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**PRICING POLICY & COMMERCIAL  
CONDITIONS |  
PO-COR-13**

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 **ascend**

Policy

**PRICES & COMMERCIAL CONDITIONS | PO-COR-13**

Version No.: 01 | Date: 01/02/2025

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### **1. Purpose of the Policy**

This Pricing Policy aims to establish a clear, accessible, and transparent framework for setting, quoting, communicating, and managing prices for the conformity assessment services provided

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by ASCEND, ensuring that all clients are treated fairly and that prices are consistent with the principles of transparency, fairness, accessibility, and competitiveness.

The main objective of this policy is to ensure that ASCEND:

- **Transparent in pricing:**The prices for our services will be clearly communicated to clients, without ambiguity, with sufficient formality and advance notice, in accordance with the terms of the contracted service.
- **Equitable:**Set prices that are fair to all customers, without discrimination based on company size, industry, or any other characteristic.
- **Non-discriminatory:**Treat all customers equally, ensuring that prices and trading conditions do not unduly favor or disadvantage any interested party.
- **Competitive:**Prices will be set considering a balance between the quality of the services offered, ASCEND's operating costs, and the need to maintain accessibility for businesses and organizations of various sizes and sectors, as well as market prices.

## 2. Scope and applicability

This Policy applies without exception to all individuals and entities that are part of or act on behalf of ASCEND. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Members of corporate governance bodies, such as owners, board members, senior management, members of steering committees and functional management;
- Permanent and temporary collaborators, regardless of their role, contractual type or geographical location;
- Members of advisory, technical or impartiality committees, as well as any other formal support, decision-making or control body;
- Business partners and related third parties that carry out activities on behalf of or representing ASCEND.

Business partners shall be understood to include, but are not limited to, affiliates, subsidiaries, franchisees, licensees, representatives, suppliers, agents, independent evaluators, independent technical decision-makers, and other external parties with which ASCEND maintains contractual or collaborative relationships for the provision of its services.

Likewise, this policy will be mandatory for all internal bodies, committees, or commissions, including those with executive, technical, evaluation, review, decision-making, or supervisory functions, that are part of ASCEND's organizational or functional structure, whether permanent or ad hoc.

## 3. Fundamental Principles of Pricing Policy

### 3.1 Transparency

ASCEND is committed to providing clear and accessible pricing information for its services. This includes:

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- **Detailed breakdown of service prices**, indicating the costs involved for each stage of the process, such as evaluation fees, certification fees, fees for additional services, and any other related charges. The costs to be borne by the client will be clearly indicated, where applicable.
- In cases where the conformity assessment scheme requires the payment of a fee or rate to the corresponding scheme owner, this amount will be clearly identified and differentiated in the commercial proposal. ASCEND will not charge additional fees.
- **Advance communication** of any price changes, ensuring that customers have sufficient time to consider the new rates and their impact.
- **Accessibility of information:** Prices will be available upon request to ASCEND customers and in the corresponding contracts.

#### 3.2 Equity

The OEC ensures that pricing is fair and reasonable, without unjustified differences between customers. This is achieved through:

- **Price standardization:** Prices will be the same for all customers under similar conditions, with no discriminatory rates.
- **Volume or scope discounts:** In some cases, and under specific conditions, discounts or adjusted rates may be offered to clients with large volumes of work, although this does not constitute unfair or discriminatory treatment compared to other clients.

#### 3.3 No Discrimination

ASCEND will ensure that prices are not based on irrelevant factors, such as:

- **Industrial sector:** No price distinctions will be made based on the customer's industry, unless the nature of the service justifies it due to its technical service requirements.
- **Geographical conditions:** Prices will not be arbitrarily adjusted based on the customer's geographic location, except in cases of justified additional costs (e.g., travel expenses or special services).
- Service exchanges are not permitted.
- As part of its CSR policy, Ascend may fully or partially subsidize certification services. In all cases, approval from the Executive Director is required.

#### 3.4 Accessibility and Competitiveness

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ASCEND is committed to establishing reasonable and competitive prices for its services, taking into account the costs associated with conformity assessment and the need to maintain the organization's financial viability.

- **Competitive prices:** Prices will be set to be competitive with market standards and with the prices of other conformity assessment bodies.
- **Affordable prices:** If accessibility barriers to services are identified for certain sectors or groups (e.g., non-profit organizations, SMEs, or entities in developing countries), ASCEND may offer more favorable terms or payment alternatives.

## 4. Pricing Structure

### 4.1 Generalities

Service prices are based on the variable time of the conformity assessment process and any applicable fees or licenses under the particular scheme.

Each price must be clearly broken down and detailed in a commercial proposal prior to signing the contract, in order to avoid any confusion.

### 4.2 Prices Established by Service

Each service provided by ASCEND will have a predetermined price. These prices will be available upon request. Services that may be included in the pricing structure include:

- **Initial assessment activities:** Prices for the evaluation of products, management systems, processes, or other certification services.
- **Certification licenses and certificate issuance costs:** Costs associated with the issuance of certificates of conformity, fees or certification rates, including any administrative fees.
- **Maintenance and renewal assessment activities:** Prices for periodic audits and renewal audits.

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- **Complementary or extraordinary evaluation activities:** Prices are established per certification contract.
- **Evaluation of corrective action plans:** The first review is free. Subsequent reviews are priced at a contractually agreed price.
- **Additional services:** Prices for optional services such as report translation, simultaneous translation services, and logistical services for conducting assessments and pre-audits.

#### 4.2 Facilitation payments

ASCEND does not offer or accept facilitation payments.

#### 4.2 Special Service Rates

If special services are required, such as pre-audits or evaluations outside of normal business hours, additional fees will apply. These fees will be explicitly communicated to the client in advance and formally agreed upon.

#### 4.3 Payment Conditions

Payment terms will be clear and fair. Payment terms will include:

- **Payment methods:** ASCEND will accept common payment methods, such as bank transfers, credit cards, online payments, and other methods agreed upon with the client, with the exception of paper currency payments, which will not be accepted. Payment methods will be clearly communicated in service proposals and certification contracts.
- **Payment terms:** In all cases, 50% of the service cost must be paid prior to the audit. Payment terms for the remaining 50% will be reasonable, with the possibility of installment payments or extended terms upon request and mutual agreement of the client, provided conditions permit.
- **Penalties for late payments:** Reasonable and transparent penalties will be established for late payments, which will be communicated to the client in advance in the contract.

#### 4.4. Discounts and Promotions

##### 4.4.1 Volume Discounts or Long-Term Contracts

The OEC may offer discounts or reduced rates for customers who purchase large volumes of services or sign long-term contracts. Discounts will be applied under the following conditions:

- **Volume discounts:** A discount may be applied based on the number of evaluations or certifications requested in a given period.

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- **Discounts for long-term contracts:** Contracts covering multiple years may have special pricing conditions or loyalty discounts.

#### 4.4.2 Special Promotions

In exceptional circumstances, ASCEND may launch special promotions to promote certain services or increase the visibility of its activities. Promotions will be clearly communicated and detailed on official channels (social media, newsletters, press, etc.), specifying the duration of the offer and the specific terms and conditions applicable. Promotions or bonuses must be made available to the general public on an equitable basis.

#### 4.4.3. Price Review Mechanism

ASCEND's service prices are systematically adjusted to economic activity indicators, such as the price indices of the respective countries where it operates, in the case of quotes in local currencies.

ASCEND's service prices will be reviewed annually or when necessary due to significant changes in operating costs, regulations, or market conditions. Price reviews must adhere to the following principles:

- **Prior notification:** Customers will be notified in advance of any rate increases or adjustments.
- **Objective justification:** Any rate increases must be based on justifiable factors, such as increased operating costs, new regulations, or increased complexity of services.

#### 4.4.4. Compliance and Supervision

Compliance with this Pricing Policy will be regularly monitored by ASCEND's Compliance Committee. Any attempt to manipulate prices or apply unfair conditions will be considered a serious ethical violation, which may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

## 5. Responsibilities and Commitment of Senior Management

ASCEND's Senior Management is responsible for:

- Define, communicate, and ensure the systematic implementation and application of this policy at all levels of the organization.
- Allocate resources in a timely manner to implement, maintain, and improve a pricing system that meets the principles of this policy.

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- Promote a culture of quality, excellence, and innovation within the organization through the leadership of all its members and the development of all talents.

We will ensure that all employees and stakeholders are aware of this Policy, receive appropriate training, and are able to provide feedback to improve our performance, including a commitment to staff consultation and engagement on these matters.

**6. Review, Update and Continuous Improvement of the Policy**

This Policy is reviewed at least once a year as part of the Management Review, in order to ensure that:

- Stay up-to-date and relevant with respect to the requirements established in the international reference standards applicable to conformity assessment activities (such as ISO/IEC 17021-1, 17065, 17024, 17029, among others);
- Respond appropriately to changes in ASCEND's operational, regulatory, policy, or strategic context;
- Reflect the needs, expectations and observations of relevant stakeholders;
- Incorporate lessons learned from operational experience, managed incidents, internal and external audits, or from reporting and ethics consultation channels.

**7. Change control**

The current version of this document is only available through the ESGInnova platform's document management system.

Changes since the last version can be found underlined above the document.

Revision	Date	Summary of changes
01	01/02/2025	Not applicable because it is the first version

*Ignacio Guarnieri*  
CEO ASCEND



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The logo for 'BWC.' is located in the bottom right corner. It consists of the letters 'BWC.' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, positioned inside a dark grey square that has a stylized, overlapping shape on its right side.

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