

First edition
2015-06-15

Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems —

Part 1: Requirements

*Évaluation de la conformité — Exigences pour les organismes
procédant à l'audit et à la certification des systèmes de management —
Partie 1: Exigences*



Reference number
ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015(E)

© ISO/IEC 2015



COPYRIGHT PROTECTED DOCUMENT

© ISO/IEC 2015, Published in Switzerland

All rights reserved. Unless otherwise specified, no part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized otherwise in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or posting on the internet or an intranet, without prior written permission. Permission can be requested from either ISO at the address below or ISO's member body in the country of the requester.

ISO copyright office
Ch. de Blandonnet 8 • CP 401
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland
Tel. +41 22 749 01 11
Fax +41 22 749 09 47
copyright@iso.org
www.iso.org

This is a preview of "ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015". Click here to purchase the full version from the ANSI store.

Contents

	Page
Foreword	v
Introduction	vi
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Principles	4
4.1 General.....	4
4.2 Impartiality.....	4
4.3 Competence.....	5
4.4 Responsibility.....	5
4.5 Openness.....	5
4.6 Confidentiality.....	6
4.7 Responsiveness to complaints.....	6
4.8 Risk-based approach.....	6
5 General requirements	6
5.1 Legal and contractual matters.....	6
5.1.1 Legal responsibility.....	6
5.1.2 Certification agreement.....	7
5.1.3 Responsibility for certification decisions.....	7
5.2 Management of impartiality.....	7
5.3 Liability and financing.....	9
6 Structural requirements	9
6.1 Organizational structure and top management.....	9
6.2 Operational control.....	9
7 Resource requirements	10
7.1 Competence of personnel.....	10
7.1.1 General considerations.....	10
7.1.2 Determination of competence criteria.....	10
7.1.3 Evaluation processes.....	10
7.1.4 Other considerations.....	10
7.2 Personnel involved in the certification activities.....	10
7.3 Use of individual external auditors and external technical experts.....	11
7.4 Personnel records.....	12
7.5 Outsourcing.....	12
8 Information requirements	12
8.1 Public information.....	12
8.2 Certification documents.....	13
8.3 Reference to certification and use of marks.....	14
8.4 Confidentiality.....	15
8.5 Information exchange between a certification body and its clients.....	15
8.5.1 Information on the certification activity and requirements.....	15
8.5.2 Notice of changes by a certification body.....	16
8.5.3 Notice of changes by a certified client.....	16
9 Process requirements	16
9.1 Pre-certification activities.....	16
9.1.1 Application.....	16
9.1.2 Application review.....	16
9.1.3 Audit programme.....	17
9.1.4 Determining audit time.....	18
9.1.5 Multi-site sampling.....	18
9.1.6 Multiple management systems standards.....	19

This is a preview of "ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015". Click here to purchase the full version from the ANSI store.

9.2	Planning audits.....	19
9.2.1	Determining audit objectives, scope and criteria.....	19
9.2.2	Audit team selection and assignments.....	19
9.2.3	Audit plan.....	21
9.3	Initial certification.....	22
9.3.1	Initial certification audit.....	22
9.4	Conducting audits.....	23
9.4.1	General.....	23
9.4.2	Conducting the opening meeting.....	23
9.4.3	Communication during the audit.....	24
9.4.4	Obtaining and verifying information.....	24
9.4.5	Identifying and recording audit findings.....	25
9.4.6	Preparing audit conclusions.....	25
9.4.7	Conducting the closing meeting.....	25
9.4.8	Audit report.....	26
9.4.9	Cause analysis of nonconformities.....	27
9.4.10	Effectiveness of corrections and corrective actions.....	27
9.5	Certification decision.....	27
9.5.1	General.....	27
9.5.2	Actions prior to making a decision.....	28
9.5.3	Information for granting initial certification.....	28
9.5.4	Information for granting recertification.....	28
9.6	Maintaining certification.....	28
9.6.1	General.....	28
9.6.2	Surveillance activities.....	29
9.6.3	Recertification.....	30
9.6.4	Special audits.....	31
9.6.5	Suspending, withdrawing or reducing the scope of certification.....	31
9.7	Appeals.....	31
9.8	Complaints.....	32
9.9	Client records.....	33
10	Management system requirements for certification bodies.....	34
10.1	Options.....	34
10.2	Option A: General management system requirements.....	34
10.2.1	General.....	34
10.2.2	Management system manual.....	34
10.2.3	Control of documents.....	34
10.2.4	Control of records.....	35
10.2.5	Management review.....	35
10.2.6	Internal audits.....	36
10.2.7	Corrective actions.....	36
10.3	Option B: Management system requirements in accordance with ISO 9001.....	36
10.3.1	General.....	36
10.3.2	Scope.....	37
10.3.3	Customer focus.....	37
10.3.4	Management review.....	37
	Annex A (normative) Required knowledge and skills.....	38
	Annex B (informative) Possible evaluation methods.....	41
	Annex C (informative) Example of a process flow for determining and maintaining competence.....	43
	Annex D (informative) Desired personal behaviour.....	45
	Annex E (informative) Audit and certification process.....	46
	Bibliography.....	48

This is a preview of "ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015". Click here to purchase the full version from the ANSI store.

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work. In the field of conformity assessment, ISO and IEC develop joint ISO/IEC documents under the management of the ISO Committee on Conformity assessment (ISO/CASCO).

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

ISO/IEC 17021-1 was prepared by the *ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment* (CASCO). It was circulated for voting to the national bodies of both ISO and IEC, and was approved by both organizations.

This first edition of ISO/IEC 17021-1 cancels and replaces ISO/IEC 17021:2011, which has been technically revised.

ISO/IEC 17021 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems*:

- *Part 1: Requirements*
- *Part 2: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of environmental management systems* [Technical Specification]
- *Part 3: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of quality management systems* [Technical Specification]
- *Part 4: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of event sustainability management systems* [Technical Specification]
- *Part 5: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of asset management systems* [Technical Specification]
- *Part 6: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of business continuity management systems* [Technical Specification]
- *Part 7: Competence requirements for auditing and certification of road traffic safety management systems* [Technical Specification]

Introduction

Certification of a management system, such as the environmental management system, quality management system or information security management system of an organization, is one means of providing assurance that the organization has implemented a system for the management of the relevant aspects of its activities, products and services, in line with the organization's policy and the requirements of the respective international management system standard.

This part of ISO/IEC 17021 specifies requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems. It gives generic requirements for such bodies performing audit and certification in the field of quality, the environment and other types of management systems. Such bodies are referred to as certification bodies. Observance of these requirements is intended to ensure that certification bodies operate management system certification in a competent, consistent and impartial manner, thereby facilitating the recognition of such bodies and the acceptance of their certifications on a national and international basis. This part of ISO/IEC 17021 serves as a foundation for facilitating the recognition of management system certification in the interests of international trade.

Certification of a management system provides independent demonstration that the management system of the organization:

- a) conforms to specified requirements;
- b) is capable of consistently achieving its stated policy and objectives;
- c) is effectively implemented.

Conformity assessment, such as the certification of a management system, thereby provides value to the organization, its customers and interested parties.

[Clause 4](#) describes the principles on which credible certification is based. These principles help the user to understand the essential nature of certification and they are a necessary prelude to [Clauses 5 to 10](#). These principles underpin the requirements in this part of ISO/IEC 17021, but such principles are not auditable requirements in their own right. [Clause 10](#) describes two alternative ways of supporting and demonstrating the consistent achievement of the requirements in this part of ISO/IEC 17021 through the establishment of a management system by the certification body.

Certification activities are the individual activities that make up the entire certification process, from application review to termination of certification. [Annex E](#) provides an illustration of the way in which many of these activities can interact.

Certification activities involve the audit of an organization's management system. The form of attestation of conformity of an organization's management system to a specific management system standard or other normative requirements is usually a certification document or a certificate.

This part of ISO/IEC 17021 is applicable to the auditing and certification of any type of management system. It is recognized that some of the requirements, in particular those related to auditor competence, can be supplemented with additional criteria in order to achieve the expectations of the interested parties.

In this part of ISO/IEC 17021, the following verbal forms are used:

- "shall" indicates a requirement;
- "should" indicates a recommendation;
- "may" indicates a permission;
- "can" indicates a possibility or a capability.

Further details can be found in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.