



METHODOLOGY

Surveillance Methodology

Continuous, evidence-led monitoring of accredited bodies
between full evaluation visits

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Accreditation is a continuing relationship, not a one-time event. This methodology describes how ICPA monitors accredited bodies between full evaluation visits to detect early warning signs, manage emerging risks, and inform the next full evaluation. The 2026 edition reflects a year of public consultation, peer review, and alignment with the International Standard for Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies (ISO/IEC 17011:2017) and the International Education Standards (IES) framework. It supersedes all prior editions and remains in force until the next biennial revision.

1. Why surveillance

Surveillance closes the gap between five-year evaluation visits. It provides ICPA, the public, and the accredited body itself with a continuous view of the body's standing against the PSF.

2. Annual return

Each accredited body completes an annual return covering: candidate numbers, examination outcomes and breach rates, disciplinary outcomes, complaints volume and themes, credential-revocation counts, key governance changes, and any material legal or regulatory developments.

3. Public-source monitoring

ICPA monitors publicly available information about each accredited body: regulatory actions, court decisions, media reporting, and stakeholder communications. Monitoring is conducted by the Surveillance Office on a rolling quarterly basis and triggered off-cycle by significant events.

4. Risk-based intervention

Each body is assigned a risk rating — green, amber, or red — at the close of each annual return. Ratings drive intervention intensity:

- Green — light-touch annual return only

- Amber — quarterly check-in calls and targeted documentation review
- Red — out-of-cycle thematic visit and time-bound remediation plan

5. Confidentiality and publication

Individual surveillance findings are confidential between ICPA and the body. Aggregate surveillance data — for example, the distribution of risk ratings across the accredited population — is reported in the Annual Report.

6. Escalation to formal action

Where surveillance findings cannot be remediated within agreed timelines, the matter is escalated to the Accreditation Board for possible formal action including conditions, suspension, or withdrawal. Such decisions remain subject to the Appeals and Complaints Procedure.

Approved by	Head, ICPA Surveillance Office
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