



Working towards
a global
responsible
coal supply chain

Lead Assessor Approval Process & Criteria

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Bettercoal Lead Assessor Approval Process & Criteria

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1. Introduction

1.1 Principles

Bettercoal Assessments are governed by quality and consistency. These are key to Bettercoal being a credible counterpart for all its stakeholders, both internal and external. To achieve this, Bettercoal Assessments must be conducted by individuals of the highest calibre with an in-depth understanding of the Bettercoal Code, Assessment Process and procedures.

Given these requirements and the fact that Bettercoal is unlikely to be running many Assessments per annum (20 maximum), Bettercoal will approve individual Lead Assessors rather than companies as *Bettercoal Approved Lead Assessors* (Lead Assessors). Individuals selected as part of an assessment team who are not Lead Assessors will not automatically become approved Bettercoal Assessors, however they will have to undertake at least one Bettercoal training module and sign a Confidentiality Agreement. Lead Assessors will be responsible for putting together the appropriate team of assessors for each Assessment and are accountable for the entire Bettercoal Assessment of a Bettercoal Supplier. Companies are welcomed to provide services to Bettercoal, but Bettercoal will have to ensure that individuals put forward for Assessments meet the criteria and qualifications mentioned in section 4.2.

Where possible, Bettercoal has developed the Lead Assessor qualification process following the principles of ISEAL's Code of Good Practice: Assuring Compliance with Social and Environment Standards Version 2.0 ([the ISEAL Assurance Code](#)).

The criteria for approval and Bettercoal's expectations of performance of Lead Assessors are outlined below. While Bettercoal approves Lead Assessors to conduct Bettercoal Assessments, Bettercoal does not purport to operate as an accreditation body.

Bettercoal will publish a list of approved Lead Assessors on the Bettercoal website and shall regularly review this list to keep it up to date. Bettercoal will only select Lead Assessors from this list to conduct all parts of the Bettercoal Supplier Assessment Process.

1.2 Supporting References

The following documents provide additional information to assist with the Assessment Process:

- Bettercoal Lead Assessor Application Form
- Bettercoal Lead Assessor Allocation Procedures

Bettercoal Code and Assessments Process:

- Bettercoal Code Version 1.1
- Bettercoal Assessment Manual (*July 2018*)
- Bettercoal Self-Assessment Questionnaire
- Bettercoal Claims and Log Use Guide (*July 2018*)
- Bettercoal Complaints Mechanism

These are publicly available on www.bettercoal.org.



2. Assessor Roles & Responsibilities¹

The roles and responsibilities of Lead Assessors and Assessors in the Supplier Assessment Process include but are not limited to:

- Engage with an assigned Bettercoal Supplier throughout the Assessment Process (Lead Assessor)
- Assess Bettercoal Suppliers against the requirements of the Bettercoal Code (All Assessors)
- Recommend actions for improvement to Bettercoal Suppliers (Lead Assessor)
- Prepare Assessment Plans, Assessment Reports and Continuous Improvement Plans for the Bettercoal Secretariat, Bettercoal Suppliers and Members (Lead Assessor)
- Put together a team for the Assessment covering all the skills and competences required including language and country experience or work with the team put together by the Bettercoal Secretariat (Lead Assessor)
- Carry out follow-up reviews of progress against milestones and timelines as defined in the Continuous Improvement Plan (Lead Assessor)
- Participate in mandatory training modules provided by Bettercoal (All Assessors)
- Engage with Members participating as Observers during the Assessment Process (All Assessors)
- Be ultimately responsible for the submission on time of the Assessment Report and Continuous Improvement Plan (Lead Assessors).

More information and guidance on the Supplier Assessment Process can be found in the Bettercoal Assessment Manual.

3. Approval Process

Bettercoal accepts applications from individual Assessors operating anywhere around the world. The five general steps that are part of the Bettercoal Approval Process are outlined below:



Each of these steps is detailed further in chapters 4-7 below.

Vital to managing the Supplier Assessment Process is the online Bettercoal Platform, a tool exclusively for the Secretariat, Members, Bettercoal Suppliers and Lead Assessors. The Platform provides access to all the information and data relating to Bettercoal Supplier Assessments, as well as:

- Centralized and automated processes for Bettercoal Suppliers to complete the Bettercoal Self-

¹ This section is aligned with chapter 2.5 of the Assessment Manual and may be subject to change following approval of the Manual in July 2018.



Assessment, upload policies and documents, and communicate directly and effectively with Bettercoal Assessors and Members

- Automated and efficient data collection and interpretation Lead Assessors
- Standardised Assessment tools and processes shared with Lead Assessors, Bettercoal Suppliers and Members.

The approval process takes place outside of the Bettercoal Platform. However, the allocation of a Lead Assessor to a Bettercoal Supplier will mainly take place on the Bettercoal Platform (see Bettercoal Lead Assessor Allocation Procedures).

4. Application

4.1 Who can Apply

Individual Assessors

Individual Assessors can apply provided they can demonstrate the appropriate level of expertise and qualifications. We encourage individual applications as Bettercoal will provide training on the Bettercoal Code and the Assessment Process.

Companies

Companies can also apply provided they can demonstrate they have the right resources within their team fulfilling the required skills. Bettercoal will only approve companies that can demonstrate that they have all the skills in-house or the willingness to partner with approved Bettercoal Lead Assessors. Bettercoal will approve individual Lead Assessors within a company and will agree on a case-by-case basis to the composition of the proposed Assessment Team.

4.2 How to Apply

Applicants must complete the Bettercoal Lead Assessor Application Form. Reference documentation should be supplied as supporting evidence for the claims and responses provided in the application form. The application form can be found on the Bettercoal website.

Application forms must be completed in English. Only electronic submission will be accepted. Any additional relevant documentation must be submitted with the completed form to: assessors@bettercoal.org.

Bettercoal will acknowledge receipt of the application upon its arrival and endeavour to respond to applicant within one (1) month of their application.

4.3 Confidentiality

Any information submitted by applicants in respect of Bettercoal Approval will be kept strictly confidential by Bettercoal and will be used solely for the purposes of assessing the applicant's application for Approval. Bettercoal is an equal opportunity employer.



4.4 Conflict of Interest

Bettercoal understands and accepts that Lead Assessors and Companies may be in a position to provide services to Bettercoal Suppliers to help them implement aspects of their Continuous Improvement Plan. Whilst we will not prevent Lead Assessors from providing services to Bettercoal Suppliers they have assessed, we will ask that these services be disclosed to Bettercoal. Bettercoal will determine if this constitutes a conflict of interest for re-assessment.

5. Verification

5.1 Documentation Review

The Bettercoal Secretariat shall conduct a review of the application documents against the Lead Assessors Skills and Competencies Criteria and provide a report to the applicant. Approval will not proceed until all supporting documentation has been received. Bettercoal may seek additional information from the application where required.

5.2 Lead Assessor Criteria

Lead Assessors must, at a minimum, fulfil the following requirements:

- **Independence:** Lead Assessors and their teams must be completely independent financially and otherwise from the assessed (Bettercoal Supplier). In particular, the Lead Assessor cannot have provided services for the assessed related to the design, establishment or implementation practices related to any of the areas covered by the Code for a period of at least 18 months prior to the engagement.
- **Competencies:** The Lead Assessor and their team must collectively possess the skills, knowledge and track record required to competently perform the Assessment across the subject matter of the Bettercoal Code, including social, ethical and environmental criteria (see Table 1 for further details).

Bettercoal will only allocate a Lead Assessor to a Bettercoal Supplier if they are satisfied that the Lead Assessor and the team they put together possess the necessary skills and competencies, including, but not limited to:

Table 1: Lead Assessor Skills and Competencies Criteria

Core Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ethical conduct ▪ Fair presentation ▪ Due professional care ▪ Independence ▪ Evidence-based approach ▪ Integrity
Personal Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to apply knowledge and skills ▪ Improvement of competencies ▪ Specialist knowledge, experience, and competence in assessment skills and techniques ▪ Ability to apply reporting and assessment practices and standards



	<p>Experience in the local (regional) context of the mine in question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report writing skills (a sample will be requested as part of the qualification)
Subject Matter Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least 10 years of experience ▪ Knowledge of and experience in the coal mining industry ▪ Knowledge of and experience in business ethics, human and labour rights, and social and environmental management ▪ Experience in engagement of external stakeholders, in particular local communities, Indigenous Peoples and tribal groups ▪ Knowledge of and experience in HSSE ▪ Knowledge of local context, including social, economic, political, and cultural considerations <p>This subject matter expertise shall be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Successful completion of an academic degree related to any of the above subject areas (e.g., coal mining, environmental science, anthropology, or human rights studies); and/or ▪ Successful completion of an industry-recognised or accredited audit training course related to any of the above subject areas (e.g., SA8000, ISO14001, 19001, OHSAS18001, RJC Code of Practices or other); and ▪ Demonstrated site audit experience related to at least one of the above listed areas of expertise in the past two years.
Country Expertise	Demonstrated experience operating in Bettercoal focus countries as well as main coal exporting countries across the globe
Language Skills	Demonstrated language proficiency in one or more Bettercoal focus countries or main coal exporting country.
Medical Fitness	Should be physically fit to be in a mining environment (including presence in underground mines) in line with HSSE requirements from mining companies

Skills not possessed by the Lead Assessor should be supplemented by their proposed assessment team. Assessors who are not Lead Assessors shall also follow mandatory Bettercoal training module(s) to ensure that they have understanding of the Bettercoal Code and Assessment Process. For more information, see chapter 7.

7. Approval

7.1 Approval by Bettercoal

The Secretariat will notify the Lead Assessor as to whether their application has been successful or not. More information on the Lead Assessor allocation and selection process can be found in the Bettercoal Lead Assessor Allocation Procedures.



7.2 Lead Assessor Rates

Bettercoal provides an indicative rate card for Lead Assessors (see Table 2 below). This was developed by looking at average rates in the industry, average consultancy rates and average rates of current Bettercoal Approved Assessment Bodies who have completed Bettercoal Site-Assessments.

Bettercoal Lead Assessors will be expected to charge no more than these rates. Value for money is important and when selecting Lead Assessors, and Bettercoal will look at both technical and commercial criteria.

Table 2: Bettercoal Lead Assessor 2018 Rate Card

	Type of Work	Maximum Rate (€) inclusive of VAT		Maximum Rate (£) inclusive of VAT	
		Hourly	Daily	Hourly	Daily
Lead Assessors	Desktop Review	130		120	
	Travel (over 4 hours)		500		450
	Field work (low-medium risk countries ²)		1,250		1,150
	Field work (high – very high-risk countries)		1,400		1,250

7.3 Bettercoal Supplier Rejection of a Lead Assessor

A Bettercoal Supplier may reject the allocated Lead Assessor provided they can give just cause. The acceptable motives for rejection are as below:

Conflict of interest: should the Bettercoal Supplier have had prior contact with the Lead Assessor prior to the Assessment and feel that this could lead to a conflict of interest, they can inform the Secretariat who will allocate another Lead Assessor.

7.4 Validity of Bettercoal Approval

Once approved, the Lead Assessor’s details (name and company if appropriate) will be posted on the Bettercoal website as well as on the Bettercoal Platform, which will include CVs and qualifications, subject to further training requirements as outlined in chapter 7.

Bettercoal Approval is valid for four (4) years. Bettercoal reserves the right to suspend or revoke Approval during this period where Lead Assessors do not carry out their duties appropriately or otherwise impair the quality and credibility of Bettercoal or are the object of Bettercoal Supplier and/or Member complaints (see section 10.2).

² As defined by Control Risks - <https://www.internationalosos.com/risk-outlook>



7.5 Appeals and Complaints

If Approval is not approved or has been suspended or revoked, the Applicant will be advised of the reasons for the decision. A further application can be considered by Bettercoal at a later date, where an Applicant is able to address the identified issues.

All appeals and complaints can be directed to Bettercoal in accordance with the [Bettercoal Complaints Mechanism](#).

8. Training

In addition to meeting the selection criteria (Chapter 4), prospective Bettercoal Lead Assessors will need to undertake additional training on the Bettercoal Code and Assessment Process to become approved. Any other Assessor joining an assessment team will also need to undertake at least one Bettercoal training module.

Training shall be coordinated by Bettercoal and may cover some or all the following topics:

- Bettercoal Code
- Bettercoal Supplier Assessment Process
- Topic and sector specific modules
- Refresher modules and updates as required.

Training shall be offered primarily online via electronic learning tools or through the Bettercoal Platform. For more information contact: info@bettercoal.org.

9. Publication

The names of Lead Assessors that meet the selection criteria and have completed mandatory Bettercoal training, will be added to a publicly available list of Bettercoal Approved Lead Assessors on the Bettercoal website.

10. Updates and Reviews

10.1 Quality Control

Over time, Lead Assessors and/or Assessment Reports submitted to Bettercoal may be subject to impromptu witness assessments and reviews by independent peers assigned by Bettercoal as part of Bettercoal's quality control processes. The findings of the quality checks and reviews may prompt the need for refresher training and/or the implementation of other Bettercoal controls designed to maintain the credibility of the Bettercoal Supplier Assessment Process.

10.2 Suspension and Loss of Bettercoal Approval

Bettercoal Approval may be suspended or revoked if the quality of Assessments is compromised or the Approval Criteria (chapter 4.2) cease to be complied with. This includes potential



misconduct of Lead Assessors which contravenes the basic principles as identified by ISO 19011:2011.

- **Ethical Conduct:** the foundation of professionalism. Trust, integrity, confidentiality and discretion are essential to all Assessments and audits. This includes the prohibition of bribery, gifts and/or facilitation payments.
- **Fair presentation:** the obligation to report truthfully and accurately. Findings, conclusions and reports reflect truthfully and accurately the Bettercoal Supplier's practices.
- **Due professional care:** the application of diligence and judgement in Assessments. Assessors exercise competence and care in accordance with the importance of the task they perform, and the confidence placed in them by Bettercoal and the Bettercoal Supplier.
- **Independence:** the basis for the impartiality of the Assessment and objectivity of the Assessment conclusions. Assessors are independent of the activity being assessed and are free from bias and conflict of interest.
- **Evidence based approach:** the rational method for reaching reliable and reproducible conclusion in a systemic Assessment Process. Assessors maintain an objective state of mind throughout the Assessment Process to ensure that the findings and conclusions will be based only on the Objective Evidence.
- **Integrity:** real or perceived conflict of interests. Assessors cannot have or cannot be perceived to have any conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest may arise from personal, financial, business, employment, and other relationships which the assessors have with the company being assessed.

Misconduct of Lead Assessors against the above principles or Bettercoal's requirements for Lead Assessors will result in a temporary suspension period, during which time the Lead Assessor's details will be removed from the Bettercoal website.

The Lead Assessor will be asked to demonstrate to the Bettercoal Secretariat, via corrective action or other action requested by Bettercoal, that the issues which led to the suspension have been resolved. If Bettercoal is satisfied with the Lead Assessor's response, the suspension can be lifted, and the Lead Assessors details re-added to the Bettercoal website.