

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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INTRODUCTION



BY RICHARD COLLIN, UKAS EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

Welcome to the UKAS Annual Report 2024, which has as its theme “an agile accreditation body for a changing world”. This report starts with the statements of the Chair and Chief Executive, who outline some of the challenges and opportunities faced by UKAS in the financial year 2023-24, how we have addressed them and our key successes.

The report then continues with articles and interviews from some of UKAS’s key stakeholders and the UKAS Board and Executive. These address different aspects of the theme in a way I trust readers will find instructive and insightful.

You will hear from UKAS Executive colleagues about our digitalisation programme and our CertCheck database, how we seek to improve our customer journey and the Accreditation Specialists we have appointed in key sectors. You will hear too about our focus on quality through our management system.

You will also read about the rollout of UKAS’s important scheme reviews and the development of new areas of accreditation, such as in net zero and sustainability, healthcare, forensics and digital. UKAS has recently adopted its international strategy, and UKAS’s International Director sets out the role of accreditation in enabling trade and supporting business through global recognition.

In addition, the report contains facts and figures about UKAS’s financial and operational performance in the financial year 2023-24.

In the report of the Chair of the Policy Advisory Forum and Council, and in my article, we explain how UKAS continues to reach out to its stakeholders to ensure we maintain relevance and preserve our

impartiality in the face of technological and societal change.

Our stakeholders themselves provide important content for the report. We hear from the Financial Reporting Council about the role of accreditation in supporting climate accountability, from the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology about the assurance of artificial intelligence and from Make UK on how accreditation can help reduce trade barriers with the EU.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards within the Department for Business and Trade explains its sponsorship role for UKAS in the national interest. And the Lord Mayor of London outlines his vision for the importance of standards and accreditation in supporting our approach to opportunities coming from disruptive technologies.

UKAS’s 2024 Annual Report concludes with the Group Strategic Report, Directors’, Auditors’ and Finance Director’s reports and the 2023-34 financial statements.

I would like to thank all the authors for their contributions. I hope you will enjoy the breadth of content that demonstrates how UKAS continues to respond to the challenges of a changing world, seeking to maximise our agility and customer service while delivering robust and technically excellent accreditation.

CHAIR'S STATEMENT

BY LORD LINDSAY, UKAS CHAIR



Despite continuing domestic and global uncertainties, UKAS delivered a very strong performance through the financial year 2023-24.

The year was marked by the tragedy of nearby wars, with conflict continuing in Ukraine and starting anew in the Middle East. Globally, continued geopolitical standoff on technology between the US and China produced knock-on effects on supply chains and the response to the climate emergency. Domestically, the political environment stabilised, but there were ongoing challenges in terms of inflation, the cost of living and the provision of public services.

CHAIR'S STATEMENT

For UKAS, however, the previous year's investments, both structural in terms of process, recruitment and on-boarding capacity, and operational in terms of tools and management structures, have started to show their value. UKAS's "ahead of the curve" recruitment policy is paying off, ensuring the right resources are available at the right time in anticipation of growth in strategic areas. UKAS has accelerated and streamlined operational delivery, using data to bring improvements in internal processes. Digitalisation of UKAS's core tools and documents continues, with a major programme underway that will revolutionise the ways in which UKAS can access and use the data contained in its accreditation schedules.

UKAS has never shown greater ambition: in its operational work, in the development of its tools and in a comprehensive programme of outreach to government and other stakeholders. The latter has seen increased political engagement in anticipation of the General Election, closer partnerships with key businesses and customer bodies, and deepening relationships with professional institutions. In particular, UKAS's sector specialists have brought greater insight, engagement and opportunity, such as in the digital and sustainability arenas.

The net result has been excellent operational and financial performance in financial year 2023-24, with the delivery of a record number of accreditation days, spread across a greater than ever range of activities.

These significant achievements are only reached through the efforts of the UKAS staff. As every year, I thank the whole team for their dedication and hard work. This year I should especially note the efforts of UKAS's support services: human resources, training, IT, finance, corporate services and others. Without these sometimes unsung heroes UKAS would not be where it is today. I was therefore delighted to present the Chairman's Award for Agility and Innovation at the UKAS annual conference to Lydia Hunt and Saskia Clarke for their work on enabling business insights through improved data analysis.

In a changing world, UKAS is building on its technical and operational strengths, continually enhancing technical delivery and using technology to enhance its agility. UKAS demonstrates ever more successfully the value of accreditation, as part of the UK's national quality infrastructure, to the market and to public policy. With a focus on operational excellence while supporting and developing its people, and fronted by an ambitious outreach programme, I am pleased to say that UKAS is well-positioned to deliver its purpose of building trust and confidence in the products and services we all rely upon.

"UKAS HAS NEVER SHOWN GREATER AMBITION: IN ITS OPERATIONAL WORK, IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS TOOLS AND IN A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME OF OUTREACH TO GOVERNMENT AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS."

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT



BY MATTHEW GANTLEY, UKAS CHIEF EXECUTIVE



As we reflect on the dynamic context in which UKAS operated during 2023-24, it's clear that we are navigating an era of profound change - marked by technological disruption, environmental shifts and geopolitical uncertainty. The past year has been a stark reminder of the scale and pace of these transformations, presenting both significant challenges and extraordinary opportunities for UKAS.

Technologically, the advancements we are witnessing today are reshaping industries in ways that were once unimaginable. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, biotechnology and blockchain are revolutionising sectors from healthcare to logistics. In healthcare, for example, AI systems are now capable of analysing routine test results and predicting diseases with remarkable accuracy, detecting early signs of over 1,000 diseases before symptoms appear. These innovations, while groundbreaking, raise new questions around ethics, data security and accountability.



"THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ARE NO LONGER FUTURE THREATS - THEY ARE HERE, RESHAPING HOW WE LIVE, WORK, AND GOVERN."

Equally pressing is the escalating environmental crisis. The past year has seen record-breaking global temperatures, wildfires, and floods, with 2023-24 now marked as the hottest year in recorded history. In the UK, we saw temperatures soar beyond 40°C, putting a strain on our infrastructure and raising urgent concerns about energy security and environmental resilience. The impacts of climate change are no longer future threats - they are here, reshaping how we live, work, and govern.

The political landscape has also experienced significant shifts. Rising nationalism, protectionism and the fracturing of global trade are reshaping international relations and economic flows. For decades, many of us have lived in a world of expanding free trade, but we are now witnessing a pivot toward regionalised trade blocs, which will have profound effects on global markets and the assurance that underpins them. Elections across the globe - from India to the United States - are driving changes in policy, trade agreements and climate action, adding layers of complexity to the global economy.

In the face of these intertwined challenges - technological disruption, climate change and political uncertainty - accredited assurance has never been more critical. UKAS plays a vital role in maintaining trust, safety and integrity in this turbulent

environment. Standards, measurement and accredited conformity assessment ensure that businesses, governments and consumers can continue to rely on consistent quality, even as the world around us changes rapidly.

Despite these challenges, 2023-24 has been a year of growth and achievement for UKAS. We have built on last year's investments to deliver strong operational performance, driven by our technical excellence and ambitious outreach into both existing and emerging sectors. This success is a testament to the commitment of our staff, and I extend my heartfelt thanks to the entire UKAS team.

Looking ahead, we are committed to continuing to foster a culture of belonging, rewarding outstanding performance and staying true to our core values as we position UKAS for the future.

Financial performance

UKAS's financial performance in 2023-24 remained strong. Turnover was £45,420,470, up 23.6% from £36,756,186 in 2022-23. Greater investment in technical resources and infrastructure in financial year 2022-23, continuing into this year, has led to improvements in productivity and enabled UKAS to maintain an appropriate level of profitability.

The profit margin for 2023-24 of 8.1% is within UKAS's target range. This level of profitability maintains reserves at a level that insulates UKAS against market shocks, such as a pandemic, and enables us to invest in people and infrastructure to meet the needs of the market and our stakeholders.

UKAS's financial performance is based upon the delivery of 36,436 assessment days, compared to 32,516 days in the previous year. Increased delivery across all UKAS teams was the expected result of investments made in the previous financial year.

Administrative expenses of £15,676,933 grew from £13,064,200 in 2022-23, reflecting largely higher salary costs as we geared up our capacity to deliver more days.

People

The technical excellence of our people is central to our ability to provide trust and confidence in the products and services that we all rely on.

Resourcing and developing our people remains a priority and we are beginning to see real benefits from our decision in early 2022-23 to boost resources and focus on talent acquisition, onboarding, induction and mentoring. This includes completing the cohort of Accreditation Specialists in specific sectors, such as energy, environment and sustainability, the built environment and digital, as well as growing the External Affairs and Marketing teams.

Our mentoring programmes help us support our colleagues throughout their employment and our Employee Resource Group underscores our commitment to fostering a culture of belonging at UKAS where everyone feels welcomed, understood, included, supported and connected. We recognise that, by embracing and celebrating our

differences, we are better placed to drive innovation, creativity and excellence.

We are proud that employee engagement and morale continues to improve at UKAS. The results of our last employee engagement survey show morale across the organisation to be at 80%.

Risk management and business resilience

In an increasingly digitised world, cyber crime has grown in importance as a risk for UKAS. Cyber attacks, such as the recent ransomware attack on London hospitals, can have catastrophic consequences on businesses and their customers. UKAS continuously evolves its efforts to defend against these types of attack, with significant investment to ensure that our systems remain as protected as reasonably possible. We recognise that an attack can occur at any time and through many routes; this will therefore continue to be a major focus of UKAS's business resilience and risk management for the foreseeable future.

Impacts for UKAS still remain from the effects of the UK's exit from the EU. In 2023, UKAS successfully challenged a court ruling in Italy, overturning a decision not to recognise UKAS-accredited quality certificates (e.g. ISO 14001 and ISO/IEC 27001) in public procurement tenders. The purpose of the European co-operation for Accreditation multilateral agreement is to assert technical equivalence of accreditation for all signatory members. While the outcome of the case was positive, it only related to Italy and the outcome is not binding on other EU Member States.

The value of UKAS accreditation is built upon the reputation of the organisation and its staff, established over many years and recognised around the world.

Addressing risks that may negatively impact UKAS's reputation is vital, for example reported failures in services provided by our accredited customers. UKAS therefore implemented measures during 2023 to ensure that we are informed of potential failures at the earliest opportunity. This enables UKAS to ensure appropriate corrective and preventative action is taken by the customer.

Such occurrences also present opportunities for UKAS to enhance its services through trend analysis and lessons learned, which helps UKAS deal with critical issues and incidents as they occur.

Strategic investment

UKAS has made good progress in financial year 2023-24 with its ambitious digitalisation programme. We have launched customer portals, supporting and speeding up elements of the assessment and application processes and we have rolled out Readiness Self-assessment Tools for a range of standards.

We have instigated one of our largest and most complex investment projects, as we digitalise customers' accreditation schedules. We have continued our work with AI consultants, exploring how to use AI to support the assessment process and to improve our internal monitoring and data. Finance and Corporate Services Director, Georgia Alsop, gives more detail on digitalisation in her article later in the report.

Customers and stakeholders

Alongside the need for rigour and technical excellence in our assessments, providing high quality customer service is a vital part of our work. We seek to understand the customer journey and strive for improvements across the board, as well as focusing on areas where our metrics show particular need.

In looking at our internal customer processes, we identified over 60 points for action: redefining processes, digitalising systems, enhancing communication. With regard to operational tools, we have continued our digitalisation journey, with for example our Audit Comply tool increasing efficiency in managing improvement actions by 15%. Operations Director, Lynsey Poyner, explains more in her article below, describing how this approach has brought success as we have consistently exceeded our customer satisfaction benchmarks.

UKAS's stakeholder engagement is essential for our relevance in the market and the demonstration of our impartiality. This year we have broadened our outreach further, reflecting UKAS's ambition to serve the market wherever needed and in the public interest. The article later in this report by our External Affairs Director, Richard Collin, contains more detail. It outlines our increased engagement with government and regulators, our national quality infrastructure partners, stakeholders in Scotland, business and professional bodies and others, as well as our focus on both global trade and net zero and sustainability.

Technical excellence

UKAS aims for technical excellence in its operations, through a continuous programme of review and update based on its management system and in line with international best practice. The primary focus in financial year 2023-24 has been on Programme PACE, the set of actions that UKAS has instigated following its internal investigations after the tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire and in response to intelligence gathered during the subsequent Inquiry. PACE will ensure that UKAS learns all possible lessons from the fire.

The twenty workstreams of Programme PACE have focused on four main areas: product certification scheme reviews;

UKAS assessment processes; access to technical expertise, and UKAS's contractual relationship with conformity assessment bodies. Many of the actions have now been implemented, for example a new customer agreement was rolled out in the last year.

More recently, the report of the Inquiry has been published, addressing the causes of the tragedy and seeking to ensure a response such that it cannot recur. UKAS is carefully studying the findings to ensure it is addressing all possible lessons, with a workstream in Programme PACE specifically to review and act on the report's findings and recommendations. UKAS will also work with government and all relevant stakeholders to take the recommendations forward.

UKAS continues to look forward to understand and respond to the transformational possibilities for the digitalisation of accredited conformity assessment. In particular, UKAS is investigating how digitalised conformity assessment results can form part of a global approach that promotes business competitiveness through enabling trade. Working again in international partnership under the UN/CEFACT umbrella and with colleagues from Australia, the US, Germany and others, UKAS has supported the further development of a workstream on the exchange of data on product conformity. This seeks to understand how this exchange can be both verifiable and traceable. The latest development is a UN/CEFACT Business Requirements Specification that outlines a set of digital elements and linkages to support conformity assessment bodies in their production of sharable data.

New service development

UKAS continues to be very active in the development of new areas of accreditation: we have received over 150 enquiries during the year, and nearly 50 underwent further work, matching the previous year.

Notable areas for development this year were the continuation of the projects in a number of key strategic areas, namely construction, digital, environment and sustainability, healthcare and forensics. It is particularly pleasing to have seen some important projects that have progressed to grant of accreditation that highlight the value of UKAS accreditation in providing assurance to the public. Specifically, to support the work UKAS is doing to accredit sexual assault referral centres, UKAS has awarded accreditation to an inspection body that provides assurance of services that support victims of abuse.

Work in healthcare has centred on transitions to a number of new standards in addition to the inclusion the requirements of BS 70000 for the accreditation of diagnostic imaging. UKAS has continued its work to align the requirements for healthcare scientific and diagnostic services which is essential to support the multi-disciplinary community diagnostic centres (CDCs). UKAS continues vital development work to offer a single assessment of CDCs where required.

UKAS's Development and Scheme Integrity team is continuing its work to coordinate the ongoing programme of scheme reviews for new, amended and existing schemes.

More information on the development of new UKAS services appears later in this report.

Operational performance

Building on the previous year, in financial year 2023-24 UKAS's operational teams again delivered a record number of assessment days, of 36,436. With these days we have seen 111 new grants of accreditation and 1,259 extensions to accredited scope.

To deliver the increased operational workload, UKAS continues to grow its resources, matching the demands in various sectors. We have increased the number of employees by 6% from 2022-23 and developed over 60 trainee assessors during this year. In forensics, the work continues with the Forensic Science Regulator to build accreditation into the services the sector provides, particularly in support of the criminal justice system. The team successfully completed the inclusion of the Regulator's Code within the scope of accreditation for over 50 police forces and independent providers within six months of the Code being mandated.

The confidence in the safety of our built environment is also a continued focus and we continue to support the developments of the competent person schemes and third-party voluntary schemes that

support the Building Regulations.

Outlook

Last year I reported on solid performance from UKAS following a year of consolidation and investment. Financial year 2023-24 has shown the wisdom of that approach and we have been rewarded with excellent performance: financial and operational, in our customer service and the development of new services and as a result of our stakeholder engagement.

Accreditation supports trust and confidence for business, government and the public through the assurance of the competence of conformity assessment. As part of the quality infrastructure, it supports national resilience and the framework in which the market operates.

And yet this does not and must not stand still. We have to consider the unpredictable political, economic and societal context in which we live and the unprecedented pace of change. This is vital to support the delivery of badly needed economic growth. I am proud therefore that UKAS continues to thrive by seeking to embrace the opportunities in front of us. In this way, and in a changing world, we are building an agile accreditation body to support a safe, secure and sustainable society.

PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE

Financial summary	2024 £m	2023 £m
Revenue	45.4	36.7
Cost of sales	(27.1)	(22.5)
Gross profit	18.3	14.2
Operating profit	3.2	1.1
Profit after taxation	3.7	1.4

Year highlights

+
36,436
Assessment days
delivered

+
2,969
Accreditations
held

+
2,583
Accredited
customers

+
1,259
Extensions
to scope grants

+
147
Applications
for accreditation

+
1,473
Delegates
trained

+
127
Accreditation
development projects

POLICY ADVISORY FORUM AND COUNCIL CHAIR'S STATEMENT



BY CAROLINE HAMILTON, CHAIR OF UKAS POLICY ADVISORY FORUM AND COUNCIL

It has been a privilege to continue to serve as Chair of the UKAS Policy Advisory Forum and Policy Advisory Council during the past year. UKAS, appointed to its role as the National Accreditation Body by government, delivers accreditation in the public interest. As such, its policy forums are a crucial aspect of its governance, ensuring that UKAS continues to deliver an accreditation service that meets the needs of government, the market and its broad stakeholder base.

The Policy Advisory Forum advises UKAS on strategic issues and consists of a wide range of stakeholders, numbering some 65 organisations that span government, regulators, industry groups, customer associations and trade bodies. Selected from the Forum, the Policy Advisory Council is a smaller group, meeting each quarter to provide more detailed policy advice, with a focus on UKAS's impartiality in its external relations. Last year, UKAS selected a new Policy Advisory Council and I was delighted to see four new organisations chosen alongside the existing members. In my role as Chair, I report annually to the UKAS Board on activities of the Forum and Council.

It has been another exciting and productive year as Chair of the Forum and the Council. UKAS has continued to operate in a challenging economic and geopolitical

climate and the Forum and the Council have considered both international and domestic policy matters.

The 2023 Forum, the first in-person for four years, supported UKAS's annual strategic review by providing input on UKAS's leadership role across a range of sectors. It explored the challenges and opportunities of a variety of external factors, including the economic strength of the conformity assessment industry, the role of the wider national quality infrastructure in supporting the safe use of artificial intelligence and how accredited conformity assessment can support the net zero transition.

The Council has discussed many issues in the past year, such as how UKAS can future-proof itself against unethical and sub-standard behaviour in accredited organisations, the role of new and emerging technologies in supporting the accreditation process and the impact of the UK-EU trading relationship on UKAS's services.

I look forward to continuing to ensure that the Policy Advisory Forum and Council reflect a broad range of stakeholder views, supporting UKAS to deliver technical excellence, roll-out digitalisation projects and play a leading part in the global quality infrastructure.

DIGITALISATION DRIVING IMPROVEMENT IN UKAS'S SERVICES



BY GEORGIA ALSOP, UKAS FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTOR

The development of digitalised accreditation services provides UKAS with a great opportunity to add further value to its customers, the market more broadly and government. We have made good progress over the last two years and are pressing forward with an ambitious digitalisation programme.

UKAS has launched customer portals, supporting the assessment process. They create a secure platform for enhanced collaboration with UKAS's customers, including file sharing and the electronic management of assessment findings. 80% of UKAS's customers surveyed felt that the UKAS assessment portal has helped speed up the clearing of findings significantly.

UKAS's customers can already complete pre-assessment questionnaires and external assessors can mark their availability for UKAS assessments in the portal, facilitating the co-ordination and resourcing of more complex, multi-disciplined assessments. Customers can apply to extend their accreditation scope and new customers will shortly be able to apply for accreditation in the portal. Expanding the use of UKAS's portals to optimise the planning and management of the assessment process is a priority.

UKAS has also developed its systems to provide Readiness Self-assessment Tools for a wide range of standards, helping new customers navigate their journey to accreditation and track progress using infographics. In parallel, UKAS is working with AI consultants, exploring how to use AI to support the assessment process.

UKAS is making good progress with the digitalisation of customers' accreditation schedules by capturing the details of accredited activities in a consistent and structured format. From early 2025, new functionality on the UKAS website will enable better and more consistent searching for accredited services, using geo-location co-ordinates to identify local providers. The status for each accredited field will also be visible on the customer's current digital schedule and historic accreditation schedules will be available on the UKAS website.

UKAS CertCheck is already being used by the market to find accredited management systems certifications and UKAS is looking to expand its systems to enable traceability and the independent verification of a wider range of quality credentials.

To this end, UKAS is exploring the use of unique digital identifiers for entities, products or documents. This digitalisation can enable paperless trade, reducing costs for business and supporting economic growth. At the same time, UKAS focuses on the need for the interoperability of our systems with those of other bodies, in particular our partners in the national quality infrastructure. In this way we seek to support global and frictionless trade, inspiring confidence in the products and services we all rely upon.

UKAS is exploring the use of unique digital identifiers for entities, products or documents to enable paperless trade, reducing costs for business and supporting economic growth.

UKAS AGILITY AND THE CUSTOMER SERVICE JOURNEY



BY LYNSEY POYNER, UKAS OPERATIONS DIRECTOR



As we publish this year's Annual Report, I find myself reflecting on last year's article. I remain full of enthusiasm and driven by aspirations of enhancing efficiency, improving the customer journey and optimising our blended assessment approaches.

My goal was to build our resources to support the growth of accreditation. I am pleased to report that many of these aspirations are beginning to materialise.

While there is still work to be done, we have undoubtedly made significant strides forward. In a changing world, maintaining our routine operations, while remaining agile in the face of emerging challenges, is crucial to surpassing our operational expectations. Ensuring our teams are well-resourced and prepared is paramount.

Colleagues at UKAS are familiar with my commitment to enhancing the customer experience through key communication points, transparency and a collaborative approach.

“IN A CHANGING WORLD, MAINTAINING OUR ROUTINE OPERATIONS, WHILE REMAINING AGILE IN THE FACE OF EMERGING CHALLENGES, IS CRUCIAL TO SURPASSING OUR OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS. ENSURING OUR TEAMS ARE WELL-RESOURCED AND PREPARED IS PARAMOUNT.”

It is gratifying to see that we have consistently exceeded our customer satisfaction benchmarks, achieving an end-of-year average Net Promoter Score of 47. However, our work is far from complete. Detailed analysis of customer feedback revealed that maintaining high scores in specific areas should remain a focus. As a result, I was pleased to see all teams proactively engage on this topic at our annual conference.

Maintaining excellent customer service while balancing additional, unplanned work, such as extending the scope of accreditation, requires agility, team reorganisation and clear communication with stakeholders. To address this, we guided our teams through the customer experience of our accreditation process, examining each interaction and identifying areas for improvement. We identified over 60 actionable items, including process redefinition, better utilisation of digital systems and enhanced customer communication, recognising the need to adapt our services to reflect an ever-evolving operational landscape. I am eager to collaborate with our teams on these initiatives and anticipate further improvements in our Net Promoter Scores.

Providing consistent, high-quality service necessitates building on the outstanding and capable resources at UKAS. From the start, I emphasised that our strength lies in our people and their dedication to delivering professional services that contribute towards UKAS's vision: to be recognised and respected across the world for our role in building a safe, secure and sustainable society. Over the past financial year, we have onboarded 63 new Technical Assessors and 32 Assessment Managers across various

disciplines, and we continue to collaborate with professional bodies to explore innovative ways to engage professionals in niche areas. As part of this effort, we have begun to revamp our technical assessor training and communication, streamlining the journey to ensure a comprehensive, step by step external induction package, alongside strengthening our internal induction programme. Balancing careful training with speed to deployment remains a key focus to ensure well-resourced offerings and the delivery of an agile service.

Lastly, as the strategic adage goes, “we have the people, we have the processes, now where is the technology?” We continue to leverage more effectively the critical interplay between these elements. Understanding how new and emerging technology can support our operational processes is central to our strategy, as has been outlined in this report by Georgia Alsop. UKAS engages various digital platforms to interact with our customers and I am pleased to have supported the rollout of Audit Comply across all operational areas; a digital tool that manages improvement actions between UKAS and our customers. In just six months, this system has increased the timely handling of improvement actions by 15%. While there are still areas for enhancement, this achievement demonstrates the potential when we equip both colleagues and customers with the right tools. It is with this forward-looking mindset that I approach the coming year, recognising that the customer journey must continually evolve for UKAS to deliver an agile accreditation service for a changing world.

METRICS DASHBOARD FOR OPERATIONS

Standard	2023-24	2022-23
ISO/IEC 17025 (testing laboratories)	1,172	1,170
ISO 15189 (medical laboratories)	550	601
ISO/IEC 17020 (inspection bodies)	371	372
ISO/IEC 17025 (calibration laboratories)	359	361
ISO/IEC 17065 (product certification bodies)	171	153
ISO/IEC 17021 (management system certification bodies)	121	113
IQIPS (physiological services)	63	70
QSI (medical imaging services)	49	45
ISO/IEC 17024 (personnel certification bodies)	43	37
ISO/IEC 17043 (proficiency testing providers)	32	34
ISO 14065 (greenhouse gas verifiers)	20	11
ISO 17034 (reference material producers)	14	13
BS 70000 (Medical Physics and Clinical Engineering)	3	3
ISO/IEC 17029 (validation and verification bodies)	1	0

Standard	2023-24	2022-23
Extension to scope grants	1,259	1,126
New CAB grants of accreditation	111	133

METRICS DASHBOARD FOR OPERATIONS

Number of new conformity assessment body applications by standard

Standard	Amount
ISO/IEC 17025 (testing)	61
ISO 15189	22
ISO/IEC 17020	19
IQIPS	10
ISO/IEC 17025 (calibration)	9
ISO/IEC 17021-1	8
ISO/IEC 17065	7
QSI / imaging	4
ISO 14065	3
ISO 17034	1
ISO 20387	1
ISO/IEC 17024	1
ISO/IEC 17043	1
Total	147

Number of extensions to scope applications by standard

Standard	Amount
ISO/IEC 17025 (testing)	624
ISO 15189	429
ISO/IEC 17065	57
ISO/IEC 17025 (calibration)	57
ISO/IEC 17020	54
ISO/IEC 17021-1	48
ISO/IEC 17043	12
QSI / imaging	7
IQIPS	6
ISO 14065	5
ISO/IEC 17024	4
ISO 17034	2
Total	1,305

Number of assessment days delivered



Number of assessors (broken down by role)



UKAS ACCREDITATION SECTOR SPECIALISTS – RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES OF THE MARKET



BY LORRAINE TURNER, UKAS ACCREDITATION DIRECTOR



UKAS has a long tradition of being ambitious about the role that accreditation can play in providing trust and confidence across a broad range of industries, products and services.

In our role as the National Accreditation Body, we keep our doors open to all enquiries and opportunities where there is scope to develop and deliver accreditation in new areas with a clear public benefit in doing so. Whilst not all of these enquiries progress to accreditation, each one provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the quality infrastructure with a broad range of stakeholders and also provide insight to UKAS as to which sectors are seeking a solution to deliver assurance.

UKAS ACCREDITATION SECTOR SPECIALISTS - RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES OF THE MARKET

Where these enquiries do progress, UKAS then has the task to ensure we have access to the expertise and knowledge of the sector to ensure valid and fit for purpose accreditation solutions are developed.

Managing UKAS's access to technical expertise across the broad range of industry sectors is no trivial exercise, especially as new sectors emerge or expand. Ensuring that we have effective stakeholder advisory committees and a sufficient number of experts remains a high priority. Special attention is needed to ensure all experts have access to information to enable assessments to be effective and delivered to a consistent standard. To address this, UKAS has reorganised aspects of its technical management to enable better coordination by sector, through the appointment of Accreditation Sector Specialists for key delivery areas including construction, energy and environment, digital, forensics, food and farming, healthcare and management systems.

These specialists provide a central focal point in UKAS to support the development and delivery of accreditation activities. Each of the Sector Specialists has set out a plan outlining the priorities for the sector taking account of the level of existing activities and future opportunities. They have a broad range of responsibilities and provide a sector connection between various functions in

UKAS including Operations, Technical, Development, Marketing and External Affairs. Some of the Sector Specialists are very heavily engaged with developing relationships and working with government to develop policy and regulations for emerging areas such as digital/AI and net zero initiatives, others continue to support established regulators to ensure accredited conformity assessment remains relevant and effective for their needs, such as forensics and healthcare. In all cases, the Sector Specialists work with a network of UKAS colleagues that act as technical focus points for specific schemes and activities to support our operations.

The technical aspects of the work of the Sector Specialists are overseen by a newly appointed Head of Technical Coordination, whose role is to ensure the technical effectiveness of UKAS's work. The Sector Specialists provide vital support to the development of a new system to manage technical information across UKAS through Technical Forums that will ensure all staff and assessors have access to relevant and up to date information for existing and emerging activities.

These roles represent a firm investment in the future of UKAS, to ensure that UKAS has good sight of future needs and opportunities and the technical ability to deliver them.



"UKAS HAS REORGANISED ASPECTS OF ITS TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TO ENABLE BETTER COORDINATION BY SECTOR, THROUGH THE APPOINTMENT OF ACCREDITATION SECTOR SPECIALISTS FOR KEY DELIVERY AREAS."

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

UKAS's Development and Scheme Integrity team has remained busy with work to strengthen the visibility and recognition of accredited certification and inspection schemes. This has involved staff training and awareness, creation of assessment processes for schemes, a scheme directory and scheme owner management procedures. The team has continued to work with colleagues and stakeholders, including government, as we develop and implement these processes, ensuring they are business as usual by the end of 2024.

The Development and Scheme Integrity team has received over 150 enquiries and has 31 prospects in the pipeline and over 40 active development projects underway.

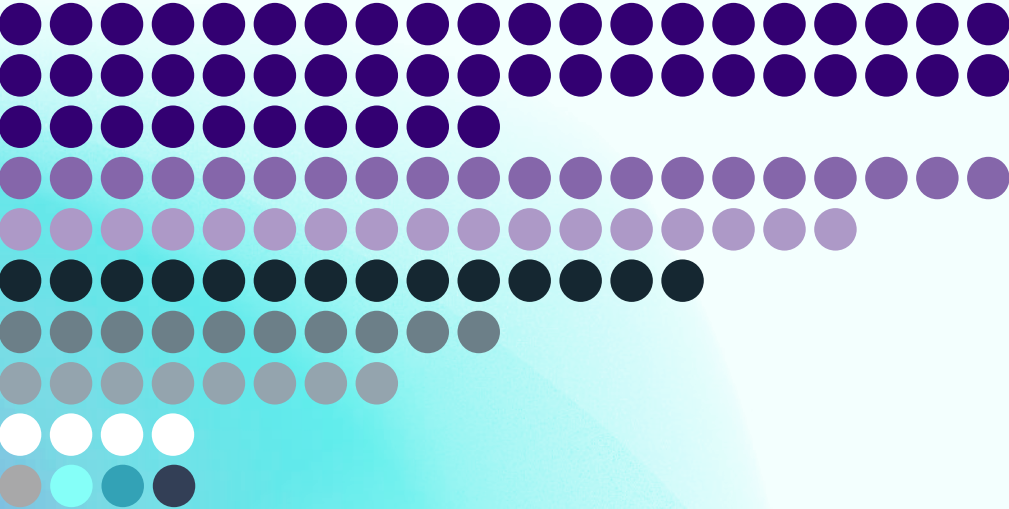
The accreditation of Sexual Assault Referral Centres, SARCs, remains a key project with 55 SARCs requiring accreditation by October 2025. The sector has been supported by the recent accreditation of The Survivors Trust, an inspection body offering support to victims

of sexual and domestic abuse. Projects in the areas of net zero and sustainability are being developed, along with others involving work with government departments to develop and deliver the required assurance, often utilising ISO 17029 for validation and verification of programmes and claims. Sustainability assessment of food, fuels and products also remains a key area for the team.

The development of accreditation in the digital sector has expanded with projects including age verification, AI management systems, cyber security and software platforms all active.

In the healthcare sector, accreditation is being developed for Community Diagnostic Centres with over 170 CDCs requiring accreditation within 2 years of opening. We continue to work closely with NHS England to develop this accreditation. BS 70000 accreditation now also covers diagnostic imaging as well as nuclear medicine.

DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ENQUIRIES TOTAL: 127



- Data assurance 20
- Health & Social Care 17
- Forensics 14
- Food and farming 10
- Built environment 8
- Management Systems 4
- Health and Safety 1
- Human resources 1
- Finance 1
- Environmental 1
- Various small voluntary schemes 50

TECHNICAL, QUALITY AND RISK UPDATE

The focus of the Technical, Quality and Risk team has been ensuring ongoing technical robustness of assessment and delivery of excellent customer service.



A review of our Technical Advisory Committees has been completed to ensure that we are seeking input from the right stakeholders. We have improved our technical forums, moving them to a SharePoint platform to ensure appropriate access to information for contracted assessors as well as UKAS employees.

A process has been formalised for central review of significant nonconforming work reported by our accredited conformity assessment bodies, giving us increased visibility of trends and risks across industries and enabling us to focus our assessments on higher-risk activities. We continue to work closely with regulators and other stakeholders to identify areas of concern and opportunities for improvement.

We continually analyse customer feedback to understand levels of customer satisfaction and to target areas for improvement within UKAS. Net Promoter Scores show a very high level of satisfaction with the assessment process itself, and professionalism and knowledge of our assessors, but reflect scope for improvement in turnaround times, particularly for extensions to scope. This has been a focus, and we have seen a gradual trend of improvement through the review period. It remains a focus for the coming year.

Looking ahead, we have a European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) peer evaluation in November 2024. This is an essential element of maintaining multilateral agreement status and mutual recognition with accreditation bodies across the globe supporting the objective, accredited once, accepted everywhere.

TECHNICAL, QUALITY AND RISK UPDATE

Number of complaints reviewed against UKAS

+
34
Upheld



+
13
Partially upheld



+
6
Not upheld



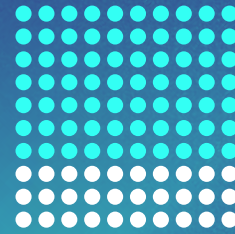
Breakdown of complaints raised against UKAS

- Service levels
- Fees
- Conduct of UKAS staff
- UKAS decision
- All other complaints



Number of complaints received about UKAS accredited conformity assessment bodies

+
70
complaints received



Post Assessment Survey

+
34
Number of Post-Assessment Survey responses received during 2023-24

Number of internal audits

+
13
Conducted



+
31
Non-conformity actions raised



+
12
Opportunities for improvement raised



Customer satisfaction (CSAT scores)

+
84
Overall performance of UKAS service delivery over 12 month period
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

+
93
Feedback on team performance during a specific assessment
POST-ASSESSMENT SURVEYS

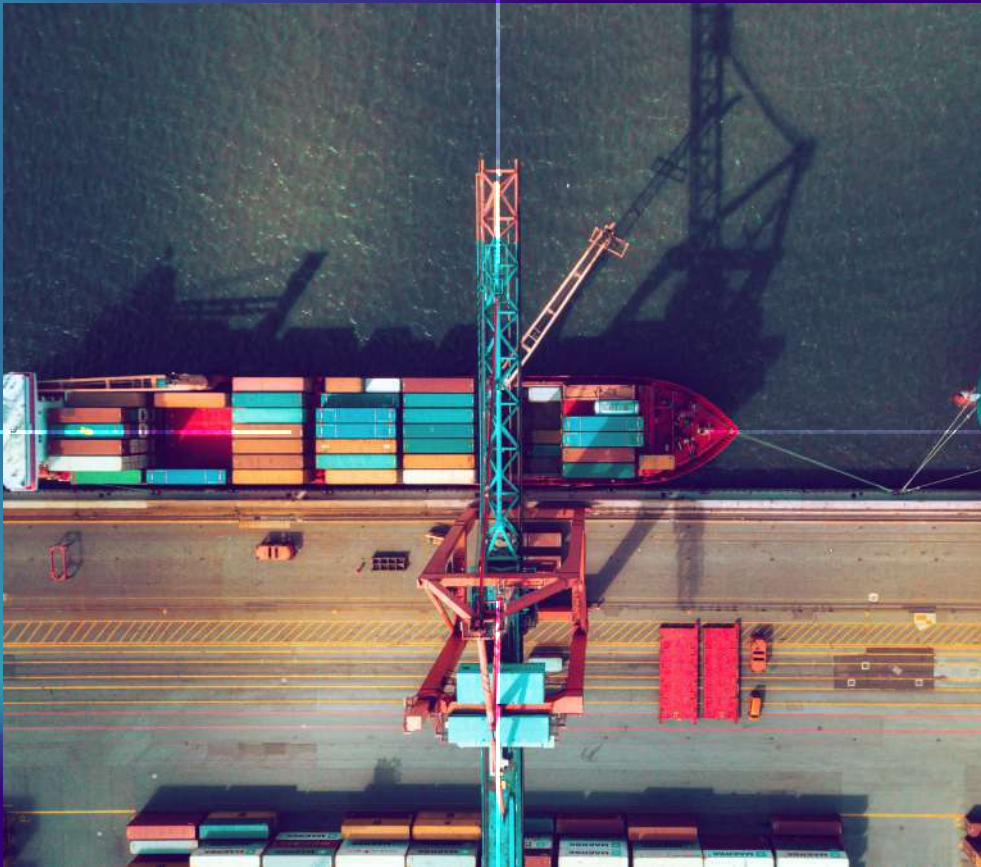
Staff monitoring

+
267
Assessors and decision makers monitored

THE VALUE OF MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS TO UK-EU TRADE – HOW ACCREDITATION BRINGS STABILITY TO SUPPLY CHAINS



BY STEPHEN PHIPSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MAKE UK



Trade policy is a critical enabling force in supporting economic growth, allowing countries to expand their markets and access goods and services that otherwise may not have been available domestically. As a result, the global market is more competitive, improving market dynamics and innovation and offering cheaper products to the consumer.

Global manufacturing trade flows are intricate with components and sub-assembly systems moving across multiple borders at separate phases of assembly before the final product reaches the customer. Nowhere is this more critical and long-serving than with the supply chains that support the UK and EU manufacturing industries.

THE VALUE OF MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS TO UK-EU TRADE - HOW ACCREDITATION BRINGS STABILITY TO SUPPLY CHAINS

Trade liberalisation in goods has previously been commonly associated with the objective of lowering tariffs. This has seen tariff levels for manufactured goods drop over many decades. A new focus is needed to address other barriers that have proliferated affecting global trade in goods and services; that is, regulation.

Regulations play a vital role in meeting public policy objectives in areas such as consumer safety and environmental compliance. However, differing national regulations lead to varying compliance requirements on businesses, such as additional testing and certification. This creates non-tariff barriers to trade which add to the cost, time and administrative burden for businesses seeking to operate across borders.

The UK's exit from the EU's internal market has introduced such non-tariff barriers, including the loss of dynamic alignment to the EU's market regulation rules and the utility of a single system of market access authorisation and compliance. These regulatory costs matter for exporters and customers. For instance, GB firms exporting products to the EU must use an EU Notified Body for testing, compliance, and certification purposes if demanded by regulation. This leads to additional administrative costs, sourcing of suitable testing and certification facilities and other legal obligations on a third country supplier into the EU.

Securing opportunities that reduce the regulatory burden on exporters of manufactured goods would play a significant role in reducing these costs without impairing the ability of regulatory authorities to carry out their public policy responsibilities.

Mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) are an important trade policy tool designed to support this dual objective of regulatory adherence and reducing exporting costs. The use of MRAs on conformity assessment in negotiating a Free Trade Agreement, or a stand-alone agreement between two negotiating parties, reduces the need for duplicative product evaluations, positively impacting trade flows. This produces positive outcomes for the value of exports, which can increase the number of exporting firms and their product portfolio available in export destinations.

The lack of MRA provision in the current trading relationship between the UK and EU is affecting trade volumes. In the future, where the UK and EU look to boost cooperation in sectors of mutual benefit and interest, trade in goods will be an integral part of how that economic cooperation will be achieved. Allowing an MRA on conformity assessment would reduce and potentially eliminate the geographical, jurisdictional, and associated costs from procedural obstacles of goods complying with each other's legal requirements and standards. This would restore enhanced connectivity and integration of the UK and EU supply chains for our mutual and collective benefit.



UKAS EXTERNAL AFFAIRS – RESPONDING TO STAKEHOLDER NEEDS



BY RICHARD COLLIN, UKAS EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR



As mentioned by Lorraine Turner earlier in this report, UKAS is ambitious in its role as the National Accreditation Body, seeking to provide accreditation services wherever needed and in the public interest. UKAS anticipates and articulates market needs through its External Affairs work, centred on stakeholder outreach and government engagement. This engagement is a key aspect of demonstrating the relevance of accreditation and enhancing UKAS's profile. Increased investment in External Affairs in 2023-24 has enabled the broadening of this work and our ambition, with engagement focused on five main areas.

Government and political engagement

UKAS has worked closely with the Department for Business and Trade, DBT, to update its Memorandum of Understanding and agree a set of annual priorities.

UKAS has built a close relationship with the Regulation Directorate in DBT and also agreed a set of common priorities with the Health and Safety Executive.

We also started a new programme of work with our National Quality Infrastructure partners, the British Standards Institution and the National Physical Laboratory, to enhance and digitalise our NQI interactions and those with government.

Scotland

UKAS has significantly increased engagement with the Scottish government and stakeholders. We held a roundtable on the role of accreditation and hosted a reception at the Scottish Parliament with BSI and Scottish trading standards. To broaden our engagement, UKAS has more recently joined Prosper, a multi-stakeholder body that seeks to raise prosperity in Scotland.

Breadth and depth of stakeholder outreach

UKAS has continued to both broaden and deepen its stakeholder relations. We hosted a lunch for UKAS members, a reception at the House of Lords themed around the topic of trade and the first in-person Policy Advisory Forum meeting for four years.

UKAS EXTERNAL AFFAIRS – RESPONDING TO STAKEHOLDER NEEDS

Government and regulators



Customer associations



Business and industry



Professional, consumer, end user and other bodies



We brought the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Engineering Council into UKAS membership, raising the membership to twenty-four. The UKAS members are shown on this page.

Environment and broader sustainability

UKAS has significantly broadened its engagement in the environmental and sustainability sector through a targeted engagement plan. UKAS has been invited to join the Hydrogen Delivery Council Certification Working Group and the Net Zero Regulator-Government Forum. UKAS has engaged in depth with voluntary carbon market and corporate sustainability reporting initiatives and now represents the International Accreditation Forum in the UN Race to Zero's Climate Champions Policy Community. UKAS also represented the IAF for the first time at the UN's Conference of the Parties, COP 28.

Promoting the role of accreditation as a tool to enable trade

UKAS has engaged with stakeholders, nationally and internationally, about the role of accreditation in reducing unnecessary barriers to trade. This has included participating for the first time in the World Trade Organization's Public Forum and being invited to speak by UK government at a WTO Technical Barriers to Trade Committee Thematic Session; it has also included speaking on quality infrastructure alongside the OECD.

Most importantly, UKAS has convened business stakeholders and reached out to political parties and officials to highlight the practical role that accreditation can play in reducing barriers to trade with the EU, through the mutual recognition of conformity assessment.

STANDARDS AND ASSURANCE HELP US “CONNECT TO PROSPER”



BY THE RT HON THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON, ALDERMAN PROFESSOR MICHAEL MAINELLI



This year, as well as being a Non-Executive Director of UKAS, I have the honour of serving as the 695th Lord Mayor of the City of London – the world’s oldest democratic workers’ and residents’ cooperative.

The City has 111 livery companies representing different professions, trades and crafts, some of which can trace their origins to the 8th century. As well as providing education and training, many of these companies have or had an important role in setting and enforcing the standards for their trade.

STANDARDS AND ASSURANCE HELP US “CONNECT TO PROSPER”

According to the World Bank, the world’s ratio of trade to GDP has increased from 25% in 1970 to 63% in 2022, with the UK having a trade to GDP ratio of 70%. A world ordered for decades by globalisation and geoeconomics has quickly become a world grounded in geopolitical risk. Trade and commerce are made possible by standards that smooth the way.

The theme of my mayoralty is **Connect To Prosper**, which celebrates the Knowledge Miles of our Square Mile, the world’s coffee

house. This is about leveraging the power of the City’s many connections to take on the big challenges facing the world today. There are 40 learned societies, 70 higher education institutions, 130 research institutes and 24,000 businesses within two miles of the City. With these and a dynamic workforce that speaks more than 300 languages, the City is the world’s most connected commercial centre. This connectivity depends on standards.

All six of our key Connect To Prosper initiatives promote international standards:

+ **The 695th Lord Mayor’s Ethical AI Initiative**

Offers ethics courses for professionals working in AI – which have, so far, had more than 5,000 participants, from 500 organisations, across 50 countries. UKAS and the City recently brought together quality infrastructure organisations from more than 30 countries to conclude the Walbrook AI Accord (now being further developed as the “AIQI consortium”) with the TIC Council, promoting ISO 42001.

+ **Our Space Protection Initiative**

Is a combined technology and financial services programme to use space debris removal insurance bonds to keep space “clutter free”, meeting international space sustainability standards.

+ **The Smart Economy Networks**

Seeks to deploy international “open data” and identity standards in business and trade, using X-Road infrastructure.

+ **Our Constructing Science: Offices to Labs Initiative**

Has created and is promoting the international standard for converting commercial premises to life sciences facilities.

+ **GALENOS**

Is a multimillion-pound Oxford University-led programme across 70 countries that is improving standards in mental health research.

+ **Our Green Finance Initiative**

Advocates standards for voluntary carbon markets, nature markets, carbon offtake agreements and sovereign sustainability-linked bonds.

STANDARDS AND ASSURANCE HELP US “CONNECT TO PROSPER”

In an unstable world, international standards define what great looks like, setting consistent benchmarks for businesses, consumers and nations that ensure reliability, build trust, simplify choices and make trade between countries simpler and fairer.

By distilling the wisdom of experts from around the world, standards represent the very best of human innovation and knowledge and guide economies in adopting sustainable and ethical practices that make our world a better place.

To quote Henry Ford, “if you think of standardisation as the best that you know today, but which is to be improved tomorrow – you get somewhere.”

From maritime to aviation to the food industry, standards make the world go round. In a world of misinformation and disinformation, we can see what happens when standards start to slip.

This is why it is so important for the City of London, UKAS and its quality infrastructure partners to continue maintaining and creating international standards and offering the appropriate assurance mechanisms to demonstrate that these standards are being met. In this way, we can create trust, stability and security, promote trade and investment, and bring the world closer to achieving our shared goals.

“IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD, INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS DEFINE WHAT GREAT LOOKS LIKE, SETTING CONSISTENT BENCHMARKS FOR BUSINESSES, CONSUMERS AND NATIONS.”



UKAS'S INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY TARGETING A CHANGING WORLD



BY ROB BETTINSON, UKAS INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR

The global rules-based trading system underpins international cooperation and economic stability. It is founded on key principles, including non-discrimination, reciprocity and transparency, and on tools such as sound quality infrastructure, comprising of standards, accredited conformity assessment and measurement.

In a changing world, international trade remains the foundation on which economic growth can be built. Within the quality infrastructure, the regional and global multilateral recognition agreements on accreditation¹ are instruments of trade facilitation. Accredited conformity assessment can reduce technical barriers to trade and maintain confidence in the quality of goods and services bought and sold.

The promotion of the agreements of these accreditation forums, of which UKAS is a signatory, has long been part of our international work. However, following the UK's departure from the European Union, UKAS's focus has expanded to include holistic support for the UK government's trade strategy. As the UK pursues new trade deals and bilateral relationships, UKAS supports negotiations and policy development so that government can fully utilise accreditation as a trade-enabling tool.

Reflecting this important role, UKAS has invested in the position of International Director, with the initial objective to develop and implement an international strategy that meets the modern and evolving demands of UK industry and reflects a changing geopolitical climate.

This strategy has three aspects:

- + Domestically, UKAS will work closely with government on its trade strategy, providing advice and intelligence regarding conformity assessment and accreditation at the global level. UKAS will support the UK conformity assessment and manufacturing industry in their international interactions, especially where accreditation can increase their export opportunities.
- + Regionally, UKAS will continue to support and participate in the committees and peer evaluation processes. UKAS will strengthen collaboration with European accreditation bodies through bilateral relationships and the European testing, inspection and certification sector, playing a leading role within the European quality infrastructure.
- + Internationally, UKAS will continue to be represented on the Executive committees and working groups of ILAC and the IAF. As these two organisations merge, forming a new, single global accreditation cooperation over the next 18 months, UKAS will continue to represent the UK on the international stage, supporting the UK's global soft power.



¹Agreements of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and, in the European region, the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA)

UKAS'S INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY TARGETING A CHANGING WORLD

UKAS will also utilise its expertise, gained through three decades of assessments, to support the development of existing and emerging international standards through the conformity assessment committees of the International Organization for Standardization. Building upon this, UKAS will work with key international stakeholders and accreditation bodies from countries with which the UK has, or is seeking, closer trade ties.

UKAS will review and update its international strategy to keep pace with the evolving geo-political landscape. UKAS remains focused on delivering an accreditation service that meets the needs of the UK and targets a changing world.

International update



Other international data



International Accreditation Forum

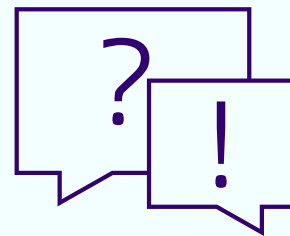


International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation



European co-operation for Accreditation

Q&A – ACCREDITATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



WITH EMILY CAMPBELL-RATCLIFFE, HEAD OF ASSURANCE, RESPONSIBLE TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION UNIT (RTA), DEPARTMENT FOR SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Q How can government support innovation and the rollout of new technologies whilst maintaining public confidence?

A Public confidence is fundamental to the success of innovation, particularly to the adoption and diffusion of new technologies. Without trust, consumers and citizens will be reluctant to accept innovative technologies, and, by extension, organisations will be even more reluctant to adopt AI for fear of public or consumer backlash.

Government can help to build and maintain public confidence in such technologies by ensuring that where new technologies are being implemented in the public sector they are done so in a responsible and transparent way, demonstrating a commitment to trustworthy innovation. Government can also work to provide the building blocks for private sector developers and deployers to build justified trust as new technologies are rolled out, creating clarity of expectations for companies and ensuring that innovation is both trustworthy and trusted.

However, government can't do this alone, and a range of actors – including regulators, the UK's quality infrastructure ecosystem, developers and deployers – need to help build and maintain public confidence in innovative technologies.

Q How important is it that consumers have trust and confidence in artificial intelligence enabled systems, particularly regarding the reliability and trustworthiness of the data they use?

A As with other types of innovative technologies, trust and confidence in AI-enabled systems is vital to their successful use. This is particularly acute with AI systems, as they rely on the effective sharing of accurate data – the Open Data Institute (ODI) has demonstrated how improved public trust is associated with increased data sharing. This, in turn, can positively impact the UK's wider economy, potentially adding up to 4% on GDP.

However, we also know that individuals are often hesitant to share their data with government and the private sector. According to our research, 49% of people believe they rarely benefit from government data sharing. Therefore, to drive adoption of AI and unlock the value of data in the economy, it is crucial that the public trust that innovation in data and AI happens responsibly and ethically and the benefits of these systems reach all citizens.

Q What role can accredited conformity assessment play, for both the regulatory and non-regulatory spheres, in the safe rollout of new and emerging technologies?

A As they demonstrate that what is being supplied actually meets the requirements specified or claimed, conformity assessments are critical to the safe rollout of new and emerging technologies. Accredited conformity assessment in particular is essential for decision-making and risk management as it gives consumers and regulators confidence that consistently high standards are being applied to products and services being purchased. When applied correctly, conformity assessment

Q&A - ACCREDITATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

can provide purchasers with confidence in the suppliers, products or services they use, particularly where products and services become increasingly technically complex – as is the case with many new and emerging technologies.

Q How can the wider national quality infrastructure of standards, accreditation and measurement support DSIT and wider governmental priorities?

A AI is at the heart of government's plan to kickstart an era of economic growth, transform how we deliver public services and boost living standards for working people across the country. The wider national quality infrastructure has a major role to play in this, supporting the development of an effective AI assurance ecosystem that can act as a key driver of responsible and safe AI that is justifiably trusted by consumers, regulators and government.

With developments in the global regulatory landscape, significant advances in AI capabilities and increased public awareness of AI, it's more important than ever for organisations to start engaging with AI assurance broadly, and measurement and standards specifically. The national quality infrastructure can ensure that the right standards and techniques exist

upon which to develop an AI assurance ecosystem, as well as continuing to advocate for their further adoption. By creating the building blocks for responsible development and deployment of AI, the national quality infrastructure will contribute significantly to DSIT's specific priorities across key technologies, as well as the government's mission on growth.

Q How can UKAS and DSIT work together to ensure the UK's digital sector continues to thrive and grow, both domestically and internationally?

A UKAS and DSIT can work together by continuing to advocate for the adoption of standards and measurement techniques, as well as supporting their further development. Government and UKAS should also be coming together to ensure better training and skills development for practitioners in this space, strengthening the quality of the UK's testing, inspection and certification sector, as well as improving the quality of its digital sector. Outside of the UK context, supporting cross-border trade in AI and other digital technologies will also require a well-developed ecosystem of approaches, tools and standards that facilitate international interoperability between differing regulatory regimes.



“AI IS AT THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT’S PLAN TO KICKSTART AN ERA OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, TRANSFORM HOW WE DELIVER PUBLIC SERVICES AND BOOST LIVING STANDARDS FOR WORKING PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY.”

ACCREDITATION AND THE UK'S NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE – A PARTNERSHIP ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGING MARKETS AND TECHNOLOGY



BY CRAIG WATSON, DEPUTY DIRECTOR - BORDERS, ACCREDITATION, MEASUREMENT AND STANDARDS POLICY, OFFICE FOR PRODUCT SAFETY AND STANDARDS, DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS AND TRADE



UKAS is appointed as the UK's National Accreditation Body, and it is the sole NAB for undertaking mandatory and voluntary accreditation in the UK.

My team in the Office for Product Safety and Standards, which sits within the Department for Business and Trade, are the leads within government for the relationship with UKAS, and for accreditation policy more broadly.

The foundation of the way we interact is provided for in the Memorandum of Understanding, MoU, between DBT and OPSS. The first MoU was drawn up in 1995 when UKAS was set up as a result of the merger of NAMAS (National Measurement Accreditation Service) and NACCB (National Accreditation Council for Certification Bodies). Since then, the MoU has been updated regularly to adapt to sector changes and the increase of using accreditation and conformity assessment as tools to support the market and policy in an ever-growing range of areas.

ACCREDITATION AND THE UK'S NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE – A PARTNERSHIP ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGING MARKETS AND TECHNOLOGY

The most recent revision was published in September 2023, which reflected UKAS's increased role to support government in trade and domestic priorities, as well as strengthening the engagement between government and UKAS.

Alongside updating the MoU and our governance, there was a range of other work between OPSS and UKAS during 2023-24. This included:

- + OPSS agreeing priorities with UKAS that set out core objectives and methods of collaboration. These objectives included working together to support government's objective to reduce technical barriers to trade, preparing to respond to recommendations relevant to UKAS from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, and exploring opportunities for greater digitalisation.
- + OPSS continuing to support UKAS through the national policy on accreditation, recommending that where conformity assessment is needed in the UK market, it is accredited by UKAS. OPSS and UKAS work closely with government departments to build capability and understanding about accreditation, to ensure this policy position is implemented consistently.
- + OPSS supporting UKAS's outreach internationally, including through supporting UKAS's programme of international engagement. OPSS maintains the policy of appointing a single not-for-profit National Accreditation Body, this being the UK position with trade partners.

+ The OPSS biannual international conference in October 2023 having a session specifically on the role of the wider quality infrastructure, of which accreditation is a part, that featured speakers from UKAS, BSI and the OECD.

A key feature of work between OPSS and UKAS in 2023-24 was on maximising the opportunities from digitalisation, and OPSS supported a range of UKAS projects to improve their systems through digitalisation. This reflects the importance of UKAS being able to take full advantage of digitalisation and emerging technologies, including in collaboration with other NQI partners, to help ensure the UK's NQI is fully fit for the digital age.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 report was published on 4 September 2024 and the report's recommendations must be considered with the seriousness the tragedy deserves. Some of these recommendations are relevant to the role of UKAS and conformity assessment. The Government will consider all recommendations in detail and we will respond within six months, listening to the community as part of this work. We will work with UKAS as we consider our response.

“A KEY FEATURE OF WORK BETWEEN OPSS AND UKAS IN 2023-24 WAS ON MAXIMISING THE OPPORTUNITIES FROM DIGITALISATION, AND OPSS SUPPORTED A RANGE OF UKAS PROJECTS TO IMPROVE THEIR SYSTEMS THROUGH DIGITALISATION.”

Q&A – THE ROLE OF ACCREDITATION IN ENHANCING CLIMATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE CREDIBILITY OF SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS



MARK BABINGTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF REGULATORY STANDARDS, FINANCIAL REPORTING COUNCIL



Q What are the critical climate and net zero issues that FRC sees for the financial world and what are your key initiatives in this area?

A There is a growing demand from investors for the provision of high-quality, consistent and comparable reporting of climate and wider sustainability matters. This information is increasingly being used to inform capital allocation decisions. It is important, therefore, that those decisions can be taken from a position of investor confidence in the reliability of that information. We are working with colleagues in government toward a decision in 2025 on the endorsement of standards issued by the ISSB. At the international level we are working with international standards-setting boards to ensure that reporting is

underpinned by high standards of ethical behaviour and independence, and high-quality assurance. One of the really interesting challenges of this work is that it is performed by a diverse group of providers, and therefore it is important to ensure that the same high standards apply regardless of who does the work. Of course, the work is not just about setting standards – with any new reporting, there needs to be implementation support as both reporting and the underlying information systems that support it can mature and develop to support assurance.

Q What is the role of assurance in helping enhance climate accountability and the credibility of organisations' sustainability actions?

Q&A – THE ROLE OF ACCREDITATION IN ENHANCING CLIMATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE CREDIBILITY OF SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS

A Sustainability reporting poses some interesting challenges – the information itself may rely on reporting systems that are less well developed and less mature than those that support financial reporting. The information being reported may contain higher levels of estimation uncertainty and may include greater levels of judgement and significant assumptions on the part of the preparer.

When thinking about issues like transition planning and net zero reporting, the information that an entity reports may be forward-looking rather than historic and may cover a time period that extends long into the future. Reporting on net zero and transition planning also offers an important opportunity for investors and other users of annual reports to assess whether an entity's net zero targets are sufficient to deliver on that target. With more uncertain, more subjective information, assurance performs an important role in providing users with confidence that the information they are relying on is trustworthy and that the judgments and assumptions made are reasonable.

Q **What is the difference between market-based assurance (of ISO standards and accreditation) and the assurance deployed in the financial auditing and ESG ratings sector? Are they complementary?**

A An audit of financial statements is a way of providing assurance that a set of financial reports, prepared in accordance with a general-purpose reporting framework, give an assurance view of an entity's financial position and financial performance. At the end of an audit, the auditor gives their opinion whether the financial statements give a reliable (true and fair) view, and whether those financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the right reporting framework.

Market-based assurance is another source of assurance, focusing on a different set of information – it can confirm that information, or a process or a product, consistently meets certain high standards regardless of where that activity has been carried out. These activities are complementary – reporting in an annual report relies on information being gathered – where that information has been prepared in line with standards and verified by an accredited body, this builds trust in its reliability. Both types of assurance effectively support the public interest in allowing users to have justifiable confidence in the information they use for decision-taking.

Q **What are the main ways in which the FRC and UKAS can work together to increase the impact of existing assurance mechanisms in the net zero, climate and broader sustainability space?**

A Firstly, this is a fast-moving, fast-developing sector, and it is not one that relies on a single profession. Together UKAS and the FRC can share their understanding of what underpins reporting and assurance of information related to net zero, climate and sustainability. Where that information is derived from existing business processes underpinned by accredited verification, it helps us to determine how companies can meet their reporting requirements with minimum additional burden. Both UKAS and the FRC also work in areas where international standards are important – standards which allow a business to meet regulatory obligations in multiple jurisdictions are an important way in which we can support economic growth and trade. It also allows both organisations to better understand the end-to-end process through which information is developed, reported and assured.

UKAS CERTCHECK

CertCheck ✓



In 2024 UKAS CertCheck has gathered momentum, supporting UKAS in its mission to ensure the integrity and credibility of accredited certification. Steady growth of registered users (those who have signed up for an account) has shown encouraging uptake of a tool that was designed to ease and expedite the process by which accredited management system certification can be verified.

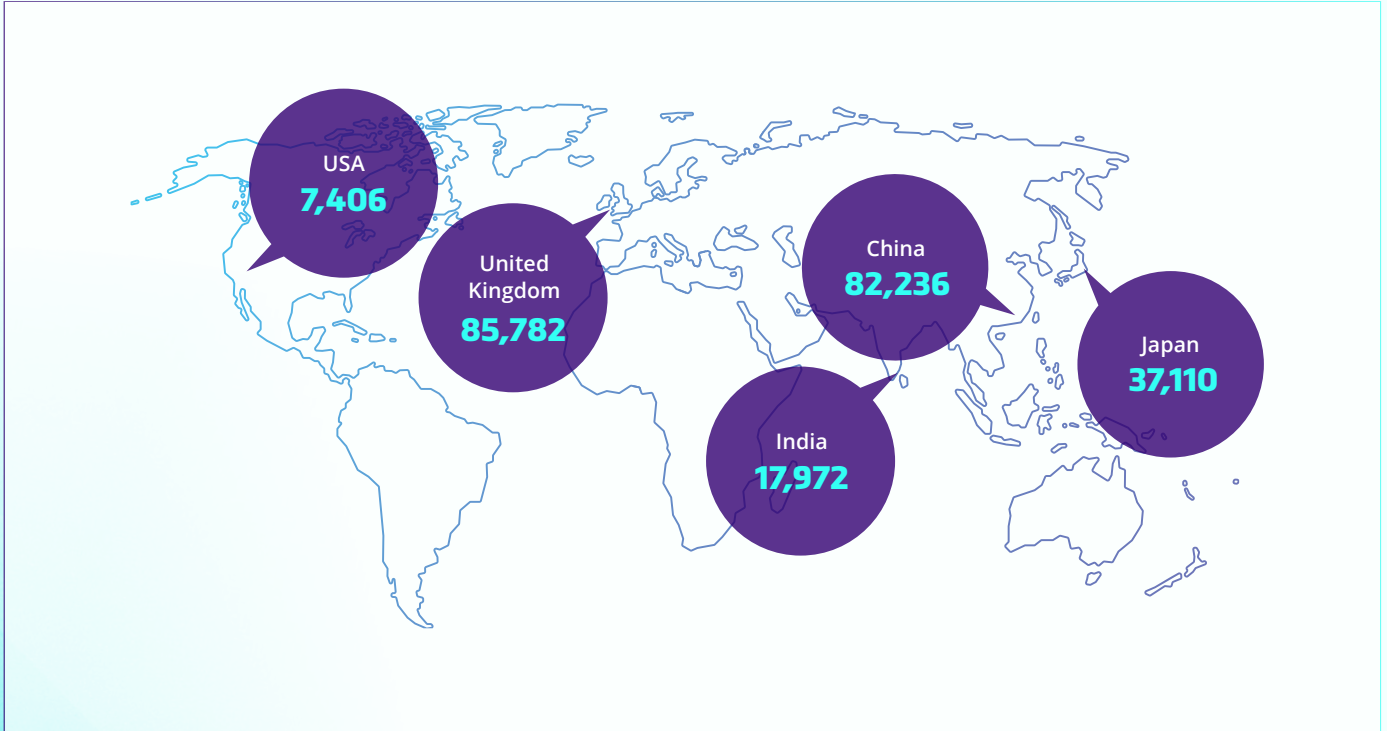
Significant work has been undertaken during this period to ensure seamless integration of certification data from UKAS CertCheck to IAF CertSearch, allowing UKAS accredited ISO/IEC 17021-1 certification bodies to comply with the requirements of the IAF MD28 document (published in 2023) without duplication of effort.

Certification bodies can also now access a suite of branded collateral through their CertCheck dashboards, helping them promote their listing and the value of accredited certification.

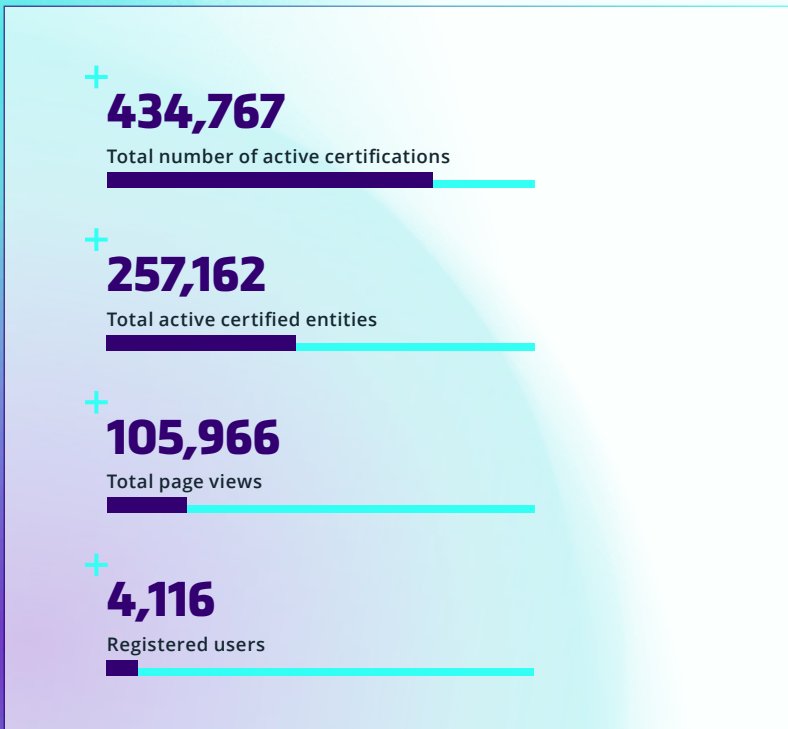
UKAS CERTCHECK

UKAS is currently working in collaboration with academic institutions to utilise the data housed within CertCheck to support projects which examine the impact of standards and certification on various aspects of UK business.

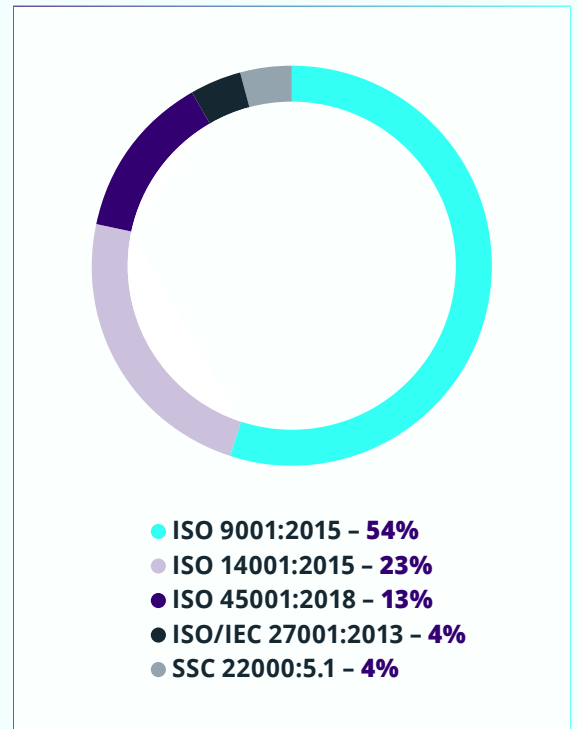
Key locations for UKAS accredited management system certification



Statistics



Top five standards



GROUP STRATEGIC REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The principal activity of the Group in the year under review was that of being the sole National Accreditation Body recognised by government to assess, against internationally agreed standards, organisations that provide certification, testing, inspection and calibration services.

The Group is a non-profit-distributing private company, limited by guarantee. The Group is independent of government but is appointed as the National Accreditation Body by Accreditation Regulations 2009 (SI No3155/2009). UKAS is licensed by the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) to use and confer the national accreditation symbols (formerly national accreditation marks) which symbolise government recognition of the accreditation process.

Business review

The results for the Group are set out on page 58. These financial statements reflect the trading activities and results of both United Kingdom Accreditation Service and UKAS Limited, formerly known as Clinical Pathology Accreditation (UK) Limited (CPA).

The Group expects to continue to grow in most areas of the business, with work in the healthcare, forensics science, construction, environment, food/agriculture and artificial intelligence/information security spearheading this growth. The Board continues to focus on creating the capability to respond to the ever-increasing demand for accreditation schemes by a wide range of sectors and to that end, continues to invest in the development of the UKAS infrastructure and people. During the year ending 31 March 2024, we completed the launch of our assessment and customer portals to our customers and are receiving positive feedback from the majority of customers. Going forward, we will continue to expand the use and the functionality of

the portals to support productivity, service delivery and richer customer interactions.

The aftershocks from Brexit, the Coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine continued to affect UKAS and its customers, especially in relation to inflationary pressures. Despite the prolonged tightening of the labour market, the Group invested heavily in talent retention and acquisition and managed to grow its resources, including in more niche technical areas and deliver assessments above expectations and continued to add a range of e-learning courses and free webinars that are designed to demystify the journey to and promote the value of accreditation.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Directors have applied judgements, based on expert advice, in relation to assessing the position of the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme. There are no other matters concerning financial risk which are material for the assessment of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the company.

Financial key performance indicators

The integrated Group has achieved an operating profit of £3,199,983 (2023: £1,132,930) and a Group gross margin of 40.4% (2023: 38.8%).

The financial performance this year was positive, and the Group continues to be profitable. The Group's Balance Sheet continues to show a healthy current ratio of current assets to short term creditors of 2.5 times (2023: 2.9 times).

Other key performance indicators

The Group continues to report internally on a series of Key Performance Indicators such as the number of days of assessment delivered, the number of customers visited and the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. In addition to this, the company constantly surveys its customer base to ensure that the quality of service is maintained at the highest levels. In the year to March 2024, the company delivered 36,436 (2023: 32,516) assessment days.

Directors' statement of compliance with duty to promote the success of the Group

In the decisions taken during the year ended 31 March 2024, the Directors have acted in the way they consider to be in good faith, most likely to promote the success of the Company and its continuing reputation for high standards of business conduct, and for the benefit of its members as a whole, having regard to the stakeholders and matters set out in Section 172 of the UK Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Board on 30 July 2024 and signed on its behalf.

Matthew Gantley

Matthew Gantley

Director

Date: 30 July 2024

+

£3,199,983

Operating profit

(2023: £1,132,930)

+

40.4%

Group gross margin

(2023: 38.8%)

DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Directors present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Directors' responsibilities statement

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Group strategic report, the Directors' report and the consolidated financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. Under company law the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and the Group and of the profit or loss of the Group for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- + Select suitable accounting policies for the Group's financial statements and then apply them consistently;
- + Make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- + State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- + Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Group will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and the Group and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and the Group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Results and dividends

The profit for the year, after taxation, amounted to £3,676,480 (2023: £1,376,876).

As the company is non-profit distributing, the Directors do not propose a dividend (2023: £Nil).



The directors who served during the year were:



Lord Jamie Lindsay
Chairman



Matthew Gantley
Chief Executive



Professor Michael Mainelli
Senior Independent Director



Georgia Alsop
Finance & Corporate Services Director



Lynsey Poyner
Operations Director
(appointed 17 October 2023)



Lorraine Turner
Accreditation Director



Sarah Veale
Non-Executive Director



Dr Jeffrey Llewellyn
Non-Executive Director



Professor Adrian Charles Newland
Non-Executive Director



Philip Rycroft
Non-Executive Director



Jeffrey Ruddle
Strategic Development Director (resigned 24 July 2024)

Future developments

In February 2024 the Board approved the UKAS Strategic Review and updated Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values as well as the Strategic Priorities which identify, at a high level the key areas of focus for the business. These strategic priorities are:

- + To excel in areas of technical expertise and service;
- + To be agile, enabling the organisation to adapt and promote digital innovation;
- + To be perceptive and inclusive in developing talent and building knowledge;
- + To deliver financial stability and productivity;
- + To be respected and recognised across the world for our role in building a safe, secure and sustainable society.

More specifically, UKAS intends to deliver these priorities through the following objectives:

Key strategic objectives related to our priority to excel in areas of technical expertise and service, are:

- Deliver 'World Class' customer service;
- Ensure ongoing MLA/MRA signatory status, through effective peer evaluation in November 2024;
- Fully implement the lessons learned from the Grenfell Inquiry, including completing the reviews of all safety critical conformity assessment schemes and augmenting our technical co-ordination systems;
- Develop and enhance operations and sales resources, expanding our sector specialists team to support strong technical management and key sector growth.

Key strategic objectives related to our priority to be agile, enabling the organisation to adapt and promote digital innovation, are:

- Enhance our customer and assessor portals to further digitise the assessment process and capitalise on the use of generative AI and performance analytics to improve reporting and the management of corrective actions and critical non-conformances;
- Digitise the accreditation schedule for automated verification and improved analytics and accreditation programme planning;
- Develop our CertCheck tool to support verification of a broader range of UKAS accredited activities, supporting our stakeholders and customers;
- Develop our accredited services and outreach in key growth areas such as voluntary carbon markets, sustainability schemes and disclosures, energy transition, artificial intelligence, data management and construction products;
- Develop tools to assist new applicants, removing perceived and real barriers to applying for accreditation.

Key strategic objectives related to our priority to be perceptive in developing talent and building knowledge, are:

- Drive improvement in staff engagement, focusing on creating a culture of belonging where everyone feels valued and heard and embedding EDI policies and practises;
- Leverage our learning management system to enhance our learning, mentoring and development programmes;
- Implement our talent and leadership development programme and enhance our process for succession planning;
- Develop our policies and processes to improve our diversity, inclusion, and our social impact.

Key strategic objectives related to our priority to deliver financial stability and productivity, are:

- Invest in the long-term growth, stability and resilience of UKAS;
- Enhance our training and advisory services providing guidance and advice that supports the needs of the conformity assessment sector and international partners.

Key strategic objectives related to our priority to be respected and recognised as the world's foremost accreditation body, are:

- Enhance UKAS' relationship within UK government, building a reputation as an agile organisation that provides solutions to government's challenges;
 - Position accreditation as a tool that supports the reduction of technical barriers to trade and campaign for international mutual recognition of conformity assessment between the UK and the EU and other major trading partners;
 - Develop evidence and enhance collateral on the value of accreditation, to communicate to customers, stakeholders and government the benefits of being accredited and using accredited services;
 - Increase UKAS's commitment to ILAC/IAF and EA, taking on leadership roles in key committees;
 - Alongside our partners, enhance the profile of the NQI systems solutions in the design and implementation of better regulation, including digital quality infrastructure initiatives;
 - Diversify and improve our stakeholder engagement, bringing in new UKAS Members and members to key committees such as the Policy Advisory Forum and Technical Advisory Committees.
-

Stakeholder engagement

In order for the Company to meet its responsibilities to stakeholders, the Board has to ensure effective engagement with them. As part of its annual strategic review process, the Board considers the identification and prioritisation of stakeholders and whether its relationships with key stakeholders are being managed appropriately. As set out below, stakeholder engagement is achieved in several ways and in particular through a broad annual Policy Advisory Forum and delegated Policy Advisory Council which advises the Directors on the views of stakeholders. The Board ensures that it has effective engagement mechanisms in place to gain a clear understanding of the views of key stakeholders so that their interests and the matters set out in Section 172 of the Companies Act 2006 can be considered in Board discussions and decision making. Taking account of the interests of our stakeholders is at the centre of our strategic plan and our purpose to promote trust in the products and services we all use, creating a world of confidence. As such, examples of UKAS' engagement with its key stakeholders including members, employees, contractors, pensioners, consumers, suppliers, standards development organisations, other accreditation bodies and regulators, governments around the world, professional bodies and academia, labour and environmental organisations and local communities can be found throughout this Annual Report.

Examples of our key engagement activities in 2024 include:

Key stakeholder or stakeholder concern	Key engagements	Further information
Employee engagement and belonging	<p>UKAS values employee engagement and regularly shares information with its employees and their representatives on all matters of concern to them, including highlighting financial and economic factors affecting the Company's performance, and encourages employee involvement in the Company's overall performance. Underpinning this are our values which promote acting with integrity and respect for one another and our aspiration for a culture of belonging and inclusion where everyone feels welcomed, connected and respected.</p> <p>UKAS communicates and engages with its workforce, including contractor assessors, using a variety of channels blending in-person, virtual and electronic communication. In 2024 the executive and non-executive Directors were able to communicate regularly with the whole of the workforce, through the use of technology and also in-person during the UKAS Annual Staff Conference providing important updates on policies and initiatives, sharing insights and best practice, celebrating success with staff awards, promoting a culture of belonging and inclusion with cross functional team building activities, and inviting feedback and questions.</p> <p>The effectiveness of these strategies is tracked through our employee engagement survey. Throughout 2024, employee moral remained high, with 80% of employees who responded to our survey giving positive responses to questions around morale.</p>	

Key stakeholder or stakeholder concern	Key engagements	Further information
Employee health, safety, wellbeing and work life balance	<p>UKAS supports employee wellbeing and work life balance by ensuring that staff have the relevant tools and information on policy decisions around safety and flexible working.</p> <p>Managers are provided with training and advice on how to lead remote teams effectively, and on how to manage stress and mental health at work. Our trained Mental Health First aiders provide a first line to our workforce and together with our line managers are trained to sign-post employees to the Employee Assistance programmes that are available to them.</p> <p>During 2024, we launched our carer support benefit which is a service that supports employees who are caring for loved ones, helping them find the right services and navigate, often complex systems.</p> <p>Our Events Committee spearheaded a number of social and team building events which helped keep the whole of UKAS connected and our Human Resources team coordinated workshops on menopause, neurodiversity, promoting awareness and providing guidance on how to support colleagues affected by menopause and other challenges.</p>	
Equality, diversity and inclusion	<p>The Group believes that equality, diversity and inclusion enable delivery of our purpose. To benefit from a diverse workforce, the Group applies role-related and objective criteria to select and develop talent and focuses on building an inclusive environment that promote psychological safety and where everyone feels able to participate and achieve their potential, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, background, ethnicity or disability. We endeavour to treat each individual and each other with equity and fairness, including in relation to job applications, pay, training, promotion and talent development.</p> <p>The Board receives an overview of diversity and inclusion at UKAS and in 2024 it continued to share its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan with the UKAS workforce, restating its commitment to building a “culture of belonging” at UKAS where everyone feels valued and heard. The UKAS leadership team has received training in EDI and are committed to inclusive leadership.</p> <p>During 2023, the vast majority of UKAS employees, participated in a series of belonging and inclusion workshops, facilitated by a leading expert in the area of belonging, offering the opportunity for a two-way-dialogue and their input on how to foster inclusion at UKAS. In early 2024, we created our Belonging Employee Resource Group “Bridge” which is helping champion inclusion at UKAS as we go forward.</p>	<p>Further information on the gender gap report can be found on the UKAS website.</p>
Members of the company's Defined Pension Scheme	<p>The Board regularly engages with members of UKAS' Defined Benefit Pension Scheme (the 'Scheme') through various direct and indirect channels, including regular communication with trustees and attendance by Directors at Trustee meetings.</p> <p>The Scheme is well funded and remains open to new employees. During 2024, the Scheme awarded discretionary increases of 10% for benefits accrued from 2003 to 31 March 2023.</p>	<p>Further information can be found from page 67 and 84 to 87.</p>

Key stakeholder or stakeholder concern	Key engagements	Further information
The UK government	<p>UKAS continued to work closely with DBT and MHCLG to support the response to the government's review into the testing of construction products and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and is committed to learning the lessons from these reviews and developing accreditation as necessary so that it can continue to be part of the solution. In parallel, UKAS continues to work with DBT on the role of accreditation in international trade agreements and in promoting trade across the world. Across its range of accreditation services, UKAS engages with government and regulators to ensure regulation and regulatory policy is effectively applied through conformity assessment.</p>	
UKAS Members and other Trade Associations	<p>UKAS maintains an external affairs programme for ongoing engagement activities with a broad range of stakeholders including UKAS members and trade associations.</p> <p>The Company's Articles of Association also require the Directors to establish a Policy Advisory Forum (PAF): "the purpose of which will be to ensure that the Directors are aware of the views of interested parties on policy issues affecting the Company's activities, including the development, interpretation and application of national, European and International Standards, guidelines, procedures, regulations, practices and agreements applicable to accreditation bodies and conformity assessment bodies." The PAF represents over 60 stakeholders and is represented by a smaller Policy Advisory Council (PAC). The PAC advises the UKAS Board on the more detailed aspects of stakeholder feedback on UKAS policy, particularly on questions relating to the safeguarding of impartiality.</p>	<p>Further information in the Policy Advisory Forum and Policy Advisory Council Chair report.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Enabling businesses to achieve best practice in sustainability is the focus of many of the areas that UKAS accredits which includes environmental/energy management systems, carbon neutrality and the UK Emissions Trading Scheme. UKAS continues to invest in the development of new areas of accreditation that support sustainability through direct engagement with a range of key stakeholders, including DBT, the FRC and IEMA. During 2024, UKAS continued to adopt a blended approach to assessing, and promoted greater use of remote internal meetings to mitigate, where possible, the environmental impact of these events. In addition, from 1 August 2022, and in line with UKAS's commitment to become net carbon neutral by 2030, UKAS introduced an attractive allowance for fully electric company cars as a way of incentivising the adoption of electric vehicles by those who are required to drive on UKAS business. UKAS is largely paperless as it uses electronic workflows and document handling systems. In November 2022, UKAS switched the lighting of its office to LED, and continues to operate movement sensor lighting in its office to further reduce its energy consumption.</p>	<p>Further information in the Chair and the Chief Executive reports.</p>

Greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption and energy efficiency action

The Group continues to adopt a blended approach to assessing, allowing some remote assessing where this was deemed optimal and does not compromise the technical rigour of assessments. Going forward UKAS expects to see a reduction in site-based activities relative to the total number of assessment days.

From 2022, UKAS introduced a hybrid working pattern that allowed staff who are contracted to work from the office the option of working from home for up to two days per week.

In addition, UKAS switched its office lighting to LED and introduced a number of other energy saving measures and incentives as detailed on page 49 of this report.

+ 106.94
2024 UK energy use
Scope 2 indirect emissions
Tonnes CO²

2023 - 120.34

+ 1,171.57
2024 Greenhouse gas emissions
relating to business travel - Scope 3
other indirect emissions Tonnes CO²

2023 - 658.10

+ 36,436
2024 Assessment
days delivered

2023 - 32,516







+ 0.035
2024 Intensity ratio
Emissions per assessment
days delivered

2023 - 0.024

UK energy use relates to the UKAS office only.

DIRECTORS' REPORT

Greenhouse gas emissions include overseas activities and have been calculated using the International Panel on Climate Change Guidelines 2016 (Tier 3 methodology).

 Fuel in fleet cars <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included	 Fuel reimbursed to employees for own cars <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included	 Fuel in hire cars and in taxis <input type="checkbox"/> Not included
 Fuel in planes and in trains <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included	 Fuel in vehicles operated by contractors <input type="checkbox"/> Not included	 Hotels <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Directors at the time when this Directors' report is approved has confirmed that:

- + So far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Company and the Group's auditors are unaware, and
- + The Directors have taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a director in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company and the Group's auditors are aware of that information.

Post Balance Sheet events

There have been no significant events affecting the Group since the year end.

Auditors

The auditors, Feltons, will be proposed for reappointment in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the board and signed on its behalf.

Matthew Gantley

Matthew Gantley

Director

Date: 30 July 2024

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of United Kingdom Accreditation Service (the 'parent Company') and its subsidiaries (the 'Group') for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows, the Consolidated Statement of Changes in Equity, the Company Statement of Changes in Equity and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- + Give a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and of the parent Company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the Group's profit for the year then ended;
- + Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- + Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Group's or the parent Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICE

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' report thereon. The Directors are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- + The information given in the Group strategic report and the Directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- + The Group strategic report and the Directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Group and the parent Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Group strategic report or the Directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- + Adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent Company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- + The parent Company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- + Certain disclosures of Directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- + We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Directors

As explained more fully in the Directors responsibilities statement set out on page 44, the Directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Directors are responsible for assessing the Group's and the parent Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the Group or the parent

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICE

Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these Group financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- + We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- + We obtained an understanding of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements through discussion with management and those charged with governance, including financial reporting and taxation legislation. We considered that extent of compliance with those laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement items.
- + We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations. We remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- + We addressed the risk of fraud through management override by reviewing the appropriateness of a sample of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making key accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business that we come across throughout the audit.

However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the company. Our examination should not be relied upon to disclose all such material misstatements or frauds, errors or instances of non-compliance as may exist.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICE

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Company's Members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's Members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's Members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Robert Carter

Robert Carter
(Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of

Feltons

1 The Green
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 1PL
Date: 28 August 2024

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



BY GEORGIA ALSOP, UKAS FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTOR

2024 marked another year of strong financial performance, enabling greater investment in strengthening our technical rigour and resources as well as in the digitalisation and enhancement of our services.

Group operating profit of £3.2m for 2024 increased by 182% compared to £1.1m in the previous year, reflecting a 12.1% growth in days delivered and improvements in productivity, as well as £1.2m fair value gains from investments in marketable securities and additional government funding for digitalisation infrastructure projects. In 2023 profitability was lower by design to allow UKAS to grow resources to meet greater regulatory demand for accreditation in forensic science and a catch up in Healthcare services, where surveillances had been disrupted by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Group turnover for 2024 increased to £45.4m compared to £36.7m in the previous year, largely due to 3,920 more assessment days delivered. Overall, UKAS delivered 36,436 assessment days compared to 32,516 in the previous year. The increase in assessment days was attributable to a full healthcare and witness assessments catch up as well as an increase in initial assessments and extensions to scope.

UKAS continued to invest in important infrastructure projects such as the completion of the launch of its customer portals and the digitalisation of the accreditation schedules and the new customer application process.

Group administrative expenses of £15.7m were 20% up compared to the previous year reflecting a £1.9m FRS102 pension cost related to discretionary inflationary increases to accrued pension benefits and £0.4m

additional legal fees from successfully defending the validity of UKAS accredited certificates for public procurement contracts in Italy. Underlying administrative expenses grew by 3% year on year, reflecting an increase in administrative staff and system costs, and an increase in the use of digital platforms in delivering our services.

Profit and loss reserves of £49.7m included a £34.5m long term pension asset net of deferred tax, relating to the company's defined benefit pension scheme. At the last actuarial valuation as of 31 March 2021, the UKAS Defined Benefit Pension Scheme was fully funded, even on a prudential basis and the Scheme's funding levels remain in surplus, allowing the Pension Trustees the ability to fund discretionary increases to protect accrued benefits against inflation. The Group aims to hold three months' turnover as reserves and as of 31 March 2024 exceeded its target, even after excluding the long-term pension asset net of deferred tax.



The Group's liquidity position as of 31 March 2024 remained strong with a current asset ratio of 2.5 times to short term creditors.

Going forward UKAS will continue to invest in the digitalisation of its services, creating new ways for collaborating with its customers to enhance services and drive efficiency.



+ **£3.2m** Group operating profit for 2024
+ **£45.4m** Group turnover for 2024

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