



ISO 9001 Made Easy

Your practical guide to the
upcoming revision

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What is ISO 9001?

ISO 9001 is the international standard that sets out the requirements for a quality management system and is the most widely recognized standard in the world. Over a million organizations are certified to it globally, with many more certifying to sector-specific versions of the standard.

ISO 9001 has become an international by-word for quality, with organizations reporting that implementation leads to improved efficiency, increased profits and most importantly greater customer satisfaction.

Why has ISO 9001 been revised?

ISO standards are reviewed every five years to ensure that they're still relevant in the marketplace. The last major revision of ISO 9001 took place in 2000 and the world has altered significantly since then. To remain a tool which consistently helps organizations maintain high standards, ISO 9001 must fully consider modern industry needs. The new revised standard is intended to reflect this.

What are the key changes?

ISO has introduced a common structure and text which all management systems must follow. By revising ISO 9001 to this structure (often referred to as the HLS or Annex SL) organizations will find it easier to cross reference and align with the other management systems standards they might use.

The requirements mainly remain the same and are actually now less prescriptive. For example, there's a shift from an explicit need for traditional documents such as a quality manual to a broader requirement for 'documented information'. This doesn't mean that organizations with an existing quality manual need to change anything. Simply that there's more flexibility, so long as relevant information is retained and available when necessary.

The new structure also takes a risk-based approach rather than putting risk into a separate clause. Companies are not required to do a formal risk assessment as considering risk becomes integral to the management system as a whole.

Who was involved in the revision?

Experts from around 50 countries were actively involved in drafting ISO 9001:2015. They include representatives from a broad range of stakeholders, from small businesses to multi-nationals, government departments to industry and trade associations. This is to ensure that the standard reflects the broadest stakeholder representation possible.

When will the new standard publish?

ISO 9001:2015 is expected to publish in September 2015. The final draft international standard (FDIS) is available for purchase through Advanced Access from the BSI Shop.

shop.bsigroup.com/ISO9001AdvancedAccess

How will the revision affect my organization?

For organizations already implementing ISO 9001, it will be necessary to review existing processes and perform a gap analysis. A series of documents will be made available to explain key concepts, help identify differences and answer frequently asked questions.

Organizations currently certified to ISO 9001:2008 will have a three-year transition period to certify to ISO 9001:2015 once the standard has published.

Auditors will need additional training to ensure that they're competent to audit to ISO 9001:2015 and fully understand that requirements depend on the context of the organization and there may be a number of ways to comply with different clauses.

This change means that smaller organizations, service industries and other non-traditional businesses will find ISO 9001:2015 simpler to use, in a way that is appropriate to their size and sector.

Common phrases and acronyms

ISO	International Organization for Standardization
DIS	Draft International Standard
FDIS	Final Draft International Standard
QMS	Quality Management System
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act: A four-step cyclical management model
Process approach	A management strategy which requires organizations to manage its processes and the interactions between them
HLS	High Level Structure: This is the term for the common structure and core text which ISO has introduced to align management systems. It's also referred to as Annex SL as the guidance and text is contained in the ISO Directives Part One, Annex SL

Frequently asked questions

When is the new version of ISO 9001 expected to publish?

September 2015.

Does my organization need to re-certify as soon as it's published?

No. Organizations will have three years from the date of publication of ISO 9001:2015 to make the move from ISO 9001:2008.

Will it be difficult to implement ISO 9001:2015?

No. An organization simply needs to follow the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 to ensure its own needs will be covered by the management system.

Each organization should first consider its context. How big is the organization? What is its core business? How complex are its operations? What risks does it face?

ISO 9001:2015 recognizes that smaller organizations, service industries and established multi-nationals all have very different needs and the requirements reflect this.

Does my organization have to scrap its existing processes and procedures and start again?

No. Most organizations which have implemented ISO 9001: 2008 will find that their existing systems already meet many requirements of the new standard and can keep these in place.

Get involved

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