

Transition Requirements on the GSTC Accreditation Manual for Certification Bodies - Industry: Hotel/Accommodation & Tour Operator Version 4.0.

November 1, 2024

GSTC Accreditation Team

Introduction

This document outlines the transition plan for the implementation of a new version of the GSTC Accreditation Manual for Certification Bodies - Industry: Hotel/Accommodation & Tour Operator.

The transition period will have a duration of one year, during which the new manual will be gradually integrated into the assessment process. The transition will be conducted through both regular/planned assessments and additional assessments requested by Certification Bodies (CBs). Desk and Office Assessments, and Witnessing will be affected by the transition.

Effective Date

Effective Date of the Accreditation Manual v.4.0 is from **1 November 2024**.

As of this date, only applications for initial accreditation for v.4.0 will be accepted.

Transition Period

The transition period for the implementation of the new Accreditation Manual is **one year**.

Methodology

During the transition period, the following approach will be adopted:

1. Dual Application of Manuals

- Initial Phase: For a period of 12 months, both versions of Accreditation Manuals, v3.1 and v4.0, will be applicable.
- Documentation related to the assessment shall clearly indicate which manual version was used for specific assessment criteria.

2. Implementation of New Requirements

- The Accreditation Manual v.4.0 will be fully applied to all initial accreditation applications and re-accreditation assessments initiated as of the effective date of application of Accreditation Manual v.4.0.
- During Surveillance Assessments, the Accreditation Manual v.4.0 will be applied.
- CBs may request GSTC to conduct Extra Assessment(s) (office assessment and/or witnessing) for the transition to version 4.0 of the Accreditation Manual.
- CBs are required to revise their documentation, reference materials, processes, procedures, and certificates based on the requirements of version 4.0.
- CBs that are currently in the application step of the accreditation process are strongly advised to proceed with the Application Checklist of the Accreditation Manual v.4.0. This will allow applicant CBs to align their accreditation efforts with the latest requirements and reduce the need for revisions during the transition period.

3. Training and Capacity Building

- CBs are responsible for training all auditors, reviewers, and decision-makers on the requirements of the new version of the Accreditation Manual.
- Training shall be documented and available for sharing with GSTC upon request.

4. Communication Plan

- CBs are responsible for informing all certified organizations about the new Accreditation Manual v4.0 and any changes that might affect their certification.

For any questions, please contact the GSTC Accreditation Team at: accreditation@gstc.org