

Information Sheet 01

Remote Assessment

What is Remote Assessment?

The objective of Remote Assessment is to employ electronic means for undertaking activities at the client's site which would previously have been carried out physically. Remote assessments may need to be considered if assessors travelling to a specific location is deemed unreasonable or not possible e.g., the 2020-21 Covid-19 pandemic.

While initially seeming a difficult concept, remote assessments provide the opportunity for increased efficiency, increased safety, and avoidance of travel delays and restrictions.

Remote assessment can now be undertaken using the latest information and communication technology (ICT). ICT can be used for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analysing and transmitting information and include software and hardware such as smart phones, handheld devices, laptop computers, desktop computers, drones, video cameras, wearable technology and so forth.

The assessment therefore may include everything that is usually covered during a site visit, but some activities, particularly process audits of service delivery or production operations may still be needed due to legislative or regulatory requirements, and will therefore need to be planned for a later date.

How is Remote Assessment achieved?

A number of tools and approaches can be used to achieve successful remote assessments. An important consideration is ensuring all assessors at the appropriate competency and skills to employ ICT technologies. ICT can be used for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analysing and transmitting information and include software and hardware such as smart phones, handheld devices, laptop and desktop computers, drones, video cameras, wearable technology and so forth. Specific examples include:

- Undertaking meetings using teleconference facilities
- Remotely reviewing documented information
- Observing activities via live webcam stream

Preparing for a Remote Assessment

Remote assessments should follow normal assessment plans and processes but with due consideration to the risks and challenges presented by remote assessment. Effective preparation is essential for successful remote assessment including:

- Ensuring the security and confidentiality of electronically-transmitted information at all stages of the assessment
- Ensuring workstations of all participants are suitable for the work to be undertaken e.g. comfortable, uncluttered, and available for all sessions of the assessment as planned
- Careful consideration of the timings of videoconferencing meetings e.g. having several short sessions over a stated period allowing time for the assessment of information gathered; video recording of processes de-conflicted with production activities
- ensuring all persons are aware of their role with appropriate 'dry runs' organised as needed
- determining the videoconferencing platform and ensuring all permissions and subscriptions are in place before the remote assessment commences
- ensuring all persons in a remote assessment are fully conversant with the ICT tools to be used such as the video conferencing platform, body cameras, other recording devices and so forth. Become familiar with the ICT before the assessment commences
- Providing suitable locations for the assessment such as quiet rooms at office locations and home locations are available at the time needed
- If necessary, ensure time zones are considered when planning activities
- Granting appropriate access to websites, shared areas and so forth for all assessors.

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