

Are your inspection services up to the mark?

A short introductory guide that explains why you should use a UKAS accredited inspection body for your inspection needs



... use a UKAS Accredited Inspection Body www.ukas.com

Competence is crucial

Do you commission or procure the inspection of equipment, buildings and processes at your place of work?

If you do, you will want to make sure that the organisation undertaking that inspection has the people, facilities, technical expertise, management systems and track record to undertake the inspection professionally and competently.

By doing so, you can be sure that you have taken the necessary steps to manage and minimise your risks.



The competence of the inspection body you appoint may be **crucial** to maintaining your reputation as a responsible organisation! It is therefore surprising that organisations are still tempted to use the services of inspection bodies whose competence has **not** been confirmed by an independent, authoritative third party.

So why leave something so important to chance? There is a tried and tested way of **ensuring** that an inspection body is up to the task, and that is by using **one that has been accredited** for the specific activity by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS).

UKAS is the **sole** accreditation body recognised by government to assess, against internationally recognised standards, organisations that provide inspection services. UKAS combines a depth of technical knowledge and expertise built up over many years with scientific and technical specialists operating across a range of inspection activities.

“By having UKAS accreditation, we have rigidly enforced into our test shops a tight regime for the periodic inspection and maintenance of gas cylinders. With the ‘UKAS seal of approval’ there is a commitment from the highest management levels to the shopfloor of BOC's determination to do things in a safe and efficient way, so that our customers will always receive a quality enhanced product.”

Roy Irani
BOC



What are your inspection needs?

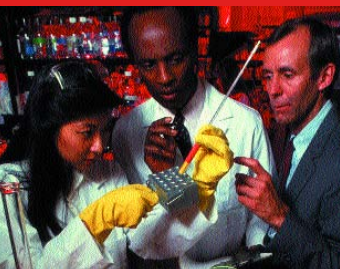
There are well over 100 UKAS accredited inspection bodies in the UK working mainly in the following broad sectors: Engineering, Food and Asbestos. So whatever your inspection needs are in these areas, there is more than likely an inspection body qualified to do the job.

Typically, inspections will cover product design, products, materials and equipment, installations, plant, processes and services.

Some of these areas will be covered by legislation that demands that regular inspection is undertaken, for example in the areas of:

- lifts
- hoists
- cranes
- pressurised gas cylinders
- electrical installations
- escalators

If the range of these inspection areas does not meet your needs, please give us a call.



“One of our aims is to promote the highest levels of engineering inspection competence. Such levels of competence can be assured when an inspection body achieves and maintains UKAS accreditation for all its inspection activities.”

Richard Morgan,
Safety Assessment Federation (SAFed)

How to identify an accredited inspection body

It is not widely known that anybody can set up as an inspection body. In some areas there are few rules, regulations or minimum standards. Fortunately, there is an assured way to check the technical competence of an inspection body.

The internationally recognised standard for the competence of inspection bodies is ISO/IEC 17020. It is **the** standard against which UKAS accredits inspection bodies. It is the standard you should look for.

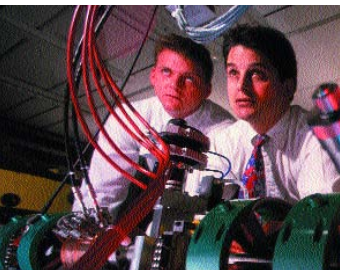
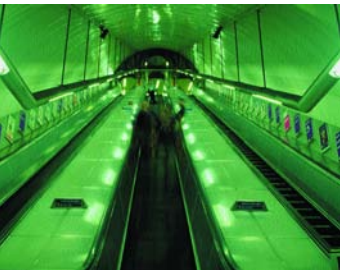
ISO 17020 should not be confused with the quality management standard ISO 9001:2000. The latter is specific to quality management systems. It does not require evaluation of the technical competence of an inspection body. ISO 9001:2000 should **not** be regarded as an 'acceptable' alternative to ISO 17020.

Identifying a UKAS accredited ISO 17020 inspection body is easy: each and every one of them is permitted to display the Royal Crown Mark, illustrated here, as proof of accreditation. ***This Mark is positive assurance of competency.***



Why you should use a UKAS accredited inspection body

There are a host of reasons why you should use a UKAS accredited inspection body. Here are some of the most important:



Minimise risk

In 2001/2 there were over 200 work-related fatal injuries and nearly 28,000 serious injuries to employees in the UK*. It can be reasonably assumed that some of these accidents may have been avoided had inspections been undertaken by a UKAS accredited inspection body. While risk can never be removed altogether, employing the services of a UKAS accredited inspection body will help reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.

Keep your reputation

What can be more important than your organisation's reputation? Properly inspected machinery and premises will send a signal to your customers about your professionalism and integrity. Conversely, your reputation could be destroyed overnight if it is shown that you tried to cut corners on inspection. Can you afford **not** to use a UKAS accredited inspection body?

Reduce costs

While the up-front costs of employing a UKAS accredited inspection body may possibly be higher, there are other factors

*Published Health and Safety Executive statistics

that need to be considered that will reduce this cost considerably. Properly inspected equipment is more reliable, leading to improved productivity and reduced downtime.

Demonstrate credibility

The last thing you want is to spend money on inspection and then worry that it has not been undertaken competently. A UKAS accredited inspection body is able to demonstrate a full audit trail for the inspection, can call upon best practice within its sector and will only use the services of trained and experienced evaluators.

Defend against litigation

Litigation is becoming more commonplace. Its consequences for small and medium sized enterprises can be dramatic. If you are unfortunate enough to find yourself in court on an inspection-related matter, the use of a UKAS accredited inspection body is a powerful demonstration that you have exercised all due diligence in the selection and appointment of an inspection body. It's a strong message that quality sits at the heart of your company.

"UKAS accreditation assures our customers that we are able to demonstrate the highest levels of quality and competency, and assures us that we are competing with other accredited inspection bodies on a level playing field."

Cameron Sinclair
Zurich Risk Services



Find out more

We hope that we have convinced you that using a UKAS accredited inspection body is the solution to your inspection needs.



A full list of all inspection bodies accredited by UKAS is available on the UKAS website www.ukas.com

Alternatively, further information on UKAS can be obtained by ringing the UKAS information desk:

**+44 (0) 20 8917 8555 or
e-mail info@ukas.com**

“Businesses that require the services of a conformity assessment body, be it a laboratory, inspection company or certification body, should look first for the National Accreditation Mark.”

Lord Sainsbury
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
for Science and Innovation

