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Assessment Visit Plan

KEY: * = mandatory field

|	
Assessment body reference number	Assessment body to insert your own reference number
ACS reference number*	Assessment body to locate ACS reference number from the 'Register of Approved Contractors' on our website.

Assessment type *	Enter the assessment type e.g. Initial assessment/ Year 2 re-verification/ Year 3 re-verification/ Renewal initial assessment/ Renewal Y2 re-verification/ Renewal Y3 re-verification /Extension to scope or one of the above followed by – re-visit
Assessment method *	Enter the assessment methodology i.e. on-site or combination of remote and on-site or on-site and remote methods used simultaneously.
Has a risk assessment for a remote assessment been carried out*	Enter n/a if on-site assessment only. Otherwise include here a summary the outcome of the risk assessment. The risk assessment process must consider whether you can achieve the fundamental principles of ACS assessments (see Assessor Guide P4). Example of Risk outcomes: Low – availability of information and communication technologies that support remote collaboration and have been satisfactorily tested with the approved contractor. Medium - availability of limited information and communication technologies to support assessment activities but not fully tested with the approved contractor. High – remote assessments not feasible or communication technologies not tested with the approved contractor. Note. Remote assessments should not proceed where an assessment is rated as high risk.

Assessment body name and address*	Must include your assessment body name and address
Assessor(s) name *	Must include your name and the names that make up your assessment team.
Has the named assessor(s) visited the applicant organisation for 4 consecutive years or more? Y/N (if Yes please supply justification)	If there is any scenario where an assessor will be visiting the applicant organisation to carry out either an initial, renewal or re-verification assessment visit for the third consecutive time please record the details and justification here
Assessor(s) contact details *	Must include mobile and/or email address of the lead assessor

Applicant organisation name*	Registered company name and trading name (if different). Check register of approved contractors and/or assessor information sheet.	**Date(s) of visit ***	Date(s) of visit and total number of assessor days: include breakdown of remote and on-site plus planning/reporting days. Any variance should be explained.
Reason/Justification for any deviation from assessment planning guidelines	Is the number of days less than outlined in the assessment planning guidelines? If so, is the number of days justified? i.e. extension to scope assessment etc.		

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Applicant organisation address & contact details *	Key contact name, position and contact details*
Include full business address and any other main trading address where you may conduct the assessment (site visit addresses not included here) Provide telephone numbers where necessary	Full name and position within the company Email address and/or telephone number Full name of consultant that will be present during the meeting (if any).

Operational area of applicant organisation*	List the geographical areas where the company operate across the UK e.g. London, Scotland, Northern Ireland

Scope of assessment *	List the correct licensable sectors throughout the visit plan (not static guarding, mobile patrol, or event security, but for example Security Guarding or Door Supervision. Check the register of approved contractors and/or assessor information sheet.					
Register of approved contractors checked and these apply?	**Additional conditions of approval (Yes/No)*** If yes, contact us and request disclosure of further information	See ⇐	**Licensing service (Yes/No) *** If yes, 'ABGN032 Licence Management Assessment' applies and must be incorporated into your assessment.	See ⇐	**LDN status authorised (Yes/No) *** If yes and where used, assessment must test application against LDN rules and protocols. If no, ensure applicant organisations is not deploying the use of LDN.	See ⇐
Number of licensable staff *	Total number of licensable staff segmented into regulated sectors in which an individual works. Note. This may be different from the type of licence held. E.g. they may be working in the SG sector but hold a DS licence.		**Effective number of personnel and deployment profile*** The effective number of personnel is used as a basis for the calculation of assessment duration. Dependent upon the hours worked, part time personnel numbers may be reduced and converted to an equivalent number of full time personnel. Appropriate reduction should be made to the temporary personnel who may be employed in considerable numbers from time to time due to seasonal work, such as festivals and concerts. Appropriate reduction of number of personnel also should be made where a significant proportion of staff carry out a similar simple function for instance: "Retail Guarding, Response Officers, etc."		See comments in left column. ⇐	
Number of licensable staff to be interviewed * As a minimum the number of people included should be the square root of the total number of: licensable people or effective number of personnel whichever is the greatest and encompass the different licensable sectors being assessed. For organisations with ≤ 5 licensable people, then	See comments in left column. ⇐ Identify number interviewed remotely and/or on-site		**Average monthly deployment of licensable staff***		This measure can be used as a means to gauge the usual service level activity, provided by the applicant organisation.	

all should be interviewed. For organisation with ≥ 900 licensable people, then a minimum of 30 should be interviewed.			
		Estimate number of deployed licensable staff at time of assessment* The assessment must be a true reflection of the applicant organisation's annualised activities. The assessment should not proceed where activities are below the average monthly deployment of licensable people; unless the assessment can be split in to several visits.	See comments in left column. ⟵
Indicators to cover *	As applicable, all 78 indicators or mandatory indicators. Mention if the required achievement level of ACS indicators has risen since last assessment and require verification. Review of previously raised improvement options and improvement needs will required verification too. Plus any ACS indicators that have changed following an annual review.		

Number of customer sites *	Total number of customer sites by licensable sector.	**Number of customers to be interviewed ***	At least one customer from each licensable sector being assessed and, where applicable, from more than one region. Where the type of customer varies significantly, a representative sample should be taken. Identify number interviewed remotely and/or on-site
Sites to be visited	Include the names of sites to be visited during the assessment and by which method i.e. remote or on-site. If this is undecided at the planning stage (on-site assessment only), explain it is to be determined on Day 1 of the assessment but that the assessor will select the sites. Aim to list how many will be visited and which sectors will be covered as a minimum for this field. Do not select same sites as previous assessment if possible and ensure there are a variety of sectors, roles and locations being covered. Attempt to cover 10% (one is the minimum) of any other operational company locations. Selection of branches should be representative, and ideally different branches should be covered at each verification/re-verification.		
Key Individuals to meet * The assessor is required, but not limited to: 1. Undertake a face to face interview with at least one customer from each sector within the scope of approval. 2. Interview the square root of the number of licensable people deployed by applicant organisation. Except for: i. Organisations with ≤ 5 licensable	List the types of stakeholders (e.g. customer, consumers, police, sub-contractors etc.); aim not to select same as previous assessment. If the nature of the business means this is not relevant, explain in this field. E.g. Head office plus any regional offices, control room, customer sites, organisations people: number, type, different shift patterns, licence dispensation notice, new licensed, unlicensed, customers, stakeholders,		

people, then all licensable people should be interviewed. ii. Organisation with ≥ 900 licensable people, then a minimum of 30 licensable people should be interviewed. Note: Recommendation for approval may not be made without the above being interviewed	consumers. Organisations people at multiple levels on each site visited, which should include different shifts, part-time, full time and temporary. Where possible aim to interview a cross section of people, new and longer serving, both licensable and un-licensable, other site based senior managers. For combination of remote and on-site assessments the visit plan should indicated which individuals will be met and on which day e.g. remote or on-site day. Where interviewed remotely, indicate where each of these people will be speaking from e.g. Home or office, and how is privacy ensured? For remote activities identify what equipment the approved contractor's staff will be using to communicate with you ensuring it is covered by the contractors IT and DPA policies.

Special Instructions *

An example of a special instruction: The assessor should identify whether payroll services are provided entirely in-house by the company, or if outsourced payroll, umbrella, or other companies are used to administer payroll services for all or some individuals. The assessor must provide the name of the outsourced provider, their address and the nature of the service e.g. organisation acting as a payment vehicle, collecting, collating the company's payroll data and make monthly payments to workers etc. (4.2.1)

Background and justification *

In this section you should provide a brief introduction about the applicant organisation e.g. size, market sectors, mergers, extension to scope and any major changes. It shows the applicant organisation that you have a good understanding of the organisation's nature. It also helps you justify your approach in relation to the number of days agreed for the assessment. If they is any deviation from the required number of days.

Include rationale where a combination of on-site and remote assessments are performed.

Review of organisations website is useful for background information.

Visit programme *

The visit plan must reflect the entire programme planned methods (e.g. remote and/or on-site) to be used to obtain sufficient holistic evidence.

You must select who you include in you assessment sample, and you should include individuals from: Head office plus any regional offices, control rooms, customer sites, organisation's people: number, type, different shift patterns, new, licensed, licence dispensation notice, customers, stakeholders, consumers.

The plan should include the range of topics to be discussed with each individual at different times of the day. Remember that this should still be a holistic approach.

It is not necessary for you to include exact timings unless it is helpful for you and the applicant organisation to do so. You should include information whether a specific assessment activity is untaken remotely or on-site, including visits to temporary sites.

We do not need named individuals in the plan, unless it is helpful for you and the applicant organisation to do so.

You do not need to specify which indicators you are covering with each individual, unless helpful to you and the applicant organisation. It is the number and type of individuals interviewed and the spread of customers sites visited that should provide us with an indication of whether or not you have identified sufficient opportunities to obtain a representative sample of evidence to demonstrate the ACS standard is met. It is assumed that you will cover with each individual a broad range of subjects (driven by the 7 criteria and 78 indicators) in order to gain sufficient evidence against an ACS indicator.

Before obtaining information remotely care must be taken that ensures you and the approved contractors information security requirements can be adhered to and comply with the Data Protection Act, including GDPR. Only then should these remote activities be programmed in to the assessment.

Details of documents shared and reviewed remotely must be specially listed in to the visit plan.

It may be helpful for the applicant organisation if you include key information regarding what will be discussed during the interview stage.

Note. Closing meeting should only be held when concluding and summarising the assessment findings.

Additional notes to client

Notes regarding how the days have been split up, lunch requirements, assessor time-outs and any other necessary information to be given to the company ahead of the assessment.

Other examples of issues you might mention include:

➢   The need for night time visits
➢   Weekend visits
➢   Split assessment over 2 weeks to accommodate national coverage, or different types of activity
➢   Any PPE you may require to have during the assessment

Include information if a summary report is to be issued e.g. for combined on-site and remote assessments a summary report is required to be issued following the close of day 1.

Include details of conditions where a remote assessment may be suspended or terminate. e.g. due to IT technical issues, or if the contractor cannot fulfil the planned activity, etc.

Include details of remote arrangements that have been made for viewing of documentary or other data (e.g. list of documents you have asked for access to), and what arrangements are in place for the safe and timely disposal of same?

How will records be remotely sampled (e.g. for 6.1.1 and 4.2.1) and where will they be accessible from?

Checklist:

- Are the correct regulated sectors covered by the visit plan – matching the applicant organisation ACS eligibility letter or are they seeking to extend the scope of their approval?

  Note: You and the applicant organisation must be clear about which regulated sectors we have granted eligibility for or which sectors are currently approved by us. If an applicant organisation has requested an extension to scope, then ideally eligibility must have been granted by us first and before that sector can be included within the verification visit, however flexibility should be exercised to meet the requirements of the SIA approved contractor.

- Where there is an extension to scope, then a sufficient sample of new staff, customers etc. should be selected. This applies where an organisation wants approval for an additional sector(s).

- Have we issued any special instructions and are these accounted for?

- Licensing/licence dispensation notice checks planned in?

- Licence management checks planning in?

- Additional conditions of approval planned in?

- Check if an ACS exceptional circumstances policy is in force or any other temporary change to the ACS (e.g. as introduced by us during the Covid-19 pandemic: use of non-approved contractors, changes to LDN rules, etc.)

- Minimum sampling requirements identified?

- Complexity of the organisation, size, geographic location of branches

- Different types of customers e.g. large or small and their location

- Nature of the services provided e.g. single sector/multiple sectors, the need for night time visits, weekend visits, split assessment over 2 weeks to accommodate national coverage, or different types of activity

- Structure i.e. whether the organisation structure is centralised or decentralised

- Whether the organisation is a subsidiary of a group/parent organisation, or has any association with other companies. E.g. is one of several companies within the same group.

- Degree of autonomy of any branches e.g. if branches operate similarly with coherent policies and procedures then fewer branches would need to sampled than if each branch worked to its own policies and procedures

- Level of formality within the organisation e.g. in a mature and formalised organisation, evidence such as documented policies, reports, meeting minutes etc. may be more readily available. In a more informal organisations evidence may only be obtained by discussion and interviews.

- Number of levels of management e.g. with a flat structure it is likely that fewer people will need to involved in discussions and interviews. With several layers of management or with functional managers, the assessor will need to arrange meetings with more individuals, such as supervisors, finance, personnel, business development, marketing, Chief Executive Officer or board members etc.

- Organisations people: number, type, different shift patterns, new, licensed, unlicensed, sub-contractors (including self-employed individuals and individuals deployed on sub-contracted activities

- Other stakeholders' e.g. local police, local business groups, other community representatives.

- Maturity of the business/quality management system in place and the expectations of the leaders regarding the assessment process. For example, businesses with a mature quality management system and mature quality culture may be expecting a high degree of "added value" from the assessment and this should be considered during the planning stage.

- Where the organisation has been subject to a merger or acquisition, the focus must be on effective integration –this will often result in a full re-assessment, as advised by us, but where this is not required, you may choose to sample a greater range of Indicators to ensure that the whole organisation continues to meet the standard.

- Samples representative e.g. customers covering the different types of activity and size, sufficient staff from each licensable sector, organisational branches near to and far from headquarters?

- If you are part of an assessment team, has sufficient time been built in for initial and ongoing briefing to ensure that as lead assessor you can provide appropriate leadership and focus for the team; and for debriefing and consolidation of findings throughout the assessment?

- Take into consideration any recent changes to the ACS self-assessment workbook.

Check List Y2 / Y3 Visit Plans

- In addition to the usual things, when reviewing plans for Y2 and Y3 you need be looking for the following:

- Refer to re-verification process: https://www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk/Documents/acs/assessors/sia_acs_g008-

ab_re-verification.pdf

- Is the number of days the same as a full verification visit? If not, is the number of days justified?

- Check there is a Y2/Y3 on-line achievement record. Review the on-line achievement record noting any changed scores.

- Check that the sectors specified are correct. If additional sectors have we granted eligibility?

- Has there been a change of name or organisational structure since previous visit? Have we been notified with a change in circumstances form? You should always check that any changes are explored to ensure they are clear about the legal entity/status, and that the impact of any change is understood and taken into account during the assessment.

- Have minimum sampling requirements been met (ref appendix 1 re-verification process), and have sufficient number of people been identified.

- Is there sufficient opportunity to review the improvement options from the previous verification visit?

- Is there sufficient opportunity to review any changed scores from previous verified scores?

- Have you selected appropriate samples of customers, organisations people, sites, branches, consumers, stakeholders etc.? You need to be selecting a different sample to that selected at the previous verification visit, and where particular branches were not previously sampled, cover them wherever possible. Of course, it may be appropriate to see some of the same (sample) but a balance is required.

- If the numbers of the organisations people or customers have increased significantly, then the sample should include some of the new people, new customers etc. Your focus should be on how effective and able the organisation has been to gear up to the increased workload, whilst maintaining the requirements of the ACS standard.

- Where external stakeholders (other than customers) were not previously sampled, then you should place greater emphasis to ensure this is covered.