

PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE NATIONAL ACCREDITATION STRATEGY

The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) invites submissions to a public consultation on the National Accreditation Strategy

Introduction

The Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) is the national body with responsibility for accreditation in Ireland. Working across government with our EU and international partners to achieve progress in EU and international fora, across a wide range of interests, including Brexit.

INAB was established in 1985 and is a Committee of the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) under legislation (Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, as amended by the Industrial Development (Dissolution of Forfas) Act 2014.

The HSA is an agency of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and in 2010, the Department notified the European Commission that INAB was the sole accreditation body for Ireland in line with regulation EC/765/2008.

Background

INAB accredits laboratories, certification bodies, verification bodies, biobanks, reference material producers and inspection bodies. It provides accreditation in accordance with the relevant International Organisation for Standardisation ISO 17000 series of standards.

Accreditation is the independent third party confirmation of competence and is recognised worldwide as a tool to support enterprise, trade and regulation.

Accreditation, which operates across all market sectors, provides an impartial assessment against internationally recognised standards. It offers a single, transparent and repeatable approach which:

- is voluntarily embraced by business;
- reduces the need for central and regional government to employ its own specialist assessment personnel;
- underpins regulations and legislation for consumer protection
- builds business and consumer confidence.

The process of accreditation provides a cost-effective means of delivering public services which:

- are reliable, high quality and safe;
- support regulatory compliance;
- imply lower administrative burdens and bureaucracy.

Further information on INAB activities and accreditation services is available on the Irish National Accreditation Board's website (www.inab.ie).

As part of the Authority's statement of strategy 2019-2021 ([here](#)), a critical objective is to grow the national accreditation service and in doing so, develop a national accreditation strategy.

National Accreditation Strategy

INAB has commenced the preparation of the first national accreditation strategy for a five-year period. The strategy will comprise the key priorities and objectives for accreditation in Ireland during that period.

The strategy development process involves developing priorities and actionable objectives, informed by input from a wide range of stakeholders including (but not limited to) government, sector partners, clients and other international accreditation organisations.

Though INAB will look to champion the delivery of this strategy, successful implementation will require buy-in across government, market sectors, individual businesses, consumer groups, and from individual service and product users i.e. the general public. It is important to note that this strategy is not INAB's organisational strategy, but instead, addresses accreditation nationally.

As part of the process of developing the new national accreditation strategy, we are now seeking input from interested stakeholders through a public consultation and, accordingly, we would be grateful to receive your input, suggestions and views regarding any strategic issues that you consider relate directly or indirectly to national accreditation and therefore should be incorporated in the national strategy.

The following areas may be used as prompts (these are suggested topics only, and should not limit your commentary):

- **Quality Infrastructure:** How can the Irish Quality Infrastructure (technology, systems, governance, organisations involved, capability) be strengthened in order to facilitate increased uptake of accreditation?
- **Promotion:** How should accreditation be promoted (i.e. to the market, within government, to the public) to ensure improved understanding, and the benefits of accreditation and accredited services are more widely known?
- **Accessibility:** How to increase accessibility for organisations to gain accreditation, and be less of a burden to those organisations looking to attain or maintain accreditation?
- **Accreditation Future:** In what areas would you consider there to be opportunities and threats related to accreditation in the next five years?
- **Collaboration:** What strategic partnerships would increase buy-in of the national accreditation strategy, to further benefit the Irish economy and society?
- **Accreditation Services:** How could current accreditation services be improved, and what new services can be incorporated to add value to clients, and to the economy and society?

Submissions

In order to enable full consideration of any inputs received, we would appreciate if replies could be input into the submission link below. The closing date for submissions is **Friday 7th May 2021**.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AccredE>

Please include contact details with the submission to give context, and the opportunity for INAB to follow up if required; otherwise, your submission will be collected anonymously.

Privacy Notice

We wish to inform you that the HSA/INAB has engaged Grant Thornton Corporate Finance Ltd. as a data processor to assist in the provision of this service. Feedback from the public consultation will be obtained through a survey processed by Grant Thornton Corporate Finance Ltd.

As set out under Article 28 of the GDPR, Grant Thornton Corporate Finance Ltd. will act under the instruction of HSA/INAB in order to collect and process personal data on our behalf. In doing so Grant Thornton Corporate Finance Ltd. are subject to the same or more onerous data protection obligations as INAB to ensure the fundamental principles of GDPR are upheld.

The data collected will include your name and email contact, should you choose to provide it. The data will be deleted by HSA/INAB and Grant Thornton Corporate Finance Ltd. once the national accreditation strategy is published. The submission shall be retained, for our records. For further information

Please note that any submission you make may be the subject of a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

The submissions and outcomes of the Public Consultation may be made available in a later stage of the strategy development process and may be published for transparency; contact or personal details will be redacted.

For further information, please see the privacy statement on the HSA website, <https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Privacy/> which provides additional information regarding your rights as a data subject (including details regarding right of access, right to rectification, right to erasure, right to restriction of processing, right to object). If you consider that your rights have been infringed, you have the right to complain to the Irish Data Protection Commissioner (www.dataprotection.ie). If you require further information, or wish to access your personal data, please contact the Data Protection Officer, Health and Safety Authority, Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street, Dublin 1 or Email: dpo@hsa.ie