UKWAS
UK WOODLAND ASSURANCE STANDARD

A quick guide to changes between UKWAS 3.1 and UKWAS 4

1. Introduction

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) was launched in 1999 so it is appropriate that this third revision has been the most comprehensive to date.

There have been three consultation opportunities; the UKWAS Steering Group is grateful to all those who took their time to provide input and each of the individual responses received has been carefully considered by the Steering Group.

Initially, an Issues Paper was prepared following an evidence-gathering phase of the revision which included the following elements:

- Certification schemes' requirements review
- International benchmarking review
- Interpretation review
- Small and low intensity managed woodlands review
- Technical review
- Standard users' feedback review
- Review of the initial stakeholders' consultation.

Next, a Consultation Draft was developed for the main public consultation exercise following which a Pre-approval Draft was prepared for a final round of consultation. Consultation Reports setting out the decisions made by the Steering Group in relation to the consultation responses received were prepared after each round of consultation: both are available on the UKWAS website.

With the user in mind, the main thrust in the revision has been to introduce a more logical ordering of sections including a rationalisation and re-ordering of the eight existing sections to create five new sections each of which gathers together elements with a common theme that were in some cases scattered throughout the text.

In addition, the text has undergone significant changes to take account of stakeholder views, the views of the multi-stakeholder UKWAS Steering Group, the needs of the FSC and PEFC international certification schemes, or for editorial reasons.

A number of additional changes to the standard were made during the FSC approval process in order to meet FSC conditions for approval; these are set out in Section 5 of this document.

As such, although tracked-changes versions of the UKWAS have been produced after each public consultation, any attempt to track all of the changes from the beginning of the drafting process in a single document would be completely bewildering.

Instead, this narrative sets out to describe the changes in broad terms and describes the rationale for some of the more wide-ranging changes, rather than for every individual requirement.

2. Changes to the way the Standard is used

The most fundamental change to the Standard has been to clarify the roles of requirements, means of verification and guidance, and to change the status of guidance.

In UKWAS 3.1, the explanation of these three elements of the Standard is in the introduction ('3. Structure of the certification standard') and possibly overlooked by many Standard-users. The revised explanations are given far more prominence in UKWAS 4.

Requirements

Requirements remain the crucial, compulsory elements of the Standard. Their wording has been tightened to use only the wording 'shall' rather than 'should'. Although the status of requirements has not changed, 'Flexibility in meeting requirements' has been clarified in the introduction, and a new introductory section on 'Third-party rights' has been added to address situations where the owner/manager does not have complete management control over the woodland management unit.

Means of verification/Example verifiers

The status of means of verification has not changed; they have always been 'suggested' and 'not exclusive or exhaustive', but they have often been misunderstood as a list of required (often documentary) evidence of conformance to the Standard. UKWAS 4 attempts to correct that misunderstanding by rewording the explanation and renaming means of verification 'Example verifiers'. In addition, explanations are given of the three most common example verifiers.

Guidance

In UKWAS 3.1, certification bodies are expected to 'take full account of the 'guidance notes' given for each 'requirement' when assessing conformance with the certification standard'. As such the guidance effectively adds a considerable level of detail to Standard requirements.

In this revision, the expectation on certification bodies has been removed and guidance is intended solely to aid understanding of the Standard. This does mean that, in order to meet the needs of the certification schemes or to address the views of some stakeholders, some elements of guidance have been moved into requirements.

3. Changes to the Standard structure

Rationalisation of the introduction

While the UKWAS 3.1 introduction contains information which is vital to the interpretation of the Standard, this information is often overlooked because it is mixed in with information which is only relevant to a subset of Standard-users, such as certification bodies.

In UKWAS 4, the contents of the introduction have been rationalised to focus on issues which are relevant to all standard-users; those elements which are only relevant to specialist users have been removed. Also, as noted above, far greater prominence is given to the explanations of requirements, example verifiers and guidance which are absolutely crucial to the understanding of the Standard.

Rationalisation of Standard sections

The eight sections of UKWAS 3.1 have been rationalised into five sections in UKWAS 4. This structure is intended to be more logical and user-friendly. In broad terms, the reorganisation of sections can be summarised as in Table 1, but this omits the detail of movements of individual requirements, which is addressed in the next section.

Table 1 – Summary of changes to Standard sections

UKWAS 3.1 sections	UKWAS 4 sections
1. Compliance with the law and conformance with the requirements of the certification standard	1. Legal compliance and UKWAS conformance
2. Management planning	2. Management planning
3. Woodland design: creation, felling and replanting	
4. Operations	3. Woodland operations
5. Protection and maintenance	
6. Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity	4. Natural, historical and cultural environment
7. The community	5. People, communities and workers
8. Forestry workforce	

Rationalisation of requirements

For most Standard-users, the most important questions about UKWAS 4 will relate to the requirements; what has moved, what has been added and what has been removed? To answer these questions, two tables have been provided at the end of this document:

- Table 2 takes UKWAS 3.1 as its starting point, and shows which requirements have been removed and where the other requirements may be found in UKWAS 4
- Table 3 starts with UKWAS 4 and shows which requirements are new and where the other requirements have come from in UKWAS 3.1.

While it is not feasible to give a detailed explanation of all of these changes, a few points are worthy of note. In UKWAS 3.1, monitoring requirements are spread throughout the document, mainly in section 2.3 but also in 4.1, 5.1 and 6.3. In UKWAS 4, monitoring requirements have been brought together in section 2.15, but to avoid the list of aspects to be monitoring appearing too long and daunting, some of the detail has been moved to guidance.

Notable in Table 3 is a slew of new requirements in section 4 of UKWAS 4. These new requirements are largely a result of picking apart existing requirements in UKWAS 3.1 and attempting to structure requirements more consistently. In most cases the intent and outcomes of the requirements have hardly changed, one exception being the new requirement 4.6.3 which expands on the brief mention of veteran trees in UKWAS 3.1 requirement 6.2.2.

In addition to the hopefully more logical reorganisation of requirements, a conscious effort has been made to make some very lengthy requirements in UKWAS 3.1 less prescriptive, most obviously 6.2.2 on deadwood and 6.3.2 on plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS). In the UKWAS 4

requirements (4.6.4 and 4.3.1 respectively) the emphasis has been placed on the intended outcomes, and the detail of how these outcomes are to be achieved is addressed through guidance or reference to the greater volume of published best practice now available.

4. Changes to the language of the Standard

Several attempts have been made in UKWAS 4 to make more consistent use of terms, and to define some terms which may be differently understood by different Standard users. For example, UKWAS 3.1 makes various references to 'rare and vulnerable', 'notable', 'endangered' and 'priority' species; UKWAS 4 consistently uses the term 'priority species', with a definition which recognises that devolved priority lists have superseded UK Species Action Plans.

General references to the environment, which may be interpreted in many different ways, have been replaced with references to defined 'environmental values'.

Various terms such as 'workers', 'forestry workforce', 'staff', 'personnel', 'operators' and 'contractors' are used in UKWAS 3.1; UKWAS 4 consistently uses the defined term 'workers' except where there is a clear justification for referring to a subset of workers, such as contractors in 5.3.1 guidance or direct employees in part of requirement 5.6.1.

To meet FSC requirements, wider use is made of the 'precautionary approach' (which in UKWAS 3.1 only appears in 6.3.2 guidance), and a definition has been added based on Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

5. Changes to the Standard made to meet FSC conditions for approval

In order to meet FSC conditions for approval, changes were made in relation to:

- The legal identity of the certificate holder, their legal ownership or tenure and rights to manage the woodland
- Anti-corruption legislation
- Legislation relating to transportation and trade of forest products
- Long-term economic viability
- Non-discriminatory methods of consultation and engagement
- Management strategies to maintain and enhance areas and features of high conservation value
- Measures to protect priority species and habitats
- Representative areas of semi-natural habitats
- Workers' rights, including living wages.

UKWAS Steering Group

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Table 2 – Changes to requirements by UKWAS 3.1 requirement

UKWAS 3.1 requirement	Where is it in UKWAS 4?
1.1	Removed
1.1.1	1.1.1
1.1.2	1.1.2
1.1.3	1.1.3(a) and (b)
1.1.4	1.1.4(a)
1.1.5	1.1.5(a)
1.2.1	1.2.1
2.1.1	2.2.1
2.1.2	2.2.2
2.1.3	2.2.3
2.2.1(a)	2.1.2
2.2.1(b)	2.1.3(b)
2.2.2	2.4.2(a)
2.2.3	2.4.3
2.2.4	3.2.2
2.3.1	2.14.1
2.3.2(a)	2.15.1(a)
2.3.2(b)	2.15.1(b)
2.3.2(c)	2.15.1(c)
2.3.3	2.15.1(b)
2.3.4	2.15.2
2.3.5	2.15.1(d)
2.3.6	2.15.3
3.1.1	2.5.1(a)
3.1.2	2.5.2
3.1.3	2.5.1(b)
3.2.1	2.6.1
3.2.2	2.6.1
3.2.3	2.7.1
3.2.4	2.3.2(a)
3.3.1(a)	2.8.1(a)
3.3.1(b)	2.8.1(c)
3.3.2	Removed
3.3.3	2.13.3(a) and (b)
3.3.4(a)	2.9.1(b)
3.3.4(b)	2.9.1(c)
3.4.1	2.10.1(a) and (b)
3.4.2	Removed
3.4.3	2.10.2(a) and (b)

3.5.1	2.13.2(a) and (b)
4.1.1(a)	3.1.2
4.1.1(b)	3.1.2
4.1.1(c)	3.1.2
4.1.1(d)	3.1.2
4.1.2	2.15.1(c)
4.2.1	3.1.1
4.2.2	3.2.1(a) and (b)
4.2.3	3.2.4
4.2.4	3.2.3
4.3.1	3.3.1
4.3.2	3.3.2
5.1.1	2.5.3(b)
5.1.2	2.15.1 guidance
5.1.3	2.15.1 guidance
5.1.4	2.3.2(b)
5.1.5	2.12.1
5.1.6	2.12.2
5.1.7	3.1.3
5.2 Background	Removed
5.2	3.4.1(a) and (b)
5.2.1(a)	3.4.2(a)
5.2.1(b)	3.4.2(d)
5.2.1(c)	3.4.2(b)
5.2.1(d)	3.4.2(a)
5.2.2(a)	3.4.2(c)
5.2.2(b)	3.4.3
5.2.2(c)	3.4.3
5.2.3	Removed
5.2.4	3.4.4(a) and (b)
5.2.5(a)	3.4.5(a)
5.2.5(b)	3.4.5(b)
5.2.5(c)	3.4.5(d)
5.2.5(d)	3.4.5(e)
5.3.1	1.3.1
5.4.1	3.5.1
5.4.2	3.5.2
5.5.1	3.6.1
5.5.2	3.7.1
5.5.3	3.7.2
6.1.1(a)	4.1.1(a), 4.2.1(a) and 4.5.1(a)

6.1.1(b)	4.1.1(b), 4.2.1(b) and 4.5.1(b)
6.1.1(c)	4.1.1(c) and 4.5.1(b)
6.1.2	4.1.1(d)
6.1.3	4.4.1(a), (b) and (c) and 4.4.2(a)
6.2	Removed
6.2.1	2.11.1(a) and (b), 4.6.1 and 4.6.2
6.2.2	4.6.4(a) and (b)
6.3.1(a)	2.13.1(a) and (b)
6.3.1(b)	4.2.1(c)
6.3.1(c)	2.15.1 guidance and 4.2.1(c)
6.3.2(a)	4.3.1(a)
6.3.2(b)	4.3.1(b)
6.3.2(c)	4.3.1(b)
6.3.2(d)	4.3.1(b)
6.3.2(e)	2.15.1 guidance
6.3.3	4.7.1(a) and (b)
6.4.1	4.9.1
6.4.2	Removed
6.4.3	Removed
7.1.1(a)	2.3.1(a)
7.1.1(b)	2.3.1(b) and (c)
7.1.1(c)	2.3.1(e) and (f)
7.2.1	5.1.1(a)
7.2.2	5.1.2(a)
7.2.3	5.1.2(b)
7.3.1(a)	5.3.1
7.3.1(b)	5.3.1
7.3.2	5.3.1
7.4.1	4.8.1
7.4.2	5.2.1
7.4.3	5.2.2
8.1.1(a)	5.4.1(a)
8.1.1(b)	5.4.1(a)
8.1.1(c)	5.4.1(b)
8.2.1	5.5.1
8.2.2	5.5.2
8.3.1	5.6.1(b)
8.3.2	5.6.1(c)
8.4.1	5.7.1

Table 3 – Changes to requirements by UKWAS 4 requirement

UKWAS 4 requirement	Where is it in UKWAS 3.1?
1.1.1	1.1.1
1.1.2	1.1.2
1.1.3(a)	1.1.3
1.1.3(b)	1.1.3
1.1.3(c)	New
1.1.3(d)	New
1.1.3(e)	New
1.1.4(a)	1.1.4
1.1.4(b)	New
1.1.5(a)	1.1.5
1.1.5(b)	New
1.1.6(a)	New
1.1.6(b)	New
1.1.7	New
1.2.1	1.2.1
1.3.1	5.3.1
2.1.1(a)	New
2.1.1(b)	New
2.1.2	2.2.1(a)
2.1.3(a)	New
2.1.3(b)	2.2.1(b)
2.2.1	2.1.1
2.2.2	2.1.2
2.2.3	2.1.3
2.3.1(a)	7.1.1(a)
2.3.1(b)	7.1.1(b)
2.3.1(c)	7.1.1(b)
2.3.1(d)	New
2.3.1(e)	7.1.1(c)
2.3.1(f)	7.1.1(c)
2.3.2(a)	3.2.4
2.3.2(b)	5.1.4
2.3.2(c)	New
2.4.1	New
2.4.2(a)	2.2.2
2.4.2(b)	New
2.4.3	2.2.3
2.4.4	New
2.5.1(a)	3.1.1

2.5.1(b)	3.1.3
2.5.2	3.1.2
2.5.3(a)	New
2.5.3(b)	5.1.1
2.6.1	3.2.1 and 3.2.2
2.7.1	3.2.3
2.8.1(a)	3.3.1(a)
2.8.1(b)	New
2.8.1(c)	3.3.1(b)
2.9.1(a)	New
2.9.1(b)	3.3.4(a)
2.9.1(c)	3.3.4(b)
2.10.1(a)	3.4.1
2.10.1(b)	3.4.1
2.10.2(a)	3.4.3
2.10.2(b)	3.4.3
2.11.1(a)	6.2.1
2.11.1(b)	6.2.1
2.11.2(a)	New
2.11.2(b)	New
2.12.1	5.1.5
2.12.2	5.1.6
2.13.1(a)	6.3.1(a)
2.13.1(b)	6.3.1(a)
2.13.2(a)	3.5.1
2.13.2(b)	3.5.1
2.13.3(a)	3.3.3
2.13.3(b)	3.3.3
2.14.1	2.3.1
2.15.1(a)	2.3.2(a)
2.15.1(b)	2.3.2(b) and 2.3.3
2.15.1(c)	2.3.2(c) and 4.1.2
2.15.1(d)	2.3.5
2.15.2	2.3.4
2.15.3	2.3.6
3.1.1	4.2.1
3.1.2	4.1.1
3.1.3	5.1.7
3.1.4	New
3.2.1(a)	4.2.2
3.2.1(b)	4.2.2

3.2.2	2.2.4
3.2.3	4.2.4
3.2.4	4.2.3
3.3.1	4.3.1
3.3.2	4.3.2
3.4.1(a)	5.2
3.4.1(b)	5.2
3.4.1(c)	New
3.4.2(a)	5.2.1(a) and (d)
3.4.2(b)	5.2.1(c)
3.4.2(c)	5.2.2(a)
3.4.2(d)	5.2.1(b)
3.4.3	5.2.2(b) and (c)
3.4.4(a)	5.2.4
3.4.4(b)	5.2.4
3.4.5(a)	5.2.5(a)
3.4.5(b)	5.2.5(b)
3.4.5(c)	New
3.4.5(d)	5.2.5(c)
3.4.5(e)	5.2.5(d)
3.5.1	5.4.1
3.5.2	5.4.2
3.6.1	5.5.1
3.6.2	New, based on guidance on tree shelters in 5.5.1
3.7.1	Expands on 5.5.2
3.7.2	5.5.3
4.1.1(a)	6.1.1(a)
4.1.1(b)	6.1.1(b)
4.1.1(c)	6.1.1(c)
4.1.1(d)	6.1.2
4.1.2	New
4.2.1(a)	New, based on requirements for ASNW in 6.1.1(a)
4.2.1(b)	New, based on requirements for ASNW in 6.1.1(b)
4.2.1(c)	6.3.1(b) and (c)
4.3.1(a)	6.3.2(a)
4.3.1(b)	6.3.2(b), (c) and (d)
4.4.1(a)	New, based on requirements for woodland in 6.1.3
4.4.1(b)	New, based on requirements for woodland in 6.1.3
4.4.1(c)	New, consistent with 6.3.1(c)
4.4.2(a)	6.1.3
4.4.2(b)	New, consistent with 6.3.1(c)

4.4.3	New
4.5.1(a)	New, based on requirements for natural processes in critical situations in 6.1.1(a)
4.5.1(b)	New, based on requirements for natural processes in critical situations in 6.1.1(b) and (c)
4.6.1	6.2.1(c)
4.6.2	6.2.1(b)
4.6.3	New, based on requirements for veteran trees in 6.2.2
4.6.4(a)	6.2.2
4.6.4(b)	6.2.2
4.7.1(a)	6.3.3
4.7.1(b)	6.3.3
4.8.1	7.4.1
4.9.1	6.4.1
5.1.1(a)	7.2.1
5.1.1(b)	New
5.1.2(a)	7.2.2
5.1.2(b)	7.2.3
5.2.1	7.4.2
5.2.2	7.4.3
5.3.1	7.3.1(a) and (b) and 7.3.2
5.4.1(a)	8.1.1(a) and (b)
5.4.1(b)	8.1.1(c)
5.4.1(c)	New
5.5.1	8.2.1
5.5.2	8.2.2
5.6.1(a)	New
5.6.1(b)	8.3.1
5.6.1(c)	8.3.2
5.6.1(d)	New
5.6.1(e)	New
5.7.1	8.4.1