

BS EN ISO 9001 guide to implementation: Next steps

[ISO 9001](#) is the most popular quality management standard in the world, used by over one million organizations large and small to ensure the quality and consistency of their goods and services.

By showing you how to develop and implement a quality management system (QMS), ISO 9001 helps your business every day to reduce errors, boost productivity and increase your profitability.



Step 1 - Develop your QMS

Buy the standard and familiarize yourself with it

Once you have bought the standard, read it thoroughly and start to identify your business within it. For example, external and internal issues that may impact your QMS could include stakeholder needs, specific industry regulations or existing processes. Think how you can make changes in your organization to follow the standard's guidance.

Make a plan

Start planning how you will implement the QMS, starting with core processes and using your analysis from step 1 to help you create a to-do list. Create milestones, set deadlines and identify which parts of the standard you want to implement first – you don't have to implement the entire standard to start enjoying the benefits of ISO 9001.

Assign roles and responsibilities

As well as getting buy-in from top management, the commitment of staff is essential to making a success of the implementation phase. Make sure everyone knows what needs to be done, when and who is responsible – and remember to celebrate achievements and recognize hard work.

Start developing policies and objectives

It's time to start putting pen to paper and laying out exactly what you want to achieve with your QMS. Define your quality objectives and the policies you'll put in place to achieve them; these will be unique to your business, as ISO 9001 is designed to be flexible, and can relate to budgets, growth or senior management reviews.

Step 2 - Get started with implementation

Implement your QMS

Start developing your documentation such as your quality manual, procedure documents and any other forms and records which you'll need to keep hold of – a lot of people use software for this. Start training employees on the new processes, any changes to their role and how to write, file and use documentation relating to the standard.

Review, reassess and make adjustments

Keep a close eye on your plan as implementation progresses and, after a few months, revisit processes informally or conduct a full audit to see how things are going. If there are issues, you can quickly make changes. When directed by the standard, review your business' progress towards your original quality objectives.



Step 3 - Continue your standards journey

Certification or non-certification?

Certification isn't compulsory and many businesses enjoy the benefits of a standard without getting certified to it. How you use standards is up to you – they're flexible to your organization.

- Getting certified involves an external assessment (carried out by a UKAS-accredited body, like BSI) and comes with a range of benefits, such as being able to display your accreditation on your marketing collateral, or tendering for projects that may require a standard for the application process.
- But any organization can enjoy the boost to efficiency, productivity and effectiveness that implementing a standard can bring, without getting certified. A business may even pick and choose which parts of the standard they implement, deciding only to adopt the most relevant parts that will have the biggest impact on the business.

Keep improving

At the heart of standards is the idea of continuous improvement; certification isn't the end of your standards journey, it's the beginning. Regular reviews and adjustments using the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle makes it easy to stay on top of your QMS and ensure standards don't start to slip.



Top tips for implementing ISO 9001

- **Work at your own pace.** There are no deadlines to meet when implementing a standard, so you can take your time and enjoy all the benefits of working to best practice without the stress of time constraints.
- **Top management commitment is key** to making this a success and staff at every level should be informed of what's happening, why and the benefits of ISO 9001.
- **Think about how different departments work together to avoid silos.** Make sure everyone works as a team for the benefit of your customers and your business.
- **Review the systems, policies, procedures and processes you already have in place** – you might already be doing things the standard requires.
- **Speak to your customers and suppliers and ask for feedback,** insights and suggestions from a fresh perspective.
- **Train your staff to carry out internal audits.** This can help with their understanding, but it could also provide valuable feedback on potential problems or opportunities for improvement.



Learn more about standards with resources from BSI

[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: The overview guide](#)

This comprehensive guide to implementation will walk you through how to get the most out of implementing ISO 9001.

Start your standards journey

To find out more about [ISO 9001](#) and how quality management could benefit your business, visit [BSI Knowledge](#) or [get in touch](#) with the BSI team.