



**INTERNAL RULES OF ORDER:
ACCREDITATION BOARD**

The only valid versions of the documents of the BELAC management system are those available from the internet website.

English translation for information only.
French and Dutch versions remain the authoritative documents.

Date of implementation: 02.12.2020

HISTORY OF THE DOCUMENT

Revision and date of approval	Reason for change	Scope of the revision
0 Boards 21.06.2005	Replaces and cancels documents BELTEST P01 rev 7, BELCERT BCT-P4 rev 4, P11 rev 2 and P20 rev 1	Full revision
1 BELAC Board 28.06.2006	Revision following the implementation of the R.D. BELAC : - tasks of the Board and of the Secretariat	Full revision Point 3.1 and 3.6.1
2 BELAC Board 22.06.2010 CC 16.09.2010	Revision of the provision for collecting answers following consultation by correspondence	Point 3.5.3
3 BELAC Board 10.05.2011 CC 12.05.2011	Suppression of the right of vote of the representatives of the FPS Economy, in case of decision of accreditation of a body placed under the direct responsibility of the FPS Economy.	Point 3.4.5
4 BELAC Board 15.01.2015 CC 22.01.2015	New point "Rights and obligations of the Board members" Chairmanship of meetings Limitation of the voting right for the Board members who have been involved as coordinator during an assessment Voting - advice of the Board Member(s) with specific competence for the concerned technical sector Provisions in case of organization of joint meetings of different Accreditation Boards : cancelled (not relevant)	Point 3.3 Point 4.2.4 Point 4.2.5 Point 4.2.5 Point 4.2.6 Rev 3
5 BELAC Board 01.03.2018 CC 19.04.2018	Delegation of decisions on extensions and other types of modifications to the chair Reviewing the level of operation of the Board as part of each internal audit.	Point 3.1 Point 3.1 Point 3.5

	<p>New point : records related to Board members</p> <p>Update of the tasks of the secretariat and the distribution of documents</p> <p>Suppression the possibility of making documents public</p>	<p>Point 5</p> <p>Point 6</p>
<p>6</p> <p>BELAC Board</p> <p>08.09.2020</p> <p>CC</p> <p>correspondence</p> <p>ballot 01.12.2020</p>	<p>Organization of the Board's activities in specific circumstances: addition of the possibility to hold a plenary session in the form of a videoconference</p>	<p>Point 4.4.1</p>

INTERNAL RULE OF ORDER:

ACCREDITATION BOARD

1. AIMS OF DOCUMENT AND REFERENCES

This document aims to define the internal rule of order of the BELAC Accreditation Board.

This document refers to and complies with the relevant sections of the legal stipulations that fix the rules for the operation of BELAC, and in particular the Royal Decree of 31.01.2006 modified by the Royal Decree of 07.02.2014 on the setting-up of BELAC.

2. RECIPIENTS

With follow up of updates:

- The members of the Coordination Commission;
- The members of the BELAC Board;
- The BELAC secretariat.

Without follow-up of updates:

- Any other request.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD

3.1. Responsibilities

The Board is the executive organ of BELAC; in this respect, the Board is responsible for :

- making decisions on granting and renewal of accreditations ;
- making decisions on extensions and other types of modifications of the accreditation schedules. The Board, however delegates this responsibility to the Chair , in case of extensions and other types of modifications having no significant impact on the field of competence of the CAB ;
- making decisions and taking the necessary initiatives in case of total or partial suspension or withdrawal ;
- investigating disputes when an advice of the Board is felt necessary due to the type and nature of the case ;
- proposing, on request of the Coordination Commission, guidelines for the implementation of the procedures for the operation of BELAC ;
- proposing, on request of the Coordination Commission, guidelines for the implementation of the general accreditation requirements ;
- performing any duties which would contribute to the successful implementation of accreditation procedures.

The level of operation of the Board is reviewed as part of each internal audit.

3.2. Composition

3.2.1. The Accreditation Board, hereafter named “ the Board” is composed according to the stipulations of the Royal Decree of 31.01.2006 modified by the Royal Decree of 07.02.2014. It includes active and observing members and, when relevant, their deputies.

Unless stated otherwise, the term “members” refers to all active and observing members and their deputies.

3.2.2. The members are proposed by the relevant authorities and appointed by the Coordination Commission, according to the competence criteria fixed by the Royal Decree of 31.01.2006 modified by the Royal Decree of 07.02.2014 on the setting-up of BELAC (article 5 § 1): impartiality, technical competence in the field of accreditation and field practice related to one or more accreditation fields.

A representative of the FPS Economy is appointed as Chair.

In addition to the Chair, one Deputy Chair is appointed by the Board.

3.2.3 Any member who can no longer carry out their mandate shall immediately notify the Chair.

The Chair shall take the necessary steps to arrange for a replacement.

3.3. Rights and duties of the Board members

The Board members:

- are regularly informed of changes in accreditation criteria and procedures for accreditation and operation of BELAC through systematic transmission of the relevant documents; training / information sessions are held whenever necessary;
- Have access to all documents of individual accreditation cases when required for the performance of their duties. When accreditation is a prerequisite for agreement or notification, the Board member shall be authorized to transmit relevant information to the instance responsible for the agreement or notification that he/she represents. Compliance with ethical rules specific to the instance must be ensured;
- may be appointed to represent the Board during an assessment to ensure an harmonized implementation of the accreditation process (role of coordinator);
- are informed of the composition of the assessment team in case the application for accreditation is related to all or part of (the) regulated field(s) they represent;
- may request to attend an assessment as observer delegated by the competent authority they represent, or designate a person to replace them for this purpose;
- are invited to inform BELAC of breaches of the accreditation requirements by an accredited body and all measures of suspension or withdrawal of agreement or notification.
- provide BELAC with any information on a body subject to an agreement or a notification, that may be useful for the accreditation of this body. (e.g. results of participation in interlaboratory tests organized by the authority).

To enable a proper operation of the Board and in particular to ensure the credibility of the decision-making mechanisms, the Board members are required:

- to communicate to BELAC ,by means of a standard form, the personal information that allow to demonstrate compliance with the general competence criteria for one or more accreditation fields ;
- to take part each year in minimum 3 meetings of the Accreditation Board;
- to take part in assessments on a regularly basis, as assessor or coordinator or representative of a regulatory authority;
- to contribute to the preparation of the accreditation decisions by acting as reviewer for the assessment reports they receive;
- to take note of the documents of the BELAC management system transmitted to them and participate in training sessions / specific information, if applicable.

3.4. Introduction of new Board members

Following a first appointment as Board member, the concerned persons are invited:

- by the secretariat for an introductory session on the operation of BELAC and of the Board in particular;
- to participate as an observer in 3 meetings of the Board and 3 assessments;
- to participate as soon as possible in an assessor training session.

3.5. Records related to Board members

The BELAC secretariat maintains and regularly updates the following records related to Board members:

- The documents supporting the appointment as member of the Board ;
- A curriculum vitae including professional past and present experience and affiliation
- A list of the recognized sectors of competence with respect to accreditation matters;
- The activities of each Board member with respect to the operation of BELAC (participation in Board meetings, activities as reviewers, participation in assessments as coordinator or assessor);
- A signed commitment to impartiality and confidentiality.

4. OPERATION OF THE BOARD

4.1. General provisions

4.1.1. For the performance of tasks which belong to its duty, the Board can organize its activities as follows:

- by plenary meetings, where the provisions taken under point 4.2 specifically apply. This way of functioning is recommended and is in anyway compulsory, if positions have to be taken on the basis of a broad exchange of point of view. In case of specific circumstances, these plenary sessions can also take the form of a videoconference.
- by means of correspondence ballots, where the provisions taken under point 4.3 specifically apply; this way of functioning will be used in particular to treat urgent problems, to prepare the decision-making by the plenary meetings or if specific circumstances require it.

4.2. Meetings

4.2.1. Calls for meetings

- The Board meets at least three times a year. All members, as mentioned under point 3.2.1, are invited.
- Upon the request of the Minister of Economy, of the Chair of the National Council for Accreditation and Certification, of the Chair of the Coordination Commission or of at least 3 active members of the Board, the Board shall hold a meeting within 10 working days.
- The Board meets at the invitation of its Chair.
The invitation letter gives details of the agenda.

4.2.2. Transfer of documents

- The most appropriate manner for communication is used. This can consist of, without limitation, the sending of documents by post, by fax or e-mail, an invitation to read the documents that can be found on the internet.

For each sending several ways of communication can be used simultaneously.

Every member informs the secretariat of the possible addresses (post, fax, e-mail...) where documents concerning the activities of the Board can be sent and this by taking into account the necessary guarantees for confidentiality.

- Except for urgent cases, which are judged by the Chair, the invitation letters and the necessary documents must be sent to the members at least 5 working days before the meeting.

4.2.3. Meeting agendas

- The agenda is fixed by the secretariat.
- At the request of at least three active members, any item which falls under the responsibility of the Board shall be added to the agenda of the following meeting.

4.2.4. Attendance at the meetings

- The Chair opens and closes the meetings. He chairs the debates and possesses all the necessary powers for this task.

In case the Chair is prevented to fulfil his(her) duty, the meeting is chaired by the Deputy Chair.

In case the Chair and the Vice-Chair are prevented to fulfil their duty for all or part of a meeting, the Board appoints one of its members who temporarily chairs the meeting.

The Chair or the Deputy Chair / member, who chairs the meeting, is replaced by its deputy who will fulfil his task as a member of the Board.

- The Board may only proceed with its deliberations if at least one third of its active members or their deputies are present or represented and at least 3 of its active members or their deputies attend the meeting.

Each member can, for a particular session of the Board, have himself represented by another active member or deputy by giving him a proxy.

These proxies are limited to one for each member and shall be given to the Chair at the beginning of the session.

- If the quorum, as mentioned next to line 2 above, is not reached, the Chair can fix the date for another meeting, and may disregard the time period fixed in point 4.2.2 .
The Chair can, if the present members of the Board are unanimous, decide to call for a correspondence ballot.

After the second call, the Board may proceed with its deliberations whichever the number of present members.

- The Board may, if necessary, on the initiative of the Chair or one or more members, consult one or more experts or persons outside the Board and invite them to participate in the meetings on the points that concern them.

For the investigation of an assessment report, the Board may, if necessary, ask the presence of the lead assessor involved.

4.2.5. Voting procedure

- Only the active members or, if appropriate, their deputies are entitled to vote. The Chair has no voting right.
- A member of the Board who has taken part in the evaluation procedure, either as a lead or a technical assessor or as coordinator, can provide the necessary clarification in the discussion but cannot take part in the voting for this file.
A member of the Board who is connected with the assessed organisation will leave the session during the discussion and the voting.
- When the body applying for accreditation is placed under the direct responsibility of the FPS Economy, the members of the Board who represent the FPS Economy may take part in the discussion in order to bring the necessary clarifications, if necessary, but are not allowed to vote on the case.
- An abstention is not considered as a vote cast.
Decisions are taken on a simple majority of votes cast.
In the event of a tied vote, the Chair of the meeting shall have the casting vote.
- If necessary, voting is through a show of hands, unless a member requests the secret ballot procedure.
- For decision, the Board gives special consideration to the advice(s) of the Board member(s) who have specific competence for the concerned technical sector.

4.3. **Correspondence ballots**

4.3.1. Scope of Application:

A correspondence ballot will take place on the basis of a specific decision of the Board or on the initiative of the secretariat in urgent cases.

4.3.2. Transfer of documents.

The specific provisions in 4.2.2 apply.

4.3.3. Request for answers

- For every ballot, the way to answer is stipulated in function of the objective of the consultation and the degree of urgency. The answering form specifies these provisions.
- If the ballot must lead to decision-making, the answering form for that purpose shall:

- precise the point for which the member is invited to take position;
- propose the following answers:
 - agreement;
 - no agreement (this answer shall be justified);
 - abstention.
- give the possibility of comments. Comments do not have any influence on the formulated answer (agreement/ no agreement/abstention).

- As from the date of sending, the answer period cannot be shorter than:
 - 5 working days if the documents are send by e-mail;
 - 7 working days if the documents are send by surface mail.

4.3.4. Handling of answers

- The secretariat is responsible for handling the answers received after a correspondence ballot.
- If the process is meant to collect points of view, a synthesis document will be prepared and presented to the plenary meeting of the Board.
- If the process is meant for decision-making, only answers that have been received at the secretariat before the limit date will be taken into account.
- A decision is considered as valid if at least 6 of the active or deputy members have taken part. The provisions under 4.2.5 alinea 1, 2, 3 are applicable.

4.3.5. Information of the Board

The Board is systematically notified of the results of each consultation by correspondence.

5. SECRETARIAT

5.1. Tasks

The secretariat is responsible for:

- the preparation of the meetings of the Board and the implementation of the decisions;
- the management of the consultations by correspondence;
- the performance of any task delegated to it by the Board.

5.2. Documents

All documents submitted to the Board are sent in the form and language they are received by the secretariat. If, however, the secretariat should arrange for a translation, reference shall be made to the official version that fixed the valid version.

5.3. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of the Board are drafted

- in French and Dutch for the points of general interest;
- in the language of the file for the part that concerns a specific accreditation file.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

The activities, decisions and documents of the Board are strictly confidential. Every member signs a confidentiality statement.

Specific measures can be taken to use the information obtained through the representatives of the regulatory authorities who are members of the Board.
