

	MASTERCERT PRODUCT CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR FOOD PRODUCTS	<i>MCI-SC-001</i>
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Mastercert LLP

**Mastercert Product Certification Scheme for
Food Products**

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Introduction

This document specifies the rules & procedure for implementation of Product Certification Scheme for Food Products. This scheme implemented by Mastercert LLP shall grant the use of Mastercert Halal mark to the products that demonstrate compliance to the General Requirements, the relevant Specific Requirements/Technical Regulation, Product Standards and Halal Standards.

Mastercert has developed this Product Certification Scheme “MCI-SC-001 Mastercert Product Certification Scheme for Food Products” based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 Standard: Conformity assessment -Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services and ISO/IEC 17067:2013 Conformity assessment — Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes. This scheme was updated to include the requirements of i-CAS-Halal standard (QCI-2023), Govt. of India.

This scheme has been developed & owned by Mastercert LLP as a Type V Certification Scheme. Mastercert constituted a Scheme Development Committee for the purpose of developing the Certification schemes as per MCI-SC-010 Product Certification Scheme Development & Management, with the following committee

- ❖ representative of the manufacturing industry of food and food materials and ingredients
- ❖ representative of the distribution industry
- ❖ representative of consumers
- ❖ representative of Certification Body
- ❖ experts in food safety
- ❖ expert in Halal Industry

The committee shall involve in planning, designing, development, validation, implementation, maintaining and updating the scheme on a regular basis. Mastercert ensures that the scheme continues to meet market needs. Mastercert adopts a continuous improvement development approach, to ensure the scheme remains relevant. Also, Mastercert shall inform the Accreditation Bodies and applicants/certificate holder of any relevant information and developments relating to the scheme. The content of this scheme does not contradict the requirements of any of the referred international requirements, standards and regulation.

All the requirements specified herein are general requirements and this scheme shall be fulfilled by the clients in conjunction with established Certification Procedures of Mastercert, Technical Regulations & Standard requirements.

Brief of Mastercert

Mastercert LLP is a conformity assessment body initially established in 2018 after deliberation between partners. Mastercert established & has updated the Management System documentation as per Standards ISO 17065, GSO 2055-2, UAE.S 2055-2, OIC SMIIC 2, India Conformity Assessment Scheme (i-CAS) for Halal Products Part C – Requirements for Halal Certification Bodies to issue Halal Certification.

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Mastercert LLP has been legally incorporated and is registered with the Registrar's Office for Ministry of Corporate Affairs form 16 of the incorporated pursuant to section 12(1) of the limited liability Partnership act 2008, with registration No: AAO-1940, by Ministry of Corporate Affairs, India in 2019. As from 1 February 2019, Mastercert started its operations to issue Halal Certification.

Mastercert was the first Halal Certification Body in India to be recognized by SFDA Saudi Halal Center as a HCB as per SFDA.FD/GSO 2055-2.

Accreditation & Recognitions

Currently, Mastercert has the following Accreditation, recognition and approvals.

- Emirates International Accreditation Centre (EIAC), UAE accredited Mastercert as an Halal Certification Body (HCB) as per UAE.S 2055-2 & GSO 2055-2.
- Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology (MoIAT), UAE, recognized Mastercert as an approved HCB as per UAE.S 2055-2.
- SFDA – Saudi Food & Drug Authority, Saudi Halal Center has assessed & approved Mastercert as per SFDA.FD/GSO2055-2.
- Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization (SASO) has approved Mastercert LLP as a Halal Conformity Assessment Body.
- Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS), Singapore has recognized Mastercert LLP as approved Halal Certification Body

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1. Scope

This scheme shall apply to locally manufactured and exported food products. The scheme is also applicable for local manufacturers who intend to market their products as Halal in Domestic market without exporting.

The products considered under this scheme for certification is listed in Annex IV.

2. Responsibilities and Obligations

2.1. Applicant Responsibilities:

Applicant shall accept and undertake the following:

2.1.1. Applicant shall make request for Halal Certification with completed Application form.

2.1.2. All the documents and records which are required for processing of Halal Certification shall be submitted. These include any document or changes requested either during or after certification process. A general list of documents required is listed in Annex V.

2.1.3. The products under certification shall be manufactured / supplied by the applicant and shall comply with the requirements of the certification process including the elements of this scheme and relevant standards.

2.1.4. Any changes in the Product being manufactured / supplied shall be communicated to the Certification Body. These might include change in Technical Specification, Brand Name, and Packaging Specification along with any other changes which might affect the Halal integrity of the Product.

2.1.5. The applicant shall make all necessary arrangements needed by Mastercert to conduct evaluation, surveillance as well as providing access to all locations, equipment, personnel, clients and subcontractors' documentation and information.

2.1.6. The applicant shall comply with any requirements that may be prescribed in the certification scheme related to the use of marks of conformity, and on information related to the product.

2.1.7. The applicant shall avail relevant standards required for implementation of standard & scheme requirements.

2.1.8. The applicant must comply with the requirements provided in the respective approved Standards for Halal along with the fulfillment of the standards / technical regulations for products, services or systems.

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2.1.9. The applicant shall implement efficient controls to ensure that implemented products, services or systems are 'Halal' and Shariah-compliant. Supporting documents shall be kept for inspection and auditing purposes.

2.1.10. The applicant shall accept to meet any other regulatory requirements issued by the official authorities in the country or state where the product is produced or service is carried out. If the applicant has the Production unit in India, then they shall adhere to the country's official regulatory authorities including but not limited to FSSAI, APEDA, MPEDA, EIC norms as stipulated by the Ministry of Health & Welfare or allied Departments.

2.1.11. The products prohibited by Ministry of Health or allied Department in Country - where the product is produced or service is carried out, due to the outbreak of an infection or any other causes as set under the ministry's respective resolution shall not be supplied.

2.1.12. Products exported to GCC countries shall fulfill the standard requirements of the importing country. In case of any conflicting requirement between the country of manufacture & country of export, the reason for the conflict shall be identified and the suitable corrective action shall be established which shall ensure the fulfillment of export country's requirement and documenting the deviation if any applicable.

2.1.13. Products that are produced in India and are meant for only exports with no domestic sales shall conform to necessary EIC, FSSAI, APEDA regulatory requirements.

2.1.14. The applicant shall ensure that the product to be certified as Halal

- shall not contain any element/part/or traces of animals that are non-halal or that comes from animals which are not slaughtered according to Islamic law;
- shall not contain synthetic alcohols, liquors, or wines;
- shall not be subjected to come in contact with any processing aid which is Haram.
- shall not contain narcotic drugs;
- shall not be contaminated with non-halal elements or Najis, in any step of the preparation, manufacturing, packaging, storage, and transportation
- shall have Raw Material, Ingredients and other additives, from approved halal source and have documented evidence for the source i.e. traceability
- shall be processed with tools / equipment free from non-halal element or najis

2.1.15. The applicant shall ensure that the unit producing/manufacturing the product to be certified as Halal

- shall meet the regional Hygiene requirements
- shall meet the importing countries technical & hygiene requirements
- shall not be processed in unit processing non-halal items
- shall follow Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)
- shall have implemented Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) system
- may have implemented Food Safety Management System (FSMS)

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2.1.16. Application for the units processing halal & non-halal products in same facility shall be reviewed initially for its acceptance by Shariah Committee.

2.1.17. The applicant shall have made arrangements for

- segregation required between products to be certified and other products not under certification, if any
- segregation required between Halal & Non-Halal Products, in case of any incidence

2.1.18. The applicant shall have defined procedures

- to prevent cross contamination at different levels in processing
- for handling nonconformities related to halal products
- for cleaning to ensure usage of tools, devices, equipment incase of contamination with non-halal products/materials

2.1.19. The applicant shall notify the certification body, in case of any certification availed for the unit under a different Halal scheme from another certification body.

2.1.20. The applicant shall also notify if any part of the unit mentioned in application is/was previously certified by the Certification Body under a different name or exporter name.

2.1.21. The applicant shall read, understand and agree to adhere to the scheme requirements & Halal Certification Conditions upon submission & acceptance of the application and at all times after successful certification.

2.1.22. The applicant shall take ownership and bear responsibility for its application at all times.

2.1.23. The applicant shall communicate directly with Mastercert on all matters related to Halal Certification.

2.1.24. The application submitted by the applicant is valid for 6 months, within which the applicant shall ensure the certification process has been initiated; else a new application shall be submitted, on completion of 6 months.

2.1.25. The application may be rejected including but not limited to below details:

- a) incomplete application or inaccurate details are found
- b) failure to pay fee
- c) products not under the scope of Mastercert is under application
- d) failure to respond to Mastercert's query for any documentation or corrective action

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2.2. Certification Body Responsibilities:

Mastercert is responsible for:

- 2.2.1. Ensuring the completion of the various stages of certification activities such as Document Review, Initial Assessment including two stage audit, Issuance of certificate, Surveillance and Re-certification.
- 2.2.2. Maintaining all information and documents of the applicant obtained during review & audit according to confidentiality agreement.
- 2.2.3. Ensuring that Auditors with competency required as per Scope is selected for Audit and approval of the applicant is obtained for the nominated Auditors. The Auditors competency is listed in Annex VI.
- 2.2.4. Appointing a staff in a permanent supervisory post who is competent and well trained in Halal requirements

2.3. Halal Supervisor Responsibilities:

- 2.3.1. Be a point of contact for certification body & Production site
- 2.3.2. Supervise the entire process in Production unit
- 2.3.3. Trained on Halal requirements as per Standards and knowledgeable in Production/Process of the products
- 2.3.4. Maintain documents related to Halal Production
- 2.3.5. Ensure segregation procedure & facility is available in case of requirement
- 2.3.6. Create and Issue Shipment / Consignment certificate
- 2.3.7. Inform Certification Body of developments in the site such as but not limited to New product development, New process line, Change in HACCP etc
- 2.3.8. Ensure availability of alternate personnel in case of absence from work

3. Certification of Multi-Site Organization

- 3.1. Each site of a multi-site establishment needs to be assessed and certified separately.
- 3.2. Applicant shall submit application separately for each unit to be assessed.

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3.3. Assessment activity shall be carried out separately for each site under multi-site establishment.

3.4. Certification decision of one site shall be independent of other sites.

3.5. For certified clients under multi-site establishment, Halal Supervisors shall be appointed individually for each site.

4. Internal Halal Team

4.1. The applicant shall establish a Halal team for the unit under certification, with the members of the team trained or knowledgeable in Halal standards & Halal requirements. This activity shall be carried out prior to certification audit.

4.2. This team shall have representation from different departments such as Quality, Production, Purchase, Marketing & Sales, Stores etc. The member appointed by Mastercert shall be included in this team.

4.3. This team shall be officially documented.

4.4. This team shall have following key responsibilities, in addition to others that may be deemed necessary by the applicant.

- i. Create Policy for Halal
- ii. Document procedures relating to Halal
- iii. Ensure all raw materials, ingredients & additives, packaging materials, contact materials, greases, disinfectants are Halal and have supporting documentation
- iv. Supervise and inspect the production process regularly
- v. Conduct routine internal audits, to ensure all operations under the scope of certification is in accordance with all requirement of this scheme & halal standards
- vi. Ensure employees are trained, at the minimum in matters of halal & conditions of non-halal
- vii. Maintain documents & records relevant to Halal Certification

5. Product Name & Labelling Requirements

5.1. Declaration of products to be certified under this scheme shall include:

- (a) Exact names printed on the packaging;
- (b) Product description (if product name does not reflect nature of product);
- (c) Brand name (if any);
- (d) Product code (if any);
- (e) Artwork of product packaging

5.2. Labeling shall comply with the requirements stated in approved Halal Standards and other standards which are specifically applicable to the given product / service.

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- 5.3. Any information, facts or claims mentioned on the label shall be valid, authentic and shall be based on established scientific and laboratory evidence.
- 5.4. Naming of products to be certified shall take into account cultural and religious sensitivities of the importing country. Any product named inappropriately or products named after haram items etc shall not be considered for certification.
- 5.5. Products under certification shall not be packed in a packaging which is against customs & values of importing country.
- 5.6. Artwork present in product label shall not include images or pictures which is considered indecent, inappropriate, and culturally insensitive. Image with main focus on haram items shall not be present on artwork.
- 5.7. In the above scenarios, necessary corrective action shall be taken.

6. Conformity Assessment of the Product & Facility

- 6.1. Upon acceptance of the Application form along with the necessary documents, Mastercert shall carry out a conformity assessment for the facility and particular product as defined in the approved Standards with an initial document review.
- 6.2. During the conformity assessment for Halal certification, Audit is conducted at different levels before certification and over the certified duration. ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO 19011 forms an important part in conduct of Halal Certification Audit.
- 6.3. The general overview of Certification Process is given in Annex VII.
- 6.4. Assessment and Evaluation of Applicant & product(s) shall be conducted by Mastercert as per applicable standards listed in Annex VIII.
- 6.5. The duration for Assessment and Evaluation shall be dependent on the readiness of the unit for Certification Audit, time taken for closure of Non-conformity & submission of corrective action by the client.
- 6.6. New application received shall be processed within 2 working days by the Application reviewer and findings documented. Further certification process steps shall be initiated as per the Certification procedures.
- 6.7. Testing of the products shall be carried out in ISO 17025 accredited laboratories as per the Product standard requirement.

- 6.8. Mastercert shall also conduct inspections following the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020 for products exported, for which the applicant may require Halal Shipment/Consignment Certificate.
- 6.9. Assessments for Units processing both halal and non-halal products shall be carried out based on guidance & approval of Shariah committee.
- 6.10. During Certification Audit, the applicant might have non-conformances which shall be graded by the Audit team and addressed by the applicant.

7. Non Conformity & Confirmation of Corrective Actions

7.1 Auditors shall assess conformity or nonconformity from the following three levels:

a) Major nonconformity: Cause a risk on food safety or halal or legality being at stake which could seriously affect food safety or Halal norms

Note) Conformity to the requirements is not fulfilled, and the product may consequently be unsafe, and/or the food safety risk may increase and/or chances of product becoming non-halal is high

b) Minor nonconformity: less likely to cause a risk on food safety or halal

Note) Conformity to the requirements is not fulfilled, however, the product is consequently considered to be virtually safe, halal and/or the food safety risk does not increase.

c) Conformity: Requirements are fully satisfied.

If there is any critical breakdown found during an initial audit, the audit shall be suspended.

7.1.1 Mastercert always informs the customer of nonconformities identified in the different evaluation stages using Non Conformity Report.

7.1.2 If one or more nonconformities have arisen, and if the client expresses interest in continuing the certification process, Mastercert shall provide information regarding the additional evaluation tasks needed to verify that nonconformities have been corrected.

7.1.3 If the client agrees to completion of the additional evaluation tasks, the process specified shall be repeated to complete the additional evaluation tasks.

7.1.4 The results of all evaluation activities are recorded prior to conducting the certification review and decision

7.2 Corrective actions against nonconformity and their deadlines

a) Major nonconformity

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In case any major nonconformity is found, the organization shall be requested to take a prompt correction and a corrective action and, in principle, confirmed with the action completed within thirty days.

b) Minor nonconformity

In case where any minor nonconformity is found, the organization shall be requested to take a correction and plan a corrective action within thirty days, in principle, and shall be confirmed with the action completed during the next audit one year later.

If a critical breakdown is observed during a recertification and/or surveillance audit, the certification shall be suspended and the organization shall be requested to take and complete a corrective action within six months. There shall be a re-audit after the corrective action has been completed. The certification expires unless the critical nonconformity is eliminated when the expiry date of the certification has passed. Nevertheless of that, if the corrective action has been accomplished within the defined period of corrective action (six months) and its conformity is assessed during the recertification audit, the certification does not lose its effect. In this case, the expiry date of the certification starts from the original three-year cycle.

7.3 Confirmation of corrective actions

7.3.1 Mastercert shall obtain corrective action plans and evidence of corrective actions taken from organizations that have nonconformity to verify that the organization fully conforms to the requirements of the Standard.

7.3.2 Verification of the corrective action plan shall be done through assessment of submitted documents including updated procedures, relevant records, and photographs, or additional on-site audit by a technical auditor, depending on the level of nonconformity.

8. Granting Halal Certificate

8.1. After making corrective actions, if any, the Auditor prepares Audit report and submits for review & decision of Certification.

8.2. Certification Review is conducted by a person not involved in the Certification process to determine the correctness of documents and process involved.

8.3. Certification Decision is taken by a committee whose members have not involved in the Certification activities. Decision is taken unanimously and not by majority of votes.

8.4. In case a decision not to grant certification is taken due to non-conformity on the part of the customer, Mastercert shall notify the customer of the reasons for the decision.

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- 8.5. If the customer expresses interest in continuing the certification process, Mastercert shall coordinate once more with the customer in order for them to initiate the necessary actions to satisfy the requirements of this certification scheme. Upon the client's submission of the corrective actions and supporting evidences, the processes of evaluation and review are repeated.
- 8.6. Mastercert shall issue a Halal Certificate to the applicant when the decision committee deems that the results of conformity assessment demonstrate the conformance to the Halal standards & requirements of Mastercert Procedure & Schemes.
- 8.7. The Halal Certificate shall serve as an approval of the product& the applicant and can be used for marketing the certified product & applicant.
- 8.8. The Halal Certificate is not transferable and is valid only for the certified products manufactured in the approved Organization of the applicant.
- 8.9. The Halal Certificate shall be valid for 3 years.

9. Use of Halal Certificate & Halal Mark

- 9.1. On being awarded Halal Certificate after successful evaluation, the Applicant (Certificate holder) shall sign the agreement for use of License, Certificate and Mark of Conformity.
- 9.2. The Certificate holder shall then affix or print the Halal Mark of Conformity on the certified product(s) in accordance with approved technical regulations.
- 9.3. Use of the Halal Mark of Mastercert shall be governed by the usage policy of Mastercert.
- 9.4. For using any other Halal Mark, prior approval must be sought from Mastercert.
- 9.5. The Halal Certificate is the exclusive property of Mastercert. Its correct use is a contractual obligation. Any intentional misuse/disregard of the Certificate maybe grounds for corrective actions that may include withdrawing the Certification.
- 9.6. For providing copies of the certification documents to others, the documents shall be reproduced in its entirety including annexure or schedules of certification.
- 9.7. The Certification shall not be used in such a manner which might bring Mastercert into disrepute. Any claim or statement regarding the certification which might be misleading or unauthorized shall not be made.
- 9.8. On the event of certification being suspended, withdrawn, cancelled or terminated, the certificate holder shall discontinue the use of Mastercert Halal Mark and the certificate. Any reference regarding the same in any form shall not be made.

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9.9. For making any reference of the certification in communication media, the certificate holder shall comply with the requirements of this scheme.

10. Halal Shipment/Consignment Certificate

- 10.1. For any Halal product being exported by certified applicant, Mastercert shall issue Halal Shipment/Consignment Certificate.
- 10.2. This certificate shall be issued and may be a mandatory or voluntary requirement of the importing country.
- 10.3. The certificate issued is valid only for the particular goods being shipped as mentioned in official shipping documents.
- 10.4. Mastercert shall conduct inspection of the product being exported following the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020. Mastercert's supervisor or inspector shall conduct the inspection.

11. Surveillance Audit

- 11.1. The certified applicant shall be subjected to mandatory Surveillance Audit at the end of first & second year during the three certification cycle.
- 11.2. The Surveillance Audit shall be carried out within the time specified in the Halal Certificate and any reason for delay in conduct of Surveillance Audit shall be documented.
- 11.3. In case the certified applicant does not permit the conduct of Surveillance Audit, necessary actions shall be initiated as per the agreement signed between the parties.
- 11.4. The certified applicant may be subjected to an additional surveillance visit as decided by the Decision Committee.
- 11.5. During Surveillance Audit, product may be sampled for testing as deemed necessary.

12. Market Monitoring

- 12.1. Market monitoring shall be conducted to ensure that the factory and the product consistently complying with the defined Technical Regulations.
- 12.2. Necessary samples are picked up from all supply points and outlets for necessary examinations to ensure their conformity with the requirements thereof. If any nonconformity is detected, necessary action shall be initiated against the supplier of such products.

12.3. Any product violating this scheme must not be processed, sold, stored, offered, marketed, promoted, distributed for free or otherwise circulated.

12.4. Any products bearing any other sign, slogan, label, mark, symbol, illustration or any other descriptive information indicating conformity with Islamic Shariah or express 'Halal' that is not in accordance with this scheme, shall be strictly prohibited.

13. Scope Extension or Reduction, Termination, Suspension, Reinstatement, Withdrawal of Certification

13.1.Extension of Scope

13.1.1. The certified Applicant can extend the certification scope to other products made in the same factory to the same Technical Regulation after review and approval of Mastercert.

13.1.2. Any other product(s) being manufactured in the same factory shall be treated independently.

13.2.Termination

The Halal Certificate may be cancelled and the right to use the Halal certificate and Halal Mark shall be revoked, when the licensee:

- goes out of business
- permanently stopped producing the Halal certified product
- cannot ensure compliance to a new requirement brought about by change in the certification scheme or applicable product standard
- requested for the cancellation

13.3.Reduction of Scope

The scope of Halal certification may be reduced in certain nonconforming situation such that nonconforming product(s) are excluded.

13.4.Suspension

13.4.1. The license to use Halal certificate and Halal Mark for one or more products, may be suspended after verifying a technical or administrative breach of contract, failure to meet the terms of an issued warning, or nonconformance found during surveillance such as:

- defects in certified products caused by a temporary problem in the production process
- improper use of Halal Mark on certified products that cannot be solved by remedial measures on the part of manufacturer or trader

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13.4.2. The suspension usually applies for a maximum of 6 months and gives the licensee the opportunity to take action in order to avoid Halal certification withdrawal by Mastercert.

13.5. Lifting of Suspension (Reinstatement of Certification)

After verifying complete fulfillment of contract obligations, the suspension of the Halal certificate may be lifted thereby enabling the licensee its right to use the certificate.

13.6. Withdrawal

The certified applicant may choose to voluntarily withdraw certificate owing to various reason such as, but not limited to,

- Management Decision
- Change in ownership
- Termination of Production activities

The certified applicant's right to use certificate and Halal Mark for one or more products (or for one or several company plants or units), may be withdrawn consequent to a serious technical or administrative breach of contract, failure to meet the terms of an issued warning, or following a further breach of contract when certification is already under suspension. The following are also grounds for withdrawal of certification:

- Product defect found during surveillance is not corrected within the agreed period
- The Halal Mark is being used for non-certified products
- Failure to settle financial obligation to Mastercert
- Inadequate corrective actions taken to rectify the reasons for suspensions

14. Certification Renewal

14.1. The Certified applicant shall submit the renewal application atleast 6 month before the expiry of Certification.

14.2. Renewal Certification Audit process shall be completed before the expiry of existing certificate.

14.3. Any application received after the expiry of Halal certificate shall be subjected to review of Management. The reasons for delay in submitting the renewal application shall be documented. If found merit in case of delay in submission of renewal application, Mastercert shall accept the renewal application.

14.4. In case of no merit in delay of submission of renewal application, the previously certified application shall undergo new certification process. The existing certification shall be discontinued.

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15. Changes in Certification

- 15.1. The certified application shall inform Mastercert of any change in the location of the Applicant's Production site/ Change of Ownership / Change of Name of the Applicant.
- 15.2. On receipt of such information, Mastercert shall issue appropriate instructions to the certified applicant for suspension of certification with immediate effect in case of change in site.
- 15.3. The Applicant shall be subject to an evaluation at the new site like an Initial Evaluation of an applicant.
- 15.4. If the evaluation is satisfactory, Mastercert shall transfer the Certificate to the new location. Mastercert shall endorse the change of premises on the Certificate.
- 15.5. In the event of change of Ownership, the Applicant shall submit their acceptance to the agreements for Certification with Mastercert regarding the operation and payment of fees. Mastercert shall ask the Applicant for proof of legal entity afresh. The same process shall be followed as and when an existing applicant undergoes a change in management. Such changes shall not call for a visit to the production site.
- 15.6. In case of change of Name, the Applicant shall inform the change in the name to Mastercert supported with documentary evidence, and if satisfied Mastercert shall endorse the Certificate in the new name.

16.Complaints & Appeals

- 16.1.The certified Applicant shall make complaint regarding any Certification activity by writing to the Management. Also, complaints regarding certified products shall also be handled by Complaints panel.
- 16.2.Upon receipt of the complaints, it shall be recorded by Mastercert and the entire process and documents are retained as confidential.
- 16.3.The complaint-handling panel formulated by Management shall review the complaints, decide appropriate remedial actions and appoint individuals responsible for those actions.
- 16.4.The certified Applicant may appeal any decision taken by Mastercert by writing to the Management.
- 16.5.For each appeal received, a committee shall be formulated comprising of impartial qualified members to review and study the appeal.

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16.6.A consensus decision by the Committee is considered final. Until such decision is made, the relevant decision shall remain in force.

17.Liability / Disclaimer

17.1.Mastercert shall not be held responsible for any legal action raised by any party against the Certified Applicant or the certified product(s) on matters resulting from the implementation of this Scheme

17.2.The Certified Applicant is responsible for ensuring that the product meets the requirements of other applicable regulations that were not assessed during the process. This includes quality, health, environmental regulations along with other regulations, which are not necessarily covered by the relevant Standards / Technical Requirements.

18. Certified Product Complaints

18.1. The certificate holder must maintain records of any and all complaints relating to Products Compliance especially in relation to halal, which are under certification of Mastercert.

18.2. These complaints, if any, must be reported to Mastercert upon request along with Corrective actions shall be taken to address and resolve the complaints.

18.3. The documentation related to the complaints shall be reported to Mastercert, upon request.

19. Violations and Penalties

19.1.In case of any violation of this scheme, the person involved or held accountable for the violation shall be subjected to all the procedures, measures and penalties as per the law, without prejudice to the right to impose any severe penalty under other laws.

19.2.In case of any violation of this Scheme, following actions shall be taken to remove the violation and its consequences from the market:

19.2.1. The violating entity which is held accountable for offering the non-complying product shall be directed to withdraw the non-complying product from the market(s) for rectification, repatriation to the country of origin or destruction within a fixed period of time.

19.2.2. All necessary actions are taken for withdrawal, retention or destruction of these products or any other necessary measures for removal of the violation. The violating entity shall bear all emerging expenses.

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19.3.Necessary actions apply to any one that use Halal product certificate or Halal mark without obtaining official permission, or if continue to use Halal product certificate or Halal mark or declaring its use through means of media despite the issuance of a decision to stop or suspend or cancel or forfeiting the license shall be reported to law agencies and legal actions shall be pursued.

20. Commitment to Impartiality

20.1.The overall aim of third-party certification is to give confidence to all parties that rely on certification. Mastercert shall act as per the principles of impartiality for inspiring confidence in the customers by having independence, impartiality and competence both in action and appearance.

20.2.Mastercert has a dedicated Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality and has developed Impartiality policy.

21. General Provisions

21.1.Necessary actions which ensure health and safety shall be taken, such as withdrawal of the product. Such actions shall not constitute any breach of confidentiality.

21.2.The conditions implying a Shariah suspicion shall be referred to the official opinion of Mastercert Shariah Committee. There shall be complete coordination with the Certification body or the authority in cases of visits to the establishment.

21.3.Any case that cannot be handled by this scheme, or any conflict in respect to its construction or application, shall be referred to the Managing Director.

21.4.If the source of nonconformity cannot be identified, the entity at which the violation has been detected shall be held accountable for the nonconformity.

21.5.Mastercert has the right to add/amend/modify these General Rules and specific Technical Rules. Parties involved shall be informed accordingly of the respective changes which shall affect the Certification.

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ANNEX I–NORMATIVE REFERENCE

- ISO/IEC 17000: Conformity assessment - Vocabulary and general principles
- ISO/IEC 17007: Conformity assessment - Guidance for drafting normative documents suitable for use for conformity assessment
- ISO/IEC 17020:2012: Conformity assessment — Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection
- ISO/IEC 17021-1: Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1:Requirements
- ISO 22003-1: Food safety Part 1: Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems
- ISO/IEC 17065: Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services
- ISO/IEC 17067: Conformity assessment - Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes
- IAF MD 25: Criteria for evaluation of Conformity Assessment Schemes
- GSO 2055-2: Halal Products – Part 2 : General Requirements For Halal Certification Bodies
- UAE.S 2055-2: Halal products - Part (2) : General Requirements for Halal Certification Bodies
- OIC/SMIIC 2: Conformity Assessment – Requirements for Bodies Providing Halal Certification
- India Conformity Assessment Scheme (i-CAS)for Halal Products (QCI-2023), Govt. of India

ANNEX II – TERMS & DEFINITIONS

The following terms and phrases shall have the meaning set against each, unless required otherwise by the context:

Scheme	Mastercert Product Certification Scheme for Food Products
Authority	All approved National Halal Standardization Bodies such as SFDA, SASO, JAKIM, BPJPH, MUI, MUIS who might also provide Halal Accreditation / Recognition to Halal Certification Bodies
Approved Standard	A document that specifies criteria, protocols or specifications for conduct, performance, services or products, including terminology, symbols, testing methods, sampling, packaging and labeling
Mandatory Standard (Technical Regulation)	Approved standard which shall be mandatorily applied by the product manufacturer or service provider
Manufacturer / Supplier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The product manufacturer or any person presenting himself as product manufacturer by naming the product after their name or by appropriate commercial description and any person renewing the product • The manufacturer's agent or the importer in case there is no manufacturer's agent in the country of production • Any person from the supply chain whose activity has an impact on the product properties
Conformity Assessment	The process that verifies the fulfillment of the approved scheme or technical regulations or standards. The subject field of conformity assessment includes activities such as inspection, testing, certification or any other related activities
Approved Assessment Body	The body approved to do certain tasks such as referential laboratories and grant of conformity certifications
Accreditation	Getting official recognition, that the conformity assessment body is qualified and competent to assume certain tasks, from a recognized body
Accreditation Body	A body whose accreditation activities are recognized through the body seeking recognition of the international organizations concerned with accreditation or signature of mutual recognition conventions
Accreditation Requirements	The criteria that shall be fulfilled by conformity assessment bodies in order to get accredited, registered or appointed as an approved Certification body
Assurance	Periodical inspection and picking samples from the market, establishment or both to ensure the continuation of conformity
Islamic Shariah	Allah's ordinance to Muslims, derived from the Holy Quran, Sunnah and unanimous view of Islamic scholars (after the death of Prophet Muhammad, PBUH)
Halal	Permissible or Lawful

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Haram	Prohibited, Non-Halal
Halal Products	The products permissible in accordance with Islamic Shariah and meeting the requirements of approved standards
Halal Foods	The foods and beverages permissible in accordance with Islamic Shariah and meeting the requirements of approved standards
Halal Certificate	A document certifying that the product, service or their respective schemes are Shariah-compliant. This includes Halal slaughtering certificates, Certificates of establishments, farms, slaughterhouses and facilities sorted as ‘Halal’, Certificates of food raw materials, food additives, ingredients with meat derivatives, extracts, as well as animal smells, gelatin, fats, oils and their derivatives.
Halal Mark	The mark approved for Halal, to be granted to a certain product to confirm the conformity of a product, service and production system to the requirements of approved standards
Licensing of Halal Mark	A certificate granted to allow the use of the Halal Mark on products, compliant with the requirements of approved standards
Consignment	A certain quantity of a product of the same type or classification, including one or more batches, covered in the same certificate or other documents, imported by a sole importer via the same means of transportation, subject to the same customs declaration
Food	Any prepared, semi-prepared or unprepared material for human consumption, including beverage, gum or any other material used in the manufacturing, preparation or processing of foodstuff, excluding cosmetics, perfumes, tobacco or any materials only used as drugs
Food Additives	Any material which is not usually used as food on its own, or as a basic element in food ingredients whether or not it has a nutrition value. It is intentionally added to food for technological purposes (including sense properties such as color, taste and smell) during manufacture, preparation, processing, packaging, transportation or circulation of food stuff, until this material becomes directly or indirectly an element of impact on the properties of this food
Food Chain	All phases which a product undergoes from primary production to delivery to consumer, including importation, exportation, manufacture, preparation, processing, packaging, transportation, distribution, submission, offering and sale
Label	Any statement, brand, mark, pictorial or any other descriptive written, printed /impressed or stuck on the container of products thereto, in such a manner so as not to be removable
Najis	Filth
Services	Activities such as transportation, storage, packaging and production of product contact materials

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Production systems	An integrated set of elements related to food and designed to perform together a task or set of tasks specified in advance
Supply Chain	Any stage that the product goes through after its production and till reaching the consumer such as import, supply, storage, delivery, trade (wholesale and retail) and any other relevant processes
Consumer	Any person obtaining a commodity or service, paid or unpaid, to satisfy his/her own needs or another person's needs

Also included are the terms and definitions in the approved Standards which shall constitute an integral part of this scheme, unless mentioned otherwise.

ANNEX III - ABBREVIATIONS

FSSAI	Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
APEDA	Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority
MPEDA	Marine Products Export Development Authority
EIC	Export Inspection Council
SFDA	Saudi Food and Drug Authority
SASO	Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization
MOIAT	Ministry of industry and Advanced Technology
EIAC	Emirates International Accreditation Centre
GSO	GCC Standardization Organization
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council (Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf)
UAE	United Arab Emirates
JAKIM	Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (English Translation)
MUI	Majelis Ulama Indonesia Religious Council of Indonesia (English Translation)
MUIS	Majelis Ugama Islam Singapura Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (English Translation)
BPJPH	Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (English Translation)

ANNEX IV – SCOPE

#	Cluster	Category	Subcategory	Products (Examples)
1	Food and feed processing	C - Food Manufacturing	CIV - Processing of ambient stable products	Production of food products from any source that are stored and sold at ambient temperature, including canned foods, biscuits, snacks, oil, drinking water, beverages, pasta, flour, sugar, food-grade salt *

Note:

- i. Products mentioned in scope are not limited to those mentioned herein
- ii. Scope is subject to change based on the approval obtained from relevant authorities

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ANNEX V – DOCUMENT REQUIREMENT

The following list of document is required for preliminary document review. The list is not exhaustive and shall include other documents as per review

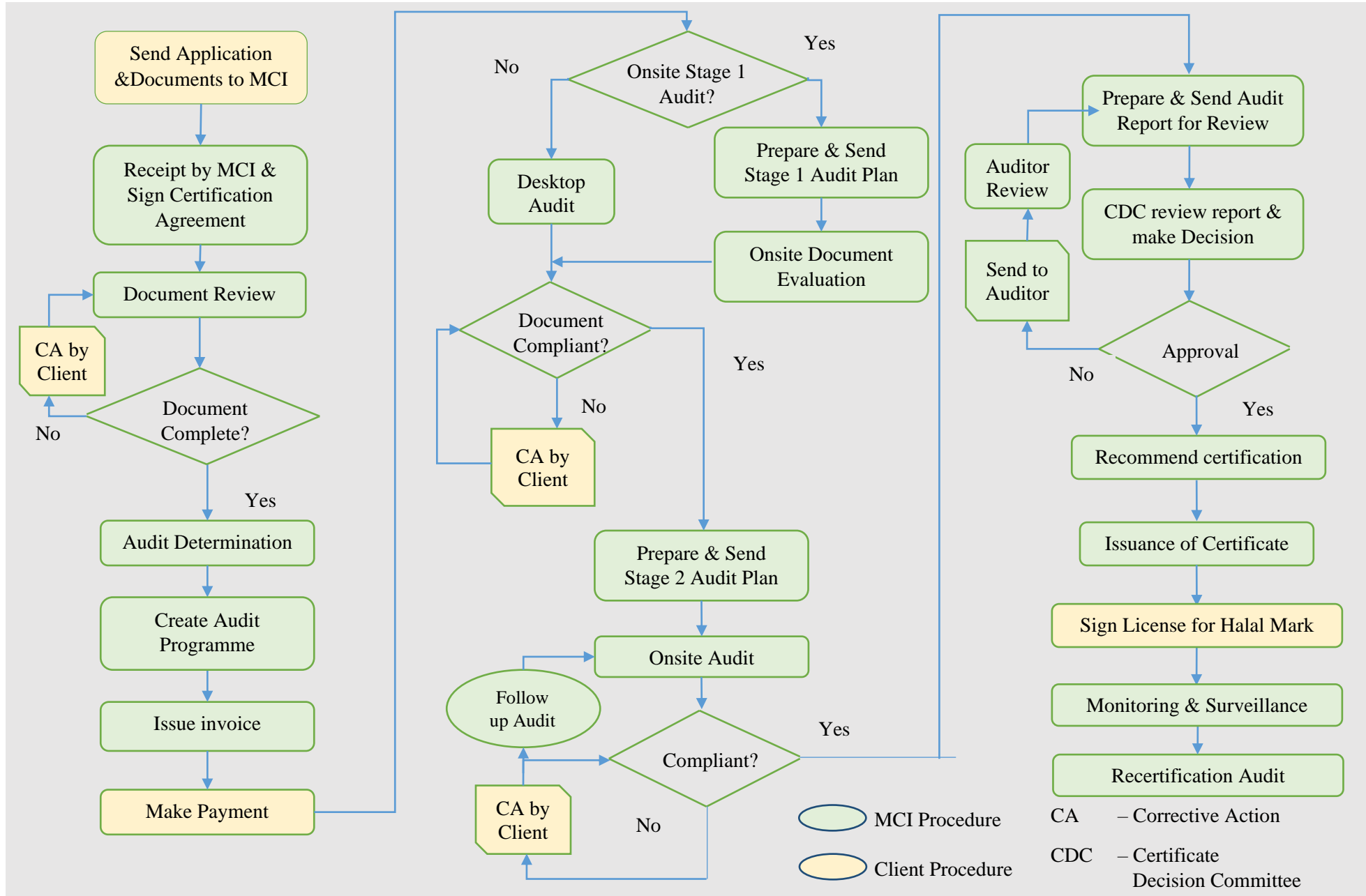
- ✓ Completed Application Form
- ✓ Declaration of Conformity by the Applicant on Letter Head
- ✓ Certificate of Registration with Governmental Authority
- ✓ FSSAI License
- ✓ HACCP Manual
- ✓ IEC / Certificate of Export / Authenticated Free Sale Certificate
- ✓ Product List to be certified
- ✓ Products excluded from Certification
- ✓ Product Composition
- ✓ Approved Supplier List
- ✓ Halal Certificate for RM, Ingredients & others
- ✓ Test Report from ISO 17025 accredited Lab
- ✓ Layout of the Unit
- ✓ Label Artwork

ANNEX VI – AUDITOR COMPETENCY

Auditors both Technical & Shariah are competent on account of their educational qualification, Training (Internal & External) and Work experience in the related field. They fulfill the criteria mentioned in the table below. Auditors are evaluated on an annual basis for their competency verification. The below mentioned criteria is with regards to Category CIV as per Certification Scheme & Standards:

#	Auditor	Educational Qualification	Work Experience	Training	Audit Experience
1.	Technical - Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bachelors Degree in Food Technology, Biotechnology or M. Sc, M. Tech in the relevant Area 	5 years work experience with 2 years in Production /QC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ FSMS ✓ HACCP ✓ GSO 2055-1, GSO 993, UAE. S 2055-1, UAE.S 993, OIC SMIIC 1 ✓ GSO 2055-2, UAE. S 2055-2, OIC SMIIC 2 ✓ I-CAS Halal ✓ ISO 19011 ✓ Certification Procedure ✓ Shariah Rules on Halal & Haram 	15 certification audit in last 2 years
2.	Technical				10 certification audit in last 2 years
3.	Shariah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aalim from Madarsa ➤ Graduate in Islamic course recognized by State Madarsa Board or UGC recognized university 	5 year work Experience in Teaching of Fiqh / Islamic jurisprudence or Employed in College in relevant sector or Experience in Halal Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ FSMS ✓ HACCP ✓ GSO 2055-1, GSO 993, UAE. S 2055-1, UAE.S 993, OIC SMIIC 1 ✓ GSO 2055-2, UAE. S 2055-2, OIC SMIIC 2 ✓ I-CAS Halal ✓ ISO 19011 ✓ Certification Procedure ✓ Shariah Rules on Halal & Haram 	10 certification audit in last 2 years

ANNEX VII – CERTIFICATION PROCESS



ANNEX VIII – AUDIT STANDARDS

List of approved Standards applicable to this scheme for Audit*

No.	Standard Title	Standard No.
1	General Requirements on Halal food **	GSO 2055-1, UAE.S 2055-1 OIC SMIIC 1
2	India Conformity Assessment Scheme (i-CAS) for Halal Products Part B – Requirements for Halal Products **	i-CAS Part B
3	Labelling Of Prepackaged Foodstuffs ***	GSO 9
4	Hygienic Regulations For Food Plants And Their Personnel ****	GSO 21
5	General Principles Of Food Hygiene **	GSO 1694
6	Food safety management system – Requirements for any organization in the food chain **	ISO 22000
7	Product Standards as per the applicable product category *****	Applicable GSO Standard
<p>* Always refer/use the latest version of the standard(s)</p> <p>** Standards for Audit</p> <p>*** For Label Review</p> <p>**** For Plant Review</p> <p>***** For Product Review, for products exported to GCC</p>		

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AMENDMENT SHEET

Version No	Revision No	Issue Date	Page No	Nature of Amendment	Reason for Change	Approved By
02	01	22.01.2024	3	Details of standards followed by Mastercert	Amendment made to comply with i-CAS Scheme requirements	Managing Director
			8	Updated responsibilities of Halal Supervisor under heading 2.3		
			8	Updated requirements under Certification of Multi-Site Organization		
			15, 16	Rename the title of Heading 13. Inclusion of details under Withdrawal of Certification		
			20	Inclusion of relevant Standards in Annex I : Normative Reference		
			27	Inclusion of relevant Standards in Annex VI as part of Training		
			29	Inclusion of Reference to i-CAS Scheme in Annex VII: Audit Standards		
			30	Inclusion of Amendment Details		