

Revised November 2015

EFESC Handbook



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Handbook EFESC

1 Background and objectives

1.1 Sectoral developments

Mobility of forest and green area workers within the European Union is gradually growing. Some countries have reliable certification systems to test the knowledge and skills of those people, but by no means have all countries such a certificate. Moreover it is difficult to assess the merits of foreign certificates. The development of European standards would allow national certificates to add a European recognition to their brand, thus increasing the value for workers wanting to work in other member states across the EU. A European standard gives other countries that do not have such a certificate now, the opportunity to participate in an internationally recognised system. This would increase transparency and mobility within the European trade area and thus strengthen the forestry, arboricultural and green area management sector with regard to chainsaw use. In some countries certification is also wanted by non-frequent chainsaw users which will enhance the safety and health among non-professional target groups.

Since June 2009 Europe a new organisation has been active, known as the ‘European Forestry and Environmental Skills Council’. EFESC has been formed as a result of the Leonard project: “Evaluation and Implementation of Chainsaw Operators Certification”.

The EFESC is an organisation in which delegates are represented from various stakeholders throughout Europe. Organisations are presented from training centres, EU branch organisations, of the forest industry, trade unions, manufacturers of tools, machines and equipment for forestry work or environmental work, certification schemes.

1.1 Objectives

The objective of this council is to:

- Develop minimal qualification standards in professions like forestry, landscaping, tree-work and or horticulture and contribute to the harmonisation and improvement of qualification in the above mentioned professions in Europe
- Improve safety due to standards setting
- Improve mobility due to interchange ability of the certificates

1.2 Organisational Framework

The delegates of the EFESC are all members of the General Assembly and have elected chairpersons in three committees/ bodies, known as:

- Executive board
- Standards committee
- Accreditation committee

The council has a secretariat which is hosted by an ordinary member of EFESC.

1.3 National Agency

In order to assure Quality of issuing the EFESC certificate or logo within each country, the Council will accredit and appoint National Agencies in each member country. The National Agency will approve and audit assessment centres and / or assessors.

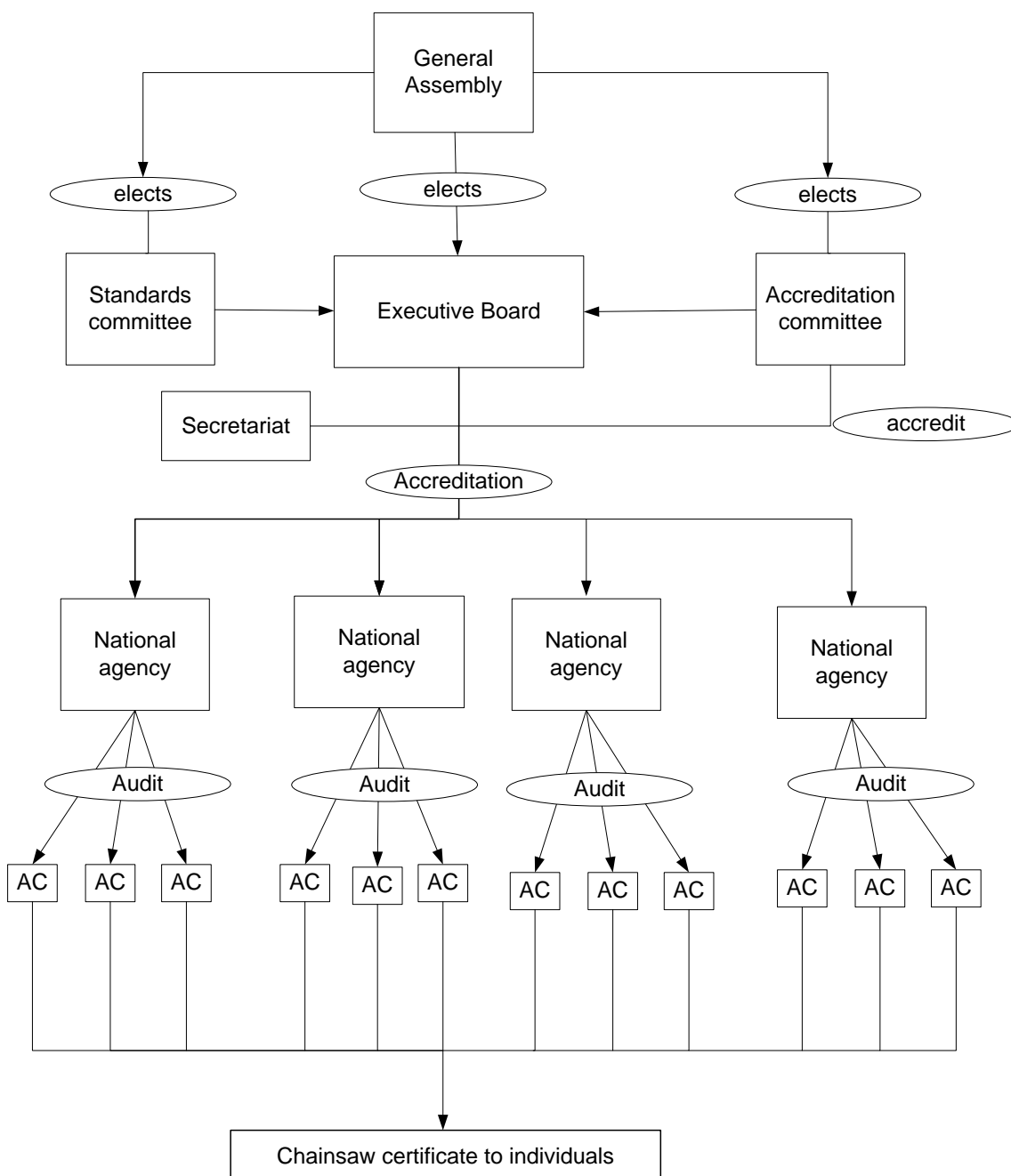
1.4 Assessment Centres and assessors

The Assessment Centres and assessors approved by EFESC can use an EFESC certificate and/or can use the ECC logo on their own certificate if they comply with the criteria set by the council.

2 Organisational Structure

The Organisational Structure is made up of different bodies. The OS describes the functions and explains what they have to do and what kind of duties and responsibilities they have.

Organisational Chart



2.1 General Assembly (GA)

2.1.1 Definition

The GA is the highest body in terms of taking decisions. The GA consists of all ordinary members. All ordinary members have equal voting rights.

2.1.2 Membership fee and voting rights

The representatives seating in the GA will have to pay a membership fee of 250€/yr.

2.1.3 Members of the GA...National agencies

- a. Health and Safety organisations on European and national levels
- b. European representatives of
 - Industry branch organisations
 - Employees representation
 - Training providers
 - Manufacturers of machinery, tools, and equipment for forestry and or environmental work
 - Certification schemes

2.1.4 Tasks of the GA

The general assembly exercises the following tasks

- To decide upon and modify the articles of legal status document of the council
- To elect the chairmen for the GA
- To elect the members of Executive Board
- To elect the members of the standard committee

- To elect the members of the accreditation committee
- To approve the budget and the accounts
- Decide on terms and condition for reimbursement of the cost the members of the Executive board, the standards and accreditation committee
- To decide organizational structures and processes
- To decide upon the EFESC Standards
- To decide about accreditation and certification procedures
- To amend the handbook of the certificate
- To work out the preconditions and procedure for new members to join the ECC-network

2.2 The Executive Board (EB)

2.2.1 Composition

The EB consists of a minimum of three persons: The chairperson and two elected members.

The secretariat operates under the EB, gets its tasks from the EB and is responsible to the EB. Each NA gets its tasks through the secretariat; in case of problems, the NA can appeal to the EB.

2.2.2 Responsibilities of the EB

- Prepare policy and recommendations for GA
- Executes policy and decisions of GA
- Implementation and setting of budget
- Prepares and presents international PR activities
- To work out the rules of procedure for GA to be followed
- Prepare the organizational structures and processes
- Prepare the contract to define role, tasks, budget, etc. for the secretariat
- Issuing of accreditation for NA
- Prepare the rules for payment of expenses of the members of the executive board, the standards and accreditation committees
- For further details see the memorandum of association

2.3 *The Standards Committees (SCs)*

2.3.1 *Definition and composition of the SCs*

The SCs are bodies that draft and maintain the EFESC Standards in accordance with the internal rules.

- T The SCs include each of a minimum of three persons which can invite other experts, engineers, advisors and consultants.

They meet at least once a year at the same time as the GA.

2.3.2 *Election :*

- members of the SCs are elected by the GA amongst the ordinary and extraordinary members of EFESC
- The members of the SCs are elected by the GA amongst ordinary and extraordinary members for a term of three years
- The members of the SCs elect a chairperson who will be the contact person towards the EB and the other bodies of EFESC. The chairperson has the right to attend the meetings of the EB in an advisory capacity, but without voting rights

2.3.3 *Responsibilities of the SCs*

- To prepare the standards (levels) for the respective certificates
- To fine-tune the standards (levels) after initial try-out(s)
- To organise the update the standards (levels) as a continuing improvement process
- To define criteria and processes for the exams
- To define criteria for the assessors

2.4 The Accreditation Committee (AcnC)

2.4.1 Definition

The AcnC defines and maintains the accreditation, certification and auditing procedures within the EFESC. The AcnC plays an advisory role to the EB on relevant matters; the members of AcnC are independent from the EB. The AcnC can invite other members of the GA or other experts for advice and consultation. The AcnC meets at least once a year, at the time as the GA.

2.4.2 Election composition

- The members of the AcnC are elected by the GA amongst ordinary and extraordinary members for a term of three years
- The members of the AcnC elect a chairperson who will be the contact person towards the EB and the other bodies of EFESC. The chairperson has the right to attend the meetings of the EB in an advisory capacity, but without voting rights.

2.4.3 Responsibilities of the AcnC

- To define terms for the establishment and maintenance of the quality assurance and management system of EFESC
- To prepare, document and maintain the criteria for NA's
- To prepare, implement and the accreditation of NA's
- To define certification and auditing procedures

2.5 *The Secretariat (S)*

2.5.1 *Definition*

The secretariat is the hosting organisation of the ECC. The S gets its tasks from the EB and is responsible to the EB. Their role is to implement organisational, administrative and PR activities. There will only be one Secretariat for the organisation.

In the contract between EFESC and the S, terms, conditions and responsibilities are laid down.

2.5.2 *Responsibilities of the S*

- Administrative work
- Organisation of meetings etc.
- Implements PR activities
- Website construction and maintenance
- Issuing of accreditation for national representatives
- Establishment and maintenance of database for certificates
- Coordination of random peer audits
- Look for sponsoring
- Prepare the file for obtaining a legal status + protection name and logo

2.6 *The National Agency (NA)*

2.6.1 *Definition*

An organisation that *is accredited* by the Executive Board and is entitled to issue certificates through Assessment Centres (or assessors) that offer assessments according to EFESC Regulations after they have been evaluated by an auditor. National Agencies work as a facilitating infrastructure between the AcnC and the Assessment Centres (or assessors).

2.6.2 *Composition, preconditions*

National organisations accredited by the AcnC as NA can be Forestry Training Centres, individual professional enterprises or governmental organisations. There is only one NA possible per country. If there is no NA in a country, a NA of a neighbouring country can fulfil its role.

2.6.3 *Criteria to become a NA:*

The criteria and the respective proof are documented in the table below:

Criteria	Proof that criteria is fulfilled
The organisation:	
Should be well integrated within national industry support framework. They must represent the various interest organisations.	Membership of forestry or green organisation or part of forestry administration; active website in place
Must have a legal entity	Document of the form of company (e.g. Limited Company), other legal status
Must have or have access to manpower in order to act as a role as facilitator / organiser	number of personnel
Must have access to qualified personnel	Qualifications of personnel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - register with personnel qualifications - formal certificates or recognised experience - description of functions and qualification
Must have a quality assurance system	External quality assurance certificate or documented internal Quality Assurance system
Must agree to the EFESC standards and codes of practice	Standardised letter of agreement to follow EFESC standards & handbook
Must have experience of certification in EFESC related skills or experience in accreditation systems / certification in EFESC related skills	Overall concept or similar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - policy - description of activities - annual report/ summary

- The required documents or relevant sections of documents shall be translated and presented in English language.

2.6.4 *Accreditation Procedures to become a NA:*

The AcnC will accredit the organization and after successful accreditation the EB will issue the accreditation document to the National Agency.

Note: For organisational reasons there will be only one NA per country possible, i.e. one national contact point. The NA can choose how they arrange the organisational structure within the country with e.g. regional offices.

2.6.5 *Responsibilities of the NA*

- Appoint and manage auditors that will audit the Assessment Centres and/or assessors
- Keep database of certified candidates linked to a European database
- Keep database of Assessment Centres and assessors
- Implement a quality assurance process for Assessment Centres and assessors, to include the competence of assessors
- Manage their own financial affairs
- Promotion of the EU-standards (all PR-activities)
- Develop acceptance within the forest and environmental industry
- To co-ordinate the participants on a national level
- If any major change occurs in one of the above mentioned criteria this should be reported to the AcnC. The AcnC decides whether a new accreditation procedure has to be implemented.
- Decide about procedures how the certificate is issued to candidates
- Have a support system in place for Assessment Centres and assessors, in particular to help develop those newly appointed.

2.7 Assessment Centres:

2.7.1 Definition

The Assessment Centres will be Training Providers, organisations or institutions that are registered with EFESC to offer and / or perform assessments.

2.7.2 Preconditions/ criteria to become a certified Assessment Centre:

- has its own Quality Assurance procedure for Assessment Centres assessors
- has its own Quality Assurance procedure for the Assessments (e.g. client evaluation scheme)
- must have the necessary resources (e.g. access to trees)
- have an administration system
- have published policies (e.g. health & safety)
- have qualified have qualified assessors to ECC standards (or equivalent)
- the provider must use exclusively approved assessors who are up to date on the latest certification regulations
- has to work according to an assessment scheme/protocol

2.7.3 Tasks

- The Assessment Centre arranges the assessment requested for candidates according to the minimal standards set
- Have assurance that training and assessment are separated

2.7.4 Procedure:

- The Assessment Centres are audited by the National Agency. Where a National Agency does not exist in the respective country, another NA can perform the audit
- After successful audit the Assessment Centre can issue respective EFESC certificates to successful participants. In the case of an organisation's existing certificate being used, an additional EFESC logo can be applied

- The registered Assessment Centres will be mentioned in a national database of the NA and on the website of the European organisation.
- At least every three years the Assessment Centre will receive an external audit
- The Assessment Centre can lose its registration whenever the external audits are contradictory to EFESC criteria
- The Assessment Centre can be a single assessor and will be subject to all the conditions above

2.8 Assessors:

2.8.1 *Definition:*

Assessors are INDIVIDUALS accredited to perform assessment of candidates

2.8.2 *Assessor Approval: Criteria to become an assessor*

The requirements after which an assessor will be registered with National Agency and EFESC are set down in Appendix 2, summarized as follows:

1. Provide proof of relevant practical experience as a skilled operator (or instructor).
2. Hold a minimum of at least one ECC level above the qualification(s) to be assessed.
3. Hold valid first aid certification relevant to forestry / tree work.
4. Submit all required paperwork to the National Agency with a completed application form to become an assessor.
5. Successfully undertake a Technical Evaluation of wider practical skills/ability by a Verifier.
6. Successfully undertake an Assessor Training course or have proof of assessor experience / evaluation / certification.
7. Complete an assessment of an ECC candidate whilst being observed & mentored by a Verifier

2.8.3 *Tasks*

- The assessors assesses candidates according to the minimal standards set
- The assessors can authorise the issuing of an EFESC certificate (or EFESC Logo on existing certification from Assessment Centre) to those candidates who meet the EFESC standard after being assessed by the qualified assessor.

2.8.4 *Procedure:*

- The assessors are audited /verified by the National Agency. In case a National Agency does not exist in the respective country, another NA can perform the audit
 - The certified assessors will be mentioned in a national database of the NA and on the website of the European organisation
 - The Assessor will receive an external audit/Verification at least every three years
 - The Assessor can lose his / her registration whenever the external audits are contradictory to the initial criteria

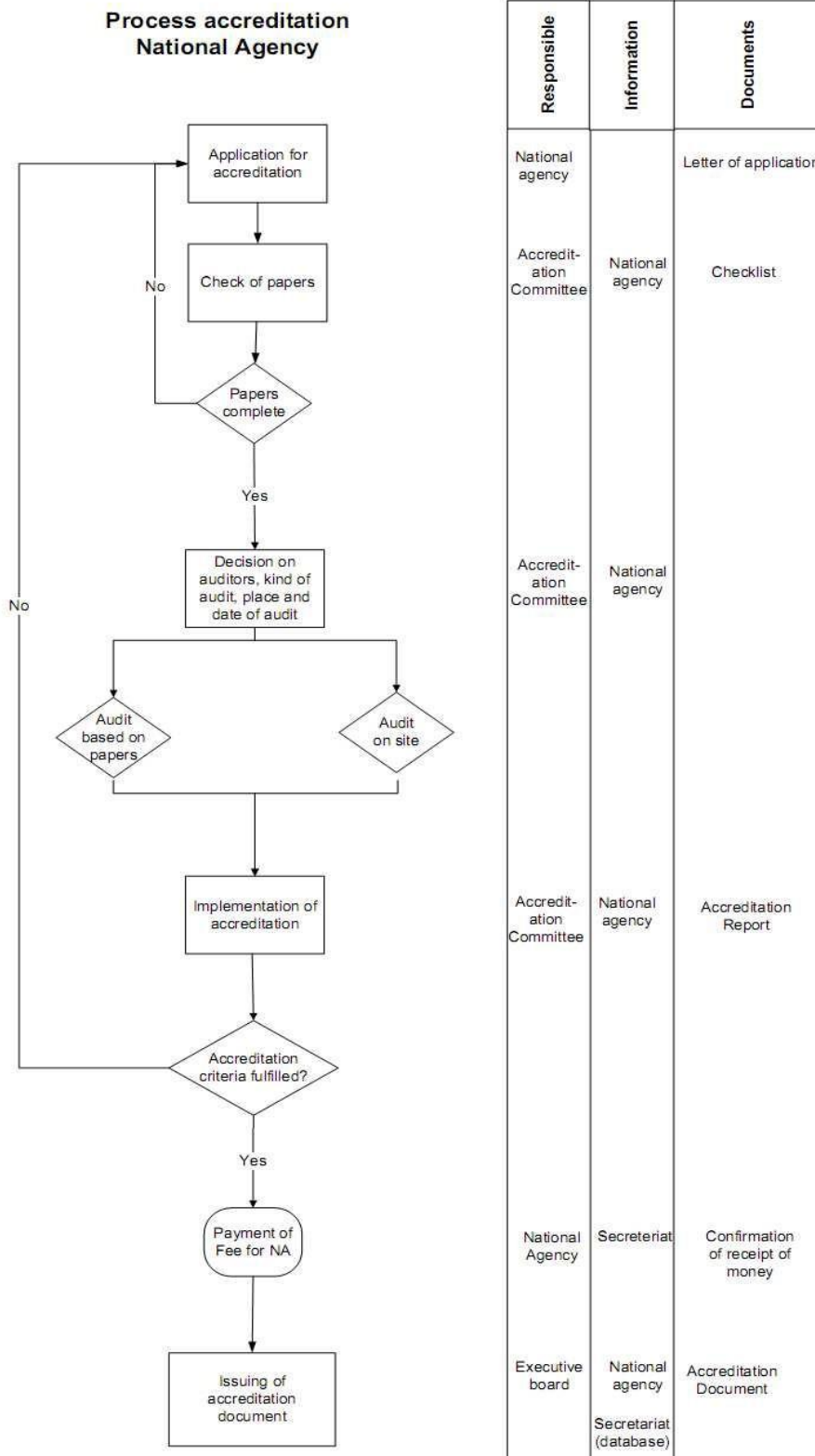
2.8.5 *Criteria and proof to be an Assessor*

Criteria	Proof that criteria is fulfilled
Technical knowledge, practical skills and experience in chainsaw operations	Technical knowledge and skills in the use of chainsaws. Proof by certificates or diploma in forestry /or green sector e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National certificates or licenses - Holders of diploma from technical colleges Other national accepted documents And Detectable experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience records from actual and previous employers related to chainsaw skills. - Or technical evaluation in front of an assessor
Assessment and Communication skills	Diploma or certificate that is recognised on national level Recognised experience as assessor This should relate to skills of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - judgment - clear communication in oral and written form - cooperation – social skills
Knowledge of ECC standards, assessment criteria,	National certificate or license to carry out assessment or Certificate of attendance delivered by the National Agency
Independency of assessors training.	The Assessment Centre is responsible for such a declaration. They declare independency by separating training and assessment.
First aid	Diploma or certificate that is recognised on national level

3 Operational Structure

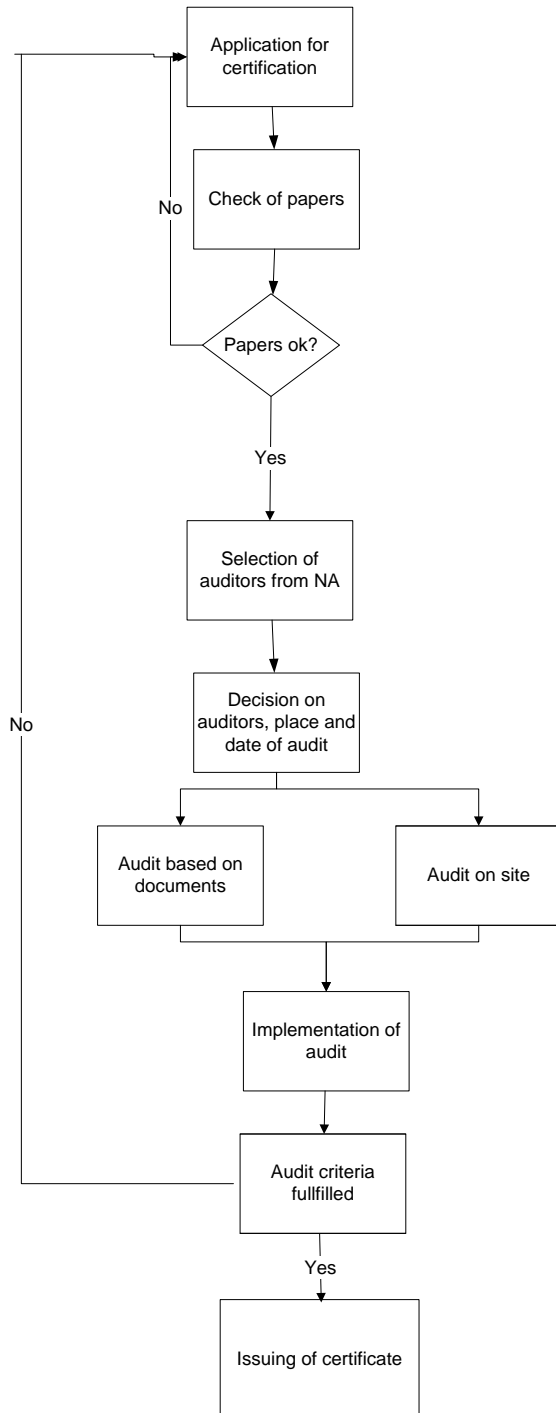
The Operational Structure describes how the organization processes works, who is responsible for what and what documents are needed by whom.

3.1 The Process of accreditation of NA



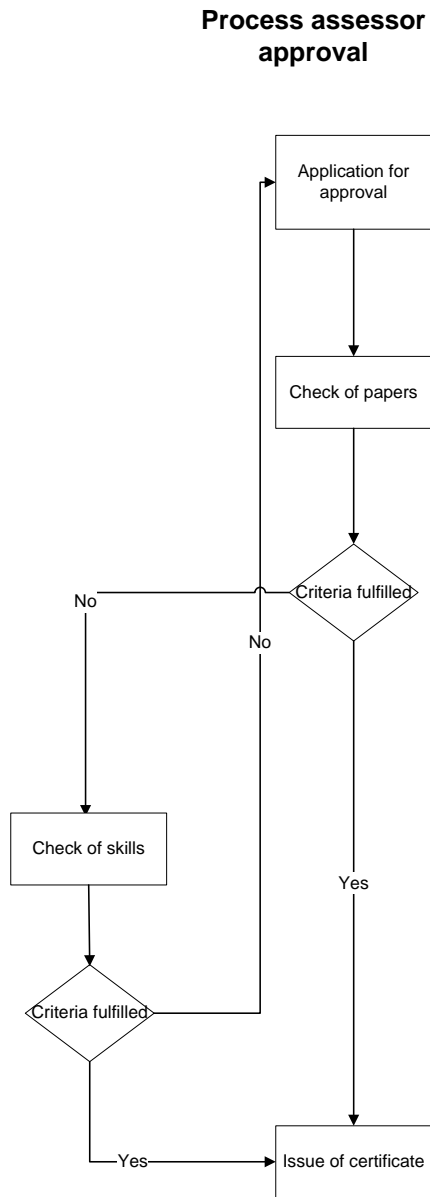
3.2 The process of Registration of Assessment Centres

Process registration of assessment centres ECC



Responsible	Information	Documents
Assessment center		Ressources Infrastructure Quality assurance
National agency	Assessment center	
National agency	Auditors	
National agency	Assessment center	
Auditors	Assessment center	Audit Report
National agency	Auditors Secretariat	Certificate

3.3 The Assessor approval Process



Responsible	Information	Documents
Candidate		Application Form
National Agency	Candidate	Checklist Criteria
National agency	Candidate	
Executive board	Candidate	Approval as assessor

4 ECC standards

The standards, modules and the respective score sheets are attached in the additional document “ECC Standards, Modules and Appendices” The standards are binding parts of the handbook.

- ECC 1 – Chainsaw maintenance and crosscutting
- ECC 2 – Basic Felling
- ECC 3 – Advanced Felling
- ECC 4 – Windblown trees

The ECC certificates are issued for life, i.e. do not expire. However EFESC strongly recommends that refresher training is undertaken every 3 to 5 years to ensure that knowledge and skills are updated.

It is the Certificate holder’s responsibility to arrange for refreshment (or upskilling), not EFESC.

Refreshment can be delivered in various formats, for example: Formal up-date training, practical skills workshops, documented ‘in-company’ updating, up-skilling to a higher ECC unit or other system agreed with the National Agency.

Some National Agencies will have a formal system of refresher training in place (for instance, from Government directives); this would normally be sufficient to comply with the above guidance.

5 Appendices

Appendixes to the handbook are not binding documents for the NAs, ordinary members and extraordinary members. They provide guidance in cases where national regulations in the respective subject do not exist. They can however be declared binding by a National Agency.

5.1 Appendix 1: Code of Practice ECC assessors

5.2 Appendix 2: ECC assessor guidance notes

5.3 Appendix 3: ECC score sheets