

# Candidate Handbook

ISO 37301 LEAD AUDITOR



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## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

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### About PECB

PECB is a certification body which provides education<sup>1</sup> and certification in accordance with ISO/IEC 17024 for individuals on a wide range of disciplines.

We help professionals show commitment and competence by providing them with valuable evaluation and certification services against internationally recognized standards. Our mission is to provide services that inspire trust and continual improvement, demonstrate recognition, and benefit the society as a whole.

#### The key objectives of PECB are:

1. Establishing the minimum requirements necessary to certify professionals
2. Reviewing and verifying the qualifications of applicant to ensure they are eligible to apply for certification
3. Developing and maintaining reliable certification evaluations
4. Granting certifications to qualified candidates, maintaining records, and publishing a directory of the holders of a valid certification
5. Establishing requirements for the periodic renewal of certification and ensuring compliance with those requirements
6. Ensuring that candidates meet ethical standards in their professional practice
7. Representing its members, where appropriate, in matters of common interest
8. Promoting the benefits of certification to organizations, employers, public officials, practitioners in related fields, and the public

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<sup>1</sup> Education refers to training courses developed by PECB, and offered globally through our network of resellers.  
PECB Candidate Handbook



## The Value of PECB Certification

### Why Choose PECB as Your Certification Body?

#### Global Recognition

Our certifications are internationally recognized and accredited by the International Accreditation Service (IAS); signatory of IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) which ensures mutual recognition of accredited certification between signatories to the MLA and acceptance of accredited certification in many markets. Therefore, professionals who pursue a PECB certification credential will benefit from PECB's recognition in domestic and international markets.

#### Competent Personnel

The core team of PECB consists of competent individuals who have relevant sector-specific experience. All of our employees hold professional credentials and are constantly trained to provide more than satisfactory services to our clients.

#### Compliance with Standards

Our certifications are a demonstration of compliance with ISO/IEC 17024. They ensure that the standard requirements have been fulfilled and validated with the adequate consistency, professionalism, and impartiality.

#### Customer Service

We are a customer-centered company and treat all our customers with value, importance, professionalism, and honesty. PECB has a team of experts dedicated to support customer requests, problems, concerns, needs, and opinions. We do our best to maintain a 24-hours maximum response time without compromising the quality of the service.



## PECB Code of Ethics

### PECB professionals will:

1. Conduct themselves professionally, with honesty, accuracy, fairness, responsibility, and independence
2. Act at all times solely in the best interest of their employer, their clients, the public, and the profession, by adhering to the professional standards and applicable techniques while offering professional services
3. Maintain competency in their respective fields and strive to constantly improve their professional capabilities
4. Offer only professional services for which they are qualified to perform, and adequately inform clients about the nature of the proposed services, including any relevant concerns or risks
5. Inform each employer or client of any business interests or affiliations that might influence their judgment or impair their fairness
6. Treat in a confidential and private manner the information acquired during professional and business dealings of any present or former employer or client
7. Comply with all laws and regulations of the jurisdictions where professional activities are conducted
8. Respect the intellectual property and contributions of others
9. Not, intentionally or otherwise, communicate false or falsified information that may compromise the integrity of the evaluation process of a candidate for a professional designation
10. Not act in any manner that could compromise the reputation of PECB or its certification programs
11. Fully cooperate on the inquiry following a claimed infringement of this Code of Ethics

The full version of the PECB Code of Ethics can be downloaded [here](#).



## Introduction to ISO 37301 Lead Auditor

ISO 37301 specifies requirements to plan, establish, implement, operate, monitor, review, maintain, and continually improve a compliance management system (CMS). ISO 37301 emphasizes the importance of embedding compliance in an organization's culture.

A CMS comprises policies, procedures, and controls to be implemented for the purpose of enhancing the organization's ability to meet compliance obligations. However, as it is not possible to completely eliminate compliance risks, a CMS also improves the organization's ability to respond to cases of nonconformities and noncompliances. The requirements specified in ISO 37301 are generic and intended to be applicable to all organizations (or parts thereof), regardless of type, size, and nature of the organization.

In addition to the implementation of a CMS, organizations and third-party conformity assessment bodies also need assurance that the policies, procedures, and controls generate the desired outcomes and meet, as a minimum, the requirements of ISO 37301. Auditors determine compliance with requirements of ISO 37301, assess the effectiveness of controls and measures, and identify areas where organizations need to improve their compliance performance. A PECB Certified ISO 37001 Lead Auditor certificate is proof that an auditor is able to complete these tasks with success.

Considering that auditing is an increasingly demanded profession, an internationally recognized certification can help you maximize your career potential and reach your professional objectives.

It is important to understand that PECB certifications are not a license or simply a membership. They represent peer recognition that an individual has demonstrated proficiency in, and comprehension of, a set of competences. PECB certifications are awarded to candidates that can demonstrate experience and have passed a standardized exam in the certification area.

This document specifies the PECB ISO 37301 Lead Auditor certification scheme in compliance with ISO/IEC 17024:2012. This candidate handbook also contains information about the process by which candidates may earn and maintain their credentials. It is very important that you read all the information included in this candidate handbook before completing and submitting your application. If you have questions after reading it, please contact the PECB international office at [certification@pecb.com](mailto:certification@pecb.com).

## SECTION II: PECB CERTIFICATION PROCESS AND EXAMINATION PREPARATION, RULES, AND POLICIES

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### Decide Which Certification Is Right for You

All PECB certifications have specific education and professional experience requirements. To determine the right credential for you, verify the eligibility criteria for various certifications and your professional needs.

### Prepare and Schedule the Exam

All candidates are responsible for their own study and preparation for certification exams. No specific set of training courses or curriculum of study is required as part of the certification process. Nevertheless, attending a training course can significantly increase candidates' chances of successfully passing a PECB exam.

To schedule an exam, candidates have two options:

1. Contact one of our resellers who provide training courses and exam sessions. To find a training course provider in a particular region, candidates should go to [Active Resellers](#). The PECB training course schedule is also available on [Training Events](#).
2. Take a PECB exam remotely from their home or any location they desire through the PECB Exam application, which can be accessed here: [Exam Events](#).

To learn more about exams, competency domains, and knowledge statements, please refer to *Section III* of this document.

### Application Fees for Examination and Certification

PECB offers direct exams, where a candidate can sit for the exam without attending the training course. The applicable prices are as follows:

- Lead Exam: \$1000
- Manager Exam: \$700
- Foundation and Transition Exam: \$500

The application fee for certification is \$500.

For all candidates that have followed the training course and taken the exam with one of PECB's resellers, the application fee includes the costs associated with examination, application for certification, and the first year of Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF) only.

### Competency Domains

The "ISO 37301 Lead Auditor" credential is a professional certification for individuals aiming to demonstrate the competence to audit the compliance management system and lead an audit team.

The most important skills required in the market are the ability to effectively plan and perform audits in conformity to the certification process master audit techniques, and manage (or be part of) audit teams and audit programs.

The ISO 37301 Lead Auditor certification is intended for:

- Auditors seeking to perform and lead compliance management system (CMS) audits

- Managers or consultants seeking to master the compliance management system audit process
- Individuals responsible to maintain conformity with compliance management system audit process
- Members of a compliance security team
- Technical experts seeking to prepare for a compliance management system audit
- Expert advisors in compliance management

The content of the exam is divided as follows:

- **Domain 1:** Fundamental principles and concepts of a compliance management system (CMS)
- **Domain 2:** Compliance management system requirements
- **Domain 3:** Fundamental audit concepts and principles
- **Domain 4:** Preparing an ISO 37301 audit
- **Domain 5:** Conducting an ISO 37301 audit
- **Domain 6:** Closing an ISO 37301 audit
- **Domain 7:** Managing an ISO 37301 audit program

## Domain 1: Fundamental principles and concepts of a compliance management system (CMS)

**Main objective:** Ensure that the candidate understands and is able to interpret ISO 37301 principles and concepts

Competencies	Knowledge statements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to understand the applicability and scope of ISO 37301</li> <li>2. Ability to explain the connection between ISO 37301 and other ISO standards, such as ISO 19600, ISO 31000, ISO 31022, ISO 19011, and ISO 26000.</li> <li>3. Ability to communicate the advantages of implementing a CMS based on ISO 37301</li> <li>4. Ability to show the connection between ISO 37301 and regulatory requirements for compliance programs</li> <li>5. Ability to illustrate the connection between ISO 37301 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</li> <li>6. Ability to describe the role of ethics in compliance</li> <li>7. Ability to point out the tools that help ensure ethics and compliance</li> <li>8. Ability to describe what a code of conduct is and its usage in a CMS</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge of the ISO 37001 scope</li> <li>2. Knowledge of the relationship between ISO 37301 and other ISO standards</li> <li>3. Knowledge of the advantages of implementing a CMS based on ISO 37301</li> <li>4. Knowledge of the connection between ISO 37301 and regulatory requirements for compliance programs</li> <li>5. Knowledge of the relationship between ISO 37301 and SDGs</li> <li>6. Knowledge of the connection between the ethics and compliance and the role of ethics in compliance</li> <li>7. Knowledge of the tools that help ensure ethics and compliance</li> <li>8. Knowledge of the definition and components of a code of conduct and its types</li> <li>9. Knowledge of the importance of the tone at the top and tone at the middle, as well as the relationship between these two</li> <li>10. Knowledge of the usual barriers to compliance</li> </ol>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. Ability to describe the importance of tone at the top and tone at the middle, and to distinguish between these two</li><li>10. Ability to describe the usual barriers to compliance</li><li>11. Ability to explain what compliance is, according to ISO 37301</li><li>12. Ability to explain what an integrated management system is and how it can help an organization</li><li>13. Ability to define the main elements in a compliance management system</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>11. Knowledge of ISO 37301's description of compliance</li><li>12. Knowledge of management system standards and integrated management systems</li><li>13. Knowledge of the main terms and definitions related to the compliance management system, as defined in ISO 37301</li></ul>
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## Domain 2: Compliance management system requirements

**Main objective:** Ensure that the candidate understands and is able to interpret and identify the requirements for a compliance management system based on ISO 37301

Competencies	Knowledge statements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to understand the ISO 37301 requirements and the structure of the standard</li> <li>2. Ability to describe the standard's requirements with regard to the context of the organization, interested parties, CMS scope, compliance obligations, and compliance risk assessment (clause 4)</li> <li>3. Ability to validate the degree to which the top management and governing body have demonstrated leadership and commitment, analyze the compliance policy, and ability to identify the separation of the roles and responsibilities related to the CMS (clause 5)</li> <li>4. Ability to identify risks and opportunities and to define compliance objectives (clause 6)</li> <li>5. Ability to analyze whether sufficient resources are available to implement, operate, and maintain the CMS (clause 7)</li> <li>6. Ability to determine the effectiveness of the processes and controls established as part of the CMS (clause 8)</li> <li>7. Ability to use monitoring, measurement, analysis, and evaluation to support the effective management of the CMS (clause 9)</li> <li>8. Ability to determine if appropriate actions were taken when nonconformities or noncompliances occurred and to analyze the actions taken to continually improve the suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness of the CMS (clause 10)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge of the requirements of ISO 37301 for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continually improving a CMS</li> <li>2. Knowledge of the common external and internal issues that affect the context of an organization, approaches to establishing the scope, approaches for determining compliance obligations, as well as the methodologies used for compliance risk assessments</li> <li>3. Knowledge of the requirements with regard to the governing body and top management's involvement in the CMS, establishment of the compliance policy, and methods to define roles and responsibilities</li> <li>4. Knowledge of the approaches used in risk management and strategies used in establishing objectives</li> <li>5. Knowledge of the required resources, competences, awareness, and documented information for an effective CMS</li> <li>6. Knowledge of the requirements for operational planning and control and the processes for raising concerns and conducting investigations</li> <li>7. Knowledge of the approaches, techniques, and programs used for the monitoring, measurement, analysis, evaluation, internal audits, and management reviews</li> <li>8. Knowledge of the requirement and approaches to dealing with nonconformities and noncompliances, and initiating corrective actions, as well as the methods to continually improve a CMS</li> </ol>

## Domain 3: Fundamental audit concepts and principles

**Main objective:** Ensure that the candidate understands and is able to interpret and apply the main concepts and principles related to a CMS audit

Competencies	Knowledge statements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to understand, explain, and illustrate the application of the audit principles in a CMS audit</li> <li>2. Ability to differentiate between first, second, and third party audits</li> <li>3. Ability to identify and judge situations that would discredit the professionalism of the auditor and violate the PECB Code of Ethics</li> <li>4. Ability to identify and judge ethical issues considering the obligations related to the audit client, auditee, law enforcement, and regulatory authorities</li> <li>5. Ability to determine and evaluate the level of materiality and apply a risk-based approach during the different stages of a CMS audit</li> <li>6. Ability to judge the appropriate level of reasonable assurance needed for a CMS audit</li> <li>7. Ability to understand the legal implications related to any irregularities committed by the auditee</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge of the main audit concepts and principles as described in ISO 19011</li> <li>2. Knowledge of the differences between first, second, and third party audits</li> <li>3. Knowledge of the principles of auditing: integrity, fair presentation, due professional care, confidentiality, independence, evidence-based approach, and risk-based approach</li> <li>4. Knowledge of an auditor's professional responsibility and the PECB Code of Ethics</li> <li>5. Knowledge of the risk-based approach to an audit and the different types of risks related to audit activities, such as inherent risk, control risk, and detection risk</li> <li>6. Knowledge of the concept of materiality and its application to an audit</li> <li>7. Knowledge of the concept of reasonable assurance and its application to an audit</li> <li>8. Knowledge of the laws and regulations applicable to the auditee and the country it operates in, etc.</li> </ol>

## Domain 4: Preparing an ISO 37301 audit

**Main objective:** Ensure that the candidate is able to prepare a compliance management system audit

<b>Competencies</b>	<b>Knowledge statements</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to understand and illustrate the steps and activities to prepare a CMS audit considering the specific context of the audit</li> <li>2. Ability to explain and compare evidence types and their characteristics</li> <li>3. Ability to determine and justify the type and amount of evidence required in a CMS audit</li> <li>4. Ability to understand and explain the roles and responsibilities of the audit team leader, audit team members, and technical experts</li> <li>5. Ability to determine and evaluate the level of materiality during the different stages of a CMS audit</li> <li>6. Ability to determine the audit feasibility</li> <li>7. Ability to determine, evaluate, and confirm the audit objectives, criteria, and scope for a CMS audit</li> <li>8. Ability to explain, illustrate, and define the characteristics of the terms of the audit engagement and apply the best practices to establish the initial contact with an auditee</li> <li>9. Ability to develop audit working papers and elaborate appropriate audit test plans in a CMS audit</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge of the main responsibilities of the audit team leader and audit team members</li> <li>2. Knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of technical experts</li> <li>3. Knowledge of the audit objectives, scope, and criteria</li> <li>4. Knowledge of the difference between a CMS scope and the audit scope</li> <li>5. Knowledge of the factors to take into account during the audit feasibility study</li> <li>6. Knowledge of the cultural aspects to consider in an audit</li> <li>7. Knowledge of the characteristics of terms of the audit engagement and the best practices to establish initial contact with an auditee</li> <li>8. Knowledge of the audit plan preparation procedure</li> <li>9. Knowledge of the preparation and development of audit working papers</li> <li>10. Knowledge of the different types of audit evidence: physical, mathematical, confirmative, technical, analytical, documentary, and verbal</li> <li>11. Knowledge of the best practices for the creation of audit test plans</li> </ol>

## Domain 5: Conducting an ISO 37301 audit

**Main objective:** Ensure that the candidate can efficiently conduct a CMS audit

Competencies	Knowledge statements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to conduct the stage 1 audit, taking into account the documented information evaluation criteria</li> <li>2. Ability to organize and conduct an opening meeting</li> <li>3. Ability to conduct the stage 2 audit by appropriately following the procedures that this stage entails</li> <li>4. Ability to apply the best practices of communication to collect the appropriate audit evidence</li> <li>5. Ability to consider the roles and responsibilities of all the interested parties involved</li> <li>6. Ability to explain, illustrate, and apply evidence collection procedures and tools</li> <li>7. Ability to explain, illustrate, and apply the main audit sampling methods</li> <li>8. Ability to gather appropriate evidence from the available information during an audit and evaluate it objectively</li> <li>9. Ability to explain, illustrate, and apply the audit evidence approach in a CMS audit</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge of the objectives and the content of the opening meeting in an audit</li> <li>2. Knowledge of the difference between stage 1 audit and stage 2 audit</li> <li>3. Knowledge of stage 1 audit requirements, steps, and activities</li> <li>4. Knowledge of the documented information evaluation criteria and ISO 37301 requirements</li> <li>5. Knowledge of stage 2 audit requirements, steps, and activities</li> <li>6. Knowledge of the best communication practices during an audit</li> <li>7. Knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of guides and observers during an audit</li> <li>8. Knowledge of the different conflict resolution techniques</li> <li>9. Knowledge of the evidence collection procedures and tools, such as interview, documented information review, observation, analysis, sampling, and technical verification</li> <li>10. Knowledge of the evidence analysis techniques (i.e., corroboration and evaluation)</li> <li>11. Knowledge of the main concepts, principles, and evidence collection procedures used in an audit</li> <li>12. Knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of using audit checklists</li> </ol>

## Domain 6: Closing an ISO 37301 audit

**Main objective:** Ensure that the candidate is able to conclude a CMS audit and conduct audit follow-up activities

Competencies	Knowledge statements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to explain and apply the evidence evaluation process: drafting audit findings and preparing audit conclusions</li> <li>2. Ability to understand, explain, and illustrate the concept of the benefit of the doubt</li> <li>3. Ability to report appropriate audit observations in accordance with audit rules and principles</li> <li>4. Ability to conduct quality reviews to audit documentation</li> <li>5. Ability to draft and present audit conclusions</li> <li>6. Ability to complete audit working documents</li> <li>7. Ability to organize and conduct a closing meeting</li> <li>8. Ability to write an ISO 37301 audit report and justify the recommendation for certification</li> <li>9. Ability to conduct the activities following an initial audit, including the evaluation of action plans, audit follow-ups, and surveillance activities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge of the evidence evaluation process: to draft audit findings and to prepare audit conclusions</li> <li>2. Knowledge of the characteristics and differences between the concepts of conformity, minor nonconformity, major nonconformity, anomaly, and observation</li> <li>3. Knowledge of the guidelines and best practices to draft nonconformity reports</li> <li>4. Knowledge of the guidelines and best practices to draft and report audit observations</li> <li>5. Knowledge of the benefit of the doubt and its application in the management system audits</li> <li>6. Knowledge of the guidelines and best practices to complete audit working documents and perform a quality review</li> <li>7. Knowledge of the guidelines and best practices to present audit findings and conclusions to the management of an audited organization</li> <li>8. Knowledge of the possible recommendations an auditor can give during the certification audit</li> <li>9. Knowledge of the guidelines and best practices to evaluate action plans</li> <li>10. Knowledge of audit follow-ups, surveillance audits, and recertification audit requirements, steps, and activities</li> <li>11. Knowledge of the conditions for the modification, extension, suspension, or withdrawal of an organization's certification</li> </ol>

## Domain 7: Managing an ISO 37301 audit program

**Main objective:** Ensure that the candidate understands how to establish and manage a CMS audit program

<b>Competencies</b>	<b>Knowledge statements</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ability to understand and explain the establishment of an audit program and the application of the PDCA cycle into an audit program</li><li>2. Ability to understand and explain the importance of protecting the integrity, availability, and confidentiality of audit records and the auditors' responsibilities in this regard</li><li>3. Ability to understand the documented information management process</li><li>4. Ability to understand the process of evaluating the efficiency of the audit program by monitoring the performance of each auditor and audit team member</li><li>5. Ability to demonstrate the application of the personal attributes and behaviors associated with professional auditors</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Knowledge of the application of the PDCA cycle in the management of an audit program</li><li>2. Knowledge of the requirements, guidelines, and best practices regarding audit resources, procedures, and policies</li><li>3. Knowledge of the requirements, guidelines, and best practices regarding the management of audit records</li><li>4. Knowledge of the management of combined audits</li><li>5. Knowledge of the personal attributes and behaviors of a professional auditor</li></ol>

Based on the abovementioned domains and their relevance, 80 questions are included in the exam, as summarized in the table below:

				Level of understanding (Cognitive/Taxonomy) required	
		Number of questions/points per competency domain	% of the exam devoted/points to/for each competency domain	Questions that measure comprehension, application, and analysis	Questions that measure synthesis and evaluation
Competency domains	Fundamental principles and concepts of a compliance management system (CMS)	11	13.75	X	
	Compliance management system requirements	10	12.5	X	
	Fundamental audit concepts and principles	16	20		X
	Preparing an ISO 37301 audit	10	12.5	X	
	Conducting an ISO 37301 audit	20	25		X
	Closing an ISO 37301 audit	6	7.5		X
	Managing an ISO 37301 audit program	7	8.75		X
Total		<b>80</b>	<b>100%</b>		
Number of questions per level of understanding				<b>31</b>	<b>49</b>
% of the exam devoted to each level of understanding (cognitive/taxonomy)				<b>38.75%</b>	<b>61.25%</b>

The passing score of the exam is **70%**.

After successfully passing the exam, candidates will be able to apply for the “PECB Certified 37301 Lead Auditor” credential depending on their level of experience.



## Taking the Exam

### General Information on the Exam

Candidates are required to arrive/be present at least 30 minutes before the exam starts. Candidates who arrive late will not be given additional time to compensate for the late arrival and may not be allowed to sit for the exam.

Candidates are required to bring a valid identity card (a national ID card, driver's license, or passport) and show it to the invigilator.

If requested on the day of the exam (paper-based exams), additional time can be provided to candidates taking the exam in a non-native language, as follows:

- 10 additional minutes for Foundation exams
- 20 additional minutes for Manager exams
- 30 additional minutes for Lead exams

### PECB Exam Format and Type

1. **Paper-based:** Exams are provided on paper, where candidates are not allowed to use anything but the exam paper and a pen. The use of electronic devices, such as laptops, tablets, or phones, is not allowed. The exam session is supervised by a PECB approved Invigilator at the location where the Reseller has organized the training course.
2. **Online:** Exams are provided electronically via the PECB Exams application. The use of electronic devices, such as tablets and cell phones, is not allowed. The exam session is supervised remotely by a PECB Invigilator via the PECB Exams application and an external/integrated camera.

For more detailed information about the online format, please refer to the [PECB Online Exam Guide](#).

**This exam contains multiple choice questions:** This format has been chosen because it has proven to be effective and efficient for measuring and assessing learning outcomes related to the defined competency domains. The multiple-choice exam can be used to evaluate a candidate's understanding on many subjects, including both simple and complex concepts. When answering these questions, candidates will have to apply various principles, analyze problems, evaluate alternatives, combine several concepts or ideas, etc. The multiple-choice questions are scenario based, which means they are developed based on a scenario that candidates are asked to read and are expected to provide answers to one or more questions related to that scenario. This multiple-choice exam is "open book", due to the context-dependent characteristic of the questions. You will find a sample of exam questions provided below.

Since the exam is "open book," candidates are authorized to use the following reference materials:

- A hard copy of the ISO 37301 standard
- Training course materials (accessed through PECB Exams app and/or printed)
- Any personal notes during the training course (accessed through the PECB Exams app and/or printed)
- A hard copy dictionary

Any attempt to copy, collude, or otherwise cheat during the exam session will lead to automatic failure.

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PECB exams are available in English and other languages. To learn if the exam is available in a particular language, please contact [examination@pecb.com](mailto:examination@pecb.com).

**Note:** PECB will progressively transition to multiple-choice exams. They will also be open book and comprise scenario-based questions that will allow PECB to evaluate candidates' knowledge, abilities, and skills to use information in new situations (apply), draw connections among ideas (analyze), and justify a stand or decision (evaluate). All PECB multiple-choice exams have one question and three alternatives, of which only one is correct.

For specific information about exam types, languages available, and other details, visit the [List of PECB Exams](#).

## Sample Exam Questions

- 1. Which of the following cycles does ISO 37301 adopt?**
  - A. **The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)**
  - B. The Define-Measure-Analyse-Improve-Control (DMAIC)
  - C. The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA)
- 2. What is a risk-based approach?**
  - A. An audit approach that ensures a perfect audit process
  - B. **An audit approach that considers risks and opportunities**
  - C. An audit approach that maximizes the possibility of not meeting the audit objectives
- 3. What should an auditor receive prior to accepting the audit mandate?**
  - A. **An offer from the certification body**
  - B. A good salary
  - C. A list of responsibilities from the top management
- 4. What is the risk that a significant defect may occur in the CMS called?**
  - A. Control risk
  - B. Detection risk
  - C. **Inherent risk**
- 5. What is a person appointed by the client to assist the audit team known as?**
  - A. Internal auditor
  - B. **Guide**
  - C. Observer

## Receiving the Exam Results

Exam results will be communicated via email. The only possible results are *pass* and *fail*; no specific grade will be included.

- The time span for the communication starts from the exam date and lasts two to four weeks for multiple-choice paper-based exams.
- For online multiple-choice exams, candidates receive their results instantly.

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Candidates who successfully complete the exam will be able to apply for one of the credentials of the respective certification scheme.

For candidates who fail the exam, a list of the domains where they have performed poorly will be added to the email to help them prepare better for a retake.

## Exam Retake Policy

There is no limit to the number of times a candidate can retake an exam. However, there are certain limitations in terms of the allowed time span between exam retakes.

- If a candidate does not pass the exam on the 1<sup>st</sup> attempt, they must wait 15 days from the initial date of the exam for the next attempt (1<sup>st</sup> retake). Retake fees apply.  
**Note:** Candidates who have completed the training course but failed the exam are eligible to retake the exam once for free within a 12-month period from the initial date of the exam.
- If a candidate does not pass the exam on the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt, they must wait three months after the initial date of the exam for the next attempt (2<sup>nd</sup> retake). Retake fees apply.  
**Note:** For candidates that fail the exam in the 2<sup>nd</sup> retake, PECB recommends them to attend a training course in order to be better prepared for the exam.
- If a candidate does not pass the exam on the 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt, they must wait six months after the initial date of the exam for the next attempt (3<sup>rd</sup> retake). Retake fees apply.
- After the 4<sup>th</sup> attempt, the waiting period for further retake exams is 12 months from the date of the last attempt. Retake fees apply.

To arrange exam retakes (date, time, place, costs), candidates need to contact the PECB Reseller/Distributor who has initially organized the session.

## Exam Security

A significant component of a professional certification credential is maintaining the security and confidentiality of the exam. PECB relies upon the ethical behavior of certification holders and applicants to maintain the security and confidentiality of PECB exams. Any disclosure of information about the content of PECB exams is a direct violation of PECB's Code of Ethics. PECB will take action against any individuals that violate such rules and policies, including permanently banning individuals from pursuing PECB credentials and revoking any previous ones. PECB will also pursue legal action against individuals or organizations who infringe upon its copyrights, proprietary rights, and intellectual property.

## Reschedule the Exam

For any changes with regard to the exam date, time, location, or other details, please contact [examination@pecb.com](mailto:examination@pecb.com).

## Apply for Certification

All candidates who successfully pass the exam (or an equivalent accepted by PECB) are entitled to apply for the PECB credentials they were examined for. Specific educational and professional requirements need to be fulfilled in order to obtain a PECB certification. Candidates are required to fill out the online certification application form (that can be accessed via their PECB online profile), including contact details of references who will be contacted to validate the candidate's professional experience. Candidates can submit their application in various languages. Candidates can choose to either pay online or be billed. For additional information, contact [certification@pecb.com](mailto:certification@pecb.com).

# PECB

The online certification application process is very simple and takes only a few minutes, as follows:

- [Register](#) your account
- Check your email for the confirmation link
- [Log in](#) to apply for certification

For more information about the application process, follow the instructions on this manual [Apply for Certification](#).

The application is approved as soon as the Certification Department validates that the candidate fulfills all the certification requirements regarding the respective credential. An email will be sent to the email address provided during the application process to communicate the application status. If approved, candidates will then be able to download the certification from their PECB Account.

PECB provides support in both English and French.

## **Renew your Certification**

PECB certifications are valid for three years. To maintain them, candidates must demonstrate every year that they are still performing tasks that are related to the certification. PECB certified professionals must annually provide Continual Professional Development (CPD) credits and pay \$100 as the Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF) to maintain the certification. For more information, please visit the [Certification Maintenance](#) page on the PECB website.

## **Closing a Case**

If candidates do not apply for certification within three years, their case will be closed. Even though the certification period expires, candidates have the right to reopen their case. However, PECB will no longer be responsible for any changes regarding the conditions, standards, policies, and candidate handbook that were applicable before the case was closed. A candidate requesting their case to reopen must do so in writing and pay the required fee.

## SECTION III: CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### ISO 37301 Lead Auditor

The requirements for PECB ISO 37301 Auditor certifications are:

Credential	Exam	Professional experience	MS audit/assessment experience	Other requirements
<b>PECB Certified ISO 37301 Provisional Auditor</b>	PECB Certified ISO 37301 Lead Auditor exam or equivalent	None	None	Signing the PECB Code of Ethics
<b>PECB Certified ISO 37301 Auditor</b>	PECB Certified ISO 37301 Lead Auditor exam or equivalent	Two years: One year of work experience in compliance management	Audit activities: a total of 200 hours	Signing the PECB Code of Ethics
<b>PECB Certified ISO 37301 Lead Auditor</b>	PECB Certified ISO 37301 Lead Auditor exam or equivalent	Five years: Two years of work experience in compliance management	Audit activities: a total of 300 hours	Signing the PECB Code of Ethics
<b>PECB Certified ISO 37301 Senior Lead Auditor</b>	PECB Certified ISO 37301 Lead Auditor exam or equivalent	Ten years: Seven years of work experience in compliance management	Audit activities: a total of 1,000 hours	Signing the PECB Code of Ethics

To be considered valid, the audit activities should follow best audit practices and include the following:

1. Planning an audit
2. Managing an audit program
3. Drafting audit reports
4. Drafting nonconformity reports
5. Drafting audit working documents
6. Documented information review
7. On-site audit
8. Following up on nonconformities
9. Leading an audit team

## SECTION IV: CERTIFICATION RULES AND POLICIES

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### Professional References

For each application, two professional references are required. They must be from individuals who have worked with the candidate in a professional environment and can validate their experience in compliance management, as well as their current and previous work history. Professional references of persons who fall under the candidate's supervision or are their relatives are not valid.

### Professional Experience

Candidates must provide complete and correct information regarding their professional experience, including job title(s), start and end date(s), job description(s), and more. Candidates are advised to summarize their previous or current assignments, providing sufficient details to describe the nature of the responsibilities for each job. More detailed information can be included in the résumé.

### CMS Audit Experience

The candidate's audit log will be checked to ensure that they have completed the required number of audit hours. The following audit types constitute valid audit experience: pre-audit, internal audits, second party audits, third party audits, or opinion audits.

### Evaluation of Certification Applications

The Certification Department will evaluate each application to validate the candidate's eligibility for certification. A candidate whose application is being reviewed will be notified in writing and, if necessary, given a reasonable time frame to provide any additional documentation. If a candidate does not respond by the deadline or does not provide the required documentation within the given time frame, the Certification Department will validate the application based on the initial information provided, which can eventually lead to its downgrade to a lower credential.

### Denial of Certification

PECB can deny certification if candidates:

- Falsify the application
- Violate the exam procedures
- Violate the PECB Code of Ethics
- Fail the exam

For more detailed information, refer to "Complaint and Appeal" section.

The application payment for the certification is non-refundable.

### Suspension of Certification

PECB can temporarily suspend certification if the candidate fails to satisfy the requirements. Other reasons for suspending certification include:

- PECB receives large amounts of or serious complaints by interested parties (Suspension will be applied until the investigation has been completed.).
- The logos of PECB or accreditation bodies are intentionally misused.
- The candidate fails to correct the misuse of a certification mark within the time frame determined by PECB.
- The certified individual has voluntarily requested a suspension.
- PECB deems appropriate other conditions for suspension of certification.

## Revocation of Certification

PECB can revoke certification if the candidate fails to fulfill the PECB requirements. Candidates are then no longer allowed to represent themselves as PECB certified professionals. Other reasons for revoking certification can be if candidates:

- Violate the PECB Code of Ethics
- Misrepresent and provide false information of the scope of the certification
- Break any other PECB rules

## Upgrade of Credentials

Professionals can apply to upgrade to a higher credential as soon as they can demonstrate that they fulfil the requirements.

In order to apply for an upgrade, candidates need to login in to their PECB Account, visit the “My Certifications” tab, and click on the “Upgrade” link. The upgrade application fee is \$100.

## Downgrade of Credentials

A PECB Certification can be downgraded to a lower credential due to the following reasons:

- The AMF has not been paid.
- The CPD hours have not been submitted.
- Insufficient CPD hours have been submitted.
- Evidence on CPD hours has not been submitted upon request.

**Note:** *PECB certified professionals who hold Lead Certifications and fail to provide evidence of certification maintenance requirements will have their credentials downgraded. On the other hand, the holders of Master Certifications who fail to submit CPDs and pay AMFs will have their certifications revoked.*

## Other Statuses

Besides being active, suspended, or revoked, a certification can be voluntarily withdrawn or designated as Emeritus. More information about these statuses and the permanent cessation status, and how to apply, please visit [Certification Status Options](#).

## SECTION V: PECB GENERAL POLICIES

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### PECB Code of Ethics

Adherence to the PECB Code of Ethics is a voluntary engagement. It is important that PECB certified professionals not only adhere to the principles of this Code, but also encourage and support the same from others. More information can be found [here](#).

### Other Exams and Certifications

PECB accepts certifications and exams from other recognized accredited certification bodies. PECB will evaluate the requests through its equivalence process to decide whether the respective certification(s) or exam(s) can be accepted as equivalent to the respective PECB certification (e.g., ISO/IEC 27001 Lead Auditor certification).

### Non-discrimination and Special Accommodations

All candidate applications will be evaluated objectively, regardless of the candidate's age, gender, race, religion, nationality, or marital status.

To ensure equal opportunities for all qualified persons, PECB will make reasonable accommodations for candidates, when appropriate. If candidates need special accommodations because of a disability or a specific physical condition, they should inform the Reseller/Distributor in order for them to make proper arrangements. Any information candidates provide regarding their disability/need will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Click [here](#) to download the Candidates with Disabilities Form.

### Complaints and Appeals

Any complaints must be made no later than 30 days after receiving the certification decision. PECB will provide a written response to the candidate within 30 working days after receiving the complaint. If they do not find the response satisfactory, the candidate has the right to file an appeal. For more information about the complaints and appeal procedures, click [here](#).

(1) According to ADA, the term "reasonable accommodation" may include: (A) making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; and (B) job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials or policies, the provision of qualified readers or interpreters, and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

(2) ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325) Sec. 12189. Examinations and courses. [Section 309]: Any person that offers examinations or courses related to applications, licensing, certification, or credentialing for secondary or post-secondary education, professional, or trade purposes shall offer such examinations or courses in a place and manner accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative accessible arrangements for such individuals.



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**PECB Help Center**

Visit our [Help Center](#) to browse Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), view manuals for using PECB website and applications, read documents related to PECB processes, or to contact us via Support Center's online tracking system.

**Emails:**

Examination: [examination@pecb.com](mailto:examination@pecb.com)  
Certification: [certification@pecb.com](mailto:certification@pecb.com)  
Customer Service: [customer@pecb.com](mailto:customer@pecb.com)

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