

Transition Schedule for ISO/IEC 17020:2026

ISO/IEC 17020:2026 ‘Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies performing inspection’ was published in March 2026 to replace the 2012 version. At the General Assembly of International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC, now known as Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated) in October 2025, a 3-year transition period from the date of publication of the new standard was endorsed. The deadline for inspection bodies to conform to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 is therefore tentatively **31 March 2029**. After the deadline, accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020:2012 will become invalid.

1. New applicants

HKAS will accept applications based on ISO/IEC 17020:2026 from **1 December 2026**. HKAS Executive recommends inspection bodies submitting new applications based on this edition. Applications based on ISO/IEC 17020:2012 (i.e. HKIAS 003) will NOT be accepted after **31 March 2027**.

Applications based on ISO/IEC 17020:2012

From **1 December 2026**, for assessments based on ISO/IEC 17020:2012, nonconformities against the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020:2012 will be, as usual, raised as ‘Nonconformities (NCs)’. Obvious nonconformities against the new requirements of ISO/IEC 17020:2026 will be raised as ‘Recommendations’*. Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020:2012 will be granted when an applicant rectifies all critical and significant NCs to the satisfaction of HKAS Executive and commits to rectifying all minor NCs prior to the next reassessment.

To ensure a smooth transition to the new standard, all new inspection bodies accredited to ISO/IEC 17020:2012 shall prepare a transition plan and submit it to HKAS Executive *within one month* from the date of obtaining the accreditation. Please refer to Appendix for a transition plan template.

If accreditation based on ISO/IEC 17020:2012 of any new application cannot be granted by **31 March 2028**, HKAS Executive will suspend processing the application. The applicant shall implement the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020:2026 before HKAS Executive resumes the application process. Another assessment to confirm the conformity with the requirements of the new standard shall be conducted. Please note that other accreditation regulations relevant to an initial application still apply.

Applications based on ISO/IEC 17020:2026

Applications based on ISO/IEC 17020:2026 will be processed according to established accreditation

procedures.

All assessed inspection bodies shall provide a plan for resolving all NCs identified in the assessment to HKAS Executive *within one month* after the assessment visit. Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 will be granted when an applicant rectifies all critical and significant NCs to the satisfaction of HKAS Executive and commits to rectifying all minor NCs prior to the next reassessment.

2. Inspection bodies accredited under HKIAS

HKAS will begin carrying out assessments based on ISO/IEC 17020:2026 on **1 December 2026**. To ensure a smooth transition, all accredited inspection bodies shall prepare a transition plan and submit it to HKAS Executive by **1 November 2026**. Please refer to [Appendix](#) for a transition plan template.

Successful transition to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 shall be confirmed through an on-site assessment. The assessment can be conducted either concurrently with an ordinary assessment (e.g. reassessment, surveillance visit or assessment for scope extension) or on an ad-hoc basis. If an accredited inspection body prefers to have its assessment for transition to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 conducted on an occasion other than an ordinary assessment, it may request HKAS Executive to do so but it shall bear the cost of such a visit. In any case, the assessment for transition to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 shall be conducted on or before **31 December 2028**.

From **1 December 2026** to **31 December 2028**, assessments can be based either on 2012 or 2026 edition of ISO/IEC 17020, depending on the transition plan submitted by accredited inspection bodies. HKAS Executive will confirm the accreditation standard to be used prior to the assessment. In an assessment based on ISO/IEC 17020:2012, obvious nonconformities against the new requirements of ISO/IEC 17020:2026 will be raised as ‘Recommendation’*.

3. Issue of Certificate of Accreditation referring to ISO/IEC 17020:2026

Certificate(s) of accreditation referring to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 will be issued free of charge to replace the one(s) based on ISO/IEC 17020:2012 when an accredited inspection body demonstrates conformity with the new standard to the satisfaction of HKAS Executive through an on-site assessment. Any additional certificates will be charged according to the fee schedule.

*Note: *Addressing the ‘Recommendations’ does not imply conformity to ISO/IEC 17020:2026. Conformity to ISO/IEC 17020:2026 will be assessed in a separate assessment.*

HKAS Executive
June 2026

Appendix – Transition Plan Template

The transition plan should contain at least the following information:

Registration Number:	HKIAS XXX		
Monitoring Plan	A / B / C		
Gap analysis	Before <i>DD MM YYYY</i>		
Management system updated to meet ISO/IEC 17020:2026	Before <i>DD MM YYYY</i>		
Implementation of the revised management system	From <i>DD MM YYYY</i>		
Internal audit of the updated management system	Before <i>DD MM YYYY</i>		
Year	Assessment type	Due dates ¹	Standard to be used ²
2026	<i>e.g. Surveillance visit</i>	<i>e.g. 1 Dec 2026</i>	<i>e.g. ISO/IEC 17020:2012</i>
2027	<i>e.g. Reassessment</i>	<i>e.g. 1 Dec 2027</i>	<i>e.g. ISO/IEC 17020:2026</i>
2028	<i>e.g. Surveillance visit</i>	<i>e.g. 1 Dec 2028</i>	<i>e.g. ISO/IEC 17020:2026</i>
Remarks ³ :			

Notes:

1. Due dates of assessment visits are normally detailed in the Notification Letter issued for the last reassessment of the inspection body. Please contact HKAS if you have any questions.
2. Please indicate which version of standard your inspection body intends to use for the assessment. A transition assessment is normally conducted after the inspection body has implemented its management system based on ISO/IEC 17020:2026 and completed relevant internal audits of the updated system and procedures.
3. For any other considerations you have regarding the transition assessment, please indicate here.