



ISO 14001 : 2015 Upgrade Guide

Your detailed guide to upgrading an
Environmental Management System



upgrades@qmsuk.com

QMS[✓]
INTERNATIONAL

Please Note: This guide is designed to take you through the key differences that exist between ISO 14001 : 2004 and ISO 14001 : 2015. It does not contain the complete content of the standard and should not be used in place of the standard itself.

Back to Basics...

ISO 14001

ISO 14001, which sets out the requirements for an environmental management standard, is one of the world's most popular standards for environmental management. It ranks high on the agenda of any organisations that places importance on their own and other organisations' environmental impact because it addresses the environmental impact at all stages within the product life cycle.

Why has the standard been changed?

ISO Management System Standards are reviewed and, when necessary, revised every 5 years to ensure they remain relevant to the marketplace. The latest revision of **ISO 14001** resulted from a number of recent trends, including an increase in organisations recognising the need to factor in both external and internal elements that influence their environmental impact, including climate volatility.



For more information, please contact us:

 **0845 86 26 246**  **upgrades@qmsuk.com**

How much has changed?

- The first significant change noted between the 2004 and 2015 versions of the standard is **Clause 4 (Context of the Organisation)**. It's a new clause which requires top management to understand how internal and external issues affect the Organisation's ability to meet the expectations of relevant interested parties.

The Organisation needs to determine who are the relevant interested parties, i.e. stakeholders, and their expectations. These could include particular requirements for how the Organisation manages its responsibilities towards the climate, availability of resources and applicable legislation. Reflecting upon the internal and external issues enables a more accurate definition of the Scope of the Management System.

The guiding principle of Clause 4 is therefore to unite the Environmental Management System with the Organisation's strategy; encouraging the development of processes that fit the Organisation's purpose and objectives. The Plan-Do-Check-Act (POCA) methodology is now intrinsic in all processes, so each one should be monitored to ensure that it fits with the Organisation's purpose and objectives.

- Clause 5 (Leadership)** describes how top management now need to be able to demonstrate a greater involvement in the Management System. Top management must take leadership of the Management System, not simply manage its implementation. They need to ensure the Management System is at the core of the business, not at the periphery. As part of this process, top management have to encourage participation throughout the Organisation to ensure the Management System is operated effectively and fully integrated into the Organisation's processes.
- Clause 6 (Planning)** contains enhanced requirements for planning, considering the potential for change, emergency situations and the response to abnormal conditions. There are enhanced requirements for determining the environmental aspects over which the Organisation can exercise control, which includes a requirement to define the criteria used to identify environmental aspects. A new requirement, to consider the life cycle of products and services, is introduced in clause six. The importance of considering legal obligations is also highlighted in clause six.

Clause six also specifies the requirements for addressing risks and opportunities, replacing the need for preventive action. The Organisation needs to understand the environmental threats and benefits presented by its environmental aspects; to identify the risks faced and decide how they will be addressed. On the other hand, the Organisation needs to consider possible environmental benefits and how to maximise such opportunities.

- Next, **Clause 7 (Support)** now includes a communications strategy with equal emphasis on external and internal communication. This includes a requirement for communicating consistent and reliable information so that employees can make suggestions about improving the EMS.

Clause 7 also considers how the Organisation reports upon external communications in respect of the requirements of regulatory bodies and external interested parties.

- Clause 8 (Operations)** specifies requirements for consideration of the product life cycle. The Organisation needs to ensure environmental requirements are addressed during any design and development activities, the idea that a product may eventually be disposed of should be considered and opportunities for recycling should therefore be designed into the product from the outset to reduce or avoid waste to landfill. The Organisation also needs to consider whether and how customers should be provided with guidance about environmental best practices when using its products and services.

Clause 8 also features enhanced controls over the 'value chain', which includes outsourcing to manufacturers and sub-contractors. Change control is being applied to changes in engineering controls and procedures. This is because change needs to be managed both during environmental design and development, as well as the documented information required by the Environmental Management System.

- Clause 9 (Performance evaluation)** is an entirely new clause, which is made up of existing clauses. These include 'Monitoring and measurement' and 'Management Review'. This new clause will guide Organisations in the effective collection and assessment of evidence to prove their Environmental Management System is meeting business objectives.
- Finally, a more structured approach has been suggested for **Clause 10 (Improvement)**. It still retains the principle behind the 'Non-conformity and corrective action' clause, but is now more detailed in consideration of nonconformity.

Additional 'Benefit'

ISO 14001 : 2015 follows the new Annex SL framework that is now used for all new ISO Management System Standards. This means new Standards will be easier to understand and far more compatible; saving you time during internal and external audits of your Management Systems.

For more information, please contact us:

 **0845 86 26 246**  **upgrades@qmsuk.com**

What are the Benefits of these Changes?

The 2015 version of the **ISO 14001** standard aims to bring a number of benefits that the 2004 version of the standard either briefly covered or did not offer at all:

- ✓ Increased prominence of environmental management
- ✓ More leadership responsibilities
- ✓ Greater emphasis on protecting the environment
- ✓ Stronger focus on improving environmental performance
- ✓ Addresses environmental impact at all stages within product life cycle
- ✓ Better communication strategy
- ✓ More modern approach to documentation management

What action should you take following this Revision?

If you are currently certified to **ISO 14001** and you wish to maintain your certification, you will need to upgrade your environmental management system to the **2015 version** of the standard and seek certification to it. You have a three-year transition period from the date of publication (September 2015) to move to the 2015 version. **This means that, after the end of September 2018, a certificate to ISO 14001 : 2004 may no longer be accepted by third parties.**

Step by Step Guide for 14001 : 2015 transition

Step 1

You will need to amend your existing Manual to ensure that it meets the requirements of the ISO 14001 : 2015 Standard.



Step 2

You will need to implement the changes brought about by the latest version of the standard.



Step 3

Your Manual, Processes and Procedures will need to be reviewed and approved in order to obtain your new ISO 14001 : 2015 Certificate.

For more information, please contact us:

 **0845 86 26 246**  **upgrades@qmsuk.com**



Do I have to upgrade the System?

Quite simply, the answer is no. QMS are able to do this for you because we are offering new and existing clients a comprehensive upgrade package to guide and support you through the whole process.

If you would like QMS to carry out the upgrade for you, our experienced Consultants will start by delivering a presentation which explains the changes brought about by the upgrade and how these will affect your business. They will then follow this up by re-writing your existing manual to ensure it meets the requirements of **ISO 14001 : 2015**.

During this process they will not only be aiming to incorporate the requirements of the new Standard (e.g. context of the organisation, needs and requirements of interested parties, etc) but they will also be able to incorporate any necessary amendments that have been brought about by changes which have taken place within your organisation since your manual was last updated. Once the manual upgrade is complete, your manual will be reviewed and approved by our Technical Team and your new **ISO 14001 : 2015** certificate issued.

With QMS we like to keep things simple and help our customers get the best value from their ISO management systems and that is why you can be confident that you will receive all the support and guidance you need to successfully implement the changes brought about by the **ISO 14001** standard.

For more information, please contact us:

 **0845 86 26 246**  **upgrades@qmsuk.com**