

ISO 9001:2026 Transition Guidance

Overview

This guidance details the changes required to update management system documentation to meet the updated requirements of the ISO 9001:2026 quality management systems standard.

ISO 9001:2026 was published on 16 September 2026 and replaces ISO 9001:2015, including its 2024 climate change amendment. The main clause structure, Clauses 4 to 10, is unchanged, although clause 6.1 now has three sub-clauses, with actions to address risks and actions to address opportunities set out separately, and clause 10 has been restructured. There are no new mandatory documents or records. Some requirements have been added or strengthened, mainly around quality culture and ethical behaviour, risks and opportunities, and the planning of changes.

Documented information is now described as “available”, or “available as evidence”, in place of the 2015 “maintain” and “retain”. This changes the wording rather than what needs to be kept.

The following requirements have been updated;

- **4.1 Understanding the organization and its context** - *the organisation must determine whether climate change is a relevant issue. This was introduced by the 2024 amendment and is now part of the standard*
- **4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties** - *the organisation must now determine which interested party requirements will be addressed through the quality management system. Interested parties can have requirements related to climate change*
- **5.1.1 Leadership and commitment** - *top management must promote quality culture and ethical behaviour, promote opportunity-based thinking alongside risk-based thinking and the process approach, and support leadership in other relevant roles, not only management roles*
- **5.2 Quality policy** - *restructured rather than added to. Taking account of the context of the organisation and supporting its strategic direction, which in 2015 was part of 5.2.1 a), is now a separate item, 5.2.1 e), and the requirement for the policy to be implemented, understood and applied within the organisation now sits in 5.2.2 d)*
- **5.3 Roles, responsibilities and authorities** - *reporting on opportunities for improvement is now a separate responsibility from reporting on performance, and the integrity of the system must be maintained at all times, not only when changes are planned and implemented as in 2015*
- **6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities** - *now has three sub-clauses: 6.1.1 Determining risks and opportunities, 6.1.2 Actions to address risks and 6.1.3 Actions to*

address opportunities. Risks and opportunities must each be determined, analysed and evaluated, and risks can include disruption to the provision of products and services. Actions on risks are proportionate to their potential impact on the intended results of the quality management system, where 2015 referred to the conformity of products and services, and actions on opportunities must be appropriate to the organisation's context

- **6.3 Planning of changes** - when planning changes the organisation must now also consider the availability of information, how the changes will be communicated, how their effectiveness will be monitored and evaluated, and how the results will be reviewed
- **7.1.3 Infrastructure** - the note now recognises infrastructure for all types of work, whether on site, remote or a combination of both
- **7.1.4 Environment for the operation of processes** - the note now recognises that some factors in the environment can be influenced by the quality culture and ethical behaviour of the organisation. The social, psychological and physical factors listed, including burnout prevention, are unchanged from 2015
- **7.1.6 Organizational knowledge** - knowledge must now be retained, applied and shared to the extent necessary, where 2015 required it to be maintained and made available
- **7.3 Awareness** - people doing work under the organisation's control must be aware of the organisational quality culture and ethical behaviour
- **8.2.1 Customer communication** - customers must now be given information related to contingency actions, when relevant, including any related to disruptions to the provision of products and services, where 2015 required specific requirements for contingency actions to be established
- **8.2.4 Changes to requirements for products and services** - changes must be communicated to relevant interested parties
- **8.3 Design and development of products and services** - design outputs must now specify the information on the products and services, as well as their characteristics, that is essential for their intended purpose, and new notes recognise that design and development can be iterative
- **8.4.3 Information for external providers** - the requirements communicated to external providers must now cover, where applicable, their interactions with the customers and other relevant interested parties of the organisation, as well as with the organisation itself
- **9.1.3 Analysis and evaluation** - the effectiveness of actions taken to address risks and actions taken to address opportunities are now evaluated separately
- **9.2.2 Internal audit programme** - the objectives of each audit must now be defined, as well as its criteria and scope

- **9.3.2 Management review inputs** - new input covering changes in the needs and expectations of interested parties, and separate inputs for the effectiveness of actions on risks and on opportunities
- **10.1 Continual improvement** - previously numbered 10.3; the old 10.1 General clause has been merged into it as part of clause 10 being restructured

Clause 3 now includes a small number of core terms and definitions, Annex A has been rewritten to give more explanation of the intent of each clause without adding requirements, and Annex B has been removed.

Most organisations with an effective ISO 9001:2015 quality management system will already meet much of the intent of these changes. The areas most likely to need updating are the review of context and interested parties, risk and opportunity records, the management of change process, the management review agenda and staff awareness. The alphaZ documents have been updated to reflect the new requirements as detailed below.

Updates Required

The following files have been updated to meet the requirements of the updated standard. A summary of what was updated and why is provided for each, to assist with updating existing management system documentation.

IMS1 Manual

The IMS1 manual has been reset for ISO 9001:2026. The main changes for the updated requirements are;

- *Standard citation updated to ISO 9001:2026 on the front page and in 1.2 and 1.6*
- **1.2 Company Profile, Management System and Scope** - company details and scope brought together, with the scope set out against each standard covered and any requirements not applicable listed with their justification (4.3)
- **1.3 Context of the Organisation** - climate change set out as a relevant issue, interested party requirements recorded with which are addressed through the management system (4.1, 4.2), and a new Values and Ethical Behaviour heading covering quality culture (5.1.1)
- **2.2 Responsibilities** - top management responsibilities follow 5.1.1, including quality culture and ethical behaviour, the process approach and risk-based and opportunity-based thinking, and the IMS Lead responsibilities follow 5.3, including reporting on opportunities for improvement and maintaining the integrity of the management system

- **2.4 Management Review** - the inputs and results follow 9.3.2 and 9.3.3, including changes in the needs and expectations of interested parties, with the effectiveness of actions taken to address risks and to address opportunities reviewed separately
- **2.5 Risks and Opportunities** - restructured to follow 6.1.1 to 6.1.3, with risks and opportunities each determined, analysed and evaluated on the key risks register and the opportunities register, risks of disruption addressed on F-IMS21 Business Continuity Register, and the effectiveness of actions evaluated separately (9.1.3)
- **3.1 Management of Staff and Company Personnel** - awareness of quality culture and ethical behaviour (7.3), and organisational knowledge that is retained, applied and shared (7.1.6)
- **3.2 Management of Equipment and Premises** - infrastructure and the work environment cover on site, remote and hybrid working, and the work environment covers physical, social and psychological factors, including the prevention of stress and burnout (7.1.3, 7.1.4)
- **3.3 Management System Communication** - communication planned and recorded on F-IMS43 Communications Register, with customer communication including contingency actions and disruption (7.4, 8.2.1)
- **4.2 Control of Purchasing and Outsourced Services** - external providers controlled through P-125 Supplier Policy, which covers the information given to them, including their interactions with customers and other relevant interested parties (8.4.3)
- **4.4 Management of Change, Variations and Design** - the planning of changes to the management system covers each of the points in 6.3, recorded on F-Q23B, with changes to products, services and operational processes recorded on F-Q23A, and design and development is controlled through IMS1-4-4-2 Design (8.3)
- **5.3 Management System Audits** - audit objectives, criteria and scope defined for each audit (9.2.2)
- **5.4 Continual Improvement** - what is monitored and measured, the methods, and when the results are analysed and evaluated, set out in 5.4.1 (9.1.1), with continual improvement following the restructured clause 10.1

F-Q3 Management Review

The management review form has been reworked to follow the IMS1 sections and the wording of clause 9.3. It covers changes in the needs and expectations of interested parties and trends in performance, with the effectiveness of actions taken to address risks and to address opportunities as separate items (9.3.2). A new Review of Opportunities table reviews the opportunities taken forward at the previous review, and the Opportunities Taken Forward and objectives tables record what is taken forward. The main form covers ISO 9001, with sections for ISO 14001, 45001 and 27001 that can be removed.

F-IMS22 Interested Parties Register

The register now notes against each interested party which of its requirements are addressed through the management system, in line with the new clause 4.2 c), and prompts for compliance obligations, legal requirements and any requirements related to climate change.

F-IMS23 Opportunities and Risks Register

The register holds the SWOT and PESTLE review of internal and external issues, including climate change, with a separate opportunities register and key risks register. Opportunities are given a priority rating for feasibility and benefit that sets how each is taken forward, and risks a risk rating, the controls in place and a residual risk rating, so that risks and opportunities are each determined, analysed and evaluated (6.1.2, 6.1.3).

F-IMS43 Communications Register

A new register holding the communication plan - what is communicated, when, with whom, how and who communicates (7.4) - including communication with customers (8.2.1), and a log of significant communications with external interested parties. It replaces the communications table previously in IMS1 3.3.

F-Q23A Change Review and F-Q23B Management System Change Review

F-Q23 has been replaced by two forms. F-Q23A records changes to products, services and operational processes (8.5.6), and F-Q23B prompts each of the points to consider when planning changes to the management system, in line with the strengthened clause 6.3.

F-Q2A Audit Checklist

F-Q2A replaces F-Q2. Its header records the scope, criteria and objectives of each audit, the site or location and the audit participants (9.2.2), and it has an audit feedback section. Audit checklists based on the previous F-Q2 template may need updating so that the scope, criteria and objectives of each audit are recorded - the simplest way is to use the new F-Q2A in place of the old template.

F-Q4 Staff Induction Record, F-Q6 Staff Annual Review and F-Q20 Staff Leaving Checklist

F-Q4 and F-Q6 now cover awareness of company ethics, the code of conduct and legal requirements (7.3), and F-Q6 adds a discussion of workload, working relationships and wellbeing (7.1.4). F-Q20 adds a check that knowledge is handed over and management system roles are reassigned when a worker leaves (7.1.6).

F-Q10 Significant Problem Incident Complaint

The action section now records any concession obtained alongside the corrective or preventive action taken (8.7.2).

P-1 Quality Policy

The policy has been refreshed for ISO 9001:2026, with the standard citation updated, a statement that the policy supports the strategic direction of the organisation (5.2.1), new commitments covering risks and opportunities and the promotion of quality culture and ethical behaviour, and a statement that quality objectives are set by top management and reviewed at least annually during management review.

P-52 Ethics and Code of Conduct Policy

P-52 is now named in IMS1 2.1, supporting quality culture and ethical behaviour (5.1.1, 7.3).

P-125 Supplier Policy

A new supplier policy, shared with suppliers, setting out what is expected of suppliers, contractors and sub-contractors, the type and extent of control applied, and the information communicated to external providers, including how they deal with customers and other interested parties on the organisation's behalf (8.4.2, 8.4.3).

Audit Checklists

The ISO 9001 full clause audit checklist has been updated to cover all clauses of the 2026 standard, following the new lettering throughout. This includes the split of clause 6.1 into risks and opportunities, the new leadership and awareness prompts on quality culture and ethical behaviour, the strengthened planning of changes in clause 6.3, the separate evaluation of risks and opportunities in clauses 9.1.3 and 9.3.2, and the restructured clause 10.

ISO 9001 Documentation Checklist

The mandatory documents and records checklist has been reviewed against the 2026 standard. There are no new mandatory documents or records, and all clause references now follow the 2026 numbering.

ISO 9001:2026 Correlation

A new correlation document maps each clause of the 2026 standard to the IMS1 sections and to the registers and forms that provide the evidence. It replaces the ISO 9001:2015 correlation.

ISO 9001:2026 Overview and Guidance

The overview and guidance document has been updated to describe ISO 9001:2026, including quality culture and ethical behaviour, the separate treatment of risks and opportunities, climate change and the planning of changes, with additional audit preparation points for the updated clauses.

ISO 9001:2026 Awareness Training Course and Certificate

The awareness training course has been rewritten to the 2026 clauses, with the planning clauses 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 and internal audit each on their own slide, quality culture and ethical behaviour covered, and the harmonised structure explained. The certificate template lists the updated topics.

Internal Audit Training Course

The course has been updated for clause 9.2.2, including the objectives, criteria and scope of each audit, and now uses F-Q2A Audit Checklist.

ER11 Audit Schedule

ISO 9001:2026 has been added to the checklist clause checker, with the ISO 9001:2026 full clause checklist selected by default.

Other changes that may need to be reviewed / addressed;

- **IMS1 Manual Guidance, IMS Setup Getting Started and the I-C setup and implementation checklists** - updated to the 2026 manual, with a new I-C IMS Maintenance Checklist
- **P-16 Training and Competency Policy and P-17 Communications Policy** - refreshed, and named in IMS1
- **General guidance documents and training talks** - updated to the 2026 standard and the reset IMS1

In summary the files updated are;

- **IMS1 Manual**
- **F-Q3 Management Review**
- **F-IMS22 Interested Parties Register**
- **F-IMS23 Opportunities and Risks Register**
- **F-IMS43 Communications Register (new)**
- **F-Q23A Change Review and F-Q23B Management System Change Review (replace F-Q23)**
- **F-Q2A Audit Checklist (replaces F-Q2)**
- **F-Q4 Staff Induction Record, F-Q6 Staff Annual Review and F-Q20 Staff Leaving Checklist**
- **F-Q10 Significant Problem Incident Complaint**

- **P-1 Quality Policy**
- **P-52 Ethics and Code of Conduct Policy**
- **P-125 Supplier Policy (new)**
- **A-C ISO 9001-2026 Full Clause Audit Checklist**
- **A-C ISO 9001 Documentation Checklist**
- **ISO 9001:2026 Correlation**
- **ISO 9001:2026 Overview and Guidance**
- **ISO 9001:2026 Awareness Training Course and Certificate**
- **Internal Audit Training Course**
- **ER11 Audit Schedule**