



Global AI  
Certification Council



# ISO/IEC 42001

## LEAD AUDITOR CERTIFICATION

Examination Content Outline  
February 2026

Global AI Certification Council  
(GAICC)

## Examination Content Outline

GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor · February 2026

Standards: ISO/IEC 42001:2023 and ISO 19011:2018

Developed in alignment with ISO/IEC 17024

# The Credential at a Glance

**60 questions**

90 minutes · Examination

**32 hours**

Structured LA training

**32 CPDs**

Every 3 years · Renewal

|                          |                                                                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Credential</b>        | GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor Certification (LA)                        |
| <b>Issued by</b>         | Global AI Certification Council (GAICC)                                    |
| <b>Standards</b>         | ISO/IEC 42001:2023 (AIMS) and ISO 19011:2018 (auditing management systems) |
| <b>Examination</b>       | 60 questions (55 scored + 5 pre-test)   90 minutes   70% pass mark         |
| <b>Scope of practice</b> | First-, second- and third-party audits of AIMS implementations             |
| <b>Validity</b>          | 3 years   32 CPD hours per cycle                                           |
| <b>Contact</b>           | support@gaicc.org   www.gaicc.org                                          |

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# 1 Introduction

The Global AI Certification Council (GAICC) offers a professional certification for artificial-intelligence governance and compliance specialists known as the GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor Certification (LA).

This credential validates a practitioner's competence to plan, conduct, report, and follow up audits of an Artificial Intelligence Management System (AIMS) in accordance with ISO/IEC 42001:2023 — the first international standard for responsible AI governance.

The Lead Auditor certification demonstrates applied proficiency in evaluating an organisation's AIMS across its entire lifecycle — examining policy, AI-risk and impact assessments, lifecycle controls, data-governance mechanisms, monitoring, and continual-improvement processes for conformity and effectiveness.

GAICC develops and administers its certifications in alignment with ISO/IEC 17024 (Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons) to ensure impartiality, transparency, and validity. Each GAICC examination is competency-based, derived from global practice analyses, and psychometrically validated to reflect the real-world responsibilities of AI-governance auditors across industries and jurisdictions.

## This Examination Content Outline (ECO) defines:

- 01 The domains of competence required of a certified Lead Auditor
- 02 The tasks and enabling activities that demonstrate capability within each domain
- 03 The relative weighting of each domain in the overall assessment

The LA examination evaluates knowledge and skills needed to perform first-, second-, and third-party audits of AIMS implementations — from audit-programme planning and evidence sampling to evaluation of risk, performance, ethics, and continual improvement.

Questions are authored and validated by global subject-matter experts from government, academia, and industry to ensure accuracy, fairness, and international applicability. Each item maps directly to this ECO and references authoritative sources, including ISO/IEC 42001, GAICC Guidance Documents, and companion ISO standards such as ISO 9001, ISO/IEC 27001 and ISO/IEC 27701.

## 2 Exam Content Outline

The GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor Certification (LA) examination measures a candidate's ability to apply the principles, clauses, and controls of ISO/IEC 42001:2023 when planning, conducting, reporting, and following up audits of an Artificial Intelligence Management System (AIMS).

The outline below defines the major domains of professional competence and the approximate weighting of questions from each domain on the examination. Each domain contains a group of **tasks** — the core responsibilities expected of a Lead Auditor — and associated **enablers**, which illustrate the knowledge, behaviours, and artefacts demonstrating capability.

### Domains and Weightings

| Domain                                                       | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Weight      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>I. Governance and Leadership in AI Management Systems</b> | Evaluating how the organisation defines AIMS scope, governance structures, leadership roles, and policy direction in alignment with ISO/IEC 42001 requirements and organisational strategy.                 | 25%         |
| <b>II. Audit of Implementation and Operational Control</b>   | Assessing how the AIMS has been implemented and operated — verifying AI-risk and impact assessments, data-governance and lifecycle-control mechanisms, and adequacy of documented procedures and records.   | 40%         |
| <b>III. Performance Evaluation and Continual Improvement</b> | Auditing monitoring and measurement processes, internal-audit programmes, management reviews, and corrective-action systems to confirm the AIMS achieves continual improvement and certification readiness. | 20%         |
| <b>IV. Ethics, Transparency, and External Engagement</b>     | Evaluating integration of responsible-AI principles, explainability and transparency practices, and mechanisms for stakeholder communication and reporting.                                                 | 15%         |
| <b>Total</b>                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>100%</b> |

## 3 Domains, Tasks and Enablers

In the LA framework, a **domain** represents a major area of professional competence required to evaluate, verify, and report on an organisation's AIMS. Each domain comprises **tasks** — the measurable responsibilities of a Lead Auditor in planning, conducting, and reporting audits — and **enablers**, examples of tangible evidence, behaviours, or actions that demonstrate these competencies in practice.

Enablers are illustrative rather than exhaustive, allowing flexibility across industries, audit scopes, and organisational maturity levels.

# Domains I and II

## Domain I Governance and Leadership in AI Management Systems

≈ 25%

**Purpose:** To evaluate how leadership demonstrates commitment, policy direction, and accountability so that the organisation's use of artificial intelligence aligns with its strategic goals, ethical values, and legal obligations.

| Task                                                                             | Illustrative Enablers / Examples                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Verify definition of AIMS scope and context.                                  | Evidence that internal / external issues, stakeholder expectations, and AI use cases have been identified and documented (Clause 4 references).   |
| 2. Assess adequacy and alignment of the AI policy.                               | Approved policy statements addressing fairness, transparency, security, and continual improvement; evidence of communication and periodic review. |
| 3. Confirm assignment of roles and responsibilities for AI governance.           | Governance charters, RACI matrices, delegation records, and decision hierarchies demonstrating accountability.                                    |
| 4. Evaluate integration of AI objectives into corporate strategy and monitoring. | Objective registers, performance KPIs, and management-review records showing top-management oversight.                                            |
| 5. Assess leadership accountability and promotion of an ethical AI culture.      | Leadership communications, awareness sessions, ethics training, and recognition mechanisms evidencing tone-from-the-top commitment.               |

## Domain II Audit of Implementation and Operational Control of the AIMS

≈ 40%

**Purpose:** To assess how effectively the organisation has implemented and operates its AIMS in accordance with ISO/IEC 42001, verifying that robust controls exist for AI-risk management, data governance, and system-lifecycle operations.

| Task                                                                       | Illustrative Enablers / Examples                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Evaluate the effectiveness of AI-risk and impact assessments (AI-SIA).  | Reviewed risk registers, impact-analysis reports, mitigation plans, and evidence of periodic updates.                  |
| 2. Verify implementation of data-governance and AI-lifecycle controls.     | Procedures for data quality, bias detection, model validation, and change-management; sampling of operational records. |
| 3. Assess adequacy of resources and competence supporting AIMS operations. | Competence matrices, training plans, and resource-allocation records demonstrating capability for key roles.           |
| 4. Audit control of documented information and internal communication.     | Document-control registers, version logs, access permissions, and communication matrices.                              |
| 5. Examine operation and monitoring of AI systems under defined controls.  | Incident logs, operational dashboards, model-performance reports, and corrective-action evidence.                      |

## Domains III and IV

### Domain III Performance Evaluation, Audit Readiness, and Continual Improvement

≈ 20%

**Purpose:** To evaluate the organisation's methods for measuring AIMS performance, confirming continual improvement, and verifying audit and certification readiness in line with ISO/IEC 42001 Clauses 9 and 10.

| Task                                                                              | Illustrative Enablers / Examples                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Assess monitoring and measurement of AIMS performance against defined metrics. | Fairness and accuracy dashboards, error-trend analyses, KPI reviews, and monitoring logs.                    |
| 2. Verify conduct and effectiveness of internal audits and management reviews.    | Approved audit plans, review minutes, action trackers, and evidence of management follow-up.                 |
| 3. Evaluate nonconformity management and corrective-action implementation.        | Root-cause analysis reports, CAPA records, and verification of effectiveness checks.                         |
| 4. Review mechanisms driving continual improvement initiatives.                   | Improvement registers, lessons-learned repositories, and post-incident review summaries.                     |
| 5. Confirm audit and certification readiness.                                     | Statements of Applicability, evidence indices, audit-readiness checklists, and pre-audit validation records. |

### Domain IV Ethics, Transparency, and External Engagement

≈ 15%

**Purpose:** To assess whether the organisation's AIMS effectively integrates ethical principles, ensures transparency and explainability of AI decisions, and maintains trust through responsible stakeholder and supplier engagement.

| Task                                                                             | Illustrative Enablers / Examples                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Evaluate integration of ethical principles within AI design and deployment.   | Ethical risk-control maps, bias-testing evidence, human-oversight protocols, and fairness review results.          |
| 2. Verify transparency and explainability of AI decisions.                       | User-facing explanation templates, traceability logs, model-documentation summaries, and disclosure statements.    |
| 3. Assess stakeholder engagement and communication of AI impacts.                | Stakeholder-consultation records, responsible-AI reports, public disclosures, and feedback mechanisms.             |
| 4. Audit alignment of supplier and third-party practices with AIMS requirements. | Supplier-compliance clauses, assurance-audit reports, performance reviews, and contractual accountability records. |



# Cognitive Depth and Assessment Approach

The GAICC Lead Auditor examination assesses three cognitive levels across all domains, reflecting the skills required to plan, conduct, and report audits of an AIMS in accordance with ISO/IEC 42001 and ISO 19011 principles.

| Cognitive Level                | What is assessed                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Understanding</b>           | Demonstrates knowledge of AIMS concepts, ISO/IEC 42001 clauses, audit principles, and terminology relevant to responsible AI governance.                            |
| <b>Application</b>             | Applies audit methods and techniques to evaluate evidence, test controls, and determine conformity with requirements.                                               |
| <b>Analysis and Evaluation</b> | Interprets complex or ambiguous scenarios, exercises ethical and professional judgement, and evaluates the effectiveness of governance and risk-management systems. |

Each examination item maps to one or more of these levels to ensure a balanced measurement of theoretical knowledge, practical auditing ability, and critical reasoning.

## 4 Application & Payment

### Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for the GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor Certification (LA), candidates must demonstrate suitable education, professional experience, and structured training aligned with the competencies required to plan, conduct, and report audits of an AIMS.

| Educational Background             | Recommended Professional Experience                                                                                                                                | Formal Training Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Diploma or equivalent</b>       | Three (3) years of relevant professional experience in AI governance, ISO-based management-system auditing, data-governance assurance, or digital-risk evaluation. | Completion of at least 32 contact hours of structured Lead Auditor training delivered by GAICC-authorised providers or equivalent recognised institutions. Students can also fulfil this requirement by completing GAICC self-paced courses. |
| <b>Bachelor's degree or higher</b> | One (1) year of relevant experience in AI governance, risk management, or ISO audit frameworks.                                                                    | Completion of at least 32 contact hours of structured Lead Auditor training delivered by GAICC-authorised providers or equivalent recognised institutions. Students can also fulfil this requirement by completing GAICC self-paced courses. |



## Additional Notes

- Experience must involve direct participation in the assessment, evaluation, or audit of an AIMS or related ISO management-system frameworks.
- Training hours must be earned through GAICC-authorized providers or equivalent recognised institutions delivering courses mapped to ISO/IEC 42001 and ISO 19011 competencies.
- Individuals who have completed the GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Foundation Certification automatically meet the prerequisite knowledge requirement and may apply directly for the Lead Auditor examination upon completion of the Lead Auditor training modules.

## How to Record Your Experience and Education on the Application

Candidates must record their professional experience using the GAICC Online Certification Portal, providing the following details:

- Name of organisation or client.
- Role title and key audit or assurance responsibilities.
- Project or programme description (e.g. AIMS audit planning, internal or external audit execution, AI-SIA verification, compliance assessment).
- Start and end dates of engagement.

Training-completion certificates must be uploaded along with the application. Academic study or research work is valuable background but does not substitute for professional auditing or evaluation experience.

## Recording the Duration of Experience

Experience is measured in months, not by number of audits or projects. If two engagements overlap, the shared months are counted once. **Example:** January–June of AIMS-audit work equals six months of experience, even if multiple clients or systems were audited concurrently. Applicants should describe each engagement separately, clearly outlining audit scope, role, and responsibilities, and ensure all dates and descriptions are accurate and verifiable.

## Application Processing

- GAICC strives to process applications promptly and transparently.
- Average processing time for complete online submissions is five (5) calendar days.
- Applications selected for audit or verification may require additional time to confirm training and experience documentation.
- Candidates will be notified by email once the application is approved or if further information is required.

## 5 Examination Information

The GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor (LA) examination is a competency-based assessment designed to evaluate a candidate's ability to apply the principles and requirements of ISO/IEC 42001:2023 and ISO 19011:2018 across all stages of an AIMS audit — from audit planning and evidence collection through performance evaluation, reporting, and continual-improvement follow-up.

The examination measures both technical knowledge of AIMS governance and the practical skills required to evaluate conformity, effectiveness, and ethical alignment of AI-governance systems within diverse organisational contexts.

### Exam Structure

| Component                                       | Description                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Total Questions</b>                          | 60 questions (55 scored + 5 unscored pre-test items).                                                                                             |
| <b>Format</b>                                   | Multiple-choice and audit-scenario-based questions delivered through the GAICC Online Testing Platform.                                           |
| <b>Allotted Time</b>                            | 90 minutes (1.5 hours) total testing time.                                                                                                        |
| <b>Pre-Exam Tutorial &amp; Post-Exam Survey</b> | A short interactive tutorial precedes the examination, and an optional feedback survey follows. Neither counts toward the official exam duration. |

### Exam Delivery

The LA examination is available through online AI-proctored or centre-based testing. All questions are presented in random order; once a section is submitted, answers cannot be revisited. The platform includes a built-in timer and progress bar, flag-for-review functionality, and automated submission upon time expiry.

### Scoring and Results

- Each scored question is worth one (1) mark.
- Results are reported immediately upon completion of the exam.
- Domain-level feedback is provided across Governance & Leadership, Implementation & Operational Control, Performance & Improvement, and Ethics & Engagement.
- A minimum scaled score of 70% is required to pass.
- All scores are verified through GAICC's psychometric calibration process to maintain fairness and comparability across testing sessions and delivery modes.

### Retake Policy

Each candidate is granted a single exam attempt. Retakes are permitted without limit, subject to payment of the applicable resit fee for each attempt.

### Additional Information

GAICC conducts regular psychometric reviews to preserve exam validity, reliability, and global relevance. If an exam session is affected by confirmed technical issues or system irregularities, the candidate will be offered a free re-examination without penalty.

## 6 Fees

Examination, membership and renewal fees are published in the applicable GAICC Candidate Handbook and on the GAICC website ([www.gaicc.org](http://www.gaicc.org)). To maintain a single source of truth, fee amounts are not reproduced in this Examination Content Outline.

## 7 Certification Maintenance and Renewal

### Certification Validity

The GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor Certification is valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of initial certification. To maintain active status, certified professionals must demonstrate continuing learning and engagement in the domains of AI governance, risk management, and ISO/IEC 42001 implementation.

### Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Requirements

During each three-year certification cycle, GAICC-certified Lead Auditors must earn and record a minimum of 32 CPD hours, distributed across the following categories:

| CPD Category                                   | Description                                                                                                                                                                                         | Minimum        |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>1. Professional Learning</b>                | Participation in GAICC-recognised training, webinars, or workshops focused on AIMS auditing, ISO 19011 principles, AI governance, ethics, data privacy, or related ISO management-system standards. | 11 hours       |
| <b>2. Practical Application</b>                | Direct involvement in conducting or leading audits, performing AI-risk and impact assessments, evaluating AIMS conformity, or providing assurance and compliance reviews.                           | 11 hours       |
| <b>3. Contribution &amp; Knowledge Sharing</b> | Mentoring new auditors, publishing or presenting audit insights, contributing to professional communities, or supporting standards-development work in AI governance.                               | 5 hours        |
| <b>4. Elective Activities</b>                  | Additional professional-development or community-learning initiatives that strengthen analytical, ethical, or leadership capabilities relevant to auditing.                                         | 5 hours        |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>Minimum required over three years</b>                                                                                                                                                            | <b>32 CPDs</b> |

### Renewal Process

- Submit a Renewal Application through the GAICC Certification Portal before the certification expiry date.
- Provide verifiable evidence of at least 32 completed CPD hours earned during the three-year certification cycle.
- Pay the renewal fee as specified in the current GAICC Fee Schedule.
- Reaffirm agreement to the GAICC Code of Professional Conduct and the Ethical AI Assurance and Audit Principles.

### Lapsed Certifications, Audit and Verification

- If renewal requirements are not met by the expiry date, the certification status changes to “Lapsed.”
- Lapsed professionals may reinstate their certification by completing all renewal steps within 12 months of expiry.
- After 12 months, re-certification requires retaking the full Lead Auditor examination.
- GAICC conducts periodic CPD audits; candidates selected must submit certificates of completion or attendance records, publications, presentations or mentoring logs, or employer/client attestation letters verifying audit participation or learning activity.

## 8 Code of Conduct and Ethics Statement

The Global AI Certification Council (GAICC) upholds the highest standards of integrity, accountability, and professional behaviour in the certification and practice of Artificial Intelligence Management System (AIMS) professionals. All GAICC-certified individuals must demonstrate ethical leadership and responsible stewardship in the evaluation, assurance, and governance of AI systems, consistent with the values of ISO/IEC 42001 and the ethical principles defined in ISO 19011.

By applying for and maintaining GAICC certification, candidates agree to:

| Principle                                                             | Obligation                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Act with Integrity and Fairness</b>                             | Conduct all professional activities honestly, without bias, conflict of interest, or misrepresentation of competence or credentials.          |
| <b>2. Protect Human Rights and Wellbeing</b>                          | Ensure that AI systems under their influence respect human dignity, fairness, privacy, and non-discrimination.                                |
| <b>3. Ensure Transparency and Accountability</b>                      | Promote explainable and auditable AI outcomes; disclose limitations, risks, and decision criteria in plain language.                          |
| <b>4. Safeguard Data and Information</b>                              | Uphold confidentiality and data-protection principles consistent with ISO/IEC 42001, ISO/IEC 27701, and applicable laws.                      |
| <b>5. Exercise Professional Competence</b>                            | Maintain up-to-date knowledge through continual learning, professional development, and adherence to recognised standards and best practices. |
| <b>6. Report and Mitigate Misuse</b>                                  | Take appropriate action when encountering unethical AI practices or violations of applicable regulations or standards.                        |
| <b>7. Respect Intellectual Property and Diversity of Perspectives</b> | Value collaboration, cultural sensitivity, and inclusiveness across disciplines and communities.                                              |

### Disciplinary and Enforcement Process

Violations of this Code may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation of GAICC certification. Complaints or ethics concerns may be submitted confidentially to the GAICC Ethics and Compliance Committee, which oversees investigations, recommendations, and fair resolution procedures.

### Acknowledgment

All GAICC-certified professionals are required to confirm their acceptance of the Code of Conduct and Ethics during application, renewal, or recertification. Adherence to this Code reinforces global confidence in GAICC-certified practitioners and the responsible governance of Artificial Intelligence technologies.

# 9 Frequently Asked Questions

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## **What is the GAICC ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor Certification?**

An internationally recognised credential that validates the competence of professionals who plan, conduct, report, and follow up audits of Artificial Intelligence Management Systems (AIMS) in accordance with ISO/IEC 42001:2023. It demonstrates the ability to evaluate AI-governance frameworks, verify conformity with ISO requirements, and assess effectiveness, risk control, and ethical assurance across the AI lifecycle.

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## **Who should apply for this certification?**

AI-governance professionals and AIMS auditors; compliance or assurance managers working with ISO-based systems; IT, data, or ethics officers involved in AI-risk oversight and audit programmes; and consultants supporting AIMS certification readiness or independent assessment.

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## **What are the eligibility requirements?**

Education: diploma or higher qualification. Experience: diploma holders — minimum three (3) years of relevant AI-governance or ISO-based audit experience; bachelor's degree or above — minimum one (1) year of relevant professional experience. Training: completion of at least 32 contact hours of structured ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor training delivered by GAICC-authorized providers or equivalent recognised institutions. Students can also fulfil this requirement by completing GAICC self-paced courses.

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## **How many questions are in the exam and how long does it take?**

The examination consists of 60 questions (55 scored + 5 unscored pre-test items). Candidates have 90 minutes (1.5 hours) to complete the exam.

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## **What is the passing score?**

A minimum scaled score of 70% is required to pass.

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## **How often can I take the exam?**

Each candidate can retake the exam multiple times, but must pay a re-examination fee for each attempt, as there are no free retakes.

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## **What is the certification validity period?**

The Lead Auditor Certification is valid for three (3) years from the date of issue.

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## **How do I maintain or renew my certification?**

Certified professionals must complete a minimum of 32 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) hours within each three-year cycle and submit a renewal application with the required fee.

# 9 Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

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## **What does the exam cover?**

Four domains: Governance and Leadership in AI Management Systems; Audit of Implementation and Operational Control of the AIMS; Performance Evaluation and Continual Improvement; and Ethics, Transparency, and External Engagement.

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## **What is the exam format?**

Multiple-choice and audit-scenario-based questions, delivered through the GAICC Online AI-Proctored Testing Platform, ensuring secure and flexible access worldwide.

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## **How much does the exam cost, and how much is the membership fee?**

Current examination and membership fees are published in the applicable GAICC Candidate Handbook and at [www.gaicc.org](http://www.gaicc.org).

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## **How long does GAICC take to process an application?**

Online applications are reviewed within five (5) calendar days, provided all training documents are complete. If selected for audit, additional verification may extend processing time.

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## **What happens if I fail to renew my certification?**

If renewal requirements are not met by the expiry date, your status becomes “Lapsed.” You may reinstate within 12 months by completing renewal steps; after that period, full re-examination is required.

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## **Does GAICC provide digital credentials?**

Yes. Upon certification, you receive a digital badge and certificate that can be shared on LinkedIn, résumés, and professional profiles.

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## **How can I contact GAICC for support?**

Global AI Certification Council (GAICC), Level 3, 21 Putney Way, Manukau, Auckland 2104, New Zealand. Email: [support@gaicc.org](mailto:support@gaicc.org) · Website: [www.gaicc.org](http://www.gaicc.org) · Phone: +61 492 061 339 / +64 21 103 6356



Global AI  
Certification Council

# ISO/IEC 42001

## LEAD AUDITOR CERTIFICATION

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Competence to plan, conduct, report and follow up audits of an Artificial Intelligence Management System under ISO/IEC 42001 and ISO 19011.

[www.gaicc.org](http://www.gaicc.org) · [support@gaicc.org](mailto:support@gaicc.org)

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