

# Rules for Reference to Accreditation

Requirement FINAS V1/2024

06.02.2024



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## 1 Introduction

The national accreditation body, FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service, is responsible for accreditation in Finland and grants accreditation to applicants determined to be competent. Accredited activities can be identified by the accreditation symbol used by the competent body or when the competent body refers to accreditation in writing. Reference to the accreditation must always be used when reporting on activities falling under the scope of the accreditation. FINAS has drawn up these national rules for reference to accreditation; these are based on the requirements published by the international cooperation bodies European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and International Accreditation Forum Inc. (IAF), as well as on the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on environmental verifiers.

## 2 Entry into force

FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service confirms these rules by virtue of Act 920/2005 and its Amendment 764/2014 concerning the accreditation of conformity assessment services (testing, calibration, inspection and certification bodies, providers of proficiency testing and verification services and biobanking).

These rules (FINAS V1/2024) replace the corresponding previous rules (FINAS V1/2021) as of 06.02.2024 and remain in force until further notice.

Director

Katriina Luoma

Senior specialist

Annika Wickström

## 3 Definitions

### **FINAS logo**

Corporate logo used by FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service. A registered trademark.

### **FINAS accreditation symbol**

A symbol used by a body accredited by FINAS enabling the body to demonstrate its accredited activities.

### **Reference to accreditation**

Use of the accreditation symbol or an accreditation claim presented in writing.

### **EA (European co-operation for Accreditation)**

A cooperation organisation of European accreditation bodies in all fields of accreditation

### **ILAC (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation)**

An international cooperation organisation for accreditation bodies (field of accreditation consisting of laboratories and inspection bodies, proficiency testing providers, manufacturers of reference materials and biobanking)

### **IAF (International Accreditation Forum)**

An international cooperation organisation for accreditation bodies (field of accreditation consisting of certification bodies; certification of systems, products and personnel and verification)

## 4 Reference to Accreditation

### 4.1 FINAS logo

The right to use the FINAS logo is limited only to the accreditation body, FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service. The FINAS logo is either in black and white (black text with a grey circle) or two-coloured (blue text with a red circle).



The FINAS logo is a registered trademark.

## 4.2 FINAS accreditation symbol and its terms of use

Accredited bodies have the right to use the FINAS accreditation symbol, which consists of the FINAS logo (a registered trademark), the accredited body's identification number and a reference to the standard underlying the accreditation, as demonstrated in the example below. For more examples of use, see Appendix 1.



Accredited bodies must comply with this requirement FINAS V1, which describes the rules for reference to accreditation. Accredited bodies are responsible for appropriate and correct reference to accreditation. Accredited bodies must ensure that any references pertain only to activities within the scope of accreditation and are not misleading. Reference to accreditation must be made so as not to damage the reputation of FINAS or the reputation of the international recognition agreements (EA MLA, ILAC MRA and IAF MLA).

More detailed instructions for reference to accreditation in various applications, such as reports, certificates, letterheads and publicity materials, are given below.

A body with multiple accredited fields of activity may use its accreditation symbols separately or by combining more than one registration number under one FINAS logo. However, the combined FINAS accreditation symbol must not be used when reporting results, for example in a test report body uses the FINAS accreditation symbol related to testing field. FINAS provides the combined symbol for the accredited body upon request. Examples of combined symbols are given in Appendix 1.

## 4.3 Shape, adaptation and printing of the FINAS accreditation symbol

FINAS provides the accredited body with the FINAS accreditation symbol in connection with issuing the accreditation decision and later upon request. The accreditation symbol is delivered in electronic format. The accreditation symbol must be used in one colour only, but the colour may be chosen freely. An accredited body does not have the right to use the two-coloured FINAS logo as part of its own accreditation symbol.

When the size of the accreditation symbol is changed, its dimensions must remain unchanged. The size must remain large enough so that all texts are fully legible. The size and layout of the accreditation symbol must be proportionate to the body's own logo and other information to avoid giving the impression that the accredited body's documents are documents prepared by FINAS.

#### 4.4 Text references to accreditation

Using the FINAS accreditation symbol whenever referring to accreditation is recommended. When necessary, text references to accreditation are also possible. The text reference must include the name, field of activity and registration number of the accredited body, the accreditation organisation and the standard or other grounds underlying the accreditation. If the standard underlying the accreditation is both an international ISO standard, a European EN standard and a Finnish SFS standard, reference may be made to all of these as in the examples below.

When a text reference is used in connection with the results of activities, it shall read as follows:

*"[name of body] is a testing laboratory/calibration laboratory/inspection body / certification body/verifier organisation/proficiency testing provider/biobank No. T/K/I/S/VB/FI-V/PT/B [accreditation number] accredited by FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service, accreditation requirement [standard/regulation/guideline]."*

##### Examples

*Company Ltd, Laboratory is testing laboratory No. T999 accredited by FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service, accreditation requirement SFS-EN ISO/IEC 17025.*

*Body Ltd is certification body no. S999 accredited by FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service, accreditation requirement SFS-EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015.*

## 5 Where and how to refer to accreditation

### 5.1 General

Reference to accreditation may be made when there is a valid accreditation decision concerning the body in question and when the body meets the requirements for accreditation. No reference to accreditation may be made during the application phase. The accredited body is responsible for reference to accreditation and shall comply with the rules for reference to accreditation described in this document. Reference to accreditation may not be misleading.

Reference to accreditation may only be made for activities that fall within the scope of the accreditation. If only a part of the body's activities are accredited, reference to accreditation may only be made for the activities mentioned in the scope of accreditation.

If the FINAS accreditation symbol is used in a situation where not all sites and activities are accredited, the scope of accreditation must be communicated clearly, for example: "Information on the activities and locations with-in the scope of the accreditation will be provided upon request/is available at [www.finas.fi](http://www.finas.fi)." See also Section 5.2.1.

## 5.2 Reports and certificates

### 5.2.1 General rules

The FINAS accreditation symbol in certificates and reports is an indication of competence and provides the opportunity to benefit from the national and international prestige of accreditation. If a body fails to include a reference to accreditation in the certificates or reports it issues, it cannot refer to competence demonstrated by means of accreditation in the same context.

FINAS complies with the mandatory guideline EA-3/01. Guideline states that a conformity assessment body, i.e. the accredited body must refer to the accreditation when reporting the results of activities falling within the scope of accreditation.

- If accreditation is not mandatory according to the legislation, accredited body can agree or make documented arrangements with customer that there is no reference to the accreditation. In such a case, the body reporting the results must inform the client that the results are not included within the scope of the EA MLA, because a reference to the accreditation is not demonstrated in connection with the reporting of the results.
- These requirements also apply to biobanking. However, biobanking is not under EA MLA when this requirement FINAS V1 is published.
- An organization that certifies person, product, and management systems must always grant the certifications as accredited and refer to accreditation in them when the certification is part of the certification organization's scope of accreditation.

Where reference to accreditation is made in connection with results, the reports and certificates must indicate which results fall within the scope of accreditation and which do not. Accredited activities and results achieved under

accreditation must be clearly distinguishable if the same certificate also includes results and activities that are not accredited. Accredited activities can be indicated, for instance, by stating “accredited testing method” in connection with the results.

No reference to accreditation may be made if none of the results or activities reported fall within the scope of accreditation.

Reference to accreditation may not give the impression that FINAS is responsible for the results of testing, calibration, inspection, certification or biobank or the carrying out of proficiency testing programs, or for the opinions and interpretations formed on the basis of the results, nor may any impression be given that FINAS has approved the object under testing, calibration, inspection, certification or biobank, or the act of carrying out proficiency testing.

### **5.2.2 System certification and accredited results**

If an accredited body has been certified, the certification symbol may not be used in connection with the results of accredited activities. For instance, test reports and inspection certificates may not refer to the body’s system certification, because the reports and certificates are considered to be the bodies’ products.

### **5.2.3 Certification documents**

A reference to accreditation may not be used to give the impression that FINAS is responsible for the conformity to requirements, approval or certification of the product. For this reason, certification documents must indicate the body granting the certificate, the grounds for accreditation, and the body granting the accreditation.

### **5.2.4 Externally provided services**

An accredited body may acquire services provided for its clients as an externally provided service. Accreditation requirement standards describe the requirements for externally provided services and the reporting of results in more detail.

The accredited body may refer to the accreditation of the subcontractor in connection with results when the subcontractor has been accredited for the activities in question by FINAS or by an accreditation body covered by the same international recognition agreement (EA MLA or ILAC MRA or IAF MLA) as FINAS. When reporting results issued as an accredited body, the subcontractor must use its own accreditation symbol. In addition, the laboratory performing the calibration must always provide the client laboratory with a calibration certificate to indicate that the calibrations are traceable.

If the body uses non-accredited subcontractors, the results must clearly indicate that the results do not fall within the scope of the accreditation.

The body cannot refer to its own accreditation when reporting results if all the activities have been subcontracted.

#### 5.2.4.1 Externally provided services in laboratory activities

When results are reported, the subcontracted results must present the same information as the laboratory's own results. In addition to information associated with samples and results, the reports must identify the subcontractor laboratory that performed the testing or calibration and provide sufficient information about the accreditation of the methods used (the service provider's accreditation symbol and the name of the accreditation body). When results are transferred in electronic format in clinical laboratories, data can be disclosed to the client by other means.

The laboratory's own reports and certificates must not include subcontracted results that have been obtained from a third laboratory (subcontracting chains). Such results acquired from a third laboratory must be reported in a separate report which includes a reference to any accreditation of the laboratory that performed the tests (the subcontractor's accreditation symbol and the name of the accreditation body that has granted it).

#### 5.2.5 Field testing and calibration

In field testing and calibration, the FINAS accreditation symbol and a reference to the accreditation may be used in the same manner as during calibrations and testing carried out in permanent premises.

#### 5.2.6 Calibration certificates and labels

Calibration certificates must include a reference to the accreditation in order to demonstrate the traceability of the calibration.

A device's calibration details may be marked on the device or in its vicinity by means of a calibration label or in another manner. The calibration label may include the FINAS accreditation symbol as shown in Appendix 2. Calibration labels including the accreditation symbol may only be used in equipment that has been calibrated using an accredited calibration method. Calibration label may not give an invalid image that FINAS has approved or calibrated the equipment.

The label must minimum include the following:

- FINAS accreditation symbol

- Date of calibration

Including the identification data of the equipment and the name of the calibration laboratory and the number of calibration certificate in the label is optional. The size of the calibration label may be changed, provided that it remains legible. The client ordering the calibration is responsible for the use of calibration labels.

### **5.2.7 Labelling the object of inspection**

In addition to the inspection report and certificate, an inspection body may refer to the accreditation in connection with the results of an inspection by means of labelling the object of inspection. The label may include the FINAS accreditation symbol or a text reference to the accreditation. Labels containing an accreditation symbol or a written reference to accreditation may only be used for those items of inspection whose inspection is in a scope of accreditation. Inspection label may not give an invalid image that FINAS has approved or inspected the object. In addition, information about the identification data of the equipment, the date of inspection and number of inspection report can be added to the label.

### **5.2.8 Requirement for bodies certifying management systems, persons and products**

Bodies certifying management systems, persons and products must always issue the certificates with accreditation and include a reference to the accreditation if the certified activity falls within the scope for which the certification body is accredited.

## **5.3 Communications and marketing materials**

### **5.3.1 General rules**

The FINAS accreditation symbol and text references to accreditation may be used in communications associated with accredited activities following the same principles as presented in this document for references to accreditation in connection with results.

### **5.3.2 Publications and websites**

Accredited bodies may use the FINAS accreditation symbol and text references to accreditation on websites and in annual reports, publications, marketing materials, leaflets, tenders and contracts. The published materials must describe the accredited activities and make a clear distinction between accredited activities and other activities.

### 5.3.3 Form templates and letterheads

The accredited body's pre-printed forms and letterheads may include the FINAS accreditation symbol or a text reference to accreditation. When such forms are used, it must always be ensured that the text clearly indicates which parts of the activities fall within the scope of the accreditation.

### 5.3.4 Other uses

The accredited body must contact FINAS if it is necessary to use the FINAS accreditation symbol or a text reference to accreditation in a manner other than those described in this document.

## 5.4 Termination, withdrawal and suspension of accreditation

The body may choose to give up the accreditation, at which point its right to use the FINAS accreditation symbol will cease. An accreditation may be withdrawn upon a decision by FINAS. After the withdrawal, the body may no longer use the accreditation symbol or otherwise refer to the accreditation. Same principle is used when accredited body does not apply new accreditation period and accreditation expires on expiry date mentioned in accreditation decision.

An accreditation may be suspended for a specific period of time. The suspension may apply to the accredited body's activities in full or in part. During this time, the body may not refer to the accreditation in connection with activities subject to the suspension of accreditation. The body must immediately inform any of its clients using the activities subject to withdrawal or suspension. Where necessary, other restrictions will be agreed with FINAS.

## 6 Multilateral agreements for accreditation between EA, ILAC and IAF

### 6.1 General

FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service is a signatory to international agreements on multilateral recognition of accreditation. Such agreements have been concluded by the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), and International Accreditation Forum Inc. (IAF).

Bodies accredited by FINAS can indicate that their activities fall within the scope of these international agreements by using the international accreditation marks associated with the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA. The right to use the

marks may be applied from FINAS.

EA is currently preparing its EA MLA Mark.

## 6.2 EA MLA

Accreditation certificates issued by FINAS for laboratories, inspection bodies, proficiency testing providers, certification bodies and verifiers contain a reference to FINAS being a signatory to the multilateral agreement for accreditation (EA MLA) of the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA).

An accredited testing and calibration laboratory, inspection body, proficiency testing provider, certification body or verifier organisation may refer to the EA MLA in writing. The body must agree on the use of the EA MLA reference with FINAS so as to ensure that the body's accredited activities are included in the MLA. Referring is governed by the same rules as references to accreditation by FINAS. However, clients of accredited bodies cannot refer to the EA MLA.

A text reference to accreditation within the scope of the EA MLA must read as follows:

*“(toimijan nimi) on FINAS-akkreditointipalvelun akkreditoima testauslaboratorio / kalibrointilaboratorio / tarkastuslaitos / vertailumittausjärjestäjä / sertifiointiorganisaatio / todentaja T/K/I/PT/S/VB (akkreditointinumero, akkreditointivaatimus (standardi). Akkreditointi kuuluu European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) monenkeskiseen tunnustamissopimukseen EA MLA.”*

*“[Name of body] is a testing laboratory/calibration laboratory/inspection body/proficiency testing provider/certification body/verifier T/K/I/PT/S/VB [accreditation number] accredited by FINAS Finnish Accreditation Service, accreditation requirement [standard]. The accreditation is included in the Multilateral Agreement for accreditation (EA MLA) of the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA).”*

## 6.3 ILAC MRA Mark for testing, calibration, inspection and proficiency testing

An accredited laboratory, inspection body or proficiency testing provider that has obtained from FINAS the necessary right of use agreement may use the ILAC MRA Mark. The mark is used together with the FINAS accreditation symbol of the laboratory, inspection body or proficiency testing provider; when these two elements are combined, they form the ILAC MRA Mark of the laboratory, inspection body or proficiency testing provider. A model of the combined mark is shown in Appendix 1. For detailed instructions on use of the Mark, see ILAC R7:05/2015.

The mark may be used on testing reports, calibration certificates and inspection certificates and on forms, letters, advertisements, websites and other documents when the activities fall within the scope of accreditation and the ILAC MRA. The right to use the ILAC MRA Mark cannot be assigned to a third party; thus, the clients of the accredited body cannot use the ILAC MRA Mark. If necessary, the user of the ILAC MRA Mark must explain to the client that ILAC is not responsible for the results which the reference to accreditation concerns.

## 6.4 IAF MLA Mark for Certification organisations

IAF MLA Mark can be use when accredited certification body has made agreement with FINAS about use of IAF MLA Mark. IAF MLA Mark can be use in connection with certifications when the scope in certificate is part of IAF MLA scope of FINAS, like ISO /TS 22003-1. A model of the combined mark is shown in Appendix 1. For detailed instructions on the use of the Mark, see IAF ML2:2023.

- The IAF MLA mark is used together with the certification body's own FINAS accreditation symbol; when these two elements are combined, they form the IAF MLA Mark of the certification body
- The certification body's own FINAS accreditation symbol may be positioned under or in close proximity to the IAF MLA Mark
- IAF MLA Mark must use as black and white or in the colours Pantone 2747 (dark blue) and Pantone 299 (light blue)
- The Mark must stand out from the background and the Mark must be in a size which makes all the words clearly distinguishable. The width of the IAF MLA Mark must not be no less than 20 millimetres for printed media and 75 pixels for digital media.
- Accredited certification organization may use IAF MLA combined mark on certification body's preprinted letter forms, recruitment notices, advertisements and website where the certification body has accreditation to the IAF MLA main scope (e.g. ISO/IEC 17021-1) or main- and sub-scopes.

## 7 Users of accredited services

### 7.1 Clients of an accredited system certification body

A system certification client may refer to the accreditation only by using

documents proving the accredited certification, such as a certificate. The FINAS accreditation symbol or a text reference to accreditation must not be used in products.

## **7.2 Clients of an accredited product certification organisation**

Product certification clients may refer to the accreditation only by using documents proving the accredited certification, such as a certificate. The FINAS accreditation symbol or a text reference to accreditation must not be used in products.

## **7.3 Clients of an accredited body providing certification of persons**

Persons certified by a body providing certification of persons cannot use the FINAS accreditation symbol. A certified person may demonstrate the certification by means of a certificate issued by the accredited certification body.

## **7.4 Clients of accredited laboratories, inspection bodies, verifiers, proficiency testing providers and biobanks**

A client of a laboratory, inspection body, verifier, proficiency testing provider and biobanks may refer to the accreditation of the accredited body when reporting the results forward. In the event that a client transfers the results to their own reports or other documents, the manner of presenting the results requires the accredited body's consent.

The accredited body must inform its clients if they are observed using an erroneous reference to the accredited body's accreditation. In addition, the accredited body must take measures to ensure a correct reference to the accreditation.

## **8 Misuse**

Accredited bodies and other parties must refer to accreditation in compliance with the requirements described above. If a national or an international accreditation symbol or mark is misused or if a reference to accreditation is otherwise erroneous, FINAS – together with other parties – will take the necessary measures to prevent misuse. Misuse may also result in the withdrawal or suspension of accreditation.

## **9 References**

EA-3/01 M:2021 EA Conditions for the use of Accreditation Symbols, Logos

and other claims of accreditation and reference to EA MLA Signatory status

ILAC-P8:03/2019 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Supplementary Requirements for the Use of Accreditation Symbols and for Claims of Accreditation Status by Accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies

ILAC-R7:05/2015 Rules for the Use of the ILAC MRA Mark

IAF ML2:2023 General Principles on the Use of the IAF MLA Mark

SFS-EN ISO/IEC 17011:2017 Conformity assessment. Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies

## Appendix 1 Examples of accreditation symbols



The FINAS accreditation symbol of an accredited body consists of the FINAS logo above and the body's registration number centred under it. These are followed, in parentheses, by the abbreviated name of the standard or another requirement underlying the accreditation. The registration number may be one of the following types:

TXXX	testing laboratories
KXXX	calibration laboratories
IXXX	inspection bodies
SXXX	certification bodies
FI-V-000X	environmental verifiers
PTXX	proficiency testing providers
VBXX	verifiers
BXXX	biobanks

The registration number consists of a letter indicating the operating sector (T, K, I, S, FI-V, PT, VB or B), followed by a number marked here with X. The number is a serial number given by FINAS to the accredited body in the accreditation decision. The FINAS accreditation symbol of an inspection body also indicates the type of inspection body (A, B or C). In the international IAF MLA and ILAC MRA accreditation marks, the FINAS accreditation symbol is accompanied by an element referring to the international agreement for multi-lateral recognition of accreditation. The international identifier may be used by a party that has acquired a right of use.





## Appendix 2 Examples of calibration labels

The label must include the following:

- FINAS accreditation symbol
- Date of calibration

Including the identification data of the equipment and the name of the laboratory or the number of calibration number is optional.

The date of re-calibration will be entered by the client, or if so agreed by the client and the calibration laboratory, by the person performing the calibration. The date of re-calibration can be entered after the date of calibration.



## Changes from the previous version

06.02.2024

	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Change</b>
4	Reference to accreditation	Added biobanking
5	Where and how to refer to accreditation	Changed general rules of referencing. Added biobanking. Requirements of calibration and inspection labels are made more specific.
6	Multilateral agreements for accreditation between EA, ILAC and IAF	Procedures of IAF MLA Mark has been clarified.
7	Users of accredited services	Added biobanking
9	References	Updated
Appendix 1	Examples of accreditation marks	Added biobanking
Appendix 2	Examples of calibration labels	Example updated.