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STANDARDS & GUIDANCE BRIEF · INTERNATIONAL · ACCREDITATION STANDARD

ISO/IEC 17020:2026

Conformity assessment — Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection

DOCUMENT	QES-WP-159, Rev B	DATE	November 7, 2026
ISSUED BY	ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (ISO/CASCO), with IEC	PREPARED BY	Conner Davidson
EDITION	Revised in 2026, replacing the 2012 edition	STATUS CHECKED	October 24, 2026
INDUSTRIES	Laboratories & Calibration	ONLINE	qesisbest.com/standard-iso-iec-17020.html

NEW EDITION, 2026 Revised in 2026, with a reworked independence model. Accreditation bodies will set the transition timetable. **Next:** Expect your accreditation body to publish a transition timetable; plan a gap assessment against the new independence requirements.

What It Covers

Requirements for the competence, impartiality and consistency of bodies that inspect products, processes, services or installations.

Who It Applies To

Inspection bodies seeking accreditation, where the activity is inspection rather than test or calibration.

Key Requirements

- Independence and impartiality, with the type of inspection body defined.
- Competent inspectors, authorized and monitored.
- Inspection methods, records, and reports controlled.
- Complaints, appeals, and management system requirements.

What an Auditor Asks to See

- How the body's independence is demonstrated for its type.

Where Systems Fall Short

- Inspection carried out under a laboratory accreditation that does not cover it.

How QES helps. Gap assessments against the 2026 edition and its independence model. See the gap assessment: qesisbest.com/services.html#gap-assessment · +1 (401) 246-3204 · mweeden@qesisbest.com

Sources, checked October 24, 2026. NATA — Preparing for ISO/IEC 17020:2026 — nata.com.au/news/preparing-for-iso-iec-170202026-what-inspection-bodies-need-to-know.

A summary for orientation, prepared by Quality Excellence Services. It does not reproduce or replace the standard or regulation: read the official text, which governs. Not legal advice.