

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Responsible Jewellery Council

RJC Member Certification First Step – Self Assessment

Please contact:
training@responsiblejewellery.com
if you have any questions
[Click here](#) for the RJC Team Contacts
on our website



Responsible
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What is a Self Assessment

In the first step towards Certification, Members carry out a Self Assessment of their organisation and its Facilities. A Self Assessment is like an internal audit or a pre-assessment to review your performance against the provisions of the Code of Practices, prior to engaging with the auditor. The Self Assessment enables Members to:

- Define the Certification Scope, by identifying those parts of their business which actively contribute to the diamond and/or gold Jewellery supply chain.
- Review their business practices against the requirements of the RJC System. This provides the opportunity to identify any areas of non-conformance and address them *in advance* of auditing.
- Assemble the relevant information to enable the Auditor(s) to work efficiently and effectively.

If you did not conduct Self Assessments, audits would be more time consuming, expensive, and have a much greater likelihood of finding non-conformances.

Please note that the RJC Management Team does not receive Self Assessments from Members, and will only receive a Certification Recommendation and Summary Report from the Accredited Auditor.

What is the Scope of the Certification?

The Certification Scope is defined by the Member, and must cover all Facilities that are:

- Owned or controlled by Members; and
- Actively contribute to the diamond and/or gold jewellery supply chain.

Any Facility or business activity that meets both of these criteria **MUST** be included in the Certification Scope. These Facilities will be detailed on the RJC website next to a Member's Certification Status.

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Are franchise businesses, licensees or contractors included in the Certification Scope?

All businesses operating under the Control of the Member, including franchisees and licensees, must be included in the scope. "Control" is defined in the RJC Glossary as:

1. Direct or indirect ownership, or Control (alone or pursuant to an agreement with other Members) of 50% or more of the voting equities/rights (or equivalent) of the controlled business or Facility; and/or
2. Direct or indirect (including pursuant to an agreement with other Members) power to remove, nominate or appoint at least half of the members of the Board of the directors or management (or equivalent of the controlled business or Facility; and/or
3. Day-to-day or executive management of the controlled business or Facility; or
4. Any legally recognised concept of 'Control' analogous to those described in (1) to (2) above in a relevant jurisdiction.

If you retain control of the franchisees or licensees in one or more of the ways described above then they should be included in the Certification Scope.

Contractors that do not fall under the "Control" of the Member as defined above are not included in the Certification Scope.

Are contractors included in the Certification Scope for the Code of Practices?

No, unless they work on the Member's premises. Under COP 4.3.2, Contractors working on Member's Facilities are required to comply with the Member's management and operating systems relevant to the Code of Practices.

References:

COP 4.3 Business Partners on Page 100 of the Standards Guidance. This details the issue background, key regulations and suggested management approach. Questions 138-141 in the Assessment Questions details evidence the Auditor will look for.

We are starting the Self Assessment - what should we do first?

Review the Core System Documents and take advantage of the free training for RJC Members.

The RJC Certification Handbook provides an overview of the RJC System and the requirements for achieving certification; this is a good document to review first. The following documents will assist you on working through the Self Assessment:

- The RJC Assessment Manual, which provides instructions for Members and Auditors in conducting Assessments.
- The Assessment Workbook, which provides forms and detailed questions used in the carrying out of Assessments, and
- The Standards Guidance, which provides information and advice about the Code.

The RJC Core System Documents are available to download from: <http://www.responsiblejewellery.com/quick-downloads/rjc-certification-system-documents/>

Training is available for RJC Members – please contact training@responsiblejewellery.com for a copy of the latest training schedule.

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What is the Code of Practices?

The Code of Practices is designed to be applicable to all Sectors in the Diamond and/or Gold Jewellery supply chain. It establishes the objective and verifiable standards against which RJC Members may be certified. The provisions of the Code are based on national and international law, established international and industry standards, and responsible business practice.

The Scope of the Code of Practices captures the following elements, to contribute to Sustainable Development:

- **Business Ethics:** – upholding ethical business practices.
- **Human Rights and Social Performance:** – upholding fundamental human rights, treating workers and communities fairly and with respect, encouraging a diverse workforce, and provision of a safe working environment.
- **Environmental Performance:** – promoting efficient use of resources and energy, protecting biodiversity and reducing and preventing pollution.
- **Management Systems:** – compliance with applicable law, assessing impacts and benefits, establishing policy, and managing business risks including contractors, suppliers and partners

How do I use the Assessment Workbook?

The RJC Assessment Workbook is a tool for documenting your Self Assessment, and provides you with the Assessment Questions laid out in an Excel spreadsheet, with additional guidance on Objective Evidence. The Assessment Workbook has been provided in both Excel 2003 and 2007 Versions.

The workbook has macros, which when used, removes those provisions and associated questions not applicable for the Member Forum.

- You can download the document from our website: <http://www.responsiblejewellery.com/quick-downloads/rjc-certification-system-documents/>
- Once downloaded the document will open and you can save it on your computer
- When you open the document please enable macros
- Select your relevant sectors of business on the contact details tab
- On the assessment questions tab select "List Relevant Requirements Only". This will then remove any non-applicable questions

Accredited Auditors use the same Assessment Questions.

How can I use the Standards Guidance Document?

The RJC Standards Guidance document provides background on the intent of each provision in the Code of Practices and includes a suggested management approach to support conformance. The suggested approach generally includes:

- Carrying out a risk assessment to understand relevance to your business (a template for a risk assessment is included in the Guidance)
- Setting out roles and responsibilities for personnel to implement the provisions
- Policies and procedures to clarify how the provision will be implemented;
- Record keeping; and Training.

These are only suggestions and Members may of course adopt different management approaches, appropriate to their own business and circumstances. The key is to have an effective approach in place. Auditors will look for evidence that the approach used by the business can consistently deliver the requirement of the standard.

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Can I attend Training?

The RJC has developed training modules which provide an overview of the RJC system, and guidance on implementing management systems, carrying out self assessments, preparing for verification assessments, and key issues for different sectors along the supply chain. Training sessions are run each week and for further details please contact: training@responsiblejewellery.com

What are the timelines for RJC Members to achieve certification?

Membership type	Certification Timeline
RJC Members with mining Facilities	31 st December 2012.
New Members	Two years from the date of joining the council

Disciplinary proceedings may be commenced against Members who do not meet this timetable. After a Member has become RJC certified for the first time, the ongoing frequency of verification assessments for re-certification will be every 3 years (or within 1 year if a Major Non-Conformance was found and Certification granted on the basis of a Corrective Action Plan in place).

What evidence can I use to support that we meet the requirements?

A rating of performance must be based on relevant Objective Evidence. Objective Evidence is typically based on interviews, examination of documents, observation of activities and conditions, existing results of measurements or tests, or other means within the scope of the assessment and specifically relevant to the requirement.

Objective Evidence must meet all of the following:

- Relevant to the time period for the scope of the assessment;
- Relevant to what is being assess or verified;
- Traceable
- Clear and unambiguous

Examples of evidence include, but are not limited to:

- Organisational charts, outlining structure, responsibilities and authorities ;
- Details describing the Member's products and processes;
- Legal permits, licences or other authorisations and related documents and correspondence;
- Reviews of previous assessments;
- Audit reports from relevant Certifications under other recognised systems;
- Risk assessment registers

Further information on objective evidence can be found on Page 7 of the Assessment Manual.

How much evidence do I need?

The process of collecting Objective Evidence for an assessment, whether by the Member or the Auditor, will require that some level of sampling be applied. This might be a sample of documentation and records, interviewing a representative selection of personnel, or observing the key functions. Sample methods need to ensure that representative samples are used and not biased in some way.

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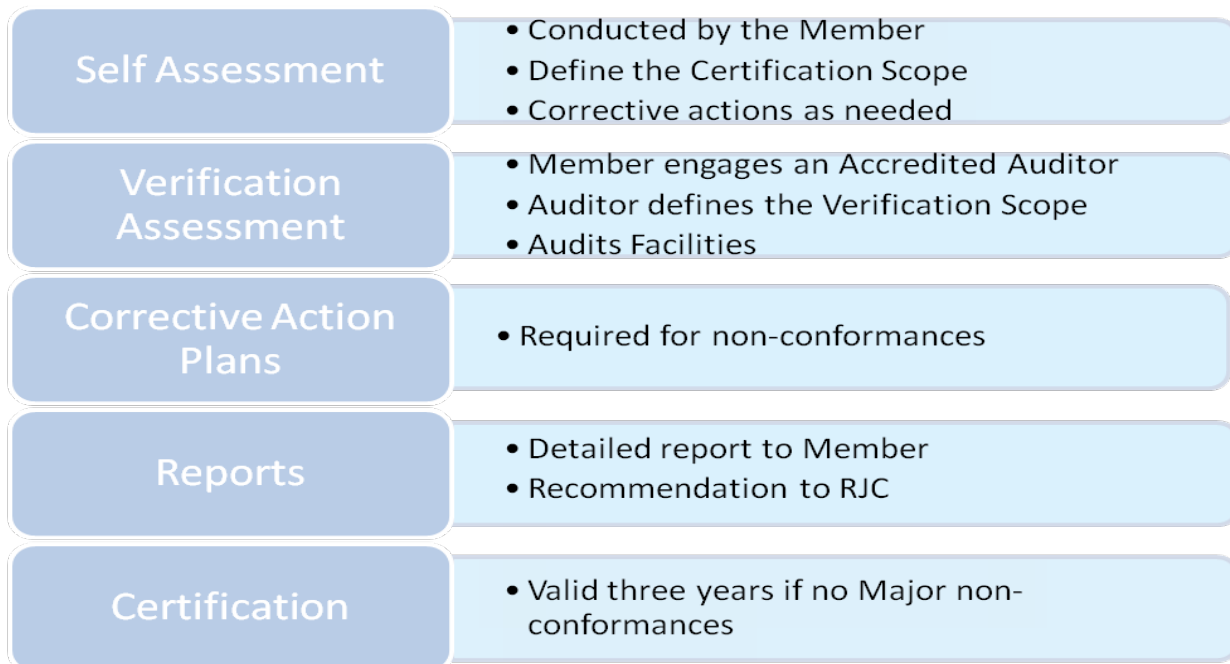
Ultimately, the sample must be enough to objectively support conformance or non-conformance with a requirement. The size of the sample, particularly in relation to the total population, will naturally influence the confidence in the audit results. The sample size needs to be sufficient to provide a reasonable level of confidence that it is representative of the larger group. For example, one guideline is to sample the square root of the total relevant records. However for large numbers of consistent records, a much smaller sample may be sufficient. Sampling should be carried out to access enough evidence to verify that systems and process are in place and are effective.

How long will it take to complete a Self Assessment?

The Self Assessment is carried out internally by the Member to evaluate their own performance against the requirements of the Code of Practices. The time required to complete a Self Assessment will depend on the nature, scale and level of complexity of the Member’s business. You should approach the Self Assessment in a way that you consider the most efficient and effective, based on your company’s individual needs and circumstances. The more time spent conducting an effective Self Assessment will enable the Auditors to work more efficiently and effectively. RJC Members have two years after they join the Council to become Certified. RJC recommends Members begin the Self Assessment process soon after they join.

The RJC does provide guidance on the time required to conduct an effective Verification Assessment. This guidance can be found on page 21 of the Assessment Manual

What are the Steps to Achieving RJC Certification?



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1. **Assign a Coordinator to oversee the Self Assessment** – Depending on the nature and complexity of your business, it may be appropriate to assemble several people to assist the coordinator in planning and conducting the self assessment.
2. **Attend RJC's Free Online Training for Members** – A recorded Introduction to the RJC is available on the website <http://www.responsiblejewellery.com/certification/training> and this is a good introduction to the RJC Training.
3. **Communicate the Purpose and Nature of the Self Assessment** – To key employees as appropriate. This will help develop internal support and avoid confusion or delays as the Self Assessment is carried out.
4. **Review the Core System Documents** - Start with the [RJC Certification Handbook](#) for an overview of the requirements for achieving RJC Certification.
5. **Define your Certification Scope** – This covers all Facilities that are owned or controlled by the Member; and actively contribute to the diamond and/or gold jewellery supply chain.
6. **Conduct your Self Assessment** - A Self Assessment is like an internal audit and prepares your business for the Verification Assessment (Third Party Audit). RJC's [Self Assessment Workbook](#) guides you through the process step by step.
7. **Review the Standards Guidance Document** – If you are wondering how to conform to a provision of the Code, refer to the [Standards Guidance](#) which gives you background information and a suggested management approach for each of the provisions for the Code.
8. **Address any non-conformances that you find during your Self Assessment** – Consider adopting the Suggested Management Approaches detailed in the [Standards Guidance](#) document.
9. **Engage an RJC Accredited Auditor** – When you are nearing completion of your Self Assessment contact the [RJC Accredited Auditors](#) to discuss audit timing and cost.
10. **Submit your Self Assessment to the Auditor** – When you are ready, submit your Self Assessment to the Auditor you have engaged and request a Verification Assessment (Third Party Audit).
11. **Prepare and Implement a Corrective Action Plan** – To address any non-conformances found by the Auditor during the Verification Assessment.
12. **Achieve Certification!**

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