# ISO 9001 2026

QUALITY MANAGEMENT TRANSITION BRIEF

One page summary of the transition priorities, likely audit risks, and leadership actions

SYSTEMS CERTIFICATION BODY
AN IAPMO COMPANY

ISO 9001:2026 modernizes the established quality-management framework. The transition is primarily about proving that leadership, quality culture, ethical behavior, planning, organizational knowledge, and improvement are embedded in everyday decisions and processes - not simply updating documents.

## What organizations should prepare for

| | |
|---|---|
| **Quality culture**<br>Show how leaders reinforce quality through decisions, accountability, resources, communication, recognition, and improvement. | **Ethical behavior**<br>Connect ethical expectations to QMS decisions, customer commitments, supplier relationships, data integrity, and escalation. |
| **Climate relevance**<br>Determine whether climate change affects organizational context or interested-party requirements, then retain evidence of the conclusion and actions. | **Planning and evidence**<br>Distinguish risks from opportunities, control changes, preserve knowledge, and demonstrate that revised practices are effective. |

## Ten priority actions

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1**<br>**Govern**<br>Assign an executive sponsor and transition owner. | **2**<br>**Assess**<br>Compare the current QMS with the 2026 criteria. | **3**<br>**Update**<br>Change processes and controls only where gaps exist. | **4**<br>**Build culture**<br>Make leadership behavior and accountability visible. | **5**<br>**Integrate ethics**<br>Link ethics to QMS decisions and data. |
| **6**<br>**Evaluate climate**<br>Document relevance and resulting actions. | **7**<br>**Develop competence**<br>Train and evaluate key roles and auditors. | **8**<br>**Audit**<br>Test implementation, integration, and evidence. | **9**<br>**Review**<br>Use management review to close readiness gaps. | **10**<br>**Sustain**<br>Complete transition and monitor effectiveness. |

## Most likely transition findings

| | |
|---|---|
| **1.** Climate relevance was not evaluated or supported. | **2.** Interested-party requirements were not fully determined. |
| **3.** Risks and opportunities were not distinctly managed. | **4.** Quality culture was supported only by policy statements. |
| **5.** Ethical behavior was not integrated into the QMS. | **6.** Planning of changes lacked controls and effectiveness checks. |
| **7.** Employee awareness did not extend to culture, ethics, or objectives. | **8.** Management review did not address transition effectiveness. |
| **9.** Internal-auditor competence for the revision was not demonstrated. | **10.** The transition changed documents but not process behavior or evidence. |

**Leadership takeaway** **Use the transition to strengthen QMS effectiveness, decision-making, accountability, and sustained performance - not merely to replace 2015 references with 2026 references.**