

Workplace Active Certification

Certification process and regulations 2022 – Pioneers' Phase

1. Scope

The Workplace Active Certification (WAC) is aimed at European organisations (companies, institutions, federations, associations, etc.) that promote health and well-being at work through physical activity, and which wish to have their approaches and progression recognised.

The Workplace Active Certification is accessible to any type of organisation which resides or have its operations within the European Economic Area, irrespective of its size, location, culture, sector of activity, social and economic situation.

2. Terms and definitions

2.1 European Federation for Company Sport (EFCS)

A voluntary non-profit organisation. promoting and developing sport and physical activity practice in the professional environment all across Europe

2.2 WAC scheme owner

This scheme has been developed under an Erasmus + European-funded programme led by the European Federation for Company Sport (EFCS).

2.3 Workplace Active Certification (WAC) scheme

A formal scheme to recognize organisations which promote health and well-being through sports and physical activity in the workplace

2.4 Evaluation Expert

A competent person mandated by the WAC Scheme owner (or its appointed representative) to perform the evaluation of the organisation's strategy and implementation of the WAC Criteria.

3. Launching the Workplace Active Certification process

3.1 Registration

Organisations interested in launching their WAC process (hereinafter referred to as "interested organisations") should fill out the registration form available online at www.activeworkplacecertification.eu.

A confirmation of registration will be sent together with the WAC introductory questionnaire.

3.2 WAC introductory questionnaire

Interested organisations are requested to complete and submit the WAC introductory questionnaire. Following verification of the introductory questionnaire and confirmation of the administrative registration, the interested organisation then becomes an official *WAC candidate organisation*, hereafter referred to as the "Candidate organisation".

3.3 Fees

Candidate organisations and certified organisations pay an annual fee to the WAC scheme owner (European Company for Company Sport (EFCS)).

Fees related to certification are officially communicated and updated by the WAC scheme owner.

4. Completing the online assessment of the WAC criteria

Candidate organisations subsequently have a maximum of 6 months to collate evidence and to complete the online assessment based on the WAC criteria, as well as to upload documents and other related evidence. Online guidance documents are provided to assist with this step.

Once this step is completed, the candidate organisation should finalise the recording of information and submit the assessment for review by the expert in charge of the external evaluation (see 5).

5. WAC assessment review by expert

5.1 Analysis of assessment results and supporting evidence

Results of the assessment as well as the evidence provided will be analysed by the expert in charge of the evaluation.

This analysis will serve as a basis for identifying topics and questions to be addressed during the remote interviews (see 5.2).

5.2 Video-conference interview with experts (external audit)

A remote electronic interview will then be arranged between one or more representatives of the candidate organisation and the expert managing the review.

An interview plan is drafted by the expert and sent to the candidate organisation before the interview.

The duration of the interview is calculated according to the size of the candidate organisation reflected by number of sites. Interviews are organised accordingly:

- organisation having 1 to 3 sites: one interview lasting 4 hours
- organisation having 4 to 20 sites: one 4-hour interview plus additional interviews to cover a minimum of 20% of the total number of sites.
- organisation having more than 21 sites: one 4-hour interview plus additional interviews to be specified on a case-by-case basis.

According to the circumstances and in agreement with the candidate organisation, it may be carried out in several separate sessions.

In cases where a remote electronic interview would not be sufficient to validate the evidence provided, an on-site visit may be substituted for, or complement, the remote interview.

5.3 Report and criteria assessment score

On the basis of the results of the evidence review and the interview(s), a report will be drawn up by the expert. It will contain (as a minimum) the expert's feedback and comments in relation to the assessment (accepted or not accepted) and may identify further information to be provided by the candidate organisation in relation to the WAC criteria. A justified comprehensive response is formulated by the expert for any non-accepted criteria. The report shall also include the confirmation of the score achieved (i.e. number of points in relation to the criteria assessment).

The report will then be forwarded to the certification commission for verification. It will be used as an input for the final decision on certification.

6. Verification phase – certification commission

The certification commission (see section 9) will organise a technical verification of the report provided by the expert. This verification will be carried out according to the principle of double control and by a qualified third party.

It is within the remit of the person in charge of the verification to ensure that the due process has been respected and that the content and conclusions of the report reflect the assessment review provided by the expert. If necessary, further clarifications may be needed prior to completing the verification of the report.

7. Certification decision

On the basis of the verification phase (see 6), the certification commission will confirm the score achieved by the candidate organisation and validate the conclusions of the report drafted by the expert.

To achieve certification, the candidate organisation shall have satisfied, as a minimum, all the criteria designated as “WAC certified” criteria contained in the “Workplace Active Certification – Evaluation criteria” document.

The certification decision as well as the review report will then be communicated to the candidate organisation by the certification commission.

The candidate organisation has two weeks to confirm receipt of the decision and report. Any appeal against the decisions must be submitted in writing by the candidate organisation within fourteen working days following the notification of the decision. Late appeals will not be considered. A conciliation review is carried out under the authority of the certification commission.

8. Certificate and use of the WAC branding

When certification is confirmed by the certification commission, the candidate organisation is thereafter designated as a certified organisation and receives the WAC certificate. The certificate, the logos and the WAC branding terms and conditions will be communicated accordingly to the certified organisation.

8.1 Certificate validity

The certification is valid for three years, subject to compliance with the certification maintenance requirements (see 9).

The date of issue and the expiry date are specified on the certificate.

A register of certified organisations is regularly updated on the following link:
www.activeworkplacecertification.eu.

9. Conditions for maintaining the certification

The Workplace Active Certification is based on the principle of “continuous improvement”. Its aim is to make the approach evolve over time in line with the evolution of the internal and external context of the organisation, the needs of the beneficiaries and an analysis of the results and impacts observed.

9.1 Updating assessments and related evidence

The certified organisation shall update, at least once a year, the content of the assessment and provide any related evidence.

The update of the assessment shall be submitted for annual review by an appointed WAC expert.

In addition, and at the latest during the annual update, the certified organisation shall inform the WAC Scheme Owner of any significant event or occurrence liable to impact on its certification status (e.g. expansion or reduction of the number of geographical sites, significant changes in the workforce or the organisation's activities).

9.3 Annual WAC assessment review by experts

Results of the updated assessment and related evidence provided will be analysed by an expert, according to the procedure outlined in Chapter 5.

In addition, the annual review will include a remote interview by videoconference.

The experts shall inform the certification commission of any proposed change of certified status such as suspension, change in scope, etc.

9.4 Suspension and withdrawal of the certificate

In case of non-compliance with the conditions above, the certification may be temporarily suspended or completely cancelled by the certification commission and communicated in writing to the certified organisation. The justification for the decision as well its effect on the organisation's certification status will be communicated.

A certificate can be withdrawn for various reasons. The following list contains a few examples (but is not limit to):

- a) Absence of compliance with the required minimum number of criteria;
- b) Failure of the certificate holder to respect the certification procedures;
- c) A justified complaint by a third party;
- d) Lack of collaboration during the certification process;
- e) non-payment of the annual fee.

10. Certification commission

The certification commission is the authority responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the WAC certification process and regulations for all candidate and certified organisations.

On the basis of this regulations and its application, the commission makes the final decision on whether to award certification or not.

Members of the commission are nominated by the WAC scheme owner (EFCS, represented by the WAC Steering Committee). It is composed of at least:

- A representative of the WAC certification scheme owner (EFCS)
- Two representatives of the WAC consortium of partners (other than EFCS)
- Two external experts

The commission is responsible for ensuring the conformity of the qualification procedure for experts in charge of external evaluations.

ANNEX 1 - WAC certification process - flow chart

