



Third-party Auditor/Reviewer Competency Guidelines

1. INTRODUCTION

SIZA has embraced a third-party audit approach, aiming for a credible and objective evaluation that accurately reflects both the audit outcome and the relevant social and/or environmental requirements within a business. Consequently, aspiring auditors seeking to audit according to the SIZA standard must apply to one of the recognised audit firms. Upon appointment by a specific firm, adherence to certain stringent criteria becomes essential and a prerequisite for recognition.

SIZA remains dedicated to establishing robust processes, ensuring that monitoring and measurement of the SIZA Standards align with the programme's methodology and adhere to the SIZA Social and/or Environmental Standard. Given the challenges inherent in auditing, it is imperative to select individuals who are not only well-suited for the position but also willing to embark on the demanding and costly journey to become a Lead Auditor. Thus, careful consideration of traits and commitment is vital for success in this chosen career path.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective is to outline the prerequisites and set out the procedure for attaining the role of an auditor, while also furnishing a framework for ongoing competency and professional growth. To ensure the competence of auditors under the SIZA scheme, careful consideration must be given to the following requirements:

- Level of education and qualification
- Relevant work experience
- Training and practical auditor experience
- Evaluation of personality traits to ascertain their suitability for the role
- Communication and language abilities

3. SCOPE

This set of competency requirements shall apply to all audit firms, auditors and admin staff operating on behalf of SIZA, namely schedulers, audit report reviewers, trainees, associates, and lead auditors.

4. SOCIAL AUDITOR REQUIREMENTS

4.1. *Prerequisites to Become a Trainee Auditor*

4.1.1 Education

- The individual will have completed a two to three-year tertiary qualification with a preference in either law, social sciences, or human resource management.
- To operate at this level, the individual should have excellent reading, writing, and verbal proficiency in English and Afrikaans with a good understanding of other languages and cultures.

4.1.2 Work experience

- The individual will know and have working life experience relevant to the business and workplace being audited. A minimum of five years of post-tertiary experience with at least three years in the primary agricultural sector.

4.1.3 Audit experience

- The individual will most likely not have any auditing experience at this level. The individual will enquire from a recognised audit firm about their internal competency requirements and start the journey of becoming a trainee auditor with the specific auditing firm.
- The individual will commence with training offered by the auditing firm and attend any training offered by SIZA to upskill themselves in understanding the auditing field. The trainee auditor will start to attend shadow audits as part of the auditing experience with experienced Lead Auditors of the audit firm.

4.1.4 Key personality Traits

- Attentive to detail
- Excellent written, editing, and oral communication skills in **both** Afrikaans and English
- Excellent interpersonal skills.
- The ability to work under pressure and handle multiple projects at a time.
- Willing to travel and to be away from home.

4.2 *Prerequisites to become an Associate Social Auditor*

4.2.1 Registration

- All auditors will need to be registered with SIZA. They will need to submit a valid SIZA Auditor Request Form to SIZA management for approval and acceptance.
- All auditors will have a unique username to register on *MySIZA*. It is advised that they use the email address of the audit firm under which they are appointed.
- This profile will be reviewed annually, and all approvals will be subject to the discretion of SIZA management.

4.2.2 Auditor Personality & Behavioural Profile

The required auditor personality and behavioural profile will be developed and prescribed by SIZA. All auditors are subject to potential psychometric assessments if and when requested by SIZA. These assessments will be aimed at establishing certain personality or behavioural traits which could require further development or training. These psychometric assessments may include personality, behavioural, profile, or emotional intelligence assessments/inventory.

4.2.3 Education

- The individual will have completed a two to three-year tertiary qualification with a specialisation in either law, social sciences, or human resource management.
- To operate at this level, the individual should have good reading, writing, and verbal proficiency in English and Afrikaans.
- Should the candidate demonstrate equivalent experience other than that stated above, submissions along with the individual's CV will need to be made available to SIZA for approval by the scheme.

4.2.4 Work experience

- The individual will know and have working life experience relevant to the business and workplace being audited. A minimum of five years of post-tertiary experience with at least three years in the primary agricultural sector.
- Should the candidate demonstrate equivalent experience other than that stated above, submissions along with the individual's CV will need to be made available to SIZA for approval by the scheme.

4.2.5 Audit experience

- The individual will initially have completed a minimum of 10 auditor days of onsite audits (for social compliance) under the direction and guidance of a competent lead auditor. Of these 10 auditor days, five days should be shadow audits as an observer, followed by five audit days as a trainee auditor under the guidance of a lead auditor.
- SIZA will acknowledge audit experience as a baseline, which was obtained under social standards recognised by the scheme.

4.2.6 Training requirements

Associate auditors will be required to complete the SIZA annual training, which can include the following topics:

- Audit principles, procedures & techniques
- Management systems & reference documents
- Organizational situations
- Situational awareness
- Applicable laws; regulations and other requirements relevant to the discipline
- Audit planning; approach & methodology
- SA-based ethical codes & standards
- Basic interviewing skills
- Detection; evidence gathering & triangulation
- Capturing findings

An independent training assessment will need to be undertaken by the auditor to be moderated by a SIZA-approved moderator and assessor. In addition, the auditor will need to attend training in the SIZA Social Standard and Audit Process and Methodology (APM).

4.2.7 APSCA Requirements

All social auditors and Audit entities should be registered with the Association of Professional Social Compliance Auditors (APSCA). SIZA can unfortunately not accept any audit conducted by an Audit entity or auditor that is not registered with APSCA due to market requirements. Audit entities need to ensure that auditors maintain and meet all relevant criteria from APSCA. Associate auditors will only be recognised with a registration of Associate Social Compliance Auditor (ASCA) level with APSCA. All SIZA social audit reports must be completed by a competent SIZA Lead Auditor with a CSCA APSCA-level and cannot be completed by an associate auditor.

4.3 Prerequisites to become a Level 3 – Lead Auditor

4.3.1 Registration

- All auditors will need to be registered with SIZA. They will need to submit a valid SIZA Auditor Request Form to SIZA management for approval and acceptance.
- All auditors will have a unique username to register on MySIZA. It is advised that they use an email address of the audit firm under which they are appointed.
- This profile will be reviewed annually, and all approvals will be subject to the discretion of SIZA management.

4.3.2 Auditor Personality & Behavioural Profile

The required auditor personality and behavioural profile will be developed and prescribed by SIZA. All auditors are subject to potential psychometric assessments if and when requested by SIZA. These assessments will be aimed at establishing certain personality or behavioural traits which could require further development or training. These psychometric assessments may include personality, behavioural, profile, or emotional intelligence assessments/inventory.

4.3.3 Education

- The individual will have completed a two to three-year tertiary qualification with a specialisation in either law, social sciences, or human resource management.
- To operate at this level, the individual should have good reading, writing, and verbal proficiency in English and Afrikaans.
- Should the candidate demonstrate equivalent experience other than that stated above, submissions along with the individual's CV will need to be made available to SIZA for approval by the scheme.

4.3.4 Work experience

The individual will know and have working life experience relevant to the business and workplace being audited. A minimum of five years of post-tertiary experience with at least three years in the primary agricultural sector.

4.3.5 Audit experience

- The individual will initially have completed a minimum of 25 auditor days of onsite audits under the direction and guidance of a competent lead auditor. Of these 25 auditor days, 10 audit days are as a trainee auditor and 15 days as an associate auditor.
- Furthermore, of the 25 auditor days, the individual will have undertaken at least two satisfactory audits formally assessed by a competent SIZA lead auditor as part of their evaluation. Ideally, the assessment should be undertaken by two different lead auditors. Where this is not possible, it should be noted in the report to SIZA as to why this is not the case.
- The auditor assessment should be documented in an assessment report which will be made available to SIZA oversight for a recommendation to SIZA management along with an audit log, training plan, and CV of the auditor. Once the reports have been approved by SIZA, SIZA management will allow access to *MySIZA*.

The assessment report should contain but not be limited to the following areas of evaluation:

- Preparation & planning for audit
- Display of personal attributes
- Ability to read and understand people
- Demonstration of knowledge of legal frameworks
- Demonstration of knowledge of the SIZA standard
- Practical application of the laws and standard
- Knowledge of management systems
- Knowledge of technical and operational systems
- Understanding and demonstration of competence with audit process & methodology
- Interviewing techniques
- Ability to verify and triangulate information
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Report writing skills

4.3.6 Training requirements

Lead auditors will be required to complete the SIZA annual training which can include the following topics:

- SIZA online training
- Demonstration of the SIZA code
- Demonstration of knowledge of legal frameworks:
 - o Advanced labour law
 - o Advanced occupational health & safety
- Application of laws and the standard
- Effective leadership
- Managing & resolving conflict during the audit
- Knowledge of management & operational systems
- Competence in Audit Process & Methodology
- Competence in interviewing techniques
- Advanced detection
- Ability to verify & triangulate

- Ability to uncover the root cause
- Communication skills
- Report writing skills

An independent training assessment will need to be undertaken by the auditor to be moderated by a SIZA-approved moderator and assessor. SIZA will make available a panel of approved moderators and training courses.

4.3.7 APSCA Requirements

All social auditors and Audit entities should be registered with the Association of Professional Social Compliance Auditors (APSCA). SIZA will not accept any audit conducted by an Audit entity or auditor that is not registered with APSCA. Audit entities need to ensure that auditors maintain and meet all relevant criteria from APSCA. Once approved as a Lead auditor by SIZA, the auditor must maintain a Registered Auditor (RA) or Certified Social Compliance Auditor (CSCA) level-status with APSCA. Associate auditors will only be recognised with a registration of Associate Social Compliance Auditor (ASCA) level with APSCA. All SIZA social audit reports must be completed by a competent SIZA Lead Auditor with a CSCA APSCA-level.

4.3.8 Market Acceptance & Recognition

Auditors and audit firms must be able to demonstrate market acceptance amongst prominent markets (supermarkets, importers, standards-baskets etc.) accepting SIZA across the globe:

- Audit firms and auditors must be accepted and approved by the most prominent markets/buyers that SIZA members supplied to and who can influence the recognition of the SIZA Audit.
- Audit firms must provide written confirmation of acceptance and recognition by any relevant market of auditor and reviewers who audit on the SIZA standard, when requested by SIZA.
- As part of the SIZA Audit Process and Methodology (APM), various elements of conduct, governance, and rules form part of audit firms' responsibility to ensure adequate competency and implementation of management systems.

4.4 Requirements for Social Audit Reviewers

4.4.1 Registration

- All reviewers will need to be registered with SIZA. They will need to submit a valid SIZA Registration Request Form to SIZA management for approval and acceptance.
- All reviewers will have a unique username to register on MySIZA. It is advised that they use an email address of the audit firm under which they are appointed.
- This profile will be reviewed annually, and all approvals will be subject to the discretion of SIZA management.

4.4.2 The role of the reviewer

- The role of the reviewer is to make an objective evaluation of the audit reports, corrective action plans, and verification details, identified risks and non-compliance judgements made against the prescribed standard.
- The reviewer should consider code compliance matters, legal and regulatory frameworks, and the appropriateness of the report.
- The reviewer will also consider quality against professional standards.
- To maintain objectivity, the reviewer will also remain impartial to the site whose report is being moderated.

4.4.3 Role in moderation of an audit report

- Moderation is concerned with the consistency, comparability, and fairness of the application of the ethical code and audit standards across all audit reports.
- An auditor is not allowed to act as a reviewer on the same audit they conducted as an auditor. Audit reports are also not to be compiled by the reviewer but by an auditor in their capacity as lead auditor.
- Where concerns around the audit credibility or integrity of data come to the attention of the reviewer, the reviewer will engage with the auditor to have the auditor rectify the report.

4.4.4 Education

- The individual will have successfully completed a two to three-year tertiary qualification with a specialisation in either law, social sciences, or human resource management.
- To operate at this level, the individual should have good reading, writing, and verbal proficiency in English.
- Should the candidate demonstrate equivalent experience other than stated above, submissions along with the individual's CV will need to be made available to SIZA for approval by the scheme.

4.4.5 Work experience

The individual will have knowledge and working life experience relevant to the business and workplace being audited. A minimum of five years post tertiary experience with at least three years in the agricultural sector.

4.4.6 Auditing/Reviewer Experience

The reviewer should be a qualified lead auditor and similar experience within the particular audit firm.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR REQUIREMENTS

5.1. Prerequisites to Become a Trainee Auditor

5.1.1 Education

- The individual will have successfully completed a four-year tertiary qualification (BSc science, general science, or agricultural sciences degree), preferably with a specialisation in environmental sciences or environmental management.
- To operate at this level, the incumbent should have good reading, writing and verbal proficiency in English and Afrikaans.

5.1.2 Work experience

- The individual will know and have working life experience relevant to the business and workplace being audited. A minimum of five years of post-tertiary experience with at least three years in the primary agricultural sector.

5.1.3 Audit experience

- The individual will most likely not have any auditing experience at this level. The individual will enquire from a recognised audit firm on their internal competency requirements and start the journey of becoming a trainee auditor with the specific auditing firm.
- The individual will commence with training offered by the auditing firm and attend any training offered by SIZA to upskill themselves in understanding the auditing field.
- The trainee auditor will start to attend shadow audits as part of the auditing experience with experienced Lead Auditors of the audit firm.

5.2 Prerequisites to become an Associate Environmental Auditor

5.2.1 Registration

- All auditors will need to be registered with SIZA. They will need to submit a valid SIZA Auditor Request Form to SIZA management for approval and acceptance.
- All auditors will have a unique username to register on *MySIZA*. It is advised that they use an email address of the audit firm under which they are appointed.
- For combined audits with GLOBALG.A.P. the auditor needs to be approved as an auditor by both programmes (SIZA and GLOBALG.A.P.) in accordance with the competency requirements set out and meet the ISO requirements by GLOBALG.A.P.

- For bolt-on audits with the LEAF Marque programme, the auditor must be approved by LEAF to perform the Bolt-on module and meet the LEAF Marque auditor competency requirements.
- This profile will be reviewed annually, and all approvals will be subject to the discretion of SIZA management.

5.2.2 Auditor Personality & Behavioural Profile

The required auditor personality and behavioural profile will be developed and prescribed by SIZA. All auditors are subject to potential psychometric assessments if and when requested by SIZA. These assessments will be aimed at establishing certain personality or behavioural traits which could require further development or training. These psychometric assessments may include personality, behavioural, profile, or emotional intelligence assessments/inventory.

5.2.3 Education

- The individual will have successfully completed a four-year tertiary qualification (BSc science, general science, or agricultural sciences degree) with a specialisation in either environmental science or environmental management.
- To operate at this level, the individual should have good reading, writing, and verbal proficiency in English and Afrikaans.
- Should the candidate demonstrate equivalent experience other than that stated above, submissions along with the individual's CV will need to be made available to SIZA for approval by the scheme.

5.2.4 Work experience

- The individual will know and have working life experience relevant to the business and workplace being audited. A minimum of five years post-tertiary experience with at least three years in the primary agricultural sector.
- Should the candidate demonstrate equivalent experience other than that stated above, submissions along with the individual's CV will need to be made available to SIZA for approval by the scheme.

5.2.5 Audit experience

- The individual will initially have completed a minimum of 10 auditor days of onsite audits (for environmental compliance) under the direction and guidance of a competent lead auditor. Of these 10 auditor days, five days should be shadow audits as an observer followed by five audit days as a trainee auditor under the guidance of a lead auditor.
- SIZA will acknowledge audit experience as a baseline, which was obtained under social standards recognised by the scheme.

5.2.6 Training requirements

Associate auditors will be required to complete the SIZA annual training which can include the following topics:

- Audit principles, procedures, and techniques
- Management systems and reference documents
- Organisational situations & Situational awareness

- Introduction to applicable environmental legislation and regulations
- Audit planning, approach, and methodology
- South African based environmental codes and standards such as SIZA
- Detection, evidence gathering, and triangulation
- Capturing of findings

An independent training assessment will need to be undertaken by the auditor to be moderated by a SIZA approved moderator and assessor. In addition, the auditor will need to attend training on the SIZA Environmental Standard, and Audit Process and Methodology.

5.2.7 ISO Accreditation Requirements

All auditors and audit firms should be ISO/IEC 17065 accredited and approved by GLOBALG.A.P. SIZA will not accept any audit conducted by an audit firm or auditor that is not accredited and/or registered with these regulatory entities. It may further be required that the auditor must be registered with an appropriate regulating body. This will be communicated accordingly to the audit firm and auditor.

By joining the SIZA programme, the auditor and audit firm might be subject to further requirements if and when SIZA deems it necessary. In cases where SIZA deems it necessary to require further registration/training with external programmes, SIZA will allow a phasing period prior to implementation.

5.3. Prerequisites to Become a Level 3 – Lead Environmental Auditor

5.3.1. Registration

- All auditors will need to be registered with SIZA. They will need to submit a valid SIZA Auditor Request Form to SIZA management for approval and acceptance.
- All auditors will have a unique username to register on MySIZA. It is advised that they use an email address of the audit firm under which they are appointed.
- For combined audits with GLOBALG.A.P. the auditor needs to be approved as an auditor by both programmes (SIZA and GLOBALG.A.P.) in accordance with the competency requirements set out and meet the ISO requirements by GLOBALG.A.P.
- For bolt-on audits with the LEAF Marque programme, the auditor must be approved by LEAF to perform the Bolt-on module and meet the LEAF Marque auditor competency requirements.
- This profile will be reviewed annually, and all approvals will be subject to the discretion of SIZA management.

5.3.2. Auditor Personality and Behavioural Profile

The required auditor personality and behavioural profile will be developed and prescribed by SIZA. All auditors are subject to potential psychometric assessments if and when requested by SIZA. These assessments will be aimed at establishing certain personality or behavioural traits which could require further development or training. These psychometric assessments may include personality, behavioural, profile, or emotional intelligence assessments/inventory's.

5.3.3. Education

- The individual will have successfully completed a four-year tertiary qualification (BSc science, general science, or agricultural sciences degree) with a specialisation in either environmental science or environmental management.
- To operate at this level, the incumbent should have good reading, writing, and verbal proficiency in both English and Afrikaans.
- Should the candidate demonstrate equivalent experience other than stated above, submissions along with the individual's CV will need to be made to SIZA for approval by the scheme.

5.3.4. Work Experience

The individual will have knowledge and working life experience relevant to the business and workplace being audited. A minimum of five years post-tertiary experience with at least three years in the agricultural sector.

5.3.5. Audit Experience

- The individual will initially have completed a minimum of 25 auditor days of onsite audits under the direction and guidance of a competent Lead Auditor. Of these 25 auditor days, five audit days is as a trainee auditor and 20 days as an associate auditor.
- Furthermore, of the 25 auditor days, the individual will have undertaken at least two satisfactory audits formally assessed by a competent lead auditor as part of their evaluation. Ideally, the assessment should be undertaken by two different lead auditors. Where this is not possible, it should be noted in the report to SIZA as to why this is not the case.
- The auditor assessment should be documented in an assessment report which will be made available to the SIZA audit oversight for a recommendation to SIZA management along with an audit log, training plan and CV of the auditor. Once the reports have been approved by SIZA, SIZA management will allow access to the MySIZA platform.

The assessment report should contain, but not be limited to, the following areas of evaluation:

- Preparation and planning for audits
- Display of personal attributes
- Ability to read and understand people
- Demonstration of knowledge of legal frameworks
- Demonstration of knowledge of the SIZA Environmental Standard
- Practical application of the laws and standard
- Knowledge of management systems
- Knowledge of technical and operational systems
- Understanding and demonstration of competence with audit process and methodology
- Interviewing techniques
- Ability to verify and triangulate information
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Report writing skills

5.3.6. Training requirements

Lead auditors will be required to complete the SIZA annual training, which can include the following topics:

- SIZA online training
- Demonstration of the SIZA code
- Demonstration of knowledge of legal frameworks such as Advanced Environmental Law
- Application of laws and the standard
- Effective leadership
- Managing and resolving conflict during audit
- Knowledge of management and operational systems
- Competence in audit process & methodology
- Advanced detection
- Ability to verify and triangulate
- Ability to uncover root cause
- Communication skills
- Report writing skills

An independent training assessment will need to be undertaken by the auditor to be moderated by a SIZA approved moderator and assessor. SIZA will make available a panel of approved moderators and training courses.

5.3.7. ISO Accreditation

All auditors and audit firms should be ISO/IEC 17065 accredited and approved by GLOBALG.A.P. SIZA will not accept any audit conducted by an audit firm or auditor that is not accredited and/or registered with these regulatory entities. It may further be required that the auditor must be registered with an appropriate regulating body. This will be communicated accordingly to the audit firm and auditor.

By joining the SIZA programme, the auditor and audit firm might be subject to further requirements if and when SIZA deems it necessary. In cases where SIZA deems it necessary to require further registration/training with external programmes, SIZA will allow a phasing period prior to implementation.

5.4. Requirements for Environmental Audit Reviewers

5.4.1. The role of the reviewer

- The role of the reviewer is to make an objective evaluation of the audit reports, corrective action plans and verification details, identified risks, and non-compliance judgements made against the prescribed standard.
- The reviewer should consider code compliance matter, legal and regulatory frameworks, and appropriateness of the report.
- The reviewer will also consider quality against the professional standards.

- To maintain the objectivity of the reviewer, the reviewer will also remain impartial to the site whose report is being moderated.

5.4.2. Role in moderation of an audit report

- Moderation is concerned with the consistency, comparability, and fairness of the application of the environmental code and audit standards across all audit reports.
- An auditor is not allowed to act as a reviewer on an audit they conducted themselves. Audit reports are also to be compiled by the lead auditor in their capacity as lead auditor, and not by the reviewer.
- Where concerns around the audit credibility or integrity of data come to the attention of the reviewer, the reviewer will engage with the auditor to have the auditor rectify the report.

5.4.3. Education

- The individual will have successfully completed a four-year tertiary qualification (BSc degree) and preferably a postgraduate degree (MSc degree) with a specialisation in environmental science or environmental management.
- To operate at this level, the incumbent should have good reading, writing, and verbal proficiency in English.
- Should the candidate demonstrate equivalent experience other than stated above, submissions along with the individual's CV will need to be made to SIZA for approval by the scheme.

5.4.4. Work Experience

The individual will have knowledge and working life experience relevant to the business and workplace being audited. A minimum of five years post-tertiary experience with at least three years in the agricultural sector.

5.4.5. Audit Experience

The reviewer should be a qualified lead auditor.

6. Requirements for Schedulers

6.6.1 Registration

- All schedulers will need to be registered with SIZA. They will need to submit a valid SIZA Auditor Request Form to SIZA management for approval and acceptance.
- All schedulers will have a unique username to register on *MySIZA*. It is advised that they use the email address of the audit firm under which they are appointed.
- This profile will be reviewed annually, and all approvals will be subject to the discretion of SIZA management.
- Schedulers also need to complete the SIZA methodology and MySIZA Platform training

6.6.2. Work Experience and Competency

The scheduler will have experience in auditing and a good understanding of how the auditing process works within SIZA. The scheduler will need to be able to engage with producers and agri-businesses through the application process and navigating the MySIZA platform.

7. MAINTAINING AUDITOR COMPETENCY

- **Maintenance of profiles on the *MySIZA* platform**

It is the responsibility of the audit bodies auditing under the SIZA scheme to maintain the profiles of their auditors and to ensure the auditors' ongoing training and development. Where auditors do not fulfil the requirements as a result of extended periods away from auditing, i.e. maternity leave, study leave, alternative work obligations, or resignation or transfer to other audit firms, registration could be removed or suspended.

- **Minimum Number of Audits in a Year**

Each auditor shall undertake a minimum of five audits per year against the SIZA Social Standard and three audit reviews in the capacity of reviewer within 12 months. Any auditor who does not fulfil these criteria will have their profile reviewed.

Auditors who return to audit under the SIZA programme after a one-year or more gaps will be required to undertake two shadow audits as well as participate in a refresher course in the SIZA Social Standard, code and/or legislation updates as well as online training with a required competency test as determined by SIZA.

- **Auditor Evaluation/Shadow Audits**

All auditors will be subject to one unannounced or announced independent shadow audit every three years. This shadow will be undertaken by a SIZA approved shadow auditor. Reports on the shadow audit will be submitted to SIZA for review on competence and audit calibration.

Audit entities, in line with global audit and GSCP requirements, will be required to continue to conduct annual evaluation audits on each lead auditor.

- **Internal Audits**

The SIZA scheme reserves the right to undertake an internal audit of the audit entity at any stage to ensure that the necessary SIZA technical, support systems and procedures are in place to audit against the SIZA Social Standard.