ISO 9001

ISO 9001:2026 — Important Update

Issued 2026

The revised standard was officially published as **ISO 9001:2026 on 16 September 2026**. It replaces ISO 9001:2015.

Key Changes

Area	ISO 9001:2015	ISO 9001:2026
Leadership	Leadership and commitment	Stronger emphasis on leadership, accountability and quality culture
Quality culture	Implicitly addressed	Greater emphasis on quality culture and ethical behaviour
Quality policy	Clause 5.2	Stronger connection with organisational context and strategic direction
Risks & opportunities	Combined consideration	Clearer distinction between risks and opportunities
People & awareness	Competence and awareness	Greater emphasis on people's understanding of quality culture and ethical behaviour
Strategic alignment	Present but less explicit	Stronger link between QMS and business strategy
Annex A	No equivalent new explanatory annex	New Annex A provides clarification of concepts and requirement intent
Harmonized Structure	Existing structure	Updated alignment with current ISO management-system standards
Digitalisation	Limited explicit emphasis	Greater recognition of modern digital business environments
Supply chains & resilience	Addressed through existing requirements	Greater relevance to interconnected supply chains and organisational resilience
Climate change	Added through 2024 amendment	Continues to be considered in the revised standard
Process approach	Core requirement	Retained
Customer focus	Core principle	Retained
Continual improvement	Core requirement	Retained

ISO describes the revision as a targeted update rather than a fundamental redesign of ISO 9001. The clause structure is retained, so organisations can build on their existing QMS rather than starting again.

The Five Changes to Focus on

1. Clause 5.1 – Leadership and commitment
Organisations should be prepared to demonstrate stronger evidence that top management establishes and supports a quality culture, accountability and ethical behaviour.

2. Clause 5.2 – Quality policy
The quality policy has a stronger relationship with the organisation's context and strategic direction, reinforcing the QMS as part of business management rather than simply a compliance system.

3. Clause 6.1 – Risks and opportunities
The revision gives greater clarity to the distinction between managing risks and pursuing opportunities, supporting more proactive decision-making.

4. Clause 7.3 – Awareness
There is greater emphasis on employees understanding the organisation's quality culture and ethical behaviour, not simply knowing the quality policy and relevant objectives.

5. New Annex A
A new informative Annex A provides additional explanation of terminology, concepts and the intent behind requirements, intended to make implementation and interpretation easier.

Transition Timeline

For organisations currently certified to ISO 9001:2015:

- 16 September 2026: ISO 9001:2026 published.
- 31 March 2028: New/ Initial certifications can only be issued to ISO 9001:2026.
- 30 September 2029: Existing ISO 9001:2015 certifications must have transitioned to ISO 9001:2026.