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Standards
at the Heart
of Quality Management

BS EN ISO 9001:
Overview implementation guide

Enabling better business

Contents

Introduction

With costs rising at a rapid rate, the challenge for businesses is to maintain a high quality of output whilst finding cost savings and efficiencies wherever possible.

Whether you run a multinational, a factory or a local coffee shop, there are steps you can take to deliver consistently great results in whatever you do. Every area of your business has the potential to improve its productivity, accuracy and efficiency.

Quality management makes that possible. It is a systematic approach to ensuring the consistency of everything you do and, by setting out repeatable processes, enables you to provide great quality products and services while also boosting productivity and profitability.

## What is a quality management system (QMS)?

Developing a quality management system is the act of setting up and formalizing processes so you can optimize what your business does. By establishing a quality policy and processes to uphold it, your organization can maintain and improve the quality of your products or services, reduce costly errors and increase that all important bottom line.

Simply put, a QMS can help make everything your business does easier, better and more profitable.

What is ISO 9001?

ISO 9001 is used by over one million businesses in 170 countries to ensure the quality and consistency of their goods and services.

The standard contains best practice guidance on how to develop and implement a QMS for your business, from identifying areas for improvement to enacting a quality policy and achieving certification (if you choose to). By following the guidance contained in the standard, you'll be able to improve processes, communication, systems and controls to ensure your business is more consistent, more productive and more profitable.
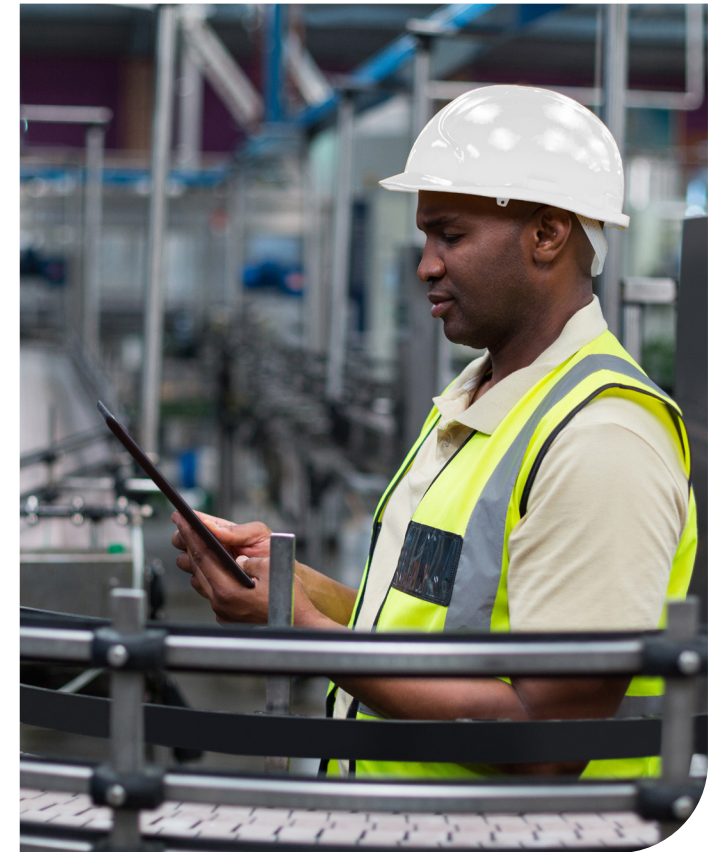
What to expect from this guide

This guide will show you how you can implement ISO 9001 in your organization to enjoy quick wins and maximize long-term benefits, whether you choose to get certified or not.

What does BS EN ISO 9001 do?

Using ISO 9001 can help your business to identify new opportunities, enhance customer loyalty and improve your bottom line. ISO 9001 can also help your organization to prevent mistakes, ensure consistency and continuously measure and improve how you operate.

And as well as helping your workforce, implementing ISO 9001 also signals to customers that you're serious about quality – by earning a reputation as the industry gold standard, your business can get a leg up on the competition.

What can your business achieve with ISO 9001?

A higher quality of products and services

Reduce costly errors, failures and defects

Boost productivity, efficiency and accuracy

Make your business more resilient in challenging times

Establish a "culture of quality" to improve your reputation, win new business and continually grow

Learning the language of ISO 9001

Key terminology:

Communication

Guidance on what needs to be communicated to who in the planning, implementation, maintenance and improvement phases of adopting the QMS, such as changes to processes or internal structures.

Management responsibility

The actions required by management staff to support the successful implementation and maintenance of the standard.

Documentation

This means your written records for the QMS, including supporting information, such as your quality policy, responsibilities and measurements taken.

Management review

The process of evaluating the progress and achievements of implementing the standard, for example monitoring improvements in customer service, productivity levels or sales.

Performance indicators

Measures that will be used to evaluate the success of the QMS – this could be response time to customer queries, volume of goods manufactured or any other target in your quality policy.

Non-conformity and corrective action

If you choose to get certified, 'non-conformities' are failures to meet requirements of the standard. Corrective actions are the steps needed to fix non-conformities to ensure the standard's guidance is being followed.
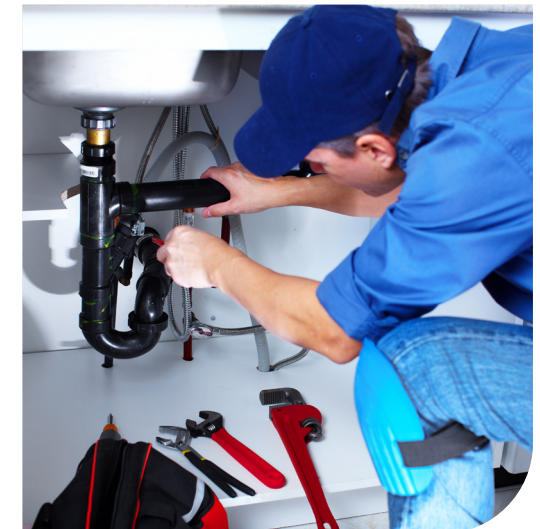
The principles behind ISO 9001

When implementing ISO 9001, consider how your QMS can align with your company values to give you the best outcome. There are 7 key things to keep in mind when working out what you want your QMS to achieve:

1 Customer focus

The best outcome businesses can achieve with quality management is meeting or exceeding customer expectations. Winning and keeping the confidence of customers can enable you to continue growing your business.

2 Leadership

Implementing ISO 9001 gives your team a sense of purpose and direction at every level. Clear processes, established goals and a dedication to quality from the top down can help focus the whole company in pursuit of your objectives.

3 Engagement

Ultimately, ISO 9001 can make things easier for everyone in your organization. Getting buy-in from all levels and working together to implement your QMS can help to create a more productive workforce.

4 Process

Establishing a clear set of processes to follow results in consistent quality. An agreed best practice approach lays the groundwork for continuous future improvement.

5 Improvement

At the heart of ISO 9001 should be continuous improvement. Your 9001 journey should start by measuring existing baselines which can then be monitored and improved upon as your implementation progresses.

6 Evidence

By using a set of key performance indicators, you can use data to make evidence-based decisions on optimization and improvement.

7 Relationship management

Developing a QMS doesn't just show your commitment to quality – it also signals to suppliers, investors, employees and customers that your business can be relied on. Creating mutual trust with these key players will ultimately make meeting your business' goals easier.

Implementing ISO 9001

Developing a QMS with ISO 9001

Step 1: Get to know the standard

Familiarize yourself with ISO 9001 and start to think about the issues that could impact your QMS. External and internal issues include stakeholder needs, industry regulations and existing processes. Analyze where you're currently at and where you want to be - how far will you have to go before you meet all the standard's requirements?

Step 2: Get planning

Use your analysis from step 1 to create a to-do list and make a plan for how you'll implement ISO 9001. Establish milestones, set out deadlines and pick out which bits of the standard you want to implement first. Remember, you don't have to implement the entire standard to start enjoying the benefits of ISO 9001.

Step 3: Assign roles and responsibilities

Getting buy-in from staff and top management is essential to implementation. Make sure everyone knows what they need to do, when they need to do it and who's responsible for each element.

Step 4: Time to develop policies and objectives

What do you want to achieve with your QMS? Now's the time to work out your quality objectives and what kind of policies it's going to take to achieve them.

Top tips for implementation

Get buy-in
Commitment from every level of your business is crucial for implementing ISO 9001, so make sure everyone is engaged and involved.

Compare and contrast
It might be that you're already doing some of the things that the standard recommends. Check your existing systems and procedures against ISO 9001 so you can work out what you're not doing yet, and what you are doing but could be doing better.

Communication is key
Everyone needs to be kept in the loop when you're implementing ISO 9001. Ensure your internal communications channels are up to the job.

Team effort
It's going to be important that your departments are all working towards the same goal. Think about how you can get them to work together effectively.

Don't forget the customers
Use customer feedback to work out what they like best about what you're doing, and ensure that you keep delivering as you make changes to your processes.

Stay goal-oriented
Set clear goals for your business as you implement ISO 9001, and remember to celebrate the milestones you reach.

Learning the ropes
By training your staff to audit your new processes you'll help their development and understanding of the system. Also, it will make your organization as a whole better at pinpointing problems and opportunities.

How to start your standards journey today

ISO 9001 sets the stage for continued improvement across the board. Saving money, strengthening your reputation and boosting profits are just some of the ways your organization can benefit from implementing a quality management standard.

Want to learn more about ISO 9001?

Guide: Benefits of ISO 9001

Explore how ISO 9001 can benefit your business and help you boost your bottom line.

Guide to quality management

What is quality management and how does improving it benefit an entire organization? Find out in this guide.

Implementing ISO 9001: Next Steps

Thinking of implementing ISO 9001? Get started on your standards journey with this short guide.

Start your journey to better quality management

Visit **BSI Knowledge** to explore over 60,000 standards. For more information about **ISO 9001**, contact our customer service team on 0345 086 9001.

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