ISO 9001:2026

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

TRANSITION Q&A

ACI®

Highlights of several crucial dates on Transition:

- The issue date of ISO 9001:2026 :
  16th September 2026.
- The transition period:
  16th September 2026 -30th September 2029 (3 years).
- ACI deadline for accepting ISO 9001:2015 Certification application:
  31st March 2028
- The expiry date of ISO 9001:2015 Certificate
  30th September 2029

Highlights of ACI services to facilitate the Transition:

- **Preliminary Gap Assessment:**
  A professional review of clients' QMS against ISO 9001:2026 requirements
- **Dedicated Customer Support:**
  A professional team ready to answer enquiries regarding transition schedules and audit reservations.
- **Modular Training Programs:**
  - TQ1: ISO 9001:2026 Introduction & Conversion Training
  - TQ2: ISO 9001:2026 Effective Application Training
  - TQ3: ISO 9001:2026 Implementation & Documentation Training
  - TQ4: ISO 9001:2026 Internal Auditor Training

General

01 When is the ISO 9001 :2026 issued?

ISO 9001:2026 was issued on 16th September 2026.

02 What are the major differences between ISO 9001:2015 & ISO 9001:2026?

1) Context & Climate - Climate change and supply chain resilience are explicitly integrated into the organizational context. Climate risks must be evaluated for quality compliance.

2) Leadership & Culture - Top management must actively promote quality culture, psychological safety, and ethical conduct alongside operational governance.

3) QMS Changes - Enhanced rigor for Clause 6.3 (Planning of Changes). Requires structured risk/opportunity evaluation before operational or digital process changes.

4) Operations & AI/Technology - Clarified controls for emerging technologies (AI, automation), operational risk management, and externally provided processes.

5) Evaluation & Metrics - Requires distinct evaluation of process performance, product/service conformity, and overall QMS effectiveness.

03 What are the core concepts and structural changes in ISO 9001:2026?

The 2026 revision incorporates updated Harmonized Structure guidelines (Annex SL) focusing on strategic resilience, ethical quality culture, advanced technological integration, and structured change management.

04 We hold an ISO 9001:2015 Certificate. What is the impact on us?

According to the transition requirement for ISO 9001:2026, there is a **3-year transition period** from the issue date of ISO 9001:2026 for all the existing ISO 9001:2015 Certificates to transit to ISO 9001:2026 Certificates.

Therefore, all ISO 9001:2015 Certificates will **expire on 15th September 2029** (i.e. the ISO 9001:2015 certificates will have lost validity after 15th September 2029).

05 We plan to implement a Quality Management System now. What are our options?

1) Direct Implementation: Implement ISO 9001:2026 directly and apply for ISO 9001:2026 certification.

2) Phased Approach: If implementation began under ISO 9001:2015, obtain the 2015 certificate on or before March 15, 2028, and complete the transition to ISO 9001:2026 before September 15, 2029.

Q&A

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General

06 Is there any deadline for the application for ISO 9001:2015 Certification?

ACI welcomes ISO 9001:2015 Certification applications made during the Transition Period provided that such application should be on or before **15th March 2028.**

The reason for setting this deadline is to ensure sufficient time for the certified clients to prepare the transition after being certified for ISO 9001:2026.

07 When should we do the transition?

During the Transition Period, the ISO 9001:2015 certified clients can choose to transit at any time provided that the deadline of successful transition is 15th September 2029. The clients can decide their schedule for transition.

However, it is highly recommended for the clients to complete the transition as early as possible:

- To avoid the transition peak;
- To leave enough time for the submission of plans of correction and corrective actions and the arrangement of any follow up visits if there were non-conformities (NCs) raised in the Transition Audit(s).

08 How should we do the transition?

- Review ISO 9001:2026;
- Plan the transition;
- Implement the QMS in accordance with the ISO 9001:2026;
- Discuss with ACI the plan and reserve the date(s) for Transition Audit(s).

09 What is the transition process?

For ACI, all ISO 9001:2015 certified clients seeking ISO 9001:2026 transition shall undergo a Transition Audit(s).

Normally, there are two types of Transition Audit: one-off audit or staged audit.

- For One-Off Transition Audit, the audit will be a one-time audit in which the fulfillment of the client's QMS against all the ISO 9001:2026 requirements will be evaluated within the same audit. It can be carried out together with the normal scheduled audits such as Surveillance Visit (SV) or Renewal Audit (REA) or a single independent audit.

- For staged type, the evaluation of the fulfillment of the client's QMS against the ISO 9001:2026 requirements will be conducted in several planned audits provided that the accumulative results of these audits can prove the full fulfillment of the client's QMS with ISO 9001:2026. Each audit of Transition Audits in such case can be carried out together with the normal scheduled audits such as Surveillance Visit (SV) or Renewal Audit (REA) or a single independent audit

[**Remarks:** For the staged type, during each audit of the Transition Audits, as the QMS is not or has not been evaluated to be fully complied with ISO 9001:2026, the normal audit for ISO 9001:2015 will still be carried out. Please make sure to maintain effectively the QMS of ISO 9001:2015 before the completion and success of the transition.]

General

Q10 How should we choose between one-off type and staged type Transition Audit(s)?

The choice for one-off type or staged type Transition Audit(s) may have impact in terms of clients' internal manpower arrangement or business plan. Clients are advised to have a comprehensive consideration before making decision and discuss with ACI if necessary.

Q11 How does ACI begin the transition for the clients?

ACI auditors will conduct a Gap Assessment for every ACI certified client of ISO 9001:2015 (upon request) in the occasions of the normal scheduled audit such as Surveillance Visits (SVs) and Renewal Audit (REAs).

The purpose of this Gap Assessment is for ACI:

- To know the clients' preliminary plan of transition;
- To have a general picture on the readiness of the clients' management system for the transition;
- To discuss any issues of the transition, if any or necessary, which may be more preferable to be discussed in clients' certified sites.

Q12 What does ACI do to assist certified clients for the transition?

Besides the abovementioned Preliminary Gap Analysis, in order to get our clients more familiar with the ISO 9001:2026 requirements and facilitate our clients' preparation for the transition, ACI with pleasure provides the following services:

- (TQ1) ISO 9001:2026 Introduction & Conversion training to provide a generic introduction of the ISO 9001:2026 requirements;
- (TQ2) ISO 9001:2026 Effective Application training;
- (TQ3) ISO 9001:2026 Implementation & Documentation Training;
- (TQ4) ISO 9001:2026 Internal Audit Training;
- On-site Gap Assessment: Upon request, ACI auditors can come to the client's office to perform a comprehensive Gap Assessment by going through every requirement of the ISO 9001:2026 with the client in order to check whether the client's existing QMS fulfills the requirements and if not, what the discrepancies are;
- Professional customer support to answer enquiries on the transition including the quotation for the Transition Audit(s) and reservation of dates for Transition Audit(s).

For reference only
Please contact ACI for details

Email: enquiry@aci-limited.com
Phone: 39778988