

NEN conformity assessment scheme

NCS SCL 2.0

Requirements for the assessment against the Safety Culture Ladder

November 2026

De waarde van normen

NEN conformity assessment scheme

NCS SCL 2.0

(en)

Requirements for the assessment against the Safety Culture Ladder

Replaces certification scheme SCL 2.0:2023

November 2026

Committee of Experts Safety Culture Ladder

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Foreword

This NEN conformity assessment scheme replaces SCL certification scheme 2.0:2023.

This conformity assessment scheme sets out the requirements for assessment against standard SCL 2.0. These requirements supplement or replace the requirements from NEN-EN-ISO/IEC 17021-1.

This scheme is reviewed on an ongoing basis and adjusted where necessary. These adjustments are recorded in decisions made by the Committee of Experts (CoE). These decisions are published on the Safety Culture Ladder (SCL) website (www.safetycultureladder.com) and become part of this scheme once published. These decisions are included periodically in the next edition of this scheme.

This revised edition includes all CoE decisions from 2024 up to and including September 2026 that are applicable to the scheme.

The main updates are as follows:

— The SCL Light product for small organisations has been added.

— The Approved Self Assessment product has been withdrawn.

— The Self Assessment product has been added.

Other documents

In addition to the standard document and this scheme, the following two informative documents are available.

— Explanatory document: this contains background information about and examples of the SCL. It is continuously updated and published on the SCL website.

— Interpretation document: this provides auditors with the guidance and best practices necessary to achieve a consistent assessment - based on harmonisation between certification bodies (CBs) - and is distributed exclusively among the CBs. It is intended as an aid; it is not meant to prescribe how the assessment is to be carried out.

Relationship with safety management systems

NEN-EN-ISO 45001 and the VCA, VCO and VCU schemes focus on the systematic management and improvement of health and safety at work. NEN-EN-ISO 45001 sets out the requirements that a management system for health and safety at work is to meet. VCA, VCO and VCU are checklists that are used to assess safety policy and performance.

Both systems and the human factor are important for health and safety at work in practice. Therefore, the SCL focuses on attitudes and behaviour in respect of health and safety. The aims are to improve health and safety awareness and encourage healthy and safe behaviour and, by doing this, contribute to the continuous improvement of safety culture.

Thus, the SCL complements how an organisation has set up its processes, whether or not through standards like NEN-EN-ISO 45001, the VCA, VCO and VCU schemes and current laws and regulations, such as Dutch working conditions legislation and sector guidelines.

Transition period SCL 2.0

Since 1 January 2025, certification and recertification have only been possible against SCL 2.0. Follow-up audits can still be conducted against the previous edition of the SCL. If a switch to SCL 2.0 is made during the term of the certificate or statement, an initial audit must be conducted against SCL 2.0.

From 1 January 2028, only certificates issued based on SCL 2.0 (or later editions) will be valid.

Requirements for the assessment against the Safety Culture Ladder

1 Subject matter and scope

This NEN conformity assessment scheme ('the scheme') contains the requirements that CBs must adhere to when assessing against the Safety Culture Ladder (SCL). The requirements against which assessment occurs are set out in the following standard: Safety Culture Ladder 2.0 (SCL 2.0).

The SCL is an instrument that has been designed to improve awareness of health and safety work within our own organisations. The ladder is also suitable as a quality aspect when procuring work, services and supplies. The SCL has been developed for every type of organisation - in the profit, non-profit, service and industrial sectors, in large as well as smaller businesses.

NOTE The intention is not to develop different business-specific editions of the SCL. If sectors or businesses do not immediately identify with a description in the SCL, the intention of that description can be examined. This can then be interpreted in line with the specific business sector or type of business in question.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referenced in the text in such a way that some or all of their contents constitute requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. With undated references, the most recent edition of the document (including any amendments, correction sheets and consolidations), to which a particular reference is made, applies.

NEN-EN-ISO/IEC 17021-1, Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies that audit and certify management systems – Part 1: *Requirements*

Safety Culture Ladder 2.0 (SCL 2.0)

3 Terms and definitions

The following terms and definitions apply to the application of this document.

3.1
auditor
a person that conducts an audit

Note 1 to entry: This person may be employed by or work for a CB on a self-employed basis.

3.2
business
organisation to be certified

Note 1 to entry: The highest legal business entity to be certified is the establishment. The associated or underlying legal entities are branch offices.

Note 2 to entry: Some businesses have a high-level legal structure but are organised operationally with business units (BUs) and/or functional units (FUs), for example. In these cases, a choice can be made to certify an operational unit (BU/FU), including its steering and support services.

3.3
stakeholder
stakeholder
a person or organisation that may influence a decision or activity or be influenced by a decision or activity, or considers themselves as having been influenced by a decision or activity

Note 1 to entry: For example, employee, parent company, customer, client, contractor, co-contractor, environment, politics and/or governance.

3.4
sector
a group of organisations that engage in similar economic activities or supply similar products or services

Note 1 to entry: Sector is a term for all businesses working in a particular category of services and products, such as the hospitality sector. So, a sector includes all the businesses pursuing the same activities.

3.5
certification body
CB
an institution authorised by NEN to assess as an independent third party and issue a SCL certificate or statement on this basis

Note 1 to entry: To ensure that an assessment is carried out properly, a CB and its auditors must meet a number of conditions (see 6.1, 6.2 and Appendix B).

3.6
secondment agency
an organisation that has employees and temporarily makes them available to a client

3.7
board of directors
a person or group of people who manage an organisation at the highest level

Note 1 to entry: For example, the chief executive officer, the chief financial officer and the chief commercial officer.

Note 2 to entry: If referring to part of the organisation, this relates to the most senior manager of that part.

3.8
internal auditor
a person who conducts an internal audit on behalf of the organisation

3.9
chain
sequence of parties in the same process including client-contractor or contractor-supplier-subcontractor

3.10
management
a group of people who hold leadership positions in an organisation, from the board of directors down to and including first-line supervisors

Note 1 to entry: The board of directors forms part of management and constitutes the highest level of management within it.

Note 2 to entry: In smaller organisations, this management layer might not exist (then read: board of directors).

3.11
employee
person holding a position in the company

Note 1 to entry: This applies to persons on the company's payroll as well as to self-employed persons, temporary workers and other persons hired in or borrowed by the company.

Note 2 to entry: For example, the fitter, the driver, the consultant, the health and safety coordinator.

3.12
co-contractor
party performing work on the client's instructions in the vicinity of the company's work and affecting the company's work

3.13
client
instructing party
client for whom work is being carried out

3.14
contractor
party performing work on the company's instructions

Note 1 to entry: For example, the subcontractor, supplier or service provider.

3.15
project
a number of interrelated activities (commissioned by the client) that are carried out by an entity (for example, company, combination or joint venture) on site or in its own working environment

Note 1 to entry: Examples of these activities for a project include performing a specific order, creating a design, supervising a work order, etc.

3.16
risk analysis
written inventory and evaluation of health and safety risks for employees and other persons in the vicinity of the work

Note 1 to entry: The risk analysis contains a description of the hazards of the work, the risks, their severity and risk mitigation measures (including those relating to attitude and behaviour).

3.17
Self Assessment Questionnaire
SAQ
a questionnaire that provides an insight into an organisation's safety culture

3.18
temporary employment agency
an organisation that makes available workers to a user employer on the basis of an agreement with it

3.19
health and safety
H&S
integral safety of a business' own employees as well as users, third parties and the environment

Note 1 to entry: H&S is broader than just occupational safety. It also includes psychosocial work stress, psychosocial safety, well-being and integrity.

Note 2 to entry: Depending on what is happening in the organisation, the following should also be considered. For example, cybersecurity, structural safety, machine safety and fire safety.

Note 3 to entry: Health is also part of the SCL. For example, exposure to hazardous substances that could affect someone's health.

3.20
safety culture
set of shared values, standards, competencies and associated health and safety behaviour

3.21
H&S behaviour
conscious and unconscious behaviour and actions aimed at the healthy and safe performance of work, paying attention to people, materials, resources, methods, the workplace and the environment

3.22
H&S behaviour audit
systematic assessment of the level of safety awareness and conscious safe behaviour in the company

3.23
H&S in the working environment
health and safety for the set of conditions under which the work is performed

Note 1 to entry: This can also include the circumstances of stakeholders.

Note 2 to entry: Conditions can include physical, social, psychological and environmental factors.

Note 3 to entry: The performance of work must be interpreted broadly. Depending on the situation, it can also be about design and use.

4 Abbreviations

CB	certification body
B	behaviour
Global ACI	Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
MD	mandatory document
P	preconditions
RvA	Dutch Accreditation Council
VCA	Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Checklist for Contractors
VCO	Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Checklist for Clients
VCU	Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Checklist for Temporary Employment Agencies
H&S	health and safety

5 Safety Culture Ladder

5.1 Five steps

The Safety Culture Ladder (SCL) is based on the culture ladder as features in the model of Parker et al. (see Figure 1). This is an evolutionary ladder consisting of five levels. The model assumes that the safety culture in a company is at a certain stage of maturity. The model recognises five culture levels or steps. Each step represents the stage of development the company is at in relation to health and safety.

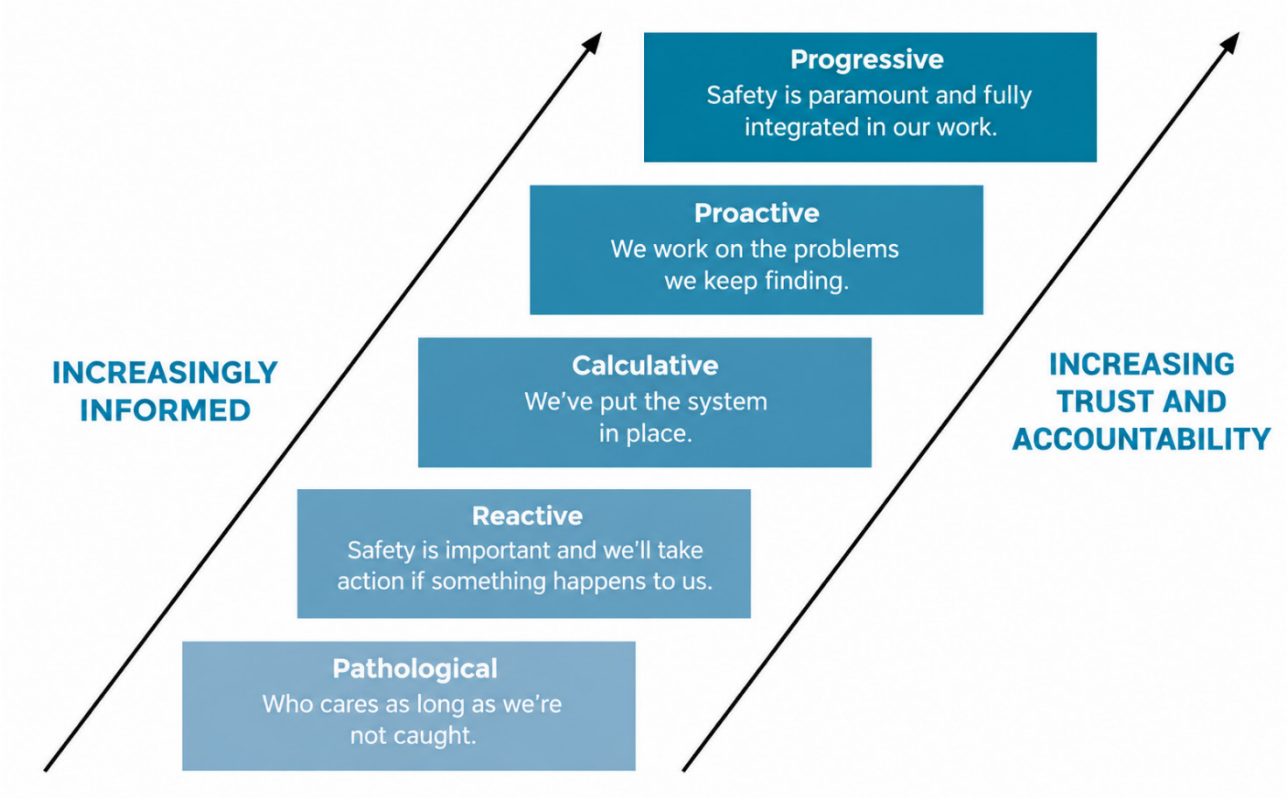


Figure 1 — The five steps of the SCL

5.2 Descriptions of each step

This section outlines the five steps of the SCL.

Step 1: Pathological

The organisation does not see the point of working safely or more safely. Attention to safety costs time and money. For them, it's all about sales and profits. 'Accidents can always happen; you have very little control over that.' The organisation believes that it really knows what it is doing; after all, things have been going well for years.

Step 2: Reactive

The company has a habit of only changing after something has gone wrong. Responses are based on ingrained patterns. People in the company feel like victims rather than responsible themselves. 'But that's hardly my fault, is it?' 'Incidents are caused by people and they don't last long in our company.' Any change in behaviour is often ad-hoc and temporary.

Step 3: Calculating

Safety is seen as an added value. This becomes evident in what is said, written (policy/system) and done (commitment). Attention to H&S comes mainly from the board of directors, management and direct managers and is directed at the shop floor. Operators still feel just limited responsibility for H&S. The H&S manager is often seen as the engine of daily H&S practice.

Step 4: Proactive

Everyone in the organisation is aware of the importance of safety. For themselves, for colleagues and for employees of contractors and third parties. Everyone knows and acknowledges their share in and responsibility for H&S. Important safety information is shared with each other and reported top-down and bottom-up, both inside and outside the organisation. Mistakes are allowed; they're honestly admitted. Efforts are made to prevent recurrence. Initiative to work more safely is demonstrated.

Step 5: Progressive

Safety has been fully integrated into the business processes. It is a regular part of reflection and evaluation within the organisation itself and with industry peers. Safety is ingrained in how all employees and contractors' employees think and act. They are not used to anything else.

5.3 Themes and sub-themes

SCL 2.0, which forms the basis for the assessment, consists of five themes:

— policy and leadership;

— knowledge and skills;

— primary and secondary processes;

— cooperating with external parties;

— learning and improving.

Each theme consists of a number of sub-themes and is divided into 'preconditions' and 'behaviour'.

6 Assessment requirements

6.1 Competent certification bodies

Only CBs that have entered into a licensing agreement with NEN are entitled to perform certifications against the SCL. The following requirements at least must have been met to be able to enter into a licensing agreement with NEN:

— The CB has been accredited by the RvA or by another member of Global ACI (formerly IAF) in accordance with NEN-EN-ISO/IEC 17021-1.

— The CB has been accredited by the RvA, or by another member of Global ACI (previously IAF) for VCA and management systems such as NEN-EN-ISO 9001, NEN-EN-ISO 14001 or NEN-EN-ISO 45001.

— The CB undertakes to perform the assessment in accordance with the requirements of this scheme.

— Each CB states in advance which new or existing auditors will be used for the assessment, including competency file of the auditor in question, demonstrating that the auditor is competent for assessment.

— The CB spends sufficient time educating and training auditors in the SCL principles and associated certification standard and scheme. The education or training must have been documented as part of the competency file.

— Employees who have been involved in management system consultancy at the company to be certified or who have been employed by the company to be certified in the two-year period before the certification activities may not be used for SCL audits. However, auditors may have conducted ISO or VCA audits at that company.

The same requirements apply to the performance of certification activities outside the Netherlands. The CB must also comply with the additional requirements specific to SCL audits outside the Netherlands (see 6.6.1). A separate licensing agreement must be entered into with NEN for certification activities in the DACH region (Germany, Austria and Switzerland).

NEN may always proceed to suspend or cancel the licensing agreement if these conditions are not met. The CBs that NEN authorises to carry out SCL certification are registered at www.safetycultureladder.com.

6.2 Competent auditor, lead auditor and assessor

The CB only uses employees who have the appropriate qualifications. These employees follow below:

a) Auditor or lead auditor: this person is responsible for:

   — conducting the certification audit,

   — assessing the results,

   — reporting on the audit,

   — recommending certification

   — conducting the annual follow-up audit, and

   — the reassessment.

   The lead auditor does the audit preparation and manages the audit process. The lead auditor does the introduction and completion of the certification assessment. The auditor and lead auditor reach an opinion together.

b) Assessor: this person is responsible for making decisions about issuing and reissuing a certificate or statement.

A NEN-authorised CB employs the qualified auditor, lead auditor and assessor. The auditor, lead auditor and assessor may have been hired in. However, it must be possible to demonstrate that they are qualified to conduct audits against the SCL.

Only auditors and lead auditors who have been authorised by NEN can do SCL assessments. NEN will authorise them if they meet the qualification requirements listed in Appendix B and their witnessing assessment has been successfully completed. Each new auditor starts auditing up to and including step 3.

To be authorised to audit at step 4/5 as well, the auditor or lead auditor must also:

— have sufficient experience of auditing against the SCL;

— have followed an extra training course (the masterclass for step 4/5).

Before the auditor or lead auditor is assigned at this level, an additional authorisation is issued.

Appendix B details the qualification requirements for auditors, lead auditors and assessors against which NEN tests them for the purpose of the authorisation.

6.3 SCL audit requirements

6.3.1 Conducting audits

For each audit, the CB prepares an audit plan. At the very least, this plan sets out:

— the design of the assessment (including scope of the audit);

— the organisational boundaries (department, company or legal structure, relevant establishments);

— the number of workers;

— the step that will be assessed;

— the SCL product name;

— the initial audit or follow-up audit;

— the number of man-days;

— the composition of the audit team and the division of its duties;

— the programme assessment;

— the report.

An SCL assessment is conducted by a team of two auditors, one of whom is a qualified lead auditor. Auditors do not necessarily have to work at the same CB. An alternating audit team may be used, provided there is a good handover between the auditors.

There are four SCL assessment methods; see Table 1.

Table 1 — SCL assessment methods

Method	Objective
Self-assessment by the company	Self-assessment against quality requirements and criteria, safety awareness and conscious safe behaviour
CB self-assessment analysis	Analysis of actual data from the party being assessed on the application of conscious safe behaviour
Interviews by the CB	Verification of factual data, self-qualification and actual implementation of quality criteria
Observations and working visit by the CB	Observation of the application and enforcement of conscious safe behaviour and conduct in the work environment and its meaning for the organisation

Interviews are chosen to cover all layers of the organisation (from high to low) with a focus on operational employees. In addition, the interviews are chosen such that their results, together with what is observed in the working environment, are verifiable in other interviews.

Besides interviews of individuals, projects in progress are visited. All work awarded by clients to the businesses to be assessed may be assessed. However, they must be representative in number and type (large, small, complex, simple, standard, unique, etc.). At least one work or project visit takes place. An assessment based solely on a desk review is insufficient and, therefore, unacceptable.

NOTE If an audit is conducted at a business service provider where no project can be visited, or the visit would not have any added value, this rule can be deviated from with justification. However, it is preferable to always visit a project.

The scope of the audit includes all employees performing work under the company's responsibility.

If work reflecting the scope of the certificate or statement is performed by subcontractors, these subcontractors and their projects must be part of the audit. Subcontractors can also be addressed and observed during the visit.

The assessment is performed based on interviews, observations, monitoring and verifications.

The assessment ends with an audit report. This report presents the conclusions of the assessment (step). A copy of this audit report remains with the CB and must be able to be produced at NEN's request.

Each certification audit must be completed within thirteen weeks (one quarter) of commencement. The preliminary assessment part of the audit is regarded as the starting point (see 6.3.3.2). The certification audit is completed once the certificate or statement has been issued. It is not possible to change the CB during this period. If a certification audit cannot be completed within thirteen weeks, the audit will be invalid and no valid certificate or statement can be issued. If a company still wants to be validly certified, another full certification audit will have to be conducted. The company is free to choose the CB at that time.

If substantial changes occur during the certification audit (reorganisations, etc.) and the original audit scope is no longer representative as a result, the certification audit must be discontinued. For the company to receive a valid certificate or statement based on the new or changed scope, another full certification audit will have to be scheduled. The company is also free to choose the CB at that time.

If an audit that has been started cannot be completed (in full) because of circumstances and actions of the assessed company, it must then be completed within three months of the start of the audit.

6.3.2 Group interviews

Group interviews are allowed in an SCL audit under the following conditions:

— The quality of group interviews must be at least equal to the quality of individual interviews.

— Group interviews must supplement individual interviews.

— Group interviews must not affect the total audit time.

— The group to be interviewed must not exceed ten people (a maximum of three people may participate remotely in hybrid meetings).

— In a group interview, auditors must ensure that all those present at the interview are actually involved and that dissenting opinions can be expressed and heard.

— The audit team assesses whether it is advisable for a manager to be present at an interview or group interview.

— Group interviews can be used for SCL audits that are conducted by an audit team. Group interviews may not be used if audits are to be conducted by a single auditor.

6.3.3 Preliminary and operational assessment

6.3.3.1 Introduction

An SCL audit involves a preliminary assessment (see 6.3.3.2) and operational assessment (see 6.3.3.3).

6.3.3.2 Preliminary assessment

The purpose of the preliminary assessment part of an SCL audit is:

— to check a self-assessment;

— to determine the scope (see Appendix A);

— to check and confirm business details, such as the business name, chamber of commerce extract, number of operating companies, branch offices and number of employees;

— to prepare an audit plan.

The preliminary assessment is also used to get to know the organisation and its activities and to check with the organisation whether expectations regarding the step to be achieved are realistic. Additional documents may be requested to enable thorough audit planning (e.g. safety/culture programme, internal audit result, management review).

The preliminary assessment forms part of an initial certification audit.

The preliminary assessment may be carried out by a single auditor. This is at the discretion of the lead auditor. If the assessment is carried out by a single auditor, this auditor will always be the lead auditor. The lead auditor is responsible for sharing the information obtained with the other auditor or auditors in the audit team.

6.3.3.3 Operational assessment

The operational assessment part of the SCL audit involves the certification assessment of health and safety perception in practice and the assessment of the five themes.

To ensure objectivity, this part of the certification assessment is conducted by a team of two auditors: an auditor and the lead auditor.

6.4 Audit term in man-days

6.4.1 Minimum number of man-days

Table 2 specifies the minimum number of man-days applicable for certification. The highest legal business entity to be certified is regarded as the establishment. The associated or underlying legal entities are regarded as branch offices.

Table 2 sets out the certification assessment for step 2 of the SCL; it consists of the preliminary and operational assessment parts of the SCL audit.

Table 2 — Number of minimum man-days

Number of workers	Audit term in man-days	Number of workers	Audit term in man-days
5 - 65	See Table 3	1,176 - 1,550	13
		1,551 - 2,025	14
		2,026 - 2,675	15
66 - 125	6	2,676 - 3,450	16
126 - 175	7	3,451 - 4,350	17
176 - 275	8	4,351 - 5,450	18
276 - 425	9	5,451 - 6,800	19
426 - 625	10	6,801 - 8,500	20
626 - 875	11	8,501 - 10,700	21
876 - 1,175	12	> 10,700	The above progression follows in accordance with the last step (+ 500 people) 10,700 people (+ 2,200) 13,400 people (+ 2,700) 16,600 people (+ 3,200)

The duration of the certification assessment, expressed in man-days, increases as follows:

— step 3, factor 1.5;

— step 4, factor 2.0;

— step 5, factor 2.5.

This calculation is based on a 100% audit. The number of man-days for a 40% audit is 40% of a full certification audit, subject to a minimum of two man-days for step 2 and three man-days from step 3 upwards. The audit term in man-days is rounded up to half-days.

For companies with 5 up to and including 65 people working for them (both own staff and hired staff), Table 3 applies. The table provides a breakdown for the audit term in man-days for each step and the audit scope.

Table 3 — Man-days for small organisations

Number of workers	Audit	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
		Audit term in man-days	Audit term in man-days	Audit term in man-days	Audit term in man-days
5 - 10	40%	2	3	3	N/A
	100%	2	3	4	5
11 - 25	40%	2	3	3	N/A
	100%	3	4	5	6
26 - 35	40%	2	3	3	N/A
	100%	3	5	6	8
36 - 50	40%	2	3	3	N/A
	100%	4	6	8	10
51 - 65	40%	2	3	4	N/A
	100%	5	8	10	13

6.4.2 Criteria for the determination of man-days

An SCL audit is conducted separately from certification for NEN-EN-ISO 45001, VCA, etc.

Reduction opportunities from MD documents (including but not limited to MD1, MD5, MD11 and MD22) do not apply to time allocation and audits for the SCL.

In the case of two different BVs (private limited companies) with one board of directors or management, combining interviews with the board of directors or management is allowed under the following conditions:

— The board of directors (or management) consists of the same people.

— The same people manage the BVs, even in respect of H&S.

— One policy is demonstrably in place for both BVs.

If these conditions are met, the individuals who form part of the joint board of directors or joint management are only counted in respect of one of the two audits when determining the audit term. However, the minimum number of man-days continues to apply to both audits.

If an organisation wishes to be certified on two different steps for different business units, two separate audits must be conducted. In cases where specific groups, such as management, need to be audited twice, the selection of persons to be audited can be such that the same person is not interviewed twice. Furthermore, overlap is the consequence of the organisation's choice to have two audit paths. No discount will be given on the number of man-days in this situation.

The SCL products (see Chapter 7) apply to companies with a minimum of five people working in them. The term "people working" is defined as the total of own staff plus hired-in staff.

The total number of people working refers to the number of such people at the establishment and relevant branch offices pertaining to the scope of the certification assessment. The number of people working is the sum of the company's own staff plus hired-in staff; the auditors decide which people will be interviewed. In determining the number of people working in terms of hiring in/borrowing, the number of employees assigned on average on a one-year basis is considered. The minimum number of people to be interviewed is $0.6\sqrt{M}$ for the board of directors, management, advisory staff, etc., and $1.2\sqrt{M}$ for operational employees. M equals the total number of people working. A 40% audit involves talking to at least 40% of the required number of people interviewed.

If the company has N projects simultaneously in progress on average per year, at least $0.6\sqrt{N}$ projects will be visited and tested during the audit. The auditors decide which projects to visit. The total number of projects refers to the number of projects from all establishments and branch offices. The projects to be visited should be divided proportionally between the establishment and branch offices to be visited. In a 40% audit, at least 40% of the required number of projects to be visited are visited. At least one project must always be visited.

6.4.3 Branch offices

Besides the visit to the establishment, branch offices are visited on the basis of the random sample set out in Table 4. When choosing establishments, the following must be considered:

— a good reflection of the commissioned work;

— the safety risks and related attitudes and behaviour;

— as representative as possible picture of the establishment as a whole.

Table 4 — Visit to establishments

(X)	($\sqrt{x}$)
2 < 6	2
6 < 12	3
12 < 20	4
20 < 30	5
30 < 42	6
42 ... etc.	
X = total number of establishments $\sqrt{x}$ = minimum number of establishments	

If a branch office falls within the scope of the certificate or statement, it may be added to the certificate or statement. However, the follow-up audit must then cover the entire audit process of the branch office (separate to the organisation as a whole). If the achieved step is equal to that of the overall organisation, the branch office can then be included in the audit process of the overall organisation.

6.4.4 Temporary employment and secondment agencies

The following requirements apply when determining the number of man-days for an audit of a temporary employment or secondment agency:

— Temporary employment agency: Both the office staff and the number of employees working for the temporary employment agency at the time of the audit must be included when determining the number of man-days for the audit.

NOTE 1 The number of employees working for the temporary employment agency at the time of the audit may be different to the number of employees registered with the agency.

— Secondment agency: Both the office staff and the number of employees working for the secondment agency at the time of the audit must be included when determining the number of man-days for the audit.

NOTE 2 The number of employees working for the secondment agency at the time of the audit may be different to the number of employees that have been seconded.

Temporary employment and secondment agencies are also subject to the following conditions:

— The number of employees to be interviewed at a temporary employment agency must be representative of the 'normal' situation at the agency (in the course of a calendar year). The CB must check this before the audit.

— The interviews with temporary workers or seconded employees must take place at the office of the temporary employment agency or secondment agency.

NOTE 3 So, not at the location at which they are working at the time of the audit.

— The temporary employment agency or secondment agency is responsible for the staff it places or seconds. It must 'onboard' the employees who register with them, or whom they employ, at the general safety level of the client.

The following must also be verified in an audit, via a number of interviews:

— whether and how the temporary employment agency or secondment agency has carried out 'onboarding';

— whether employees have understood the essence of 'onboarding' and can explain what this means for their work in practice;

NOTE 4 The same applies to temporary workers or seconded employees who are assigned or seconded to a management position.

— how what is learnt during the 'onboarding' process is maintained.

6.5 Unannounced working visits

Another intention of an unannounced working visit is to establish whether an organisation is meeting the requirements of the SCL in its daily practice 'at any point in time'. An unannounced working visit takes place from step 4 upwards during the certification audit. The certification body offers to schedule an unannounced working visit when offering a step 3 audit. In the case of a step-3 audit, the client decides whether this should be included.

The following conditions apply:

— For steps 4 and 5, at least one unannounced working visit takes place during each audit. For small organisations (that employ ten or less people), the unannounced working visit takes no more than half a day.

— The client provides a list of ongoing projects during the scheduled audit days to the auditor.

— The auditor agrees when this list must be delivered with the client.

— The auditor chooses a project to be visited from this list and informs the client on the same day which project will be visited.

— The unannounced working visit is scheduled in the audit plan (without the name of the project).

— The results of the unannounced working visit form part of the relevant audit report (not a specific or separate report).

— The unannounced working visit takes place within the total number of man-days for the overall assessment.

An unannounced working visit consists mainly of observations but sometimes also discussions.

Observations are designed to assess whether work is being carried out in a safety-conscious manner. It is possible to engage with employees. The aim here is not to have detailed discussions, but to have a short conversation to gain a better sense of - or background to - the behaviour displayed. These conversations are preferably held during breaks or before or after work.

How these unannounced working visits take place depends on the type of organisation. In general, the following principles apply:

— implementing organisation: observe work on the construction or other site;

— service organisation: observe operations and hold brief discussions at construction sites (if applicable), observe employees at the office (walking around and talking to employees) and attend sessions.

The aim here is to observe employees in their natural working habitats as much as possible.

If it is impossible to carry out an unannounced working visit (e.g. for an offshore audit), dispensation can be requested from NEN. The application must be submitted with proper substantiation before the audit.

6.6 Language requirement for SCL audits

6.6.1 SCL audits outside the Netherlands

The audit is conducted in the country's official language or the company's working language. CBs wishing to conduct SCL audits outside the Netherlands must train local SCL auditors in the country concerned. The audit team must have at least one native speaker. The second auditor must have a demonstrable command of the language at B2 level. A CB must ensure that the auditors it uses for audits conducted in other languages have a sufficient command of the language (language level B2).

The following applies when starting conducts audits in a 'new' country:

— For the first three clients or the first twenty audit days in two years for each certification body in a country in which no significant SCL activities are yet being developed, an SCL audit can be conducted with SCL auditors who do not speak the country's official language or the company's working language accompanied by an interpreter. The audit team must then always include a S4/S5 auditor.

— If there is one SCL-trained auditor on the team who is a native speaker, an interpreter MUST still be used for the auditor who does not speak the language in question. If an auditor is not a native speaker, but does have a sufficient command of the language, this must be at B2 level (also see Appendix B).

— A CB pursuing certification activities in a country has a best-efforts obligation to actively develop the market in that country, together with the scheme manager, other CBs and other stakeholders.

— It is determined, per country - in consultation with the relevant stakeholders - whether and how SCL activities will be developed further in a 'new' country. CBs already carrying out activities in the new country are obliged to participate in this committee.

A separate licensing agreement must be entered into with NEN for certification activities in the DACH region (Germany, Austria and Switzerland); see 6.1.

6.6.2 Offshore audits and audits of internationally oriented organisations

For audits where the company's working language is English (offshore audits and audits at internationally oriented organisations), it is sufficient for both auditors to have a command of the English language. A CB must ensure that the auditors it uses for audits conducted in other languages have a sufficient command of the language (language level B2).

English as a working language means that all employees who fall within the scope of the audit communicate in English. If employees who do not communicate in English are interviewed, an interpreter must be used.

6.6.3 Audits at a company where most employees are not proficient in the working language(s) used at the site

An SCL audit at a company where most employees are not proficient in the working language(s) used at the site can be conducted by SCL auditors using an interpreter. If employees are of multiple nationalities (and speak different languages), the largest group of non-native speakers is identified and interviewees are chosen from this group. The interviews take place with an official interpreter. During follow-up audits in years 2 and 3, another group of non-native speakers can be interviewed (if this group is representative). Under no circumstances must discussions be held with the manager alone. The manager may not act as an interpreter.

6.7 Additional requirements for specific certification processes

6.7.1 Certifying a project

The following additional requirements apply in the event of a project. For example, the construction of rail infrastructure from A to B for a three-year period.

Scope
The scope is the determining factor for the certificate or statement and must be consistent with the activities being assessed. A certificate or statement is issued for each scope. This means that a number of certificates can be issued or valid for one project. These certificates can have different steps. The scope specifies which phase or phases apply. A phase can be 'engineering' or 'execution', for example. If the scope contains multiple phases, these phases must be active at the time of the audit. A phase can consist of a number of sub-activities. The sub-activities do not all have to be active during the audit. Project certification also applies to a project in one company.

Time spent on an audit
The time spent on the audit is related to the scope.

Validity of certificate or statement
The certificate or statement is valid until the end of the project or until the end of the project phase. If the project or project phase lasts longer than one year, the monitoring activities are carried out in accordance with the requirements in Chapter 7. If the auditor has doubts during the follow-up audit (e.g. whether the previously determined level still applies to the SCL), the standard requirements set out in Chapter 7 apply.

6.7.2 Certifying a department

Certifying part of a company relates to a certain distinctive activity that a company performs. In larger companies, such a component is called a business unit or equivalent or even placed in a separate legal entity. The smallest possible 'certification unit' is a department.

6.7.3 Certifying an offshore company

If activities that take place offshore fall within the scope of the assessment, the additional requirements set out in Appendix A apply.

6.8 Assessment method

6.8.1 General

SCL 2.0 consists of five themes. These themes are divided into sub-themes that contain descriptions of what you encounter at an organisation. Each description aligns with a particular step of the SCL.

The descriptions have been divided into 'preconditions' and 'behaviour'. The descriptions under 'preconditions' say something about what an organisation must have set up and organised in relation to H&S. These are, as it were, the 'preconditions' that an organisation sets so that every employee knows what to do.

NOTE 1 For example, the organisation of H&S, the availability of resources, clear tasks and the responsibilities and authorities relating to H&S.

These conditions can be part of a management system, although such a system is not mandatory. Nor does an organisation necessarily have to have anything on paper about this. Obviously, this could be done if useful for the organisation.

Behaviour describes how the organisation and its employees deal with certain issues in the organisation on a certain step and also what is visible and audible.

Each theme is assessed. This involves a separate assessment of the 'preconditions' (P) and 'behaviour' (B). Since the assessment of culture relates mainly to the effectiveness of the efforts and tools being implemented, the behaviour assessment has a heavier weighting.

NOTE 2 It may be that a description in the standard does not apply to a specific company. However, auditing is conducted 'in the spirit of the standard', which means looking at the intent of the description.

NOTE 3 Various stakeholders of the organisation being certified can be identified as contractors. These are not just the contracting firms, but all parties that perform - and therefore contract for - work in the broadest sense. These parties have a direct or indirect impact on safety. Besides contracting firms, examples, include organisations that provide catering in the office, the painting company that paints its own office building or a wholesale or logistics company that drives onto the property to supply products.

6.8.2 Assessment colour

The following assessment colours are possible:

— A green assessment shows that a theme has been assessed as satisfactory. The auditors feel that the characteristics of the theme are largely being met. This does not require full compliance with the characteristics of a theme on a particular step. After all, behaviour cannot be determined with 100% certainty. There will always be people who exhibit different behaviour. A green assessment relates to the most common behaviour patterns, habits, unwritten rules, and so on - the overall picture.

— Orange assessment: this shows that the organisation partially meets the descriptions associated with a theme and that the organisation is making efforts to achieve a satisfactory (green) assessment.

— Red assessment: this shows that a theme has been assessed as insufficient.

6.8.3 Assessing themes

The following applies when assessing themes:

— All themes are assessed against P and B.

— When assessing P, at least four out of five themes must have been assessed as 'satisfactory' (green). A theme that does not have a green score must score orange for a positive assessment. A red assessment means that the step has not been attained.

— When assessing B, all themes must have been assessed as 'satisfactory' (green).

This assessment takes place during both an initial audit (the first certification audit, in year 1) and a recertification audit (in years 4, 7, etc.).

6.8.4 Assessing sub-themes

The assessment of a theme is determined on the basis of the assessment of all its sub-themes. The overall picture of the theme must be sufficiently in line with the level of the step against which the assessment is being carried out. The auditor's opinion is decisive.

An organisation must have the opportunity to demonstrate that it is working to improve sub-themes, without this automatically resulting in an insufficient assessment for the theme in question.

The following applies when assessing sub-themes:

a) Preconditions (P):

   — One sub-theme within a theme may be assessed as 'orange' without the theme in question being assessed as 'orange'.

   — If two or more sub-themes within a theme are assessed as 'orange', the theme in question will be assessed as 'orange'.

b) Behaviour (B)

   — One sub-theme within a theme may be assessed as 'orange' without the theme in question being assessed as 'orange'.

   — If two or more sub-themes within a theme are assessed as 'orange', the theme in question will be assessed as 'orange';

   — The assessment of one sub-theme as red automatically results in a red assessment for the theme in question.

6.8.5 Awarding steps

Each theme contains descriptions appropriate to the level of a particular step. Behaviour at a higher step generally looks different from what is described at lower steps.

EXAMPLE 1 H&S is not a topic of discussion for step 1 and no attention is paid to it. At step 5, everyone is in constant dialogue with each other to improve H&S.

The higher the step, the more parties are involved: mainly just the board of directors first, then management and the immediate manager and, finally, employees. The higher the step, the more

employees themselves take the initiative to work healthily and safely and the more responsibility they take for this purpose.

An organisation is assessed against the descriptions in the standard of the step being audited. The assessment is based on the image matching the highest step. The underlying steps are not 'coloured green' in the process.

If the description of a particular step is not appropriate for the organisation, the description of higher or lower steps is considered.

EXAMPLE 2 If an organisation wants to be certified for step 3, the descriptions of step 3 are considered. If a requirement is not met, the descriptions of the underlying steps are considered. Based on the results of this assessment, a certificate or statement appropriate to the lower step is issued to the organisation.

An organisation might not comply with the descriptions of step 3, but it could score higher for a particular theme. The auditor then checks which level the organisation is at for this theme: step 4 or step 5. This is recorded in the report so that the organisation gets a clear picture of how it is performing in this area and whether any potential exists to progress to a higher step.

A company has at least step 1 of the SCL if it has a completed assessment and an ambition to continue progressing on the SCL.

If one or more themes are at a higher level than the level at which the audit was requested, a higher step will not be awarded.

6.8.6 Examples of an assessment

Examples of an assessment are shown in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5 — Example 1: the organisation is assessed at step 4 but awarded step 3

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3		Step 4		Step 5	
Themes	**P**	**B**	**P**	**B**	**P**	**B**	**P**	**B**	**P**	**B**
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
Final assessment	This organisation will not receive a S4 certificate because some B themes have not been assessed as satisfactory. The organisation will receive a S3 certificate.									

Table 6 - Example 2: the organisation is assessed at step 4 and awarded step 4

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3		Step 4		Step 5	
Themes	**P**	**B**	**P**	**B**	**P**	**B**	**P**	**B**	**P**	**B**
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
Final assessment	This organisation will receive an S4 certificate. Although one theme does not score as satisfactory yet, the organisation shows that it is already partially compliant and is making efforts to achieve a satisfactory assessment. On B, all themes score as satisfactory, with the assessment of one theme at S5 level. The auditor will mention this in the report.									

6.8.7 Possibility to 'go open' into audits

If the organisation to be certified so wishes, it can choose to 'go open' into the audit. In this case, a particular step is not chosen in advance, but the auditor sees where the organisation ends up.

This option is offered up to and including step 3.

The starting point in this audit is step 3. For this audit, the man-days associated with step 3 apply.

The outcome of the assessment can be step 1, step 2 or step 3.

6.8.8 No audit possible at step 1

Step 1 contains many descriptions of matters that the organisation has not arranged yet. The descriptions show that certain desired health and safety behaviour is not in place yet. Therefore, an audit cannot be conducted on this step.

However, it is possible to issue a certificate or statement at step 1 as the outcome of an audit at a higher step.

6.9 Audit report

6.9.1 General arrangements

The audit report must, at the very least, set out the results of the SCL requirements and state at which step on the ladder the audit took place. The organisation's inability to demonstrate compliance with the requirements (yet) is mentioned separately in the audit report. Each audit report must include a conclusion on the step on the SCL, as determined by the auditor.

The audit result can only result in a positive report if the minimum requirements of the step have been met. If an audit report is positive, the conclusion states the step met and makes a recommendation to the CB to issue or change the step on the certificate or statement.

The CB's decision to award a certificate or statement is made on the basis of:

— a full audit report with a positive conclusion on the achieved step and a recommendation for certification;

— generally required appendices, such as a management statement on the activities and business entities; if possible, with a copy of the legal organisational structure from the annual audit report;

— specifically required appendices, such as the assessor's report of the audit report, the auditors' notes and findings, and a substantiation for the auditors' assessment.

The CB provides the report to the organisation's board of directors within fifteen business days of the last audit day. The audit report remains an integral part of the certificate to substantiate the step on the SCL. The audit report is confidential and may not be used to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the SCL to third parties.

NEN has no influence over the audit report and audit results. NEN also receives no reporting. NEN may see audit reports as a sample for CB or auditor assessment and if the audited party complains.

6.9.2 Accountability and substantiation of findings

The client must be able to rely on good accountability and substantiation as part of the SCL assessment system. This is done in three steps:

1) An oral summary of the interview is given after each interview.

2) At the end of each audit day, oral feedback is given at a slightly more abstract level about the entire audit to that point. This is not a preliminary conclusion. This prevents the assessment from happening only at the end of the audit and leaving a client with unpleasant surprises.

3) The presentation and preliminary final assessment of the audit are given at the end of the entire audit process, as agreed with the client.

Before the report is provided to the client, the CB first reviews it internally.

6.9.3 Reporting

Besides accountability and substantiation, a good report is essential. During the audit, the five themes are assessed on the basis of their respective sub-themes. The findings relating to the sub-themes are incorporated into a coherent summary for each theme. These summaries set out the strengths and areas for improvement in a coherent manner. This gives the organisation an insight into its position within a step and its growth potential per theme.

In their report, the auditors describe their observations and findings. Observations are described in a way that is factual and contain no value judgements. While the report does contain specific recommendations for growth, it does not prescribe the measures that the organisation should take.

The report must not be traceable to an individual. The report must not contain any personal matters.

A general picture of the culture encountered in the organisation is presented first. This also includes a final assessment with the announcement of the step.

A justification of the final assessment for each theme is then provided as follows:

— A summary is prepared for each theme, incorporating the findings relating to the underlying sub-themes.

— A final conclusion with substantiation is provided. An assessment is present for each theme (based on preconditions and behaviour): green, orange, red. P and B are assessed in conjunction with each other.

— The summary by theme must be culture-oriented. If the auditor has spotted something unusual, they must mention it, adding what they think it means for the culture. If the auditor encounters aspects that have a direct relationship with elements described under 'preconditions', these must also be mentioned. When assessing 'preconditions', the relationship to and consequence for the culture is established. The overall picture with regard to the theme is the guiding principle here.

— Strengths and areas for improvement in the area of culture are reported on in the summary per theme. The relationship to and the consequence for the culture is established for any observations about the preconditions.

— The recommendations in the audit report must be formulated as specifically as possible so that the organisation's opportunities for growth become clear.

Why the theme has received a particular assessment must be traceable in the substantiation. In this way, the audit team takes responsibility for the audit conducted. The audit team's findings can help the organisation progress to a higher step.

The CB is free to use its own layout for this purpose.

6.10 Certificate or statement

The name of the certificate or statement reads: 'Safety Culture Ladder certificate or statement step N', where N can take the value 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5.

A certificate or statement indicates the highest step attained and the date on which the certificate or statement was issued. Each certificate or statement is a unique document with a unique number. This number is provided by the CB. The CB issues the certificate or statement to the organisation.

If an SCL audit is conducted at a holding company with multiple establishments, one certificate or statement is issued. The holding company is listed on the main certificate or statement and the establishments or operating companies are listed in the appendix.

The certificate or statement will contain the following information at the very least:

— the legal name, address details with place of business and the registration number in the relevant official business register of the business entity or entities covered by the SCL certification;

NOTE If a branch office does not have a registration number, the number of the establishment is used.

— the name of the CB as stated in the authorisation;

— the step attained (or indicative step in a statement) on the SCL (steps 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5);

— the scope of the certificate or statement;

— the name and signature of the CB representative;

— a reference to the version number of the SCL standard used (Safety Culture Ladder 2.0, stating the version date);

— the date of first issue and the date of change;

— the certificate or statement registration number issued by the CB. A certificate or statement issued by a CB is submitted by that CB to NEN for publication in the certificates register.

6.11 Validity of certificate and statement

A 'Safety Culture Ladder certificate or statement step N' issued by a CB is valid for three years, subject to an annual follow-up audit. The follow-up audits must be conducted between ten and twelve months after the final (follow-up) audit to maintain the validity of the original certificate or statement in years 2 and 3.

If an organisation believes it can progress higher up the ladder, it is free to request a new assessment plus the associated initial audit, from a CB. This cannot be done earlier than six months after obtaining the certificate.

A measurement error is regarded as a perceived error in the execution of the audit process. It is not a substantive error in respect of the score awarded.

If the client disputes the way in which the audit has been conducted, the complaints procedure of the CB will apply. The complaint must be submitted to the CB within one week of receiving the (draft) report. The CB must resolve the complaint within thirteen weeks. If the complaints procedure does not produce the desired result, a complaint may be submitted to the NEN scheme manager.

The CB or auditors may not be changed within the thirteen-week period. An organisation is permitted to do this after thirteen weeks. However, NEN must be notified of this in advance.

A certificate or statement may be transferred to another CB under the conditions set out in IAF MD 2:2023.[1] It is important that a proper handover takes place.

6.12 Trial audit

If an organisation wants to experience what a SCL audit entails but does not yet want to have a 'real' certification done, a limited assessment of whether certain topics meet the requirements is possible, also with a view to gaining experience with a SCL audit.

The trial audit is limited in scope and does not lead to the issue of a score, certificate or statement. The scope is set at 40% of a full certification audit, with a minimum of one and a half man-days per auditor (a total of three man-days).

[1] IAF MD 2:2023, IAF Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems, remains in force pursuant to the 'Global ACI–IAF and ILAC Document Cross-Reference Table' until an equivalent Global ACI document has been finalised and adopted. See Global ACI's current list of documents for the relevant publication.

The board of directors, management and operational employees are assessed and a project is visited at the very least. A trial audit is always carried out at step 3 level. The CB may not specify whether a step has been achieved.

7 SCL products

7.1 General

Various SCL products are available (see Table 7). See sections 7.2 up to and including 7.6 for the requirements applicable to the assessment of these SCL products.

Table 7 — SCL products

Product	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
SCL Original (see 7.2) *applicable up to and including step 5*	100% audit — SCL Original certificate — valid for three years stating the step attained — free choice of self-assessment — man-days according to Table 2 or 3 — two auditors	100% audit — retention of certificate — man-days according to Table 2 or 3 — two auditors	100% audit — retention of certificate — man-days according to Table 2 or 3 — two auditors
SCL (see 7.3) *applicable up to and including step 4*	100% audit — SCL certificate valid for three years stating the step attained — free choice of self-assessment — man-days according to Table 2 or 3 — two auditors	Follow-up audit 40% — retention of certificate — man-day table 40% — two auditors	Follow-up audit 40% — retention of certificate — man-day table 40% — two auditors
SCL Light (see 7.4) *applicable up to and including step 3*	SCL Light audit 40% — statement valid for three years with step indication — man-day table 40% — SCL web tool mandatory when conducting self-assessment	Assessment of behavioural objectives — retention of statement — one man-day [a] — one auditor	Assessment of behavioural objectives — retention of statement — one man-day [a] — one auditor

<table>
<tr><th>Product</th><th>Year 1</th><th>Year 2</th><th colspan="2">Year 3</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>— assessment of action plan (gap analysis, actions and behavioural objectives)

— two auditors</td><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">SCL Light for small organisations
(see 7.5)

applicable up to and including step 3

(max. 50 employees)</td><td rowspan="2">SCL Light audit 40%

— statement valid for three years with step indication

— man-day table 40%

— SCL web tool mandatory when conducting self-assessment

— assessment of action plan (gap analysis, actions and behavioural objectives)

— two auditors

— internal auditor (see B.8)</td><td rowspan="2">Assessment of behavioural objectives

— retention of statement

— one man-day [a]

— one auditor</td><td colspan="2">Assessment of behavioural objectives</td></tr>
<tr><td>Criteria met in year 2 (see explanation in 7.5)

— retention of statement

— assess-ment by auditor no longer required if the criteria are met

— assess-ment by internal auditor (see B.8)</td><td>Criteria barely met in year 2 (see explanation in 7.5)

— retention of statement (see B.8).

— one man-day [a]

— one auditor</td></tr>
<tr><td>Self Assessment
(see 7.6)

no step indication</td><td>Self-assessment via SCL web tool

— no involvement of CB

— self-declaration valid for one year

— SCL web tool mandatory when conducting self-assessment

— assessment by internal auditor GAP analysis and action plan

— internal auditor (see B.8)</td><td>Extension of self-declaration

— may be extended by one year

— internal auditor (see B.8)</td><td colspan="2">Switch to another SCL product</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">[a] One day as time spent includes the time needed to travel from one location to the next and excludes commuting travel time.</td></tr>
</table>

7.2 SCL Original

7.2.1 General

For the SCL Original, the CB assesses the health and safety culture through an audit as described in Chapter 6. A 100% audit is conducted in years 1, 2 and 3.

The SCL Original certificate is valid for three years if the same step is attained in years 2 and 3. If the same step is not attained, the certificate issued will no longer be valid. A step increase or scope extension of the certification is possible in year 2 or 3. In this situation, a new certificate will be issued in that year and will be valid for a period of three years. It is possible to switch from SCL Original to SCL in year 2. In this situation, a new SCL certificate will be issued with a remaining period of two years. The SCL Original applies to all steps.

7.2.2 Assessment requirements

All themes are assessed against P (preconditions) and B (behaviour).

When assessing P, at least four out of five themes must have been assessed as 'satisfactory' (green). A theme that does not have a green score for P must score orange for a positive assessment. A red assessment means that the step has not been attained.

When assessing B, all themes must have been assessed as 'satisfactory' (green).

In the follow-up audits in years 2 and 3, the organisation must continue to meet the same requirements as those set out in the assessment carried out in year 1. This may involve, for example, the same theme continuing to score orange for P or another theme scoring orange for P. If the company does not meet the assessment requirements any more, but it is clear from the audit results that a lower step has been attained, a new certificate can be issued for a lower step.

7.3 SCL

7.3.1 General

For the SCL, the CB assesses health and safety culture as described in Chapter 6. A 100% audit is conducted during the initial audit or recertification audit.

The SCL certificate is valid for three years, with an assessment carried out in the two intervening years by means of a 40% audit. All themes are assessed in each audit. The SCL applies up to and including step 4.

7.3.2 Year 1

The audit in the first year is a full certification audit (100%), as described in Chapter 6.

7.3.3 Years 2 and 3

The follow-up audit in years 2 and 3 must meet the following requirements:

— In terms of scope, the audit counts for at least 40% of a full certification audit as described in Table 2 or 3, with a minimum of two man-days for step 2 and three man-days from step 3 upwards.

— All themes are assessed in each audit. In this context, 40% implies that the sample to be taken is set at 40% of the number of employees to be interviewed.

— The results are recorded in a report including a summary.

— At least the board of directors, management and operational employees must be assessed during the audit.

— At least one work or project visit takes place.

— An extension of the scope of the certification or step increase in year 2 or 3 is viewed as an 'initial certification'. In that case, a 100% audit must be conducted. A new certificate is issued that is valid for three years.

7.3.4 Assessment requirements

All themes are assessed against P (preconditions) and B (behaviour).

When assessing P, at least four out of five themes must have been assessed as 'satisfactory' (green). A theme that does not have a green score for P must score orange for a positive assessment. A red assessment means that the step has not been attained.

When assessing B, all themes must have been assessed as 'satisfactory' (green).

In the follow-up audits in years 2 and 3, the organisation must continue to meet the same requirements as those applicable in the assessment carried out in year 1. This may involve, for example, the same theme continuing to score orange for P or another theme scoring orange for P.

If an auditor is unable to confirm that the assessment requirements are met in the follow-up audit in year 2 or year 3, a 100% audit must be conducted within three months. In this context, 100% means that the remaining 60% of the audit is carried out.

If this audit shows that the company does not meet the requirements any more, but it is clear from the audit results that a lower step has been achieved, a new certificate can be issued for a lower step.

7.4 SCL Light

7.4.1 General

In SCL Light, the CB gives an indication of the health and safety culture, based on the gap analysis, actions and the behavioural objectives. The initial audit or recertification audit is 40% of a full certification audit (see 6.4).

As no full assessment of culture is performed, a 'SCL Light statement' is issued (in the event of a good result) instead of a certificate. The SCL Light statement includes a step indication and is valid for three years. The achievement of behavioural objectives is assessed in the two intervening years. SCL Light applies up to and including step 3.

7.4.2 Year 1

The SCL Light audit in year 1 must meet the following requirements:

— The organisation uses the SCL web tool to complete the self-assessment.

— The SAQ must be completed again for every initial certification audit (year 1) or recertification audit (years 4, 7, etc.).

— The CB assesses the SAQ and the action plan (gap analysis, actions and behavioural objectives) drawn up by (or on behalf of) the organisation concerned.

— The SAQ in the SCL web tool is used to carry out the self-assessment. This is then linked to the online file, in which the reports can be uploaded.

7.4.3 Action plan

7.4.3.1 General

The action plan is drawn up by (or on behalf of) the organisation concerned. The action plan sets out the actions to be carried out in practice in the years ahead to implement the necessary measures identified in the gap analysis. The action plan consists of three parts: a gap analysis, actions and behavioural objectives.

7.4.3.2 Gap analysis

The gap analysis method is used to make a comparison between an existing and a desired situation. In this case, the results from the SAQ are compared with the step that the organisation aims to obtain.

The gap analysis is drawn up by (or on behalf of) the organisation concerned in year 1 and again in year 4. The CB assesses this gap analysis before issuing an SCL Light statement.

The gap analysis contains the following information at the very least:

— the date or period in which the SAQ was carried out;

— the outcomes of the self-assessment;

— the identification of what is below the desired level;

— an analysis of the existing versus desired situation;

— an overview of necessary measures to progress from the existing to the desired situation.

NOTE Here, the CB assesses whether measures have been formulated that match the gaps. The CB does assess whether the measures have been formulated specifically and measurably and whether they are related to the identified gaps but does not substantively assess their effectiveness.

7.4.3.3 Actions

A step-by-step plan is set up for each measure from the gap analysis to progress from the existing to the desired situation. The actions must be formulated by (or on behalf of) the organisation concerned in year 1 and again in year 4.

The step-by-step plan must include the following at the very least:

— a description of specific actions and the intended result;

— a detailed schedule with deadlines for each action;

— the names and positions of the action holders.

Priorities can be set, with specific actions being put on actions to be put on the agenda for the years ahead. The action plan also contains a description of how implementation of the actions is monitored and how they will be adjusted if necessary. If applicable, the action plan also contains an overview of the actions and results of the previous years.

7.4.3.4 Behavioural objectives

One to a maximum of three behavioural objectives are set, to be achieved in the year or years ahead.

These behavioural objectives must meet the following requirements:

— They must be formulated in a way that is specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic and time-bound (SMART).

— The organisation states that the board of directors is visibly and actively involved in the behavioural objectives and takes responsibility for them.

— If a sub-theme is assessed as 'orange', the organisation must establish a behavioural objective for it. When assessing the behavioural objective in the following year, an assessment will take place to ascertain whether it has been achieved.

7.4.4 The 40% audit

In terms of scope, the audit counts for at least 40% of a full certification audit as described in Table 2 or 3, with a minimum of two man-days for step 2 and three man-days from step 3 upwards.

The following points apply in this regard:

— All themes are assessed. In this context, 40% implies that the sample to be taken is set at 40% of the number of employees to be interviewed.

— The results are recorded in a report including a summary.

— At least the board of directors, management and operational employees must be assessed during the audit.

— At least one work or project visit takes place. The auditor chooses the location. Considerations when determining the location are its representativeness, the scope of the audit, the risks and previous experiences with the client (in the context of the SCL).

— The audit does not result in a certificate being issued, it merely provides a statement indicating that the step has been indicatively attained.

— An extension of the scope of the certification or step increase in year 2 or 3 is viewed as an 'initial certification'. In that case, a 40% audit must be conducted. A new statement stating the step attained is issued and is valid for three years.

7.4.5 Assessment requirements

All themes are assessed against P (preconditions) and B (behaviour).

When assessing P, at least four out of five themes must have been assessed as 'satisfactory' (green). A theme that does not have a green score must score orange for a positive assessment. A red assessment means that the step has not been attained.

When assessing B (behaviour), all themes must have been assessed as 'satisfactory' (green).

7.4.6 Years 2 and 3: assessment of behavioural objectives

The behavioural objectives are assessed in years 2 and 3. The site visit and assessment of behavioural objectives are used to assess whether the intended progress has been made, barely made or not at all:

— Progress made/barely made: In years 2 and 3, the assessment is always carried out by an auditor from a CB.

— No progress made at all: If the findings indicate that the intended progress has not been made, another year-1 assessment will take place in year 2 (40% audit). As part of this assessment, the auditor will request an analysis that explains why the intended progress has not been made and how this will be prevented in the future.

The behavioural objective is assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

— The one to three behavioural objectives formulated in year 1 (or 2) must have been achieved. A new behavioural objective (or a maximum of three behavioural objectives) must be formulated for the period ahead as well.

— The involvement of the board of directors must be visible. How did it achieve the behavioural objective or objectives, what was its personal contribution and level of involvement and how did it get the organisation on board? The above is based on the following three points:

  a) The behavioural objective or objectives relating to a desired behavioural change or changes;

  b) The meeting with the board of directors about this;

  c) The impact of the behavioural objective in the organisation.

— Practical implementation (on the shop floor): to what extent has the behavioural objective actually been achieved?

The purpose of this assessment is not just to check whether the issued step indication is still correct. It also includes a site visit in which observations are made and interviews are conducted with employees.

7.4.7 Switching from SCL Light statement to SCL certificate

If an organisation has an SCL Light statement and wishes to obtain an SCL certificate, an additional 60% audit will suffice. The following conditions must be met:

— The additional 60% audit is conducted within the three-month period of the initial 40% audit (i.e. this refers to the 40% audit for attaining the SCL Light statement).

— There have been no significant changes to the scope of the certification or to the organisational structure.

— There has been no step increase.

The new certificate shows the date of issue of the new certificate.

7.5 SCL Light for small organisations

7.5.1 General

SCL Light for small organisations is suitable for organisations with a maximum of 50 employees. In the SCL Light for small organisations, the CB gives an indication of the safety culture in the area of safety and health, based on the gap analysis, actions and behavioural objectives. The initial audit or recertification audit is 40% of a full certification audit, as described in Chapter 6.

As no full assessment of culture is performed, a 'SCL Light for small organisations statement' is issued (in the event of a good result) instead of a certificate. The SCL Light statement for small organisations includes a step indication and is valid for three years. The achievement of behavioural objectives is assessed in the two intervening years. The SCL Light for small organisations applies up to and including step 3.

7.5.2 Year 1

The audit in year 1 is the same as that for SCL Light (see 7.4.2). In year 1, the auditor checks whether there is an internal auditor and whether that person meets the qualification requirements set out in B.8.

7.5.3 Years 2 and 3: assessment of behavioural objectives

The behavioural objectives are assessed in years 2 and 3. The assessment in year 2 is always carried out by an auditor from a CB. The site visit and assessment of behavioural objectives are used to assess whether the intended progress has been made, barely made or not at all:

— Progress made: if the criteria for the assessment of the behavioural objectives are met during the year 2 assessment, the year 3 assessment will be carried out by an internal auditor (in accordance with the qualification requirements in B.8).

— Barely made: if these criteria are barely met, the year 3 assessment is carried out by an auditor from a CB.

— Not progress at all: if the findings indicate that the intended progress has not been made, another year 1 assessment will take place in year 2 (40% audit). As part of this assessment, the auditor will request an analysis that explains why the intended progress has not been made and how this will be prevented in the future.

The behavioural objective is assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

— The one to three behavioural objectives formulated in year 1 (or 2) must have been achieved. A new behavioural objective (or a maximum of three behavioural objectives) must be formulated for the period ahead as well.

— The involvement of the board of directors must be visible. How did it achieve the behavioural objective or objectives, what was its personal contribution and how did it get the organisation on board? The above is based on the following three points:

  a) The behavioural objective or objectives relating to a desired behavioural change or changes;

  b) The meeting with the board of directors about this;

  c) The impact of the behavioural objective in the organisation.

— Practical implementation (on the shop floor): to what extent has the behavioural objective actually been achieved?

The purpose of this assessment is not just to check whether the issued step indication is still correct. It also includes a site visit in which observations are made and interviews are conducted with the employees.

7.6 Self-assessment (SA)

7.6.1 General

The SCL SA is an accessible entry-level tool that SCL offers to organisations. It is suitable for organisations that want to work on their safety culture independently. The SA is available via the SCL web tool and follows the same steps as SCL Light (for small organisations) in the web tool.

The SCL SA does not involve an external audit or a CB. A self-declaration is issued via the web tool. A trained internal auditor must be present who meets the qualification requirements in B.8.

8 Quality assurance and supervision of CBs

8.1 General

The basic principle for certification against the SCL is that there is justified confidence on the part of the stakeholders that the assessment by the CB is carried out in a uniform, reliable and independent manner.

NEN uses a number of instruments at various levels of the governance model to promote this method of assessment. These instruments are shown in table 8.

Table 8 — Instruments of the governance model

GOVERNANCE MODEL	CONTROL MEASURES
MANAGEMENT/ORGANISATION	Stakeholder representation Complaints procedure
CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS	Interpretation documents CoE decisions Version management
CERTIFICATION BODY	Harmonisation consultation NEN-EN-ISO/IEC 17021-1 accreditation Incident administration Office visits
AUDITOR	Auditor training Authorisations Shadowing days Witnessing assessments
AUDIT	Audit plans checks (random)

8.2 Witnessing assessment

Witnessing assessment (see Table 8) involves observing and assessing the audit team. NEN uses witnessing assessments to gain a picture of the competencies of the assigned audit teams and of the individual auditor(s).

Witnessing assessment also shows whether the auditors' decision-making and assessment process is sufficiently harmonised between different CBs.

Witnessing assessment takes place at any auditor who wishes to be authorised to audit against SCL 2.0. This witnessing assessment must take place during the first, second or third audit against SCL 2.0. After the witnessing assessment, the auditor receives a report on the findings during the witnessing assessment plus any areas for improvement to be addressed.

If the witnessing assessment is completed successfully, the auditor is authorised to audit against SCL 2.0. If the witnessing assessment is not completed successfully, a new witnessing assessment will take place within six months. If this witnessing assessment is not completed successfully, it will be concluded that the auditor concerned is not suitable to work as an SCL auditor and no authorisation will be issued.

If the CB does not agree with the outcome of the witnessing assessment, a witnessing assessment can be carried out by an external agency (second opinion). The outcome of this witnessing assessment is binding. The costs of this witnessing assessment are payable by the party requesting the reassessment.

Witnessing assessments also take place for the supplementary authorisation at step 4/5. After this, a follow-up witnessing assessment takes place at least once every four years unless issues are found during a witnessing assessment. If this happens, an additional witnessing assessment takes place.

NEN does not carry out the witnessing assessments itself. These are carried out by independent and qualified assessors that NEN appoints for this purpose.

The organisation concerned cannot refuse a witnessing assessment. NEN may decide to replace the witnessing assessment at the organisation with a review at the CB. The assessor observes. Which means that they do not interfere in the CB's audit process. However, this does not prevent the assessor from exchanging additional information with the CB auditors and requesting additional clarifications, etc. from them at regular intervals. However, these interventions can occur only outside the presence of the client (organisation). This means that the necessary time must be built into the audit schedule. The CB ensures that the presence and purpose of witnessing assessment, including the assessor's task, are clearly explained to the organisation in advance. NEN treats all information provided during the witnessing assessment as confidential.

A witnessing assessment report is made of each assessment. The witnessing assessment report focuses solely on the main aspects (professional and harmonisation aspects). This witnessing assessment report can serve as input for improvement measures for the CB. Generally applicable observations will be discussed for harmonisation (anonymously) in the harmonisation meeting with the CBs' auditors.

9 Organisation

9.1 Who manages the Safety Culture Ladder?

As the managing body, NEN has established a Committee of Experts (CoE) in the Netherlands for which NEN provides project management and secretariat services.

The CoE in the Netherlands is the highest body of the SCL. The input of committees from other countries is considered during decision-making.

The SCL is structured as follows:

— CoE: It is primarily responsible for keeping the certification scheme up to date and acts as the contact for the CBs. The CoE is a representative board. This means that members have no personal interest but represent the interests of the entire sector, industry and/or country. The CoE's composition was decided on the basis of a stakeholder analysis.

— CB Harmonisation Platform: It consists of representatives of CBs with which NEN has entered into a licensing agreement. The representatives must be involved in the certification process as auditors or lead auditors or as the individual that makes the certification decision (assessor). CBs assess organisations partly on the basis of this harmonisation. The CBs may submit assessment problems to NEN, possibly with the organisation concerned (as the CB's client). If necessary, the scheme will be adjusted.

— Working groups: Where necessary, working groups are created whose members are technical experts put forward by clients, contractors and CBs. The CoE must agree to the composition of the working group. Working group members may come from the CoE.

9.2 Document/version management

NEN bears substantive responsibility for developing and managing the standard and the SCL scheme. The CoE prepares, adopts and ratifies the editions.

Comments and/or remarks on SCL documents can be submitted to NEN via info@safetycultureladder.com.

Current editions of the documentation are published at www.safetycultureladder.com. All previous editions then cease to apply.

Appendix A
(normative)

Defining the scope and offshore assessment

A.1 Defining the scope of the audit

The scope of an audit is determined by defining the core activities, products, services and locations of an organisation. This ensures that the audit has clear boundaries.

Based on the APL rule (Activities, Products and Limitations), the standard process consists of the following two parts:

1) Analysis of the core processes and activities: Information is carefully gathered about the organisation. The following aspects are assessed:

   — Primary processes: The specific services or goods that the organisation provides are identified.

   — Locations and departments: It is ascertained which physical and administrative units are subject to the assessment.

   — Support processes: It is determined whether support departments like procurement and HR have a direct influence on the certified end result. If so, these departments are included in the scope.

2) Formulation of the scope: The analysis results are translated into a definitive scope based on the following guidelines:

   — Active and factual formulation: Specific verbs are used to describe the activities carried out. For example: 'the design and installation of …'

   — Objective formulation: Vague, subjective and commercial terms like 'high-quality' and 'market leader' are not used.

   — Explicit exclusions: Components, locations and activities that are not relevant are explicitly excluded to ensure that the scope of the audit is clear.

A.2 Specific situation: offshore assessment

If offshore activities are included in the scope, additional criteria apply when determining the scope. This involves the following parts:

a) Definition and scope

   Offshore assessment is the case when maritime activities are carried out at sea, in a port, at a quay or in the air. This includes:

   — Preparatory work: For example, engineering and the selection of routes.

   — Logistics and transport: For example, activities carried out with ships and/or helicopters.

— Operational locations: For example, work on installations positioned at sea. For example, in the oil, gas or wind energy sectors. This includes work on wind turbines and the laying of power cables onshore.

b) Borderline cases

— Inclusion: In an offshore assessment, the preparatory high-risk activities carried out at a quay or in a port are always included in the assessment.

— Exclusion: There will be no offshore assessment if work is carried out exclusively at a quay or in a port. In this situation, the term 'offshore' is not included on the certificate.

NOTE In the case of an assessment of the preparatory work, a similar project in progress will suffice.

c) Agreements between the CB and the client

Due to the complexity of offshore assessment, binding agreements are set out in advance between the CB and the client about:

— the scope and the project locations to be audited, distinguishing between offshore and onshore locations;

— the specific entry requirements, including the training and safety training that auditors are required to have;

— logistical and financial particulars, including additional travel time, man-days and additional costs.

A.3 Interpretation for offshore assessment

Table A.1 describes the interpretation of offshore assessment. The relevant texts from this scheme are provided in the left-hand column for information purposes.

Table A.1 — Interpretation for offshore assessment

NCS SCL 2.0	Interpretation for offshore assessment
6.3 SCL audit requirements The CB makes at least one on-location work or project visit. An assessment based solely on a desk review is insufficient and, therefore, unacceptable. The number of interviews to be held and working locations to be visited are specified in the man-day table (see Table 2 or 3). *6.3.1 Conducting audits* Each certification audit must be completed within thirteen weeks (one quarter) of commencement. The audit's preliminary	The CB considers the overall scope (onshore and offshore activities). The full scope of activities must be covered within the three-year period. In other words, the total number of work locations visited 'cover the context of the scope'. The CB may opt to substantiate why the project location it has visited adequately reflects other project locations. *The following applies in the event of an offshore assessment:* If there are no offshore activities in year 1, these activities cannot be assessed in year 1. In this case, the actual offshore project audit can be carried out in year 2. So, year 1 can focus on design and safety.

NCS SCL 2.0	Interpretation for offshore assessment
assessment is regarded as the starting point. The certification audit is completed once the certificate or statement has been issued. It is not possible to change the CB during this period. If a certification audit cannot be completed within the period of thirteen weeks, the audit will be invalid and no valid certificate or statement can be issued.	The offshore project visit may not be postponed until year 2 if offshore activities do take place in year 1. For practical reasons (like a shortage of qualified auditors), it is not permitted to delay an offshore project visit until year 2. *Extension of the scope to include offshore in year 2 or 3* If an organisation wishes to extend the scope to include 'offshore' in year 2 or 3, a full audit (100%) is required. *Term for completion of audit with offshore activities* A certification audit involving offshore activities must be completed within 26 weeks of starting the audit. During the offshore project visit, the auditor passively observes the activities. NOTE 1 They do not go into the water with a diver or climb a mast. NOTE 2 The scope of the certificate always takes precedence.

Appendix B
(normative)

Qualification requirements for auditors and assessors

B.1 Requirements from step 1 upwards

Table B.1 sets out the qualification requirements from step 1 upwards.

Table B.1 — Qualification requirements from step 1 upwards

Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
At least higher vocational education (HBO+) intellectual and professional level (up to and including step 3)	A completed higher vocational education (+) training course or comparable through education or experience	Diploma CV If not demonstrable by diploma or CV: assessment showing level	Yes	Yes	-
Knowledge and understanding of managing health and safety risks	Completed education at least at senior secondary vocational education (MBO) level related to H&S or comparable through training or experience	Diploma (at least MVK or equivalent) CV	Yes	-	-
Qualification of lead auditor (team leader)	Completed Lead Assessor Course (LAC 17021) Qualified for QMS/SMS If someone is not qualified for QMS/SMS, qualification on the basis of 'qualified SCL-auditor' is also possible. This requires someone to have audited against the SCL for a minimum of fifteen days in the last two years. Minimum three years of relevant work experience in H&S or behaviour and culture	LAC diploma For QMS/SMS, must have NEN-EN-ISO/IEC 17021-1-related audit experience For SCL qualification: monitoring by CB/audit log	Yes	-	-
Qualification for auditor	Internal or other audit course with demonstrated independent conduct of audits (this may include internal audits) Minimum three years of relevant work experience in H&S or behaviour and culture	Certificate for internal or other audit course Monitoring by CB/logbook	-	Yes	-

Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
Familiar with the principles and content of the SCL	Knowledge relating to: — SCL standard — SCL certification scheme — other supplementary SCL documents	Witnessing assessment CB assessments CB review audit reports	Yes	Yes	-
Official two-day SCL auditor training course	Demonstrable attendance of training course	NEN proof of participation	Yes	Yes	-
Two shadowing days with audits	Demonstrable two audit days shadowing an experienced SCL auditor If shadowing days are not possible, alternative kick-off training in consultation with NEN	Audit plans Or: participation in kick-off training	Yes	Yes	-
Familiar with health and safety risks in the area of application and country	Auditor is familiar with health and safety risks in the area of application (rail, energy, housing, healthcare, etc.) Auditor is familiar with best practices in the area of application Auditor is familiar with the culture of the country concerned	Witnessing assessment CB assessments Review of audit reports CV	-	-	Yes

B.2 Additional requirements from step 4 upwards

Table B.2 sets out the extra requirements from step 4 upwards.

Table B.2 — Additional requirements from step 4 upwards

Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
SCL Masterclass 'What is 4/5 culture?'	Demonstrable attendance of masterclass	NEN certificate	Yes	Yes	-
Has extensive audit experience with the SCL	The lead auditor has completed at least 25 days of step 3 auditing in the past year, conducted at a minimum of two companies. The auditor has completed at least 15 days of step 3 auditing in the past year, conducted at a minimum of two companies.	CB logbook	Yes	Yes	-

B.3 Skills

Table B.3 sets out the skills requirements.

Table B.3 — Skills requirements

Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
Experience with management systems	Auditor knows the difference between management systems and the SCL, so that the SCL audit follows the SCL assessment method and not a management system audit.	Two-day auditor training	Yes	Yes	-
Language skills suitable for communication at all levels within the client's organisation	Auditor is proficient in the working language (of the company) verbally and in writing (including on the shop floor). The minimum level of language proficiency is B2. A CB ensures that the auditors it uses for audits conducted in other languages have a sufficient command of the language (language level B2). Auditor can have a pleasant conversation (dialogue).	CV Witnessing assessment CB assessments Review of audit reports The audit team must have at least one native speaker	Yes	Yes	-
Knows the customs and practices in the country concerned or arrangements are made to supplement that within the audit team	The auditor or lead auditor (or the eternally-engaged auditor) was born or raised in, or has at least two years of work experience in the country concerned.	CV (also from external) Witnessing assessment CB assessments Review of audit reports	-	-	Yes
Good reporting skills	Auditor can: — summarise and analyse well, — clearly report areas for attention and improvement, — substantiate the assessment, — report broadly (what I found based on culture), — produce a concise and smoothly written report,	Witnessing assessment CB assessment/ statement	Yes	Yes	-

Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
	— distinguish between main and secondary issues and identify the main message, — write in the active voice and know how to captivate the reader.				
Convincing presentation	Auditor can present themselves well, present the results of an audit fully and well and explain the results.	Witnessing assessment CB assessment/ statement	Yes	Yes	-

B.4 Skills - Soft skills

Table B.4 sets out the soft skills requirements.

Table B.4 — Soft skills requirements

Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
Interview skills	Auditor: — can apply different good and different questioning techniques, uncovering the required information, — can listen, summarise and ask follow-up questions, — can observe well, is sharp and alert, — puts the client first during the audit, allows the client to talk, can keep quiet, — can recognise a difference in attitude and behaviour, — is able to recognise the different levels of attitude and behaviour, — reads a situation well and makes the right assessment, — recognises non-verbal behaviour and body language,	Witnessing assessment CB assessment/statement Assessment	Yes	Yes	-

Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
	— is analytical and can adopt quickly (responding to responses, criss-crossing the scheme, etc.), — can make connections between an interview and monitoring, — is neutral, has no bias, is not easily influenced, — is good at asking open-ended questions.				

B.5 Personal qualities

Table B.5 sets out the requirements in respect of personal qualities.

Table B.5 — Requirements in respect of personal qualities

Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
Social/communicative	Auditor: — can put the auditee at ease and help them feel relaxed, — can communicate pleasantly and effectively,	Witnessing assessment CB assessment/statement Assessment	Yes	Yes	-
Diplomatic/tactful	Auditor: — has tactful agility, — can challenge or confront the audit subject.	Witnessing assessment CB assessment/statement Assessment	Yes	Yes	-
Calm, trustworthy appearance	Auditor: — is not chaotic and does not appear tense, — is able to put others at ease.	Witnessing assessment CB assessment/statement Assessment	Yes	Yes	-
Attentive/ interested	Auditor: — takes time for the auditee, — allows the auditee to talk and listens attentively.	Witnessing assessment CB assessment/statement Assessment	Yes	Yes	-

B.6 Retained qualification

Table B.6 sets out the requirements to be met to retain a qualification.

Table B.6 — Requirements to bet met to retain a qualification

As of step:	Requirement	Criteria	Assessment	Lead auditor	Auditor	Team
1	Participation in annual NEN harmonisation day	Mandatory attendance at auditors' day	NEN attendance registration	Yes	Yes	-
1 up to and including 3	Regular audits	At least twenty days (including preparation and reporting), of which at least five days per year of on-site SCL audits were conducted in the past year Once every three years, on-site monitoring/review by an experienced SCL auditor to be appointed by the CB, according to NEN-EN-ISO/IEC 17021-1	Audit log (dispensation possible due to market conditions)	-	-	-
4	Very regular audits	A minimum of 35 days in two or three completed SCL audits over the past two years, of which a minimum of 10 days per year should be on-site, of which a minimum of 20 days should be at step 3 Once every three years, on-site monitoring/review by an experienced SCL auditor to be appointed by the CB, according to NEN-EN-ISO/IEC 17021-1	Audit logbook Reporting and monitoring/wit-nessing assessment by team leader For new CBs that have not yet conducted sufficient audits on the SCL, there will be a check to see whether at least two audits on step 3 have been conducted in the past 12 months	Yes	Yes	-

B.7 Qualification requirements for assessors

Table B.7 sets out the requirements for assessors.

Table B.7 — Requirements for assessors

Requirements	Criteria	Assessment
Has at least three years of proven experience as lead auditor for the SCL	The lead auditor must have qualified as a lead auditor for the step they are to assess. It is possible that new CBs may not be able to meet the requirement for three years of demonstrable experience. Dispensation can be requested from NEN in this situation.	CB audit logbook

B.8 Qualification requirements to be met by an internal auditor

Table B.8 sets out the requirements to be met by an internal auditor.

Table B.8 — Requirements to be met by an internal auditor

Requirements	Criteria	Assessment
Completed the NEN training course 'Assessing internal safety awareness with the Safety Culture Ladder' or other training courses that meet the NEN learning outcomes An exemption applies: – for an authorised auditor; – if the two-day SCL 2.0 auditor training course has been completed.	Demonstrable attendance of training course	Participation certificate
Affinity with attitude and behaviour, and knowledge of the SCL and the organisation	The internal auditor has a demonstrable affinity with attitude and behaviour and demonstrable knowledge of the SCL.	Assessment by CB
In small organisations, the internal auditor may also be someone from the 'usual' health and safety consultancy or someone from the trade association. However, the person in question must meet the requirements set out above for an internal auditor	Works for the organisation or is demonstrably involved in health and safety at work in the organisation.	Assessment by CB

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