Leader

The certification scheme shall apply to variants of the CMC award each of which shall be regulated by an appropriate assessment process:

Practicing CMC

Management Consultants who are currently practicing shall be assessed using the mainstream ICMCI CMC Certification Process Standard as described in 3 of this Manual.

Emeritus CMC

ICMCI member institutes shall be allowed to authorise CMCs of their institute who cease professional activity (whether by moving into another field of activity or by retirement) to continue to use the designation “**CMC emeritus**” after their names. The following conditions and qualifications shall apply:

1. Such a designation is not automatic – the institute should explicitly grant it on application, by its sole decision.
2. The retention of CMC emeritus is dependent on continued membership of the institute (and consequent payment of an appropriate fee).
3. The institute should maintain a register of CMCs emeritus.
4. It should be made clear to all involved (for example on the institute’s website) that CMC emeritus is distinct from CMC in that it does *not* indicate current qualification to practise.
5. CMCs emeritus would be required to advise the institute if they at any point returned to active professional practice, in which case they would once again be expected to meet the requirements of the normal CMC designation.
6. Subject to the above condition, and to continued membership of the institute, the granting of CMC emeritus would be permanent without any further requirements, except that CMCs emeritus would continue to be subject, as members of the institute, to the institute’s normal disciplinary procedures and sanctions.

Profession Leader CMC

ICMCI member institutes shall be allowed to award CMC to senior and experienced management consultants who are recognised leaders and outstanding practitioners within their professional communities. The following conditions and qualifications shall apply:

1. Candidates for the profession leaders’ entry route shall be expected to be by the invitation or suggestion of the institute, although candidates shall be allowed to come forward of their own accord.
2. Certification shall be based on a very intensive, high level peer review and assessment process by a “Profession Leaders Reference Group” – a committee of senior and experienced CMCs of an institute, established for this purpose. This Reference Group shall consist of a minimum of 5 members, representing between them the widest possible high level perspective of the institute’s consulting community and its clients.

The Reference Group’s role is to use its combined knowledge and judgement, backed by due diligence research as necessary, in order to identify appropriate candidates for entry to CMC by the profession leaders route (or to verify their suitability, if they come forward of their own accord).

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017



3. The Reference Group’s approach in assessing prospective candidates before invitation or acceptance as candidates shall be thorough and rigorous:
 - prospective candidates shall be considered by the Reference Group against the main headings of the Competency Framework, using their knowledge and judgement and any due diligence research
 - if any member of the Group has doubts about the suitability of a candidate, then either more research shall be carried out to resolve these, or the candidate shall not be approved for this entry route
 - no candidate shall be approved for this entry route except by unanimous agreement of the Reference Group.

Candidates who are not approved for this entry route may of course be referred to the mainstream certification route, and should be encouraged to apply via this.

4. An appropriate application form, a detailed CV, and contact details for two clients shall be required – but no assignment case studies, and no evidence of qualifications etc.
5. References shall be taken from the two nominated clients. This will not be in the detailed form relating to specific client assignments as in the mainstream process. However, all suitable candidates shall have extensive dealings with clients, at least in terms of managing client relationships, overseeing work undertaken for the client, and developing and submitting proposals. References shall be taken at this higher level and in these more general terms. Gaining a client perspective to complement the peer group assessment shall be considered of importance.
6. The second main stage of the process shall be an interview conducted by at least two senior and experienced CMCs of the institute, approved by the Reference Group (they may or may not be members of the Group).

This interview may be somewhat different from the interview conducted in the mainstream process, because of the nature of the candidates. It should be conducted in a relaxed, peer to peer discussion style, not requiring for example any presentation from the candidate. And the pre-screening by the Reference Group should have been so thorough, that it should essentially be confirmatory in nature and candidate failure at this point should be unlikely.

Nevertheless, the interview should be thorough and probing, at least an hour in length. During its course, the interview assessors should explicitly assess the candidate against the main headings of the Competency Framework, and it should follow a structure which facilitates this.

After the completion of the interview, the interview assessors shall produce a specific assessment report on the candidate, against the main headings of the Competency Framework, together with an overall summary and recommendation on the award of CMC. Although, as noted above, candidates are not normally expected to fail at this point, this shall not be ruled out.

7. The interview assessors’ report shall be submitted to the Reference Group, who shall review it and take the final decision on the award of CMC. A decision to award CMC shall normally require unanimous agreement by the Group.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

1.2.3 Conditions of ICMCI membership for Member institutes

Only Member institutes of Management Consultants shall be eligible to apply for ICMCI membership.

Only Full Member Institutes shall be allowed to award CMC.

Full Membership

To become full member the institute:

- shall be a legal entity and has been in existence for four years or more
- shall be the recognized national professional organization for independent management consultants
- shall be formally committed to maintaining the highest professional standards among its members
- shall have a formal certification/registration process meeting ICMCI's minimum standards
- shall have a Code of Professional Conduct meeting ICMCI's minimum standards
- shall have a governing council or committee prepared and empowered to affirm on behalf of its members support for the aims and objectives of ICMCI and agreement in principle to such international standards (definitions, codes, guidelines, etc.) as may be agreed upon from time to time by the ICMCI
- All correspondence and documentation concerning ICMCI shall be in English, the official language of the ICMCI.

Provisional Membership

Admission as a Provisional Member of ICMCI shall be open to the organized entity of any country which intends to be the recognized national professional institute for individual management consultants, and:

- is formally committed to maintaining the highest professional standards among its members
- subscribes to the minimum Code of Professional Conduct of ICMCI and has installed this Code pending development of its own Code
- intends to develop a formal certification/registration process
- has a governing Council or Committee prepared and empowered to affirm on behalf of its members support for the aims and objectives of ICMCI and to accept in principle such international standards (definitions, codes, guidelines, etc.) as may be agreed upon from time to time by the ICMCI

Update and Re-accreditation

Members of ICMCI shall:

- Update the content of their Membership Profile in the Website annually at the time of Membership renewal. Submit interim participant and contact changes as they occur.
- Undergo a mandatory re-assessment process every three years from the commencement of their initial membership.

Provisional Restrictions

Provisional Members shall be subject to the following restrictions:

- A Provisional Member is a non-voting member
- By its first anniversary as a Provisional Member, the organization shall have its own Code of Professional Conduct consistent with ICMCI standards
- By its second anniversary as a Provisional Member, the organization shall have a formal certification/registration process consistent with ICMCI standards

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

- A Provisional Member shall retain its provisional status for not more than two years at which time it shall qualify for regular membership or be dropped altogether from the ICMCI rolls; except that a Provisional Member which has not been in legal existence for four years at the end of two years may retain its status until it has been in existence for four years
- Acceptance of Provisional Member status is subject to the above conditions, and shall be validated by the Chairman of ICMCI and one member of the Membership Committee.

1.2.4 Member Institute CMC Standards Quality Assurance process

Introduction

ICMCI shall, through its quality assurance process assure the compliance of member Institutes' national CMC standards with the ICMCI Standard for Certified Management Consultant. The quality assurance process shall be supported by three other documents as follows:

- **Statement of Equivalence** with the ICMCI Standard, a standard form to be completed by an Institute in preparation for quality assurance assessment of its CMC standard against the ICMCI Standard.
- **Assessment of Equivalence** with the ICMCI Standard, the corresponding form used by ICMCI appointed quality assurance assessors
- **Guidelines for QA Assessors**, containing practical guidance for quality assurance assessors in undertaking the role.

This quality assurance process shall also be used for internal quality assurance through self-assessment by member Institutes, and for peer review between two or more Institutes.

The Quality Assurance Standard and Principles

- The benchmark shall be the CMC standard adopted by ICMCI as mandatory (subject to a transition period where necessary) for all member Institutes.
- This ICMCI Standard shall be the competencies related standard currently in place at the time of assessment.
- The quality assurance process shall address both:
 - the Institute's CMC standard, and
 - the Institute's assessment process for measuring candidates against that standard (including the arrangements for monitoring of continued compliance with the standard).
- The onus shall be on the Institute being QA assessed to demonstrate:
 - the equivalence of its CMC standard to the ICMCI Standard.
 - the adequacy of its assessment/monitoring process in assuring this standard.
- "Equivalence" is a key concept concerning compliance with the ICMCI Standard. ICMCI respects the historical, cultural and legal diversity of its members; consequently it fully accepts diversity (within certain defined limits) in national CMC standards in reflection of these valid differences.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

What ICMCI shall require is that an Institute demonstrates to the satisfaction of ICMCI that the Institute CMC standard requires at least the equivalent level of professionalism and ethics in candidates as the ICMCI Standard. This requires the Institute to demonstrate, against each of the ICMCI Standard requirements, how its standard assures the presence of a least the equivalent of that requirement (e.g. an equivalent competence at an equivalent level) in candidates.

- f. “Adequacy” of the process shall mean adequate fitness for purpose for assuring the Institute’s CMC standard; in other words is it reasonably complete, coherent, and relevant in respect of the Institute CMC standard. This means that the Institute needs to demonstrate to a reasonable degree that:
- the process for selection of assessors and the standards of qualification/experience required of them are suitably stringent
 - the assessment process measures candidates appropriately and effectively against its standard;
 - the assessment process assures fair and consistent outcomes (for example, monitoring of assessment and individual assessor performance, provision for an appeal process);
 - the required minimum level of ethical behaviour, both before and after award of CMC, is as far as is practicable assured;
 - the continued maintenance by candidates of their performance to the CMC standard is assured (for example, by continued professional development, or re-certification).

The Quality Assurance Process is detailed in Section 4 of this Manual.

1.2.5 The Principle of Equivalence

ICMCI’s policy is that the ICMCI CMC Standard is at a relatively high level, leaving a significant degree of freedom to member countries in the detailed specification of their national CMC standards. This is largely in recognition of the valid differences in background, history, and culture across the wide range of member countries. It also has the benefits of a longer term validity of the Standard in a changing world, and of allowing room for national innovation in good practice from which ICMCI benefits.

“Equivalence” is a key concept used for assessing compliance with the ICMCI CMC Standard. ICMCI respects the historical, cultural and legal diversity of its members; consequently it fully accepts diversity (within certain defined limits) in national CMC standards and procedures in reflection of these valid differences.

What ICMCI does however require is that an Institute shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of ICMCI that the Institute CMC standard requires at least the equivalent level of professionalism and ethics in candidates as the ICMCI Standard. This requires the Institute to demonstrate, against each of the ICMCI Standard requirements, how its standard assures the presence of at least the equivalent of that requirement (e.g. an equivalent competence at an equivalent level) in candidates.

The policy reflects the fact that the local consultant needs to be able to operate within the culture of his or her own country and should be assessed on that basis. Therefore, the relative mix or emphasis of the competences required, and the way in which these competencies are expressed, should be expected to vary from country to country in order to achieve the same desired service outcomes. The equivalence principle makes valid these

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

variations in the competence model and the certification process adopted to meet the local needs determined by the local culture – but still within a common universal framework. The equivalence principle emphasises the outcome, or actual effect, of a standard, rather than rigid and detailed compliance to a specific set of means to achieve it.

1.2.6 The Principle of Reciprocity

The CMC mark of excellence is used worldwide to identify a certified management consultant whose competency is recognized and certified by a member institute that is a member of ICMCI. To the extent that the CMC mark is protected within each country, no other individual or institute may use it. However, ICMCI shall provide for reciprocity of the CMC under the following conditions:

- where there is no legal restriction within the member institute's nation against reciprocity
- where the individual who is requesting reciprocity has earned his or her CMC from a nation that meets the ICMCI international model for certification
- where the individual who is requesting reciprocity has relocated to the new country or will be spending substantial or repetitive time on assignments in that country

An ICMCI member institute or association shall grant reciprocity to CMCs from ICMCI qualifying member institutes even if the granting or receiving member institute has more stringent requirements than the sending or qualifying member institute. Reciprocity shall not be offered where a member institute from which the CMC comes does not follow the international model or does not accept reciprocity in its own country.

Individuals who are CMCs shall be permitted to hold memberships simultaneously in more than one ICMCI member institute on the basis of completing the process above without having to meet additional membership requirements.

When an individual requests reciprocity in a second or subsequent ICMCI member institute, the sending institute from which reference is obtained shall always be the member institute in the country of full-time residence.

In the case where an individual's CMC is revoked for cause, the ICMCI member institute exercising such action shall notify any other ICMCI member institute it had previously sent a positive reference for the purpose of granting reciprocity. The granting member institute shall then determine what disciplinary action, if any, it will take in accordance with its own procedures.

National member institutes shall not grant the CMC mark to an individual resident in another country where there is an ICMCI member institute member, except through the reciprocity process. The purpose of this provision is to deter an individual from obtaining a CMC from a member institute with less stringent requirements than the ICMCI member institute in his or her own country of residence and then transferring membership to the member institute in his country of residence.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

1.3 The Consultant's Job and Task Description – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.2b

The day-to-day activities of management consultants are complex and varied. Projects can vary in length depending on the type of consultancy and the demands of the client. They can involve an individual or a large team and may be based in one location or across various sites including overseas. Typical tasks involve:

- carrying out research and data collection to understand the client organisation and the sector in which it operates
- conducting analysis
- interviewing client's employees, management team and other stakeholders
- running focus groups and facilitating workshops
- providing coaching or mentoring
- preparing business proposals/presentations
- identifying issues and forming hypotheses and solutions
- presenting findings and recommendations to clients
- implementing recommendations/solutions and ensuring the client receives the necessary assistance to carry it all out
- managing projects and programmes
- leading and managing those within the team, including analysts
- liaising with the client to keep them informed of progress and to make relevant decisions.

ISO 20700:2015 Guidelines for Management Consultancy Services - Annex C also provides a basic structure of consulting services.

1.4 Certification requirements – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.2c,d,e,f & 8.4c, 8.4d

A Certified Management Consultant has met strict certification requirements of the Institute of Management Consultants in his or her country. The initials mean the consultant has met world class standards of competence, ethics and independence, and is eligible for reciprocity between ICMCI member institutes.

The Standard requires a consultant to demonstrate:

- Fulfilment of the requirements of the institute's competence framework
- Relevant educational qualifications
- Experience in their field of consultancy
- Ability to act independently without supervision
- Satisfactory Client references
- Adherence to the institute's Code of Conduct

The CMC Standard is described in more detail in Section 2 of this Manual.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

1.5 Certification Process – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.3

The ICMCI Standard Certification Process is detailed in Section 3 of this Manual.

1.6 Representation of interested parties – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.4a,b

In any development or review of this Certification Scheme ICMCI shall involve interested parties including, but not exclusively, the ExCom, PSC and QAC committees, trustees and member institutes. Where appropriate, ICMCI will consult with the International Accreditation Forum.

1.7 Review, changes and revisions – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clauses 8.4e and 8.5

ICMCI shall carry out a regular, scheduled review, update and publication of the CMC Certification Standard Manual, Competence Framework, Body of Knowledge, Additional Pre-requisites and certification methods. The review shall take place at least once every three years and shall take account of input from the interested parties listed in 1.6 above. The results of the review and resultant changes to the Scheme shall be communicated to member institutes together with details of the allowed transition period.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

2 The CMC Standard - ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.2

2.1 Competence Framework - ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.2c

The CMC Competence Framework specifies the cluster of **related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills** that a management consultant should demonstrate in practice in order to successfully complete an assignment, independently and unsupervised; all of which are underpinned by a code of conduct and professional ethics – **professional behaviours**. It sets out a standard for those within the profession that is equally relevant for sole practitioners, niche players, and internal consultancies as well as for the major practices and firms. It can be used as a **benchmark for clients** in developing their expectations of consultants as well as by academic bodies and **training providers** to align offerings to the market.

The CMC Competence Framework and the accompanying Range Statements are given as *Appendix 1 Specimen CMC Competence Framework (CMC002)* and *Appendix 2 CMC Competence Framework Range Statements (CMC002a)* to this Manual.

2.2 Common Body of Knowledge - ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.2b

The ICMCI Summary Common Body of Knowledge is a broad statement of topics that covers the scope of a management consultant's work. Each member institute of ICMCI should have its own Body of Knowledge developed to incorporate relevant ICMCI materials presented herein plus local requirements.

The Summary Body of Knowledge applies to all management consultants. In addition, consultants are expected to have functional knowledge in the form of their subject matter expertise. This specialist knowledge is outside the scope of this Summary Body of Knowledge, which relates to the process of delivering that expertise to the benefit of the client.

ICMCI member institutes may use this Summary Body of Knowledge to:

- help in defining the body of knowledge in their own country
- assess the scope of their own body of knowledge
- determine the topics that should be included in training for management consultants

The Summary Body of Knowledge is given as *Appendix 4 Summary Common Body of Knowledge (CMC004)* to this Manual.

Attention is particularly directed to references within the Body of Knowledge to ISO20700:2017 Guidelines for Management Consultancy Services.

2.3 Code of Professional Conduct - ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.2f

The member institute shall have a Code of Professional Conduct and shall have in place arrangements to ensure that their Code is publicised and accessible to consultants and to other stakeholders in management consulting. It should, for example, be easily accessible on the institute's web site.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

Institute members practising as management consultants should affirm their understanding, and agreement and conformance with the Code on a regular basis. They should also be encouraged to refer to the Code in contracting with clients.

The institute should seek to promote the Code through the training given to consultants and managers.

The institute should have arrangements for helping members resolve ethical dilemmas arising from the application of the Code.

There should be arrangements for reviewing the scope and wording of the Code from time to time.

The Code of Professional Conduct is given as *Appendix 3 Factors to Consider in a Code of Professional Conduct (CMC003)* to this Manual.

2.4 Additional Pre-requisites - ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 8.2d & 8.2e

Additional pre-requisites include:

- Education
- Membership Requirements
- Specialist Functional Knowledge
- Specialist Sectoral Knowledge
- Continuing Personal Development

The detailed statements of Pre-requisites are given as *Appendix 5 Additional Pre-requisites (CMC005)* to this Manual.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

3 ICMCI CMC Certification Process Standard – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9

Policy	General Approach	<p>This is the ICMCI Standard for the certification process for the assessment of candidates for the award of CMC. Its aim is to codify the Standard completely, in terms of the recognised, main-stream good practice for CMC certification and it follows the ICMCI's policy that the CMC standard is at a relatively high level, leaving significant degree of freedom to member countries in the detailed specification of their national CMC standards.</p>
	General Requirements	<p>Each member institute's CMC standard and certification process, together with the application of the standard and the operation of the certification process, shall be controlled and overseen by a professional committee (or equivalent) comprised predominantly of CMCs, which should report directly to the institute's governing council.</p> <p><i>Guidance Note: The members of the professional committee controlling a member institute's CMC standard and certification process should be elected (directly or indirectly) by the professional members of the institute.</i></p> <p>Member institutes shall not outsource decisions for granting, maintaining, recertifying, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification.</p> <p>The member institute shall confine its decision on certification to those matters specifically related to the requirements of their certification scheme.</p> <p>The decision on certification of a candidate shall be made solely by the member institute on the basis of the information gathered during the certification process.</p> <p>Personnel who make the decision on certification shall not have participated in the examination or training of the candidate.</p> <p><i>Guidance Note: The decision will normally be taken by the professional committee with oversight for the certification process.</i></p> <p>The personnel who make certification decisions shall have sufficient knowledge of and experience with the certification process to determine if the certification requirements have been met.</p> <p>Certification shall not be granted until all certification requirements are fulfilled.</p>

3.1 Application – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9.1

3.1.1	Certification overview	<p>As part of the application process, an overview of the CMC certification processes will be made available to all applicants.</p> <p><i>The overview will include as a minimum – certification scope and requirements, a description of the assessment process, the applicant's rights, the fees, the certified person's duties and a notice to the applicant of his/her opportunity to declare a request for accommodation of special needs.</i></p>
3.1.2	The application	<p>CMC applicants will complete and sign an application, which will comprise, as a minimum, the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Information required to identify the applicant. b The scope of the desired certification.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

- c A statement from the applicant confirming that they agree to comply with the certification requirements and to supply any information needed for assessment.
 - d Supporting information to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Standard as in 3.3.2 below.
- 3.1.3 Review of application The application will be reviewed by a qualified institute person for completeness before acceptance into the certification process. A qualified institute person will verify the applicant’s academic and professional qualifications against documentary evidence supplied in accordance with the particular requirements of the institute - these could include degrees, diplomas, certificates and accreditations.

3.2 Assessment – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9.2

3.2.1 In order to maintain the CMC Standard at a relatively high level but leave significant degree of freedom to member countries in the detailed specification of their national CMC standards, it is important for the CMC Certification Process Standard to hold a balance between mandatory requirements on one hand, and guidelines of good practice on the other – with requirements made mandatory only where this is seen as essential. Consequently, the structure of the Process Standard comprises two main elements:

Mandatory Requirements These are elements or characteristics which a member country’s CMC certification process must contain, if it is to be compliant with the ICMCI Standard.

In the triennial country assessment process, assessors will expect the country to demonstrate that its certification process meets all these mandatory requirements as a minimum, if it is to be compliant with the ICMCI Standard.

Formal Guidelines These are not mandatory for compliance, but embody ICMCI recommended good practice in the certification process, for the information and guidance of member countries. Each is grouped together with the particular mandatory requirement with which it is associated. Although these guidelines are not mandatory, country assessors will take them into account when undertaking triennial assessments. Some of the guidelines may, with the evolution of the Standard over time, be expected eventually to become mandatory requirements also.

3.2.2 In addition, *Appendix 6 Matrix of Preferred and Acceptable Assessment Techniques (CMC006)* contains a definition of the techniques for assessment of CMC candidates which are recognised by ICMCI, together with a matrix showing the “preferred” and “acceptable” techniques for assessing each competence sub-set in ICMCI’s Competency Framework.

3.3 Examination – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9.3

3.3.1 **Mandatory** The certification process should have at least two separate stages: a review of documentary evidence, and a structured face to face element with the candidate. Together, these two stages should explicitly test each competence sub-set. Other elements, such as written examination, or a detailed case study, may also be included at the discretion of the country institute.

Associated Guidelines a The results of the documentary assessment should be available to the assessors undertaking the face to face assessment, together with any indications of particular areas to be explored further face to face, so that they can take a balanced and total judgement.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017



- b The face to face element of the certification process should comprise both a presentation from the candidate, preferably on a particular assignment or if not on a professional area, and a structured interview with the assessors. The assessors' specific findings and the overall outcome should be formally recorded.

- 3.3.2 Mandatory The documentary evidence required from candidates should include at least an application form, a detailed CV, certificates for degrees and other academic and professional qualification as appropriate, at least 3 fairly detailed written assignment descriptions to a defined format (which should include learning points), and client contact information for each assignment description.
- 3.3.3 Mandatory References should be obtained by the institute from at least two of the clients involved in the case studies submitted by the candidate, either orally by telephone, by confidential written questionnaire or other suitable technique. A qualified institute assessor will evaluate the Client references and other testimonials.
- 3.3.4 Mandatory The certification process should be defined by explicit written guidelines, supported as appropriate by checklists, and by standard forms to record results.
- 3.3.5 Mandatory The review of documentary evidence should be carried out by at least one qualified examiner, and the face to face element by at least two qualified examiners. To be deemed qualified, examiners should be either CMCs of the institute, or qualified external assessment professionals, and in either case should have been trained in the national CMC standard and certification
- 3.3.6 Mandatory A competency framework which is at least the equivalent of the ICMCI CMC Specimen Competency Framework as agreed by Congress, should be a central element of any member country's CMC standard, and CMC candidates should be explicitly and primarily assessed against this.
- Associated Guideline The Definition of Competences as given in the ICMCI Competency Framework should be used as formal guidance by member countries in establishing their own competency framework
- 3.3.7 Mandatory In assessing CMC candidates, each competency sub-set in the ICMCI Competency Framework (or its equivalent in the member country's competency framework) should be assessed at least twice, using different techniques. These techniques should be either "acceptable" or "preferred" techniques for the relevant competency subset from the ICMCI Matrix of Preferred and Acceptable Assessment Techniques attached in Annex E of this document, with at least one of these being a "preferred" technique.
- 3.3.8 Mandatory Each CMC candidate should formally undertake to abide by the member institute's Code of Professional Conduct, which should be consistent with the ICMCI Code of Professional Conduct.

3.4 Decision – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9.4

- 3.4.1 Mandatory The examiners will ensure that the information gathered during the certification process is sufficient:
 - a) for the member institute to make a decision on certification;
 - b) for traceability in the event, for example, of an appeal or a complaint.
- Mandatory The result of the Examination will be communicated to the applicant and will be kept by the institute as a record. The result will be either:

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

- a The Examination was successful and the candidate will be awarded CMC status.
- b The Examination was largely successful but the candidate will only be awarded CMC status on the condition that specific additional information or clarification is provided. Certification will not be granted until all certification requirements are fulfilled.
- c The Examination was unsuccessful. The Assessors will provide feedback to the candidate on the aspects of the Examination that did not fulfil requirements.

3.5 Sanctions, suspension, reduction and withdrawal – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 9.5

- 3.5.1 Mandatory The member institute shall have a policy and documented procedure for suspension or withdrawal of the certification in the case of a certified consultant failing to comply with competence requirements or failing to abide by the Code of Professional Conduct of the institute. The policy and procedure for raising a complaint or grievance should be made publicly available without request and there should be a facility in place for dealing with direct enquiries to the institute on these matters. *Guidance Note: This could be stated on the institute web site.*

The procedure will include clauses to cover:

- a How a complaint or grievance is to be handled and the organisational and financial arrangements for so doing.
- b How complaints or grievances that fall outside the scope of the Competence Framework of Code of Professional Conduct (e.g. a commercial disagreement) are to be identified and handled.
- c The basis on which evidence is to be taken and a decision made, which is transparent and fair to all those involved.
- d What arrangements, if any, there are to appeal against a decision.
- e A clear statement of the range of sanctions and, where appropriate, remedies.
- f Arrangements for what publicity should be attached to a complaint, whether found to be substantiated or not.
- g Arrangements for withdrawal of the certification or reduction of the scope of certification in case of failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in a suspension, in a time established by the institute
- h Enforceable arrangements with the CMC certified consultant to ensure that, in the event of suspension of certification, he or she refrains from further promotion of their certification while they are suspended.
- i Enforceable arrangements with the CMC certified consultant to ensure that, in the event of withdrawal of certification, he or she refrains from use of all references to a certified status.

3.6 Re-certification – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9.6

- 3.6.1 Mandatory The member institute shall have a documented procedure for implementation of a recertification process that ensures it confirms continued competence of the CMC certified consultant and his/her ongoing compliance with current scheme requirements including adherence to the Code of Professional Conduct.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017



- 3.6.2 Mandatory The member institute’s selected recertification activities shall be adequate to ensure that there is impartial assessment to confirm the continuing competence of the CMC certified consultant.
- Mandatory The member institute’s selected certification activities shall conform to the Standard Requirements and the Process Requirements of the ICMCI Policy for Re-certification of CMCs by Member Institutes – Appendix 9 to this Manual.
- Formal Guidance The member institute will base the recertification period on a rationale that takes into account, where relevant, local regulatory requirements, frequency of changes to normative documents, the risks resulting from an incompetent person, requirements of interested parties and the frequency and content of ICMCI surveillance activities.
The recertification period shall not be longer than 3 years.
The recertification process will include at least the following:
 - a confirmation of continuing satisfactory work and work experience records
 - b continuing professional development;
 - c Written confirmation or signed oath
 - d client references
 Optional additions may also be included as listed in the Re-certification Policy – the following should be particularly considered:
 - d structured interviews;
 - e on-site assessment;
 - f examination;

3.7 Appeals – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9.8

- 3.7.1 Mandatory The member institute shall have a documented process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on appeals against the results of the certification process.

Policies and procedures shall ensure that all appeals are dealt with in a constructive, impartial and timely manner.

A description of the appeals-handling process shall be publicly accessible without request.

The member institute shall acknowledge receipt of the appeal and shall provide the appellant with progress reports and the outcome and shall give formal notice to the appellant of the end of the appeals-handling process.
- 3.7.2 Mandatory The appeals-handling process shall include at least the following elements and methods:
 - a the process for receiving, validating and investigating the appeal, and for deciding what actions are to be taken in response to it, taking into account the results of previous similar appeals;
 - b tracking and recording appeals, including actions undertaken to resolve them;
 - c ensuring that, if applicable, appropriate corrections and corrective actions are taken.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

- 3.7.3 Mandatory The member institute shall be responsible for all decisions at all levels of the appeals-handling process and shall ensure that the decision-making personnel engaged in the appeals handling process are different from those who were involved in the decision being appealed.
- 3.7.4 Mandatory Submission, investigation and decision on appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

3.8 Complaints - ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9.9

- 3.8.1 Mandatory The member institute shall have a documented process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on complaints. A description of the complaints-handling process shall be accessible without request. The procedures shall treat all parties fairly and equitably. The policies and procedures shall ensure that all complaints are handled and processed in a constructive, impartial and timely manner. The complaints-handling process shall be subject to requirements for confidentiality, as it relates to the complainant and to the subject of the complaint.
- 3.8.2 Mandatory The complaints-handling process shall include at least the following elements and methods:
 - a an outline of the process for receiving, validating, investigating the complaint and deciding what actions are to be taken in response to it;
 - b tracking and recording complaints, including actions undertaken in response to them;
 - c ensuring that, if applicable, appropriate corrections and corrective actions are taken.
- 3.8.3 Mandatory Upon receipt of a complaint, the member institute shall confirm whether the complaint relates to CMC certification activities and, if so, shall respond accordingly.

Whenever possible, the member institute shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and shall provide the complainant with progress reports and the outcome.

Whenever possible, the member institute shall give formal notice of the end of the complaints handling process to the complainant.

The decision to be communicated to the complainant shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, personnel not previously involved in the subject of the complaint.
- 3.8.4 Mandatory The member institute receiving the complaint shall be responsible, through an appointed group of suitably qualified people, for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the complaint.
- 3.8.5 Mandatory Any substantiated complaint about a CMC certified consultant shall also be referred by the member institute to the CMC certified consultant in question at an appropriate time.

3.9 Control of Certification Marks and Logos – ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 9.7

- 3.9.1 Mandatory The member institute shall provide a certificate to all CMC certified consultants and shall maintain sole ownership of the certificates. The certificate shall take a form authorised by ICMCI.
- Formal Guidance The certificates should contain, as a minimum, the following information:
 - a the name of the CMC certified Consultant;

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017



- b a unique identification;
- c the name of the member institute;
- d a reference to the CMC standard including issue date
- e the scope of the certification including, if applicable, validity conditions and limitations;
- f the effective date of certification and date of expiry.

The certificate should be designed to reduce the risks of counterfeiting.

3.9.2 Mandatory The member institute shall require that a CMC certified consultant signs an agreement for the following reasons:

- a to comply with the relevant provisions of the certification scheme;
- b to make claims regarding certification only with respect to the scope for which certification has been granted;
- c not to use the certification in such a manner as to bring the member institute into disrepute, and not to make any statement regarding the certification which the member institute considers misleading or unauthorized;
- d to discontinue the use of all claims to certification that contain any reference to the member institute or certification upon suspension or withdrawal of certification, and to return any certificates issued by the member institute;
- e e) not to use the certificate in a misleading manner.

Formal Guidance Where permitted by law, other methods, including electronic signature, are acceptable.

3.9.3 Mandatory The member institute shall have arrangements to address, by means of corrective measures, any misuse of its certification mark or logo.

3.10 CMC Examination Resources - ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 6

- 3.10.1 Mandatory The member institute shall manage and be responsible for the performance of all personnel involved in the certification process, whether within, or external to, the institute and shall ensure that the personnel who make certification decisions have sufficient knowledge of, and experience with, the certification process to determine if the certification requirements have been met.
- 3.10.2 The member institute shall define the competence requirements for personnel involved in the certification process and shall provide its personnel with documented instructions describing their duties and responsibilities.
- 3.10.3 Mandatory The member institute shall maintain up-to-date personnel records, including relevant information, e.g. qualifications, training, experience, professional affiliations, professional status, competence and known conflicts of interest.
- 3.10.4 Mandatory Personnel acting on the member institute's behalf shall keep confidential all information obtained or created during the performance of the institute's certification activities, except as required by law or where authorized by the applicant, candidate or certified person.
- 3.10.5 Mandatory The member institute shall require its personnel to sign a document by which they commit themselves to comply with the rules defined by the institute, including those relating to confidentiality, impartiality and conflict of interests.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

- Formal Guidance Where permitted by law, other methods, including electronic signature, are acceptable.
- 3.10.6 Mandatory When a member institute certifies a person it employs, it shall adopt procedures to maintain impartiality.
- 3.10.7 Mandatory The member institute shall require personnel involved in the certification activities to declare any potential conflict of interest in any candidate.
- 3.10.8 Mandatory Examiners shall meet the requirements of the member institute. The selection and approval processes shall ensure that examiners:
- a understand the relevant certification scheme;
 - b are able to apply the examination procedures and documents;
 - c have competence in the field to be examined;
 - d are fluent, both in writing and orally, in the language of examination; in circumstances where an interpreter or a translator is used, the member institute shall have procedures in place to ensure that it does not affect the validity of the examination;
 - e have identified any known conflicts of interest to ensure impartial judgements are made.
- 3.10.9 Mandatory The member institute shall monitor the performance of the examiners and the reliability of the examiners' judgements. Where deficiencies are found, corrective actions shall be taken.
- Formal Guidance Monitoring procedures for examiners can include, for example, on-site observation, review of examiners' reports, feedback from candidates.
- 3.10.10 Mandatory If an examiner has a potential conflict of interest in the examination of a candidate, the member institute shall undertake measures to ensure that the confidentiality and impartiality of the examination are not compromised. These measures shall be recorded.
- 3.10.11 Mandatory The member institute shall have a documented description of the responsibilities and qualifications of other personnel involved in the assessment process.
- If other personnel involved in the assessment have a potential conflict of interest in the examination of a candidate, the member institute shall undertake measures to ensure that confidentiality and impartiality of the examination is not compromised. These measures shall be recorded.
- 3.10.12 Mandatory If the member institute engages the outsourced services in its certification process it shall have a legally enforceable agreement covering the arrangements, including confidentiality and conflict of interests, with each body that provides outsourced work related to the certification process.
- NOTE: For the purposes of the CMC Standard, the terms "outsourcing" and "subcontracting" are considered to be synonymous.*
- 3.10.13 Mandatory When a member institute outsources work related to certification, it shall:
- a take full responsibility for all outsourced work;
 - b ensure that the body conducting outsourced work is competent and complies with the applicable provisions of the ICMCI CMC Certification Scheme;
 - c assess and monitor the performance of the bodies conducting outsourced work in accordance with its documented procedures;
 - d have records to demonstrate that the bodies conducting outsourced work meet all requirements relevant to the outsourced work;

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017



3.10.14 Mandatory

e maintain a list of the bodies conducting outsourced work.

The member institute shall use, and shall ensure that any outsourced provider uses, adequate premises, including examination sites, equipment and resources for carrying out its certification activities.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

4 Accreditation of Member Institutes by ICMCI

For ICMCI – ISO/IEC 17011:2004 Clause 7

As part of its mission to promote and maintain professional standards internationally in management consultancy, the ICMCI shall undertake a triennial assessment or audit of the CMC standard of member institutes against the ICMCI CMC Certification Scheme standard. Successful completion of this process shall also be a requirement before provisional members can become full members of the ICMCI.

Note: The ICMCI respects the legitimacy of varying approaches to the professional standard for management consultancy across its member institutes, depending on valid cultural and historical differences. However, a common core professional standard is essential in order to reflect the best international practice, to assure common understanding across all members of the ICMCI, to assure consistency in the award of the CMC, and to provide a firm basis for reciprocal recognition of the international CMC qualification across all members.

The ICMCI CMC Certification Scheme represents this core, international professional standard. The assessment of member institutes' CMC standards is made against this ICMCI CMC Certification Scheme. The purpose of the assessment is to assure compliance with that standard, for all the reasons stated above; and it is equally also to actively share the best international practice, and to help institutes to develop and improve their professional standards and processes.

4.1 Assessment Process

For ICMCI – ISO/IEC 17011:2004 Clause 7

Assessment Programme

The ICMCI shall conduct assessments of prospective and member institutes to help them prepare for and maintain their international status as a member of the ICMCI. The purpose is to guide institutes in their role as certifiers of management consultants.

NOTE: These assessments are intended to be constructive, and an institute that has passed an ICMCI assessment or has made changes to comply with assessment recommendations may rightfully hold itself out to the public as meeting an international standard of professionalism; and their members can be equally proud of their certification as CMCs.

Types of assessments

There shall be three types of assessments, reviews or quality assurance sessions:

1. Pre-admission check
2. Original Certification check
3. Renewed Certification check (triennial)

The process for all assessments:

1. The prospective or member institute requests an assessment through the ICMCI Secretariat.
2. The Chairman of the QAC (Quality Assurance Committee) designates an ICMCI assessing team of approved assessors. Assessors are approved according to the Requirements to become an assessor. Normally two assessors are assigned, but only one is required to travel to the institute being assessed. The role of the second assessor is to review the assessment papers of the first.
3. The ICMCI Secretariat notifies the institute of the assessment team members and contact information, sends them a pre-assessment kit, and explains the current financial arrangements:
 - Service fees are paid to the ICMCI in advance

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Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017

- The institute is responsible for the travel costs of at least one assessor. If the institute and the assessors agree to have both assessors travel, the distribution of travel costs should be agreed upon in advance. The institute will reimburse travel cost directly to assessors.
 - The institute is responsible for the lodging and meals of the assessors
 - There is no fee for the time of the assessors
 - The institute may negotiate a fee arrangement for any assessor asked to provide training. Such fee will be paid directly to the assessor.
4. The assessing team arranges with the institute for the time and location of the assessment. Key individuals of the institute must be available to meet with the assessor(s) during this time.
 5. The visiting assessor conducts the assessment using the approved standard ICMCI assessment process. The content and process is described in the Section 3.
 6. The Member Institute reimburses the visiting assessor(s) directly for his or her travel costs.
 7. The visiting assessor confers with the reviewing assessor.
 8. The assessment team reports its findings to the institute officers, orally at the end of the visit, in writing within few weeks after the visit. The written report is copied to all members of QAC for their information and possibly questioning.
 9. The institute officers have 30 days to file a response.
 10. If the response is considered satisfactory the assessment team files its report together with the institute's response with the Secretariat; steps 11 and 12 are executed; if not, see steps 13 to 15.
 11. The chairman of QAC notifies the Executive Committee of the result of the assessment and whether a previously provisional member qualifies as a full member.
 12. The Secretariat officially congratulates the institute, with copies to the Executive Committee and assessment team, for completing and passing the assessment. If full membership is obtained a certificate stating this is sent to the institute.
 13. Where the institute's response is not satisfactory the assessment team files a confidential report with the Secretariat identifying the disqualifying conditions and sends its original report plus the institute's response to the Secretariat.
 14. The Executive Committee determines whether to defer action pending corrections by the institute, to place the institute on probation, or to cancel its membership in ICMCI.
 15. The Secretariat informs the Institute of the result of the assessment and the action of the Executive Committee.

4.2 Rules governing the detailed post assessment procedure For ICMCI – ISO/IEC 17011:2004 Clause 7

The Statements of Equivalence should be regarded as official statements from the institutes to ICMCI.

After an assessment the assessment report and statement should only go to the institute, the assessors and QAC. The detailed assessment remains confidential between the assessors (and by implication the QAC) and the institute concerned.

If QAC wants to distribute a Statement of Equivalence to ExCom, to ICMCI Working Groups or internal ICMCI Knowledge Sharing, the QAC may ask the institute for permission but expect them to grant it.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017



ExCom will of course be informed about the result: Approval, conditioned approval or rejection but not about the details. (A few relevant praising remarks may be added).

If the actual assessors and QAC agree to approve the assessment then that is the final decision and requires no more information to ExCom.

If and when an institute with lack of total compliance is given a period to plan and change their procedures in order to be able to comply entirely the assessment should not be informed in detail to people outside the assessors, QAC and the institute itself. But ExCom should receive some information - marked confidential - about rectifications required and the time frame agreed.

In the rare case where an institute does not comply the ExCom should be informed about the reasons for non-compliance.

ExCom acts as appeal authority. In case of not fully compliant the institute may want to appeal to ExCom and has then to attach a copy of the full documentation received from the assessors. Thus the institute itself will inform ExCom by about the complete content of the statement of Assessment and the assessment report.

At some later stage QAC will be prepared to inform member institutes in anonymous form about findings across the assessments.

And any brilliant and best practice items may be informed and shared right away giving full credit to their institute of origin.

4.3 Obligation of Member Institutes
ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Clause 4.4

The ICMCI shall require the member institute to conform to the following.

- a) The member institute shall commit to fulfil continually the requirements for accreditation set by the accreditation body for the areas where accreditation is sought or granted. This includes agreement to adapt to changes in the requirements for accreditation.
- b) When requested, the member institute shall afford such accommodation and cooperation as is necessary to enable the accreditation body to verify fulfilment of requirements for accreditation. This applies to all premises where the conformity assessment services take place.
- c) The member institute shall provide access to information, documents and records as necessary for the assessment and maintenance of the accreditation.
- d) The member institute shall provide access to those documents that provide insight into the level of independence and impartiality of the member institute from its related bodies, where applicable.
- e) The member institute shall arrange the witnessing of member institute services when requested by the accreditation body.
- f) The member institute shall claim accreditation only with respect to the scope for which it has been granted accreditation.
- g) The member institute shall not use its accreditation in such a manner as to bring the accreditation body into disrepute.
- h) The member institute shall pay fees as shall be determined by the accreditation body.

The ICMCI shall require that it is informed by the accredited member institute, without delay, of significant changes relevant to its accreditation, in any aspect of its status or operation relating to:

- a) its legal, commercial, ownership or organizational status,
- b) the organization, top management and key personnel,
- c) main policies,

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017



- d) resources and premises,
- e) scope of accreditation, and
- f) other such matters that may affect the ability of the CAB to fulfil requirements for accreditation.

4.4 Obligations of ICMCI
ISO/IEC 17011:2004 Clause 8.2

The ICMCI shall make publicly available information about the current status of the accreditations that it has granted to member institutes. This information shall be updated regularly. The information shall include the following:

- a) name and address of each accredited member institute;
- b) dates of granting accreditation and expiry dates, as applicable;
- c) scopes of accreditation, condensed and/or in full. If only condensed scopes are provided, information shall be given on how to obtain full scopes.

The ICMCI shall provide the member institute with information about suitable ways to obtain traceability of measurement results in relation to the scope for which accreditation is provided.

The ICMCI shall, where applicable, provide information about international arrangements in which it is involved.

The ICMCI shall give due notice of any changes to its requirements for accreditation. It shall take account of views expressed by interested parties before deciding on the precise form and effective date of the changes. Following a decision on, and publication of, the changed requirements, it shall verify that each accredited body carries out any necessary adjustments.

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017



Record of Changes

Version/Date	Change	By
1.0 / circa 2005-2009	Various documents comprised the CMC standard: notably Professional Standard 3, the Matrix of Preferred and Acceptable Assessment Techniques and QAC membership assessment process published on www.icmci.org .	PSC, QAC
1.1 / January 24 2014	Reissue, consolidating previous documentation using ISO certification scheme document formatting.	PSC, Approved by ICMCI Trustee
1.1a / December 16 2014	Edits: typos, paragraph numbering sequence and title, reference formats. Content unchanged.	QAC
1.2 August 1 2017	Added Recertification Policy as Appendix 9 and references to the Policy in clause 3.6 Added reference to ISO 20700 in Clause 1.3 and 2.2	PSC

Document Title	CMC Certification Scheme Manual	Version #	1.2
Document Authority	PSC	Status	Board Approved
System Reference	ICMCI-CMC-001	Date	August 2017