



Communiqué

Expected Outcomes for Accredited Certification to ISO 9001

The International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) support the following concise statement of outcomes that are to be expected as a result of accredited certification to ISO 9001. The intent is to promote a common focus throughout the entire conformity assessment chain in order to achieve these expected outcomes and thereby enhance the value and relevance of accredited certification.

ISO 9001 certification is frequently used in both private and public sectors to increase confidence in the products and services provided by organizations, between partners in business-to-business relations, in the selection of suppliers in supply chains and in the right to tender for procurement contracts.

ISO is the developer and publisher of ISO 9001, but does not itself carry out auditing and certification. These services are performed independently of ISO by certification bodies. ISO does not control such bodies, but does develop voluntary International Standards to encourage good practice in their activities on a worldwide basis. For example, ISO/IEC 17021 specifies the requirements for bodies providing auditing and certification of management systems.

One option for certification bodies wishing to provide further confidence in their services is to apply to be accredited as competent by an IAF recognized national accreditation body. The IAF is an international association whose membership includes the national accreditation bodies of 49 economies. ISO does not control such bodies, but does develop voluntary International Standards such as ISO/IEC 17011 which specifies the general requirements for carrying out accreditation.

NOTE: Accredited certification is only one way that an organization may demonstrate conformity to ISO 9001. ISO does not promote accredited certification over other conformity assessment methodologies.

Expected Outcomes for Accredited Certification to ISO 9001

(from the perspective of the organization's customers)

“For the defined certification scope, an organization with a certified quality management system consistently provides products that meet customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, and aims to enhance customer satisfaction.”

Notes:

- a. “Products” also include “services.”
- b. Customer requirements for the product may either be stated (for example in a contract or an agreed specification) or generally implied (for example in the organization's promotional material, or by common practice for that economic/industry sector).
- c. Requirements for the product may include requirements for delivery and post-delivery activities.

What accredited certification to ISO 9001 means

To achieve conforming products, the accredited certification process is expected to provide confidence that the organization **has** a quality management system that conforms to the applicable requirements of ISO 9001. In particular, it is to be expected that the organization:

- A. has established a quality management system that is suitable for its products and processes, and appropriate for its certification scope
- B. analyzes and understands customer needs and expectations, as well as the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements related to its products
- C. ensures that product characteristics have been specified in order to meet customer and statutory/regulatory requirements
- D. has determined and is managing the processes needed to achieve the expected outcomes (conforming products and enhanced customer satisfaction)
- E. has ensured the availability of resources necessary to support the operation and monitoring of these processes
- F. monitors and controls the defined product characteristics
- G. aims to prevent nonconformities, and has systematic improvement processes in place to
 - 1. Correct any nonconformities that do occur (including product nonconformities that are detected after delivery)
 - 2. Analyze the cause of nonconformities and take corrective action to avoid their recurrence
 - 3. Address customer complaints
- H. has implemented an effective internal audit and management review process
- I. is monitoring, measuring and continually improving the **effectiveness** of its quality management system

What accredited certification to ISO 9001 *does not* mean

- 1) It is important to recognize that ISO 9001 defines the requirements for an organization's quality management system, not for its products. Accredited certification to ISO 9001 should provide confidence in the organization's ability to "consistently provide product that meets customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements". It **does not** necessarily ensure that the organization will always achieve 100% product conformity, though this should of course be a permanent goal.
- 2) ISO 9001 accredited certification **does not** imply that the organization is providing a superior product, or that the product itself is certified as meeting the requirements of an ISO (or any other) standard or specification.