

BSI Standards Publication

Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies performing inspection



This is a preview of BS EN ISO/IEC 17020:2026. [Click here to purchase the full version from the ANSI store.](#)

National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of EN ISO/IEC 17020:2026. It is identical to ISO/IEC 17020:2026. It supersedes BS EN ISO/IEC 17020:2012, which is withdrawn.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee CAS/1, Conformity assessment.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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UK Government is responsible for legislation. For information on legislation and policies relating to that legislation, consult the relevant pages of www.gov.uk.

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Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

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Supersedes EN ISO/IEC 17020:2012

English version

Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies performing inspection (ISO/IEC 17020:2026)

Évaluation de la conformité - Exigences pour les organismes effectuant des inspections (ISO/IEC 17020:2026)

Konformitätsbewertung - Anforderungen an Stellen, die Inspektionen durchführen (ISO/IEC 17020:2026)

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 17 February 2026.

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Rue de la Science 23, B-1040 Brussels**

European foreword

This document (EN ISO/IEC 17020:2026) has been prepared by Technical Committee ISO/CASCO "Committee on conformity assessment" in collaboration with Technical Committee CEN-CENELEC/ JTC 1 "Criteria for conformity assessment bodies" the secretariat of which is held by BSI.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by October 2026, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by October 2026.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN-CENELEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

This document supersedes EN ISO/IEC 17020:2012.

This document has been prepared under a standardization request addressed to CEN and CENELEC by the European Commission. The Standing Committee of the EFTA States subsequently approves these requests for its Member States.

For the relationship with EU Legislation, see informative Annex ZA, which is an integral part of this document.

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Endorsement notice

The text of ISO/IEC 17020:2026 has been approved by CEN-CENELEC as EN ISO/IEC 17020:2026 without any modification.

Annex ZA
(informative)

Relationship between this European Standard and the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 339/93 aimed to be covered

This European Standard has been prepared under Commission Implementing Decision C(2021)9277 of 17.12.2021 on a standardisation request to the European Committee for Standardisation and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation as regards accreditation and conformity assessment in support of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council (M/580), to provide one voluntary means of conforming to Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 339/93 [OJ L 218].

Once this standard is cited in the Official Journal of the European Union under that Regulation, compliance with the normative clauses of this standard given in Table ZA.1 and ZA.2 confers, within the limits of the scope of this standard, a presumption of conformity with the corresponding requirements of that Regulation, and associated EFTA regulations.

Table ZA.1 — Correspondence between this European Standard and Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 setting out the requirements for accreditation and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 339/93 [OJ L 218].

Requirement of Regulation (EC) 765/2008	Clause(s)/sub-clause(s) of this EN	Remarks/Notes
Article 5(1)	1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6	

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Table ZA.2 — Correspondence between this European Standard and Decision No 768/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 on a common framework for the marketing of products, and repealing Council Decision 93/465/EEC [OJ L 218].

Requirement of Decision No 768/2008/EC	Clause(s)/sub-clause(s) of this EN	Remarks/Notes
Article R17(1)	5.2.1	
Article R17(3)	5.1, Annex A	
Article R17(4)	4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.5, 4.1.6, 4.1.7, 4.2.4	
Article R17(5)	4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.7, 6.1.2, 8.2.2	
Article R17(6)	6.1.2, 6.2, 6.3.1, 6.3.2, 7.1.1, 7.2	
Article R17(7)	6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3	
Article R17(8)	4.1	
Article R17(9)	5.2.4	
Article R17(10)	4.2	
Article R20(1)	6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.4	
Article R20(2)	6.3.5	
Article R20(3)	6.3.4	
Article R20(4)	6.3.2, 6.3.6	
Article R27(1)	7.1, 7.2	
Article R27(2)	6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3	
Article R27(3)	7.2.5, 7.6.2	

WARNING 1 Presumption of conformity stays valid only as long as a reference to this European Standard is maintained in the list published in the Official Journal of the European Union. Users of this standard should consult frequently the latest list published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

WARNING 2 Other Union legislation may be applicable to the product(s) falling within the scope of this standard.

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives or www.iec.ch/members_experts/refdocs).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html. In the IEC, see www.iec.ch/understanding-standards.

This document was prepared by the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (CASCO), in collaboration with the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) Technical Committee CEN/CLC/JTC 1, *Criteria for conformity assessment bodies*, in accordance with the Agreement on technical cooperation between ISO and CEN (Vienna Agreement).

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO/IEC 17020:2012), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- the categorization of the inspection body's independence type has been changed to type A and type non-A;
- a definition of "item" and a definition of "client" have been included;
- a new subclause on the control of data and information and actions to address risks and opportunities has been added;
- the common elements in CASCO standards have been incorporated;
- the risk-based thinking applied in this edition has enabled some reduction in prescriptive requirements and their replacement by performance-based requirements;
- there is greater flexibility than in the previous edition in the requirements for processes, procedures, documented information and organizational responsibilities.

This corrected version of ISO/IEC 17020:2026 incorporates the following correction:

- in [6.3.3](#), the sentence "The use of externally provided inspection activities for part of the inspection or the entire inspection shall be used in exceptional circumstances." has been replaced by the following:

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This document was developed to promote confidence in bodies performing inspection.

Inspection bodies perform inspection activities on behalf of private clients, their parent organizations, regulatory authorities, or others, with the objective of providing information about the conformity of inspected items with regulations, standards, specifications, inspection schemes or contracts. Inspection parameters include matters of quantity, quality, safety, fitness for purpose, and conformity of inspected item(s) with specified requirements (e.g. safety compliance of installations or systems in operation). This document provides requirements for the competence, impartiality and consistent operation of inspection bodies as a basis to promote confidence about and acceptance of inspection results by clients, regulatory authorities and others.

This document covers the activities of inspection bodies whose work can include the examination of materials, products, installations, plants, processes, work procedures or services, and the determination of their conformity with requirements and the subsequent reporting of results of these activities to clients and, when required, to regulatory authorities. Inspection can concern all stages during the lifetime of these items, including the design stage. Such work normally requires the exercise of professional judgement in performing inspection, in particular when assessing conformity with general requirements.

This document can be used as a requirements document for accreditation or peer-assessment or other assessments.

The requirements of this document can be interpreted when applied to particular sectors.

Inspection can be an activity embedded in a larger process. For example, inspection can be specified as a surveillance activity in a product certification scheme. Likewise, results of other conformity assessment activities can be used as an input when performing inspection activities. Inspection can be an activity that precedes maintenance or simply provides information about the inspected item with no determination of conformity with requirements.

The categorization of inspection bodies as type A and type non-A reflects the level of their independence. The impartiality requirements are equally applicable to both type A and type non-A inspection bodies.

Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies performing inspection

1 Scope

This document contains requirements for the competence and impartiality of bodies performing inspection, and for the consistent operation of their inspection activities.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 17000:2020, *Conformity assessment — Vocabulary and general principles*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 17000 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1 inspection

examination of an *item* (3.8) and determination of its conformity with detailed requirements or, on the basis of professional judgement, with general requirements

Note 1 to entry: Examination can include direct or indirect observations, which can include measurements or the output of instruments.

Note 2 to entry: Inspection results normally include a statement of conformity regarding the item. However, schemes or contracts can specify inspection as examination only.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17000:2020, 6.3, modified — In the definition, "object of conformity assessment" has been replaced by "item"; the original Notes 2 and 3 to entry have been removed; a new Note 2 to entry has been added.]

3.2 inspection body

body that performs *inspection* (3.1)

3.3 inspection scheme

inspection programme

set of rules and procedures that describes the *item* (3.8), identifies the specified requirements and provides the methodology for performing *inspection* (3.1)

Note 1 to entry: Inspection schemes can be operated at the international, regional, national, sub-national or industry sector level.