

ISO 9001:2026 Changes at a Glance

A Quick Guide to the Key Changes

ISO 9001:2026 was published on 16 September 2026. The new edition is an evolution rather than a complete rewrite. The fundamental QMS structure and principles remain, while several requirements have been strengthened or clarified.

FOUR MAIN CHANGES

1. Quality Culture & Ethical Behaviour

Clauses 5.1.1, 7.1.4 & 7.3

Leadership is explicitly expected to promote quality culture and ethical behaviour. Personnel awareness and the work environment reinforce this theme.

Key point: Review leadership behaviours, quality communication, employee awareness and how quality decisions are made under operational pressure.

3. Stronger Management of Change

Clause 6.3

Planning of changes is strengthened to include communication, monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness, and review of results.

Key point: Key question: Was the change effective and did it achieve the intended result?

2. Risks & Opportunities Clearly Separated

Clauses 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3 & 9.1.3

Risks and opportunities are addressed more distinctly. Organizations determine, analyse and evaluate them, take appropriate actions and evaluate effectiveness.

Key point: Risk-based thinking reduces undesirable effects; opportunity-based thinking pursues beneficial outcomes.

4. Expanded Annex A

Clarification of Clauses 4-10

Annex A is substantially expanded to clarify structure, terminology and the intent and application of requirements.

Key point: Important: Annex A is informative. It provides clarification but does not introduce additional requirements.

OTHER NOTABLE ENHANCEMENTS

Clause	Enhancement
4.1 Context	Explicitly determine whether climate change is a relevant issue.
4.2 Interested parties	Determine which relevant interested-party requirements will be addressed through the QMS; climate-related requirements are also recognized in a note.
7.1.3 Infrastructure	New note recognizes on-site, remote or combined working arrangements.
7.1.6 Organizational knowledge	Updated notes clarify four forms of organizational knowledge: experience-based knowledge held by people; knowledge gained through education, training and learning from others; knowledge embedded in methods, processes and products; and knowledge represented in documented information, digital systems and other media. This highlights capturing and sharing both human and digitally stored knowledge.
8.2.4 Changes to requirements	Changes to product/service requirements are updated and communicated to relevant interested parties.
9.1.3 Analysis & evaluation	Explicitly includes evaluating the effectiveness of actions taken to address opportunities.
9.3.2 Management review	Adds changes in the needs and expectations of relevant interested parties as an explicit management review input. The effectiveness of actions addressing risks and opportunities is also considered separately.

EDITORIAL & STRUCTURAL CHANGES

Not every wording change creates a new requirement. Examples include updated documented-information terminology, restructuring of 9.2, the revised Clause 10 structure, and expanded explanatory material in Annex A.
Transition message: First determine whether a difference is a new/changed requirement, an enhancement/clarification, or an editorial change.

TRANSITION TIMELINE

Existing ISO 9001:2015 certifications: transition by 30 September 2029.

From 31 March 2028: new and initial accredited certifications may only be issued to ISO 9001:2026.

Recommended first step: Understand changes → Gap analysis → Actions → Implement → Evaluate effectiveness → Transition audit

Use together with the ISO 9001:2026 Transition Gap Analysis Checklist for a more detailed assessment.