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# The IFS Scoring System

Driving continuous improvement



“ The new IFS Scoring System will make assessment results easier to read and understand because it highlights the criticality of deviations and non-conformities. This new system will also save time for all stakeholders by not requiring corrections and corrective actions for B-rated points of attention.

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## Introduction

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With the publication of the IFS Food Standard Version 7, IFS introduced alignments to the scoring system. This brochure explains the new policy that now also applies to the following standards: IFS Broker version 3.1, IFS Logistics version 2.3 and IFS PACsecure version 2.

“ **We all need people  
who will give us feedback.  
That’s how we improve.** ”

Bill Gates

The IFS Scoring System is unique in that it gives an assessed company differentiated feedback on its performance and indicates where it can improve. The main objective of IFS is to drive continuous improvement regarding safe, legal and compliant products and services at the assessed businesses.

Working with IFS leads to more efficiency, safer products and processes, and less recalls. It also contributes to being valued as a trustworthy and reliable business partner delivering safe products according to customers’ specifications.

# The IFS Scoring System

Based on the total number of points obtained, a percentage is calculated, which forms the result of the IFS Assessment. In this document, we use the term IFS Assessment instead of IFS Audit. This wording and its definition have been introduced with the publication of IFS Food version 7. We will gradually adopt this term in our other certification standards as well. The chart explains this system in more detail.

RESULT	EXPLANATIONS	POINTS
A	A indicates full compliance and perfect implementation of the requirement.	20 points
B Point of attention	B is a point of attention observed by the auditor, indicating compliance without a significant negative impact on the result. The intention is to give the business a signal to monitor the requirement. This way, the company can avoid a deviation or even a non-conformity in future. Note: a point of attention is not a deviation as no corrections or corrective actions are requested, and it is not meant to recommend specific solutions or improvements.	15 points
C Deviation	C means that part of the requirement is not implemented and that improvement is needed.	5 points
D Deviation	D means that the implementation of the requirement is not sufficient or not done at all, but there is no impact on food/product safety.	-20 points
MAJOR Non-conformity	An auditor can give a Major for all requirements not being defined as KO. It indicates a substantial failure usually relating to product safety or legal issues, and results in a subtraction of 15% from the total amount of points. During a follow-up assessment, the company needs to show it has implemented the corrective actions. Only then it is possible to award an IFS Certificate at foundation level.	Major non-conformity will subtract 15 % of the possible total amount, the certificate cannot be awarded.
KO Scored with a D	Knockout (KO) requirements are defined in the standard and can only be scored with an A, C (deviation) or D. The scoring of a KO requirement with a D indicates a non-implementation of the requirement. It leads to a subtraction of 50 % of the total amount of points. A final score of less than 75 % results in a failure of the assessment. Consequently, the IFS Certificate will not be awarded.	KO non-conformity will subtract 50 % of the possible total amount, the certificate cannot be awarded.



## The difference between deviations and non-conformities

Requirements partly or not fulfilled can be scored as a deviation or a non-conformity:

### DEVIATION

A deviation is a non-compliance with a requirement, without an impact on safety related to products and processes. Deviations are requirements scored with a “C” or a “D”, and KO requirements scored with a “C”.

### NON-CONFORMITY

A non-conformity describes the non-fulfilment of a specified requirement related to legislation, food/product safety, or internal dysfunctions. Non-conformities are Majors or a D scoring of a KO requirement.

## TIMESCALE FOR CORRECTIONS AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

### CORRECTIONS

Implementation has to be done immediately and needs to be finished before a certificate can be issued. Evidences of implementation shall be provided to the certification body within a maximum of four (4) weeks after the receipt of the provisional assessment report and the provisional action plan for completion.

### CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

May have different timeframes (depending on the individual finding and severity). This ensures that the implementation of the measures is sustainable.

Corrective actions need to be completed in a reasonable timeframe before the recertification assessment.

# The IFS Assessment, Assessment Report and Action Plan



## IFS Auditor Competence

Only auditors approved by IFS can perform an IFS Assessment. All IFS Auditors received specialised training and passed the IFS Exams. To have the assurance that their knowledge is always up to date, IFS Auditors receive calibration training once every two (2) years. It ensures that they have a thorough understanding of the IFS Standard requirements and our expectations when performing an assessment.



## The IFS Assessment

During the IFS Assessment, the auditor will evaluate every individual IFS Standard requirement and determine the level of compliance. Based on the nature and significance of the observations, the auditor determines the score. The responsible certification body reviews the auditor's findings.



## The IFS Assessment Report

In the assessment report, the auditor shall give explanations about all requirements with B, C and D scorings, as well as Major and KO-ratings. The auditor must explain and justify deviations and non-conformities unambiguously. He or she needs to provide precise and sufficient information to give an objective, transparent, and understandable picture of the situation. This way, the score given for the requirement is reasonable for all parties involved.

For some fixed, pre-defined requirements, the auditor must also give explanations, even in case of an A scoring. With this information, the certification body can prepare a standardised summary of the report for each company, including details for essential evaluations. The IFS AuditXpressX™ software supports the generation of this uniform report.



## The IFS Action Plan and follow-up of corrections and corrective actions

The auditor writes his/her findings in a provisional action plan. It includes all the requirements not scored with A, B or N/A (not applicable). This plan provides clear descriptions of assessment findings, on which basis the company has to define appropriate corrections and corrective actions, including responsibilities and timeframes.

The assessed company must implement corrections verifiably before the IFS Certificate can be issued. Depending on the severity of the finding, the company has up to one year to execute and conclude corrective actions. The auditor will verify these at the next recertification assessment.



## The benefits of the IFS Scoring System

- The scoring system drives continuous improvement at the assessed companies and supports reaching a higher score.
- It gives both the assessed company and its customers a clear and differentiated overview of the performance.
- Reports and results are standardised, making them comparable and easy to understand for business partners.
- The assessment report gives the company an action plan with clearly stated explanations about deviations and non-conformities. Sometimes these are crucial arguments to obtain financial resources for necessary investments.
- Follow-up on the action plan may have different timeframes depending on the severity and complexity of the issues found. It leads to immediate action to solve the problem, but also allows for better planning of corrective actions for sustainable improvement.
- The result of an IFS Assessment is a motivation in striving for excellence. Employees are proud to reach a high-level score or achieve a higher percentage compared to the previous years.

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