

The Open Group[®] Certification for People

Training Course Accreditation Policy

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The Open Group[®] Certification for People: Training Course Accreditation Policy

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Contents

1.	Overview	5
1.1	Introduction	5
1.2	Purpose of Accreditation	5
1.3	Scope and Applicability	6
1.4	Examinations and Courses	6
1.5	Levels of Certification	6
1.6	Languages.....	6
1.7	Fees.....	6
1.8	Terminology and Definitions.....	7
2.	Accreditation Process	9
2.1	Accreditation Process Steps.....	11
2.2	Certification Authority Quality Management.....	12
3.	Conformance	14
3.1	Accreditation Requirements	14
3.2	Versions.....	14
3.3	Conformance Declaration.....	14
4.	Obligations of Organizations	15
4.1	Achieving Accreditation.....	15
4.2	Maintaining Accreditation.....	15
4.3	Removal of Accreditation.....	16
5.	The Open Group Accreditation Logo	17
5.1	Use of the Accreditation Logo.....	17
5.2	Licensing the Accreditation Logo	17
5.3	Removal of the Accreditation Logo	17
6.	Accreditation Register	18
6.1	Inclusion in the Accreditation Register	18
6.2	Removal from the Accreditation Register	18
6.3	Delayed Listing in Accreditation Register	18
7.	Accreditation Requirements for Modifications to an ATC.....	20
7.1	Change of ATC Manager	20
7.2	Change in Training Materials	20
7.3	Change in Trainers	20
7.4	New Delivery Language or Method	20
7.5	Administrative Changes	21
7.6	Other Changes	21
8.	Working with a Third Party.....	22
8.1	Delivery of an ATC by Partners – Affiliates	22
8.2	Promotion of an ATC by Partners – Brokers.....	22
8.3	Use of Third-Party Materials.....	23
9.	Duration and Re-Accreditation.....	24
9.1	Duration of Accreditation.....	24
9.2	Re-Accreditation Process	24
9.3	Periodic On-Site Assessments	25
9.4	Withdrawal of Accreditation at Re-Accreditation	26
10.	Problem Reporting and Interpretations	27
10.1	Overview	27
10.2	Problem Report Resolution	27
10.3	Resolution of Problem Reports.....	29
10.4	Problem Report Repository	29
11.	Appeals Process.....	31

12.	Confidentiality and Disclosure	32
12.1	Confidentiality.....	32
12.2	Disclosure of Accreditation Information	32

1. Overview

1.1 Introduction

This document, The Open Group Certification for People Training Course Accreditation Policy, is an integral part of each Certification for People Program of The Open Group. Defined terms herein are in addition to definitions provided in the specific Program's Program Configuration document.

This document sets out the policies and processes by which a training course may achieve accreditation. Training courses eligible for accreditation are those courses designed to help people acquire the necessary knowledge and understanding of a Standard covered by the Program in order for the person to achieve certification.

1.2 Purpose of Accreditation

Accreditation provides an authoritative and independent assurance of the quality and relevance of training courses.

Once a course is accredited, training course providers may:

- Use the Accreditation Logo in their promotional material.
- Offer The Open Group defined examinations for the Program on their own or their clients' premises and at times of their choosing, if allowed by the Program, as indicated in the Program Configuration document.
- Attend Open Group ATC Provider events where they can learn about plans for future developments and influence the direction that the Program takes.

Accreditation of a training course means that:

- There is adequate coverage of the curriculum, with an appropriate mix of lectures, practical work, and revision appropriate to the level of the course.
- Materials (including presentations, candidate handouts, course tutor notes, exercises, and case studies) are relevant to the curriculum and are kept up-to-date in line with changes to the curriculum.
- Trainers are appropriately qualified, are skilled in teaching, have knowledge and experience of the subject area, are familiar with the curriculum, and keep themselves up-to-date in line with changes to the curriculum.
- The training course provider has the capability to offer the training course in terms of organization, physical resources, administration, trainers, finance, and marketing.
- Sufficient guidance is available to Candidates and their employers, before enrollment, on what level of prior knowledge and experience is expected for each course.
- Candidate numbers are matched to the resources available.
- Candidate feedback is actively sought and acted upon.

1.3 Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to the accreditation of training courses for the Standards covered by the Program and is intended also to cover accreditation to future versions of these Standards.

Course providers may choose which of their courses they wish to be assessed for accreditation and may in parallel offer any number of related or unrelated courses that are not accredited in the Program, provided the course provider makes no inference of accreditation where none exists.

1.4 Examinations and Courses

An individual may achieve certification either by passing the applicable examination(s) provided by The Open Group as documented in the applicable Conformance Requirements or by successful completion of other means of assessment as approved by The Open Group from time to time.

There is no requirement in the Program for people to attend a course, although attendance at an Accredited Training Course (ATC) is strongly encouraged.

1.5 Levels of Certification

The Conformance Requirements document defines in detail the certification levels that are available in the Program at any particular time.

1.6 Languages

The definitive version of each of the Standards covered by the Program is written in English. Translations to other languages may be made available.

The Open Group examinations will be available in English at the start of the Program. Examinations in other languages may be added, according to demand.

Candidates taking the examination in a language other than their first language are allowed to use a dictionary. Such Candidates may request additional time for the examination when taking the examination at an ATC, if such examinations are allowed by the Program, as indicated in the Program Configuration. Permission for extra time is granted at the sole discretion of the examination supervisor. For examinations provided in English by The Open Group Examination Provider in countries where English is a second language, the extended time is set as the default for the examination in that country.

Providers of ATCs delivered wholly or partly in a language for which no corresponding examination is available may offer other means of assessment, subject to approval by The Open Group.

1.7 Fees

Accreditation fees are payable initially upon registration of a course for accreditation and annually thereafter.

Fees are payable for each person who attends an ATC. The fees cover the provision of the applicable examination either at an Open Group Examination Provider's test center or at the Organization's premises, if allowed by the Program.

The schedule of fees is published on the Certification Authority’s web site and may be updated from time to time.

1.8 Terminology and Definitions

This table defines terms or clarifies the meaning of words used within this document. Where an abbreviation is also used, it is provided in parentheses.

Accreditation Agreement	The agreement between the Organization and the Certification Authority that defines the accreditation service to be provided and contains the legal commitment by the Organization to the conditions of the Accreditation Program.
Accreditation Logo	The trademarks and tag lines as designated from time to time by The Open Group for use in association with Accredited Training Courses.
Accreditation Package	The documents and other information provided by the Organization for inspection during the Assessment process.
Accreditation Register	The official list of all Accredited Training Courses, which is maintained by the Certification Authority and made publicly available on the Certification Authority’s website.
Accreditation Requirements	The criteria that a training course and the training course provider must meet in order for that course to be considered conformant.
Accreditation Trademark License Agreement (Accreditation TMLA)	The agreement between the Organization and The Open Group that contains the legal commitment by the Organization to the terms and conditions for use of the Accreditation Logo.
Accredited Training Course (ATC)	A training course, operated by a training course provider, that has successfully completed the accreditation process and which is listed in the Accreditation Register.
Affiliate	A partner of an ATC Provider that delivers, or supports the delivery of, the Accredited Training Course on their behalf.
Assessment	An inspection of an Organization’s training course training materials, processes, policies, and staff to determine the degree to which the training course is operating in accordance with the Accreditation Requirements.
Assessor	The individual or individuals who have been appointed by the Certification Authority to perform Assessments.
ATC Manager	The specific individual(s) identified within an ATC Provider as having the overall responsibility for managing the Accredited Training Course on a day-to-day basis and ensuring that it is carried out in accordance with its documented processes and procedures.
ATC Provider	A provider of training courses that offers at least one Accredited Training Course.
Broker	A partner of an ATC Provider that promotes and markets the Accredited Training Course, but neither delivers nor supports the delivery of the Accredited Training Course.
Certificate of Accreditation	A document issued to Organizations by the Certification Authority certifying that a training course has successfully met the requirements for accreditation and thus is considered an Accredited Training Course.
Certification Authority (CA)	The organization that manages the day-to-day operations of the Program. The Open Group is the Certification Authority for the Program.

Certification System Deficiency (CSD)	An agreed error in the certification and/or accreditation systems that is inhibiting the certification or accreditation process. A Certification System Deficiency is one possible outcome of a Problem Report.
Conformance Declaration	The Organization's documented public representation of the course, including the responsible ATC Manager, scope of the course, and delivery information.
Examination Provider	The organization(s) contracted by The Open Group to provide and administer the certification examinations at test centers throughout the world.
Interpretation (INT)	Decision made by the Specification Authority that elaborates or refines the meaning of the Conformance Requirements, Certification Policy, Accreditation Requirements, Accreditation Policy, or a standard or best practice referenced therein. An Interpretation is one possible outcome of a Problem Report.
Organization	A training course provider that is applying for a training course to be accredited or that has one or more training courses that have achieved accreditation. While the Organization is in the process of having a course accredited, the Organization may be referred to as an Applicant. Once an Organization has achieved accreditation for at least one course, the Organization may be referred to as an ATC Provider.
Problem Report (PR)	A question of clarification, intent, or correctness of an accreditation or certification document, or the web-based certification or accreditation systems, which, if accepted by the Certification Authority, will be resolved into an Interpretation or a Certification System Deficiency.
Program	The Open Group Certification for People Program specifically identified in the Program Configuration document of which this document forms an integral part.
Specification Authority (SA)	The respective Open Group working group that is responsible for interpreting the Certification Policy, Conformance Requirements, Accreditation Policy, and Accreditation Requirements of the Program.
Standard	The standard or list of standards, which define the body of knowledge covered by the Program, as defined in the Program Configuration document.

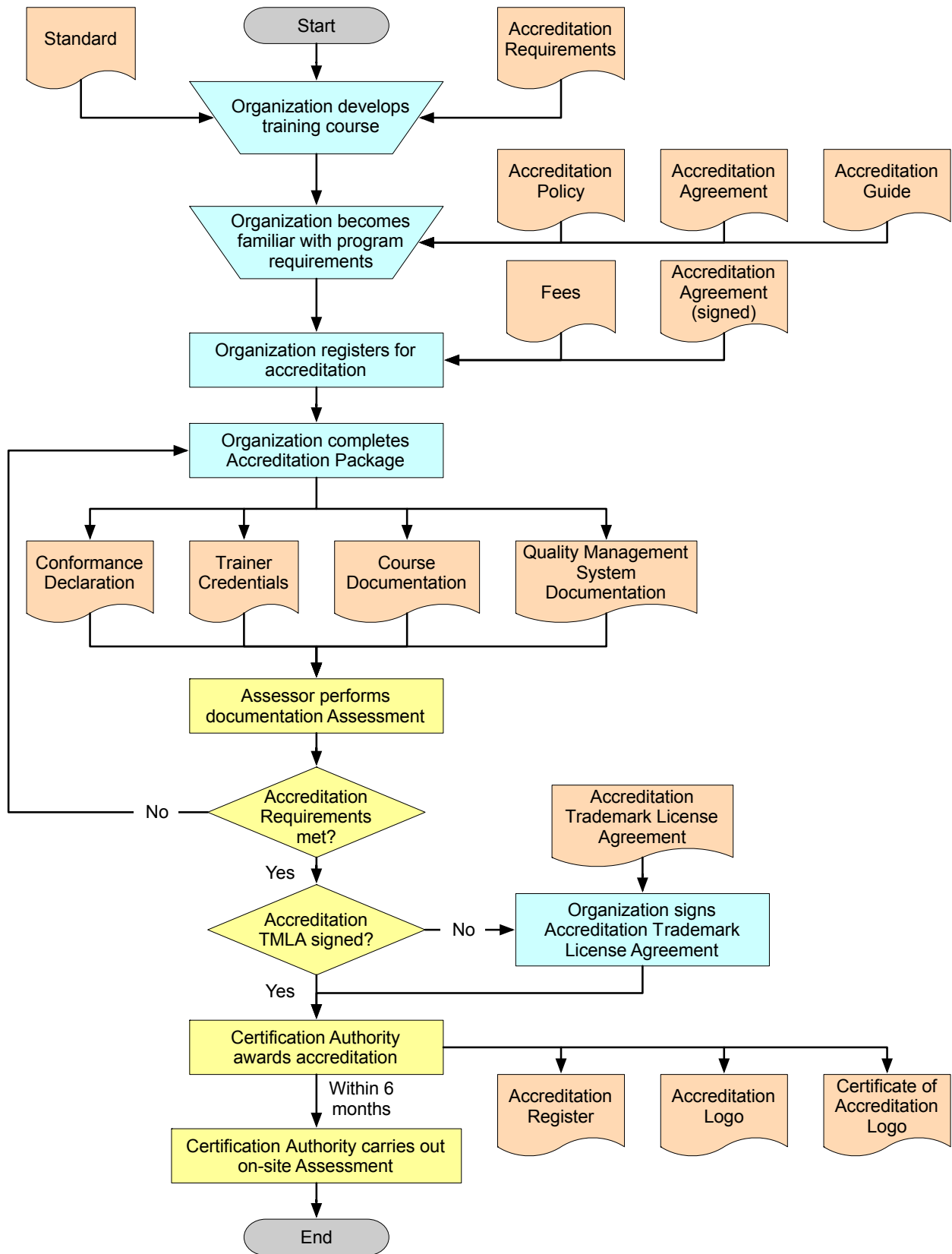
2. Accreditation Process

This section defines the process an Organization must follow to achieve accreditation for a training course.

The following parties are involved in the accreditation process:

- Organization
- Certification Authority
- Certification Authority's appointed Assessor
- Specification Authority

The figure below illustrates an overview of the training course accreditation process. The steps are described in detail in the following section.



2.1 Accreditation Process Steps

2.1.1 Organization develops training course and becomes familiar with the Program requirements

The Organization must first develop a new training course, license one from a third party, or update an existing one, and such course must meet the Accreditation Requirements.

The Accreditation Requirements define which types of course may be accredited and the curriculum required for each type. The Organization should also become familiar with this Accreditation Policy, the Accreditation Agreement, and the Accreditation Guide.

All information and documents related to the Program are available on the Certification Authority's website.

2.1.2 Organization registers for accreditation

Organizations initiate the accreditation process by completing the registration information and submitting it along with the Accreditation Agreement and accreditation fee to the Certification Authority.

Payment is non-refundable after an application has been received.

As part of the registration process, the Organization must specify individuals within the Organization to be the points of contact with respect to this accreditation. All notifications regarding this accreditation and subsequent periods of accreditation will be made to the applicable accreditation contacts. It is the responsibility of the Organization to ensure that these accreditation contacts are kept up-to-date for the duration of the accreditation.

2.1.3 Organization completes the Accreditation Package

The Accreditation Package contains all the information needed by the Assessor to carry out an initial Assessment of the course for conformance with the Accreditation Requirements, including a mapping between the course material and the learning outcomes defined in the applicable Conformance Requirements.

The Accreditation Package includes the full course documentation (including presentation materials and any case studies, work-books, etc.), the names and training credentials of all primary and back-up trainers who will initially deliver the course, the Conformance Declaration, and documentation on the Organization's quality management system.

2.1.4 Assessor performs documentation Assessment

The Certification Authority's Assessor will carry out a detailed Assessment of the Accreditation Package to determine whether the Accreditation Requirements are met.

The Assessor will produce a detailed written report of the results of the Assessment, including a description of any non-conformances that were discovered and a recommendation to the Certification Authority as to whether accreditation should be granted.

If the Assessor discovered any non-conformances, the Certification Authority will communicate the findings to the Organization and agree an action plan. The action plan will define a set of corrective

actions for the Organization to undertake to come into conformance with the Accreditation Requirements and a timeframe for implementing such actions.

Once the Organization implements the action plan, the Assessor will follow up with the Organization to determine whether the corrective actions have been appropriately implemented. The Assessor will then update the Assessment report and resubmit it to the Certification Authority.

The accreditation fee covers initial submission and one rework cycle. If the revised submission is not assessed as meeting the Accreditation Requirements, the Organization will be required to start the process again, including payment of a new accreditation fee.

2.1.5 Organization signs Accreditation TMLA

If the Organization has not previously completed an Accreditation Trademark License Agreement (Accreditation TMLA) for use of the Accreditation Logo, it must be completed at this stage. The Certification Authority's website contains information on how to obtain and complete the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement.

2.1.6 Certification Authority awards accreditation

The Certification Authority will notify the Organization in writing of the final Assessment result.

If the result is success, there is an Accreditation Trademark License Agreement in place, and the Certification Authority has received full payment of the accreditation fees, the Certification Authority will accredit the Organization's training course. The Certification Authority will also issue a Certificate of Accreditation to the Organization, enter the training course into the Accreditation Register, and notify the Organization that the Accreditation Logo may now be used in connection with the training course, according to the terms defined in the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement.

Organizations have the option to keep accreditation confidential for a defined period of time, as described in Section 6.3. During this period, the ATC will not be visible in the Accreditation Register and the Organization may not use the Accreditation Logo in relation to the ATC or provide the ATC to trainees.

If the Assessment indicates that the Accreditation Requirements have not been met, the Certification Authority will reject the application for accreditation and report the discrepancies with the Accreditation Requirements. The Organization may undertake corrective action and re-apply.

2.1.7 Certification Authority carries out on-site Assessment

Within six (6) months of a course achieving accreditation, the Certification Authority will carry out an on-site Assessment in accordance with the process defined in Section 9.3.

2.2 Certification Authority Quality Management

The Assessor will use documented procedures to perform all stages of the Assessment to ensure the repeatability, reproducibility, and objectivity of the process. A representative of the Certification Authority, other than the one(s) who performed the Assessments, will review the Assessment report to ensure that the Assessment process was performed in accordance with the defined procedures.

All materials provided to the Certification Authority or Assessor for the Assessment process performed in conjunction with registration for a new accreditation or an update to an existing accreditation must be archived for six (6) years to provide an auditable trail. The Certification Authority will maintain the archive for all submitted materials.

3. Conformance

3.1 Accreditation Requirements

It is an explicit condition of accreditation that the Organization warrants and represents that the ATC conforms to the applicable Accreditation Requirements.

The Accreditation Requirements are a precisely defined and documented set of requirements against which courses may be assessed and accredited, including requirements for conformance to the applicable technical and process requirements as interpreted by The Open Group from time to time, and including coverage of the applicable learning outcomes defined in the Conformance Requirements.

3.2 Versions

From time to time, The Open Group will issue new versions of the Standards covered by the Program. Courses are accredited against a particular version of a Standard.

If an update to a Standard is released, Organizations are required within six (6) months to update their courses to align with any revised material and include any new material as required by any updated Accreditation Requirements and Conformance Requirements.

3.3 Conformance Declaration

The Conformance Declaration refers to the set of information provided about a course in the web-based accreditation system that may be used in the public Accreditation Register entry for the course once it is accredited. The Conformance Declaration reflects the Organization's public representation of the course. It includes the responsible ATC Manager, the levels of certification covered by the course, the delivery method(s) and languages(s) supported by the course, and whether examinations are provided as part of the course, if allowed by the Program.

The Conformance Declaration is submitted to the Certification Authority as part of the registration process for accreditation. It is the responsibility of the Organization to ensure that the information supplied in the Conformance Declaration is correct and complete.

After accreditation, Organizations must ensure that the information in the Conformance Declaration of their ATC is kept accurate and up-to-date. Changes to the Conformance Declaration of an ATC may only be made by the Certification Authority, acting at the request of the Organization, subject to the requirements set out in Section 7.

4. Obligations of Organizations

4.1 Achieving Accreditation

Claims of accreditation may only be made in relation to ATCs; that is, courses that meet the Accreditation Requirements and for which the Certification Authority has provided written notice that accreditation has been achieved. Claims of conformance, certification, or accreditation may not be used with courses that have not completed the accreditation process, or that have been withdrawn from the Program.

The Accreditation Agreement requires the Organization to publicly “warrant and represent” that:

- **The ATC meets the applicable Accreditation Requirements.**
- **The Organization agrees to the policies expressed in this Accreditation Policy document.**

4.2 Maintaining Accreditation

An Organization is required to ensure that their ATC continues to conform to the applicable Accreditation Requirements, including all Interpretations that have been granted by the Specification Authority.

The Certification Authority has the right to audit the Organization’s claims of conformance and adherence to the requirements of this Accreditation Policy. The Certification Authority may at any time request Organizations to provide the Certification Authority with any information reasonably related to their ATC’s conformance with the applicable Accreditation Requirements. If the Organization fails to provide such information within 45 calendar days of the request, then the Certification Authority may remove the training course from the Accreditation Register, in which case the training course ceases to be an ATC and the Organization may no longer make a claim of accreditation in relation to the training course.

In addition to regularly scheduled assessments, the Certification Authority has the right at any time without notice to observe delivery of the ATC, review current ATC training materials, or request information on delivered ATCs and course attendees for the purpose of auditing conformance of the ATC to the Accreditation Requirements.

The Certification Authority will maintain statistics concerning pass rates for Candidates trained by each ATC. ATCs with pass rates repeatedly below average will be required to justify their performance and agree an improvement plan with the Certification Authority.

ATC customers and attendees who discover a non-conformance in the ATC should first report such non-conformance to the Organization. If the Organization does not address the non-conformance within 30 calendar days, the issue may be raised to the Certification Authority, along with justification for why the claimant believes there is a non-conformance. Recourse should always be made through normal communication channels with the Organization before escalation to the Certification Authority.

If an ATC is found by any means no longer to meet the Accreditation Requirements, the Certification Authority shall provide written notification to the Organization who shall:

1. Within 30 calendar days provide a plan to the Certification Authority for rectifying the non-conformance and within a further 45 calendar days rectify the non-conformance and satisfy the Certification Authority and/or the claimant of the efficacy of the rectification; or

2. Within 30 calendar days notify the Certification Authority that the ATC is indeed conformant and provide evidence to satisfy the Certification Authority and/or the claimant that the ATC is conformant; or
3. Within 30 calendar days acknowledge the existence of the non-conformity and indicate an inability to rectify the non-conformance within a further 45-day period, in which case the training course ceases to be an ATC; or
4. Within 30 calendar days invoke the appeals process as described in Section 11.

If option (4) is selected, the Organization will have 45 calendar days from the completion of the appeals process to implement the decision.

If the Organization fails to take one of the above actions within the times defined above, the accreditation will be revoked and the training course will cease to be an ATC.

4.3 Removal of Accreditation

If a training course ceases to be an ATC, the Organization may no longer make any claim of accreditation in relation to that course. The Organization, at its own expense, shall remove any existing claim of accreditation from all materials related to the previously accredited training course; for example, websites and promotional materials. The Certification Authority may inspect any materials related to the training course to ensure adequate removal.

Once a training course ceases to be an ATC, any future claim of accreditation in relation to that training course will require the training course to be accredited again.

Furthermore, the right to use the Accreditation Logo (see Section 5) in conjunction with a training course that is no longer accredited shall be immediately terminated.

5. The Open Group Accreditation Logo

This section describes the basis for using The Open Group Accreditation Logo in accordance with the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement.

5.1 Use of the Accreditation Logo

Once the Certification Authority has notified an Organization that their training course has achieved accreditation, the Organization may use the Accreditation Logo in association with the ATC as per the terms specified in the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement and with the applicable tag line as defined in the Program Configuration document.

The Accreditation Logo may only be used on or in relation to ATCs. It may not be used in relation to courses that have not completed the accreditation process, or that have been withdrawn from the Program. It may not be used in relation to the Organization in general; only to the specific course or courses that have been accredited.

Organizations with more than one ATC may use the Accreditation Logo with the applicable tag line in relation to each of the ATCs to which they apply.

Organizations may use the Accreditation Logo in relation to their ATC on their business cards, in proposals, in marketing materials, and other materials.

5.2 Licensing the Accreditation Logo

In order to use the Accreditation Logo, the Organization is required to sign an Accreditation Trademark License Agreement. This agreement is the legal contract governing how the Accreditation Logo may be used and defines the rights and obligations of the Organization.

The Accreditation Trademark License Agreement requires the Organization to warrant and represent that their ATC meets the applicable Accreditation Requirements as well as agree to the policies expressed in this Accreditation Policy document.

5.3 Removal of the Accreditation Logo

If an ATC loses accreditation, any and all rights the Organization has to use the Accreditation Logo on or in relation to that ATC cease immediately. The terms for removal of the Accreditation Logo are as described in the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement. Once the rights to the Accreditation Logo have been removed, any future use of the Accreditation Logo in relation to that ATC requires a new accreditation in advance of such use.

Failure to adhere to the provisions of the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement is a breach of the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement and shall result in its termination.

6. Accreditation Register

6.1 Inclusion in the Accreditation Register

The Accreditation Register is a web-accessible record of all ATCs and is maintained by the Certification Authority. The Accreditation Register contains the name of the Organization, the period of time for which the course is accredited, a reference to the version of the Standard and the version of the Accreditation Requirements against which the course is accredited, and information from the Conformance Declaration for the course.

Once the Certification Authority is satisfied that the Organization's course meets the applicable Accreditation Requirements and is satisfied that all other requirements for accreditation have been met, the Certification Authority will issue written notice to the Organization that accreditation has been achieved and will, subject to the provisions of Section 6.3, enter the training course in the Accreditation Register.

The Certification Authority may at its sole discretion include in the Accreditation Register the pass rate statistics for all ATCs.

6.2 Removal from the Accreditation Register

Only ATCs are included in the Accreditation Register; thus, if a training course ceases to be an ATC, the Certification Authority will remove it from the Accreditation Register.

A training course shall cease to be an ATC if:

- The Organization requests that the Certification Authority withdraw the ATC from the Accreditation Register.
- The training course ceases to meet the Accreditation Requirements.
- The Organization fails to meet the re-accreditation requirements or declines to perform re-accreditation.
- The Organization fails to adhere to any of the policies defined within this Accreditation Policy document.
- The Organization fails to satisfactorily implement any agreed corrective actions within their agreed timeframes.

6.3 Delayed Listing in Accreditation Register

On occasion, an Organization may want to delay listing their accreditation in the public Accreditation Register for a period of time after being awarded accreditation. The Organization may request that the listing be delayed and the accreditation remain confidential for a maximum period of six (6) months from the date that the Certification Authority provides written notification that the training course has achieved accreditation.

During this period, the Organization may not publicly represent that they are accredited, use the Accreditation Logo, or make any representation of conformance to the Accreditation Requirements.

The Organization may request to list the accreditation in the Accreditation Register at any point during this six (6)-month period. In the event that the Organization wishes to keep the accreditation information for a training course confidential permanently, the Organization may request withdrawal and deletion of such information. Such a training course will then no longer be accredited.

The accreditation information will be published in the Accreditation Register upon the earlier of notice by the Organization to list the accreditation or at the end of the six (6)-month period, provided that the Organization has not previously requested withdrawal and deletion of such information.

7. Accreditation Requirements for Modifications to an ATC

Accreditation applies to a defined training course – the ATC – from a defined training course provider – the ATC Provider. ATCs are typically delivered in many different locations, in different languages, by different trainers, and may be delivered in more than one country. Organizations are required to maintain a single point of contact within their Organization who takes responsibility for meeting all of the Organization’s obligations under the Program. This individual is termed the ATC Manager.

There is no requirement that a single ATC Manager takes responsibility for all of the ATCs operated by a course provider, but each ATC must have a designated ATC Manager.

7.1 Change of ATC Manager

A change of ATC Manager is a change of the named individual responsible for the effective operation and delivery of the ATC.

To maintain accreditation for the ATC, the Organization must notify the Certification Authority of the change in ATC Manager within 30 calendar days of such change occurring.

The new ATC Manager must provide a written commitment to the Certification Authority indicating that the new ATC Manager understands the Accreditation Requirements to which the ATC is accredited and agrees to comply with these requirements for the duration of the current accreditation and any subsequent periods of accreditation.

The Certification Authority will then update the information in the Accreditation Register and Conformance Declaration as applicable.

7.2 Change in Training Materials

The ATC Manager must notify the Certification Authority of any significant changes to material directly related to the content of the Standard against which the course is accredited. The Certification Authority has the right to review and approve all such changes; such approval will not be unreasonably withheld or delayed. The modified materials must be made available to the Certification Authority in a form that allows an Assessor to easily see the changes that have been made.

7.3 Change in Trainers

All trainers who deliver the ATC must be registered with the Certification Authority at all times.

The ATC Manager must notify the Certification Authority of all new trainers and their qualifications. The Certification Authority must grant approval before such new trainers may deliver an ATC.

7.4 New Delivery Language or Method

The ATC Manager must notify the Certification Authority of changes to the training materials to support delivery of the ATC in a new language or by a new delivery method. Such notification must be made at least two (2) weeks before first planned use. The Certification Authority has the right to review and

approve all such changes; such approval will not be unreasonably withheld or delayed. The revised training materials may be used only after the Certification Authority approves a change in the scope of the ATC's accreditation to include the new delivery language or method.

The Certification Authority will then update the information in the Accreditation Register and Conformance Declaration as applicable.

7.5 Administrative Changes

If an Organization wishes to make changes to the Conformance Declaration that do not have a material effect on the conformance of the ATC, the ATC Manager must notify the Certification Authority within 30 calendar days of such change occurring. The Certification Authority will update the Conformance Declaration to reflect the requested changes.

7.6 Other Changes

Except where specifically stated otherwise in this Accreditation Policy document, any other change to any of the elements upon which an ATC's accreditation is based must be communicated to the Certification Authority within 30 calendar days of such change occurring.

If the Certification Authority believes that the change may have a material effect on the conformance of the ATC to the Accreditation Requirements, the ATC will be subject to the full assessment and accreditation process, or any subset thereof, at the discretion of the Certification Authority.

8. Working with a Third Party

8.1 Delivery of an ATC by Partners – Affiliates

An ATC Provider is allowed to promote, sell, and deliver an ATC through a partner organization known as an Affiliate.

An Affiliate must use the course material provided by their sponsoring ATC Provider when delivering the ATC.

An Affiliate may use trainers provided by its sponsoring ATC Provider or may use its own trainers.

An Affiliate may use its own Quality Management System or may use the Quality Management System provided by the sponsoring ATC Provider.

When an ATC is offered by an Affiliate, both the ATC Provider and the Affiliate are responsible for ensuring that this Accreditation Policy document is followed and that the Accreditation Requirements are met in full.

An ATC Provider that wishes to use an Affiliate must register the Affiliate with the Certification Authority, pay the applicable fees, and submit the applicable components of the Accreditation Package for assessment by the Certification Authority, as described in Section 2.1.3. The course documentation does not need to be submitted. If the Affiliate is using the Quality Management System provided by the sponsoring ATC Provider, this must be stated in the package, and the documentation of the Quality Management System does not need to be submitted.

The Affiliate is then required to enter into an Affiliate Agreement with the Certification Authority.

The process defined in Sections 2.1.3 to 2.1.6 is then followed, after which the Certification Authority will notify the Organization and the proposed Affiliate of the outcome. If the Assessment has been successful, the Affiliate will be listed in the Accreditation Register, under the entry for the ATC, as a partner of the ATC Provider.

ATC Providers are at all times responsible for their Affiliates' compliance with the trademark usage guidelines in the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement with respect to promotional material for their ATC.

8.2 Promotion of an ATC by Partners – Brokers

ATC Providers may partner with third parties (Brokers) who promote and market the ATC, but who do not deliver or support the delivery of the ATC.

Brokers are not required to enter into any agreement with the Certification Authority.

ATC Providers are at all times responsible for their Brokers' compliance with the trademark usage guidelines in the Accreditation Trademark License Agreement with respect to promotional material for their ATC.

8.3 Use of Third-Party Materials

Organizations may license some or all of the material they need to develop a training course from third parties, including current ATC Providers. Use of material from a previously accredited training course does not, of itself, amount to accreditation and such licensees are not permitted to make any statements suggesting any approval or accreditation by the Certification Authority until their course is accredited.

If a course provider seeking accreditation uses an ATC Provider's course material, the course provider may, instead of including the course material in the Accreditation Package, provide a letter of authorization and a copy of the licensing agreement from the ATC Provider to say that the material is used with their permission and is without material change.

All other parts of the Accreditation Package must be submitted for Assessment as normal.

ATC Providers who license their materials to third parties must advise them that the licensing of course materials does not entitle a licensee to state that the course is accredited and the ATC Provider must make it clear that their licensee is not permitted to use the Accreditation Logos, claim the course is accredited, or state that they are accredited to deliver the training by virtue of the license to the materials.

The Certification Authority will not become involved in copyright or other disputes between training course providers, but will withdraw accreditation if it receives clear evidence that material in an ATC breaches another party's copyright. This includes the situation where third-party material continues to be used after the license to use it has lapsed or been withdrawn.

9. Duration and Re-Accreditation

9.1 Duration of Accreditation

Accreditation is valid for 36 months from the date at which the Certification Authority provides written notice to the Organization that accreditation has been achieved, unless accreditation is subsequently terminated in accordance with Section 4 or Section 6 of this document. Thereafter, accreditation is valid for successive periods of 36 months.

The last day of each period is referred to as the *re-accreditation date* and represents the date on which the accreditation will cease to be valid, unless the Organization extends the accreditation in accordance with the procedures defined below.

9.2 Re-Accreditation Process

Prior to the re-accreditation date, the Organization is required to demonstrate that the ATC continues to meet all applicable Accreditation Requirements.

Specifically:

- All training materials associated with the ATC continue to meet applicable Accreditation Requirements.
- All trainers that deliver or may deliver the ATC are registered with the Certification Authority.
- All Interpretations that have been granted since the previous accreditation and any new revisions or updates to the Accreditation Requirements or Conformance Requirements issued more than 90 days prior to the re-accreditation date are reflected in the course.
- The Organization is operating the quality management system as required by the Accreditation Requirements to ensure that the ATC operates as documented.

Therefore, re-accreditation requires successful re-Assessment of the Accreditation Package. The Certification Authority will determine the content of the Accreditation Package and level of Assessment required based on what has changed since the previous Assessment.

At or before 90 calendar days prior to the re-accreditation date, the Certification Authority will notify the ATC Manager that re-accreditation is due. The Organization must respond to the Certification Authority within 30 calendar days indicating whether or not the Organization would like to maintain the accreditation. Failure to respond within 30 calendar days will be deemed a withdrawal and the accreditation will expire on the re-accreditation date.

If the Organization wishes to re-accredit the course, the Organization must review and update the Accreditation Package as appropriate to reflect the current state of the ATC.

The revised Accreditation Package and any additional information requested by the Certification Authority must be submitted to the Certification Authority at least 45 calendar days prior to the re-accreditation date.

The Certification Authority's Assessor will review the Accreditation Package and report the Assessment findings with a summary to the Certification Authority. The summary will be one of:

1. No discrepancies observed.
2. Minor discrepancies observed that may be fixed after re-accreditation.
3. Major discrepancies observed that must be fixed prior to re-accreditation.

If the Assessor's summary is either (1) or (2), then the Certification Authority will extend the accreditation for another three (3)-year term and inform the Organization. The Certification Authority will update the Accreditation Register and issue an updated Certificate of Accreditation to reflect that accreditation has been re-accredited. If minor discrepancies were observed, then the Organization will be required to provide evidence of having cleared the observed discrepancies within 90 calendar days of the re-accreditation date; failure to do so will result in the accreditation being terminated.

In the event that a major discrepancy is identified during the re-accreditation Assessment, the Organization has 30 calendar days after the re-accreditation date to rectify the non-conformity and satisfy the Certification Authority of the efficacy of the rectification. Failure to do so will mean that accreditation will not be extended. To regain accreditation for the course, the course provider will need to make a new application for accreditation.

An Organization has a responsibility to act in good faith to facilitate completion of the re-accreditation process by the re-accreditation date.

9.3 Periodic On-Site Assessments

The Certification Authority will carry out periodic on-site Assessments of the ATC to ensure quality of delivery and adherence to the applicable Accreditation Requirements.

Within six (6) months of a course achieving accreditation, the Certification Authority will carry out an on-site Assessment of the ATC by having an Assessor to attend some or all of an instance of the ATC. The Certification Authority may, at its discretion, carry out subsequent on-site Assessments at the time of re-accreditation.

The Assessor will produce a written report of the Assessment, including a description of any non-conformities that were discovered, and a recommendation to the Certification Authority as to whether continued accreditation requires corrective action by the Organization.

The Certification Authority will communicate the findings to the Organization and, if corrective actions are required, will agree an action plan with the Organization. The action plan will define the set of corrective actions that the Organization must undertake to come into conformance with the Accreditation Requirements and a timeframe for implementing such actions.

Once the action plan has been implemented by the Organization, the Assessor will follow up with the Organization to determine whether the corrective actions have been appropriately implemented. The Assessor will then update the Assessment report with the outcome of the implementation of the action plan and resubmit it to the Certification Authority.

If the Assessor reports that the action plan has been implemented successfully, accreditation continues.

If the Assessor reports that the action plan has not been implemented successfully or that there are other non-conformances in the ATC, the Certification Authority will give formal notice to the Organization to address the identified non-conformances, as defined in Section 4.2.

9.4 Withdrawal of Accreditation at Re-Accreditation

During the re-accreditation process, the Certification Authority may revoke the accreditation and remove the ATC from the Accreditation Register, if:

- The Organization does not complete the re-accreditation process within 30 calendar days after the re-accreditation date; or
- The Organization fails to complete any action within the timeframe defined in Section 9.2 or 9.3.

Such a training course will then no longer be considered an ATC.

10. Problem Reporting and Interpretations

10.1 Overview

During the accreditation process, during the preparation phase, or subsequently, an Organization may encounter a problem that inhibits or will inhibit the accreditation or conformance with the Accreditation Requirements. The Organization may file a Problem Report via the Certification Authority's website to obtain resolution to the issue. The Certification Authority is the sole interface with the Organization for problem reporting, though other parties may be involved in determining the resolution.

The types of problems that may be found include:

- Errors or ambiguities in the specifications(s) against which conformance is based, specifically, in the Accreditation Requirements, Accreditation Policy, or in other documents or underlying standards referenced therein.
- Errors in the certification and/or accreditation system, specifically those related to the registration process, agreements, the Accreditation Package, or the Assessment materials used to assess conformance with the Accreditation Requirements.

The Problem Report is used specifically for the types of errors listed above which are inhibiting the accreditation effort. For general questions on the accreditation process, the Assessment process, or other problems not covered above, the Certification Authority can provide assistance on obtaining further information.

10.2 Problem Report Resolution

The Certification Authority is responsible for reviewing and providing a resolution to all Problem Reports. The key element of the review process is a deterministic timeline for a formal resolution to the Problem Report.

The Certification Authority will provide a resolution to the Organization within 25 business days of the Problem Report submission.

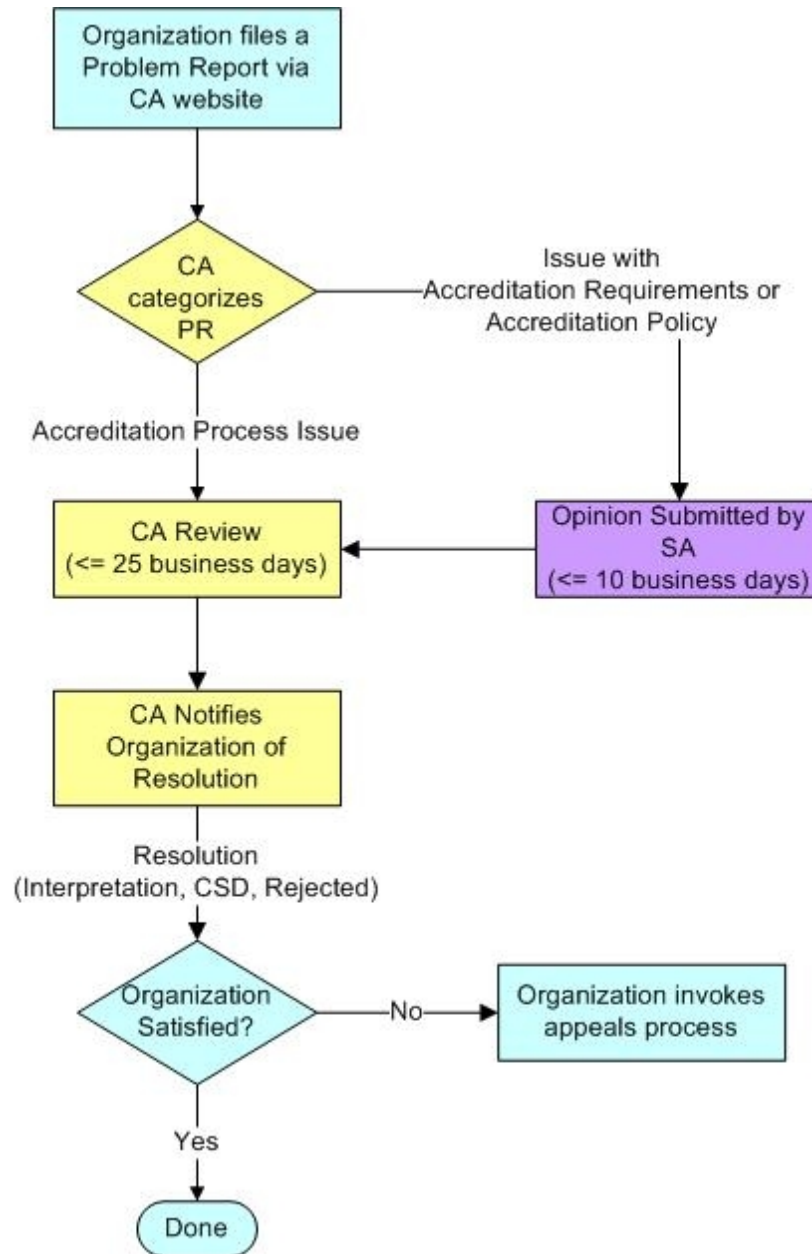
In order to resolve Problem Reports for issues related to the Accreditation Requirements or the Accreditation Policy, an opinion from the Specification Authority may be required. These opinions must be provided within ten (10) business days of the Problem Report submission in order for the Certification Authority to provide its response on time.

In most cases, 25 business days is sufficient to provide a final Problem Report resolution. However, in exceptional circumstances, final resolution may take longer. If possible, the Problem Report will be addressed sufficiently within the 25 business days to allow the accreditation process to proceed pending final resolution. The Certification Authority will notify the Organization by the 25th day of the delay and any preliminary resolution, if available.

If the Organization is not satisfied with the final resolution, the Organization may invoke the appeals process defined in Section 11.

The Problem Report resolution process will allow the Organization to remain anonymous, so pre-accreditation activity is kept entirely confidential. This anonymous review process requires that requests be filtered automatically prior to viewing by anyone other than the Certification Authority. Filtering will remove the sections of the Problem Report specific to identification of the Organization, so these are the only sections that should contain the company name, course identifier, or other confidential information. Please note that if Organization-specific information is included in the sections reserved for the detailed problem descriptions, filtering will not result in an anonymous request.

The process is outlined in the following diagram:



10.3 Resolution of Problem Reports

The possible outcomes for Problem Report resolution are:

- Accepted as an error or ambiguity in the specifications against which conformance is based (an Interpretation)
- Accepted as an error in the certification and/or accreditation system (Certification System Deficiency (CSD))
- Rejected

The issuance of an Interpretation or CSD will not cause a previously accredited training course to be “un-accredited” at a given revision level of the Accreditation Requirements, but can affect an ATC’s continued conformance. Interpretations and CSDs evolve the definition of conformance over time and ATCs are always required to conform to the current definition of conformance. At the time of re-accreditation, the Organization will be required to demonstrate that the ATC conforms to the then applicable Accreditation Requirements, including all Interpretations that have been granted since the previous accreditation.

10.3.1 Interpretations

An Interpretation elaborates or refines the meaning of a specification, therefore clarifying an error or ambiguity in the specification. Interpretations apply to a specific version of a specification and are permanent against that version. They remain in force until the specification is updated, at which time the elaboration or refined meaning should be incorporated into the updated version of the specification.

Interpretations always apply to a particular version of the Accreditation Requirements, Accreditation Policy, or a specification referenced therein. Therefore, if a Problem Report submitted against one of these documents includes rationale that cites conflict with a previous or subsequent version of the document, the Problem Report will be assessed without considering such rationale. Conflict with another version of the Accreditation Requirements, Accreditation Policy, or referenced specification does not in itself form grounds for granting an Interpretation.

The Specification Authority is responsible for deciding the meaning of conformance to normative referenced specifications or other documents (if any) only within the context of the Accreditation Requirements. Thus, a Problem Report regarding any such underlying or referenced specification that is made in the context of the Accreditation Requirements will be processed as normal. However, any Problem Report that seeks to change the base requirements of underlying normative specifications or other documents over which the Specification Authority has no direct control will be rejected.

The Problem Reporting and Interpretations process may not be used to dispute the outcome of the Assessment and accreditation process. Such issues should instead utilize the appeals process defined in Section 11.

10.4 Problem Report Repository

The Certification Authority will maintain a web-accessible repository of all submitted Problem Reports. This repository will be publicly accessible. The publicly accessible information will contain the technical details – such as the nature of the problem and its current status of resolution – but will not contain sections reserved for organizational details, thus maintaining the confidentiality of the Organization.

An Organization may cite an Interpretation or CSD to resolve discrepancies or to support their application for accreditation in any other way, irrespective of the origin of the Problem Report.

11. Appeals Process

Organizations may appeal decisions made by the Certification Authority. The occasions that may give rise to an appeal include, but are not limited to:

- The Organization disagrees with the resolution of a Problem Report.
- The Organization disagrees with the Certification Authority's grounds for denying the award of accreditation.
- An Organization disagrees with the grounds of a formal notification of the need to rectify a non-conformance.

Appeal requests should be made to the Certification Authority. The Accreditation Guide describes the process for raising an appeal.

There are two levels of appeal:

- Technical Review
- Board Review

At each level of appeal, the Organization has the right to representation at the review meeting to make the technical case, though is not required to do so. The appeals process will be anonymous if the Organization does not wish to be represented at the review meetings. In such case, the Certification Authority will remove details that may identify the Organization or its training course from all information provided for the Technical and/or Board Reviews.

An Organization wishing to dispute a Certification Authority decision may request a Technical Review. A Technical Review requires the Specification Authority to consider the matter and produce a response with a recorded vote, according to the voting rules of The Open Group, within 30 calendar days of the request. The Specification Authority may commission reports from independent experts and may seek input from other committees within The Open Group as it sees fit.

If the Organization is not satisfied with the outcome of the Technical Review, the Organization may request an appeal to The Open Group Board of Directors within 14 calendar days of being notified in writing by the Certification Authority of the results of the Technical Review. The Open Group Board of Directors may ask for reports or assistance from the relevant working groups and also from independent experts. The Board Review will be completed within 90 calendar days of the Organization's written request for a Board Review. The results of a Board Review are final and cannot be further appealed.

12. Confidentiality and Disclosure

12.1 Confidentiality

All information relating to an Organization and the training course to be accredited will be held confidential during the accreditation process; that is, prior to the award of accreditation. This includes information related to the registration, the Accreditation Package, the Assessment process, Conformance Declarations, and Problem Reports.

Assessment reports and any documents submitted by the Organization will always be confidential. Information regarding the details of the Assessment process shall not be disclosed in any publicly available document or to any third party by the Certification Authority, the Assessor, the Organization, or any party acting on the Organization's behalf.

In addition, the Certification Authority will always hold confidential any information regarding unsuccessful requests for accreditation.

The terms and conditions regarding confidentiality and non-disclosure are contained in the Accreditation Agreement.

12.2 Disclosure of Accreditation Information

Accreditation information consists of the fact that accreditation was achieved, the description of the ATC, and information in the Conformance Declaration. Any claims of accreditation or information related to the accreditation process may only be made public after the Certification Authority has notified the Organization in writing that the training course has successfully completed the accreditation process.

The Certification Authority will make accreditation information publicly available by including it in the Accreditation Register available on the Certification Authority's website.