	Quality Procedure	Impartiality Procedure		Document #: QSP-5.2
		Process owner CD	Approved By PRES	Issue date: 7/28/2025

1 Purpose and Scope

PURPOSE

This procedure defines how GMS ensures impartiality in all certification activities, identifies and mitigates threats to impartiality, and maintains stakeholder confidence in the objectivity of its certification processes.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to all GMS personnel (internal and external), contractors, committee members, and any affiliated parties involved in certification activities.

2 Responsibility

Top Management: Ensures impartiality across certification operations and reviews residual risks.

Impartiality Committee: Advises on impartiality matters and public trust.

All Personnel and Contractors: Required to disclose potential conflicts and act without bias.

3 Procedure

3.1. Policy Statement

GMS is committed to impartial and objective certification activities. A policy confirming this commitment is published on the GMS website. GMS does not allow commercial, financial, or other pressures to compromise impartiality.

3.2. Threats to Impartiality

3.2.1. GMS identifies threats including:

3.2.2. Self-interest

3.2.3. Self-review

3.2.4. Familiarity

3.2.5. Intimidation


These are managed using the Risk Assessment and Issue Procedure (QSP-4.8) and the associated Risk Assessment and Issue Log (QF-4.8.1).

3.3. Risk Assessment and Documentation

3.3.1. The process includes:

- Identification of threats (internal/external)
- Analysis and evaluation
- Treatment or mitigation
- Monitoring
- Documentation

Use of QF-5.2.1 Impartiality Review supports this process, logging employee history and potential conflicts.

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Top management reviews residual risks for acceptability and, when necessary, consults the Impartiality Committee for objective third-party input.

3.4. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Declarations

To manage conflicts and protect confidential information:

- Employees complete:
 - QF-5.2.1 Impartiality Review
 - QF-8.5.1 Confidentiality Form
 - GMS Office Portion of QF-9.2.1 Request for Services
- Contractors and technical experts complete:
 - QF-7.3.1 Independent Contractor Technical Expert Agreement

This documentation is reviewed before assignment to any certification task.

3.5. Impartiality Committee Management

GMS maintains an active Impartiality Committee responsible for ongoing impartiality oversight. Associated documentation includes:

- QF-6.2.1.1 – Meeting Schedule and Agenda
- QF-6.2.1.2 – Meeting Minutes
- QF-6.2.1.3 – Committee List
- QF-6.2.1.4 – Impartiality Committee Agreement

Committee input is balanced and independent, with no single interest group predominating.

3.6. Impartiality Safeguards

GMS ensures impartiality by:


- Not offering management system consultancy or internal audit services.
- Not certifying a management system if internal audits or consultancy were provided in the last two years.
- Not certifying another certification body.
- Not outsourcing audits to consultancy organizations.
- Avoiding marketing ties that imply GMS makes certification easier or faster.

Personnel previously involved in consulting may not participate in related certification activities for a minimum of two years.

All certification decisions are made by personnel not involved in prior consulting or auditing work for the client.

3.7. Monitoring and Corrective Action

3.7.1. GMS actively monitors for impartiality breaches. Including an Annual Impartiality

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Review Meeting.

3.7.2. When impartiality breaches are identified, corrective action includes:

- Reassignment or exclusion of personnel,
- Reassessment of certification decisions,
- Notification to relevant parties.

3.7.3. Impartiality threats from external bodies are also monitored, and GMS takes proactive action as needed.

4 References

4.1 Related Procedures

Risk Assessment and Issue Procedure

QSP-4.8

4.2 Reference Documents

None

5 Records

Risk Assessment and Issue Log	QF-4.8.1
Impartiality Review	QF-5.2.1
Impartiality Committee Meeting Schedule and Agenda	QF-6.2.1.1
Impartiality Committee Meeting Minutes	QF-6.2.1.2
Impartiality Committee List	QF-6.2.1.3
Impartiality Committee Agreement	QF-6.2.1.4
Independent Contractor Technical Expert Agreement	QF-7.3.1
Confidentiality Form	QF-8.5.1
Request for Services (Office Only Section)	QF-9.2.1
Corrective Action Log	QF-10.3.7.2
Corrective Action Report	QF-10.3.7.1

6 Governing Policies

ISO 17021 5.2