
**Quality management systems —
Particular requirements for the
application of ISO 9001:2008 for
electoral organizations at all levels of
government**

*Systèmes de management de la qualité — Exigences particulières
pour l'application de l'ISO 9001:2008 aux organismes électoraux à
tous les niveaux du gouvernement*

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Contents

Page

Foreword	iv
Introduction	v
1 Scope	1
1.1 General	1
1.2 Application	2
2 Normative references	2
3 Terms and definitions	3
3.1 Terms related to electoral quality management system	3
3.2 Terms related to electoral infrastructure and logistics	4
3.3 Terms related to voting	5
4 Quality management system	6
4.1 General requirements	6
4.2 Documentation requirements	7
5 Management responsibility	14
5.1 Management commitment	14
5.2 Client focus	15
5.3 Quality policy	15
5.4 Planning	15
5.5 Responsibility, authority and communication	16
5.6 Management review	17
6 Resource management	18
6.1 Provision of resources	18
6.2 Human resources	18
6.3 Infrastructure	19
6.4 Work environment	20
7 Product realization	21
7.1 Planning of product realization	21
7.2 Customer-related processes	22
7.3 Design and development	23
7.4 Purchasing	26
7.5 Production and service provision	27
7.6 Control of monitoring and measuring equipment	29
8 Measurement, analysis and improvement	30
8.1 General	30
8.2 Monitoring and measurement	30
8.3 Control of nonconforming product	32
8.4 Analysis of data	33
8.5 Improvement	33
Annex A (informative) Concept diagrams	35
Annex B (informative) Electoral processes	39
Bibliography	43

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

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 ISO documents 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 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

The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee ISO/TC 176, *Quality management and quality assurance*.

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Introduction

0.1 General

Conduct of periodic, free and fair elections by secret ballot is the fundamental distinctive characteristic of a democratic political system. As such, the sustainability of the democratic political system is reliant on effectively defined, implemented and controlled electoral services. The ultimate goal is to elect those who will hold public office and to decide ballot proposals that affect the populace.

Vote casting is an expression of the fundamental political right to participate in public affairs guaranteed by human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This process is based on the principle of one-person one-vote, without restrictions based on race, gender, religion, and social status. The registration and identification of eligible voters and the registration of political organizations and candidates are essential to the electoral process.

Every electoral system has its own set of regulations, which vary between countries according to their individual culture and tradition, and even within states where federal systems exist. The electoral process is composed of a series of interrelated processes, conducted by the electoral bodies, political organizations and the citizenship. These essential elements include determining who is eligible to vote, registration of political organizations and candidates, electoral logistics, casting, counting and accurate recording of votes, declaration of results, electoral education, oversight of campaign financing and resolution of electoral disputes.

Electoral bodies are institutions that have responsibility for the administration of the electoral process, including the preparation, organization, management, monitoring and promotion of the election, the casting of the votes and counting of the ballots, the resolution of electoral disputes or the official declaration of the election results.

The full and transparent implementation of each process constitutes the basis for the electoral body to achieve legitimacy.

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In this Technical Specification, the text reproduced from ISO 9001:2008 is placed in boxes, in order to distinguish it from the sector-specific guidance given for each clause.

ISO 9001:2008, Quality management systems — Requirements

Introduction

0.1 General

The adoption of a quality management system should be a strategic decision of an organization. The design and implementation of an organization's quality management system is influenced by

- a) its organizational environment, changes in that environment, and the risks associated with that environment,
- b) its varying needs,
- c) its particular objectives,
- d) the products it provides,
- e) the processes it employs,
- f) its size and organizational structure.

It is not the intent of this International Standard to imply uniformity in the structure of quality management systems or uniformity of documentation.

The quality management system requirements specified in this International Standard are complementary to requirements for products. Information marked "NOTE" is for guidance in understanding or clarifying the associated requirement.

This International Standard can be used by internal and external parties, including certification bodies, to assess the organization's ability to meet customer, statutory and regulatory requirements applicable to the product, and the organization's own requirements.

The quality management principles stated in ISO 9000 and ISO 9004 have been taken into consideration during the development of this International Standard. [ISO/TS 17582:2014](https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/ce83af1a-7169-4799-ba29-4665a116814c/iso-9001-2014)

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The design and implementation of an electoral body's quality management system is influenced by its obligations under the applicable legal framework as determined by international law, national constitutions and national law.

The electoral quality management system requirements specified in this Technical Specification are complementary to requirements for the electoral service provided by the applicable legal framework and the electoral body.

0.2 Process approach

ISO 9001:2008, Quality management systems — Requirements

Introduction

0.2 Process approach

This International Standard promotes the adoption of a process approach when developing, implementing and improving the effectiveness of a quality management system, to enhance customer satisfaction by meeting customer requirements.

For an organization to function effectively, it has to determine and manage numerous linked activities. An activity or set of activities using resources, and managed in order to enable the transformation of inputs into outputs, can be considered as a process. Often the output from one process directly forms the input to the next.

The application of a system of processes within an organization, together with the identification and interactions of these processes, and their management to produce the desired outcome, can be referred to as the “process approach”.

An advantage of the process approach is the ongoing control that it provides over the linkage between the individual processes within the system of processes, as well as over their combination and interaction.

When used within a quality management system, such an approach emphasizes the importance of

- a) understanding and meeting requirements,
- b) the need to consider processes in terms of added value,
- c) obtaining results of process performance and effectiveness, and
- d) continual improvement of processes based on objective measurement.

The model of a process-based quality management system shown in Figure 1 illustrates the process linkages presented in Clauses 4 to 8. This illustration shows that customers play a significant role in defining requirements as inputs. Monitoring of customer satisfaction requires the evaluation of information relating to customer perception as to whether the organization has met the customer requirements. The model shown in Figure 1 covers all the requirements of this International Standard, but does not show processes at a detailed level.

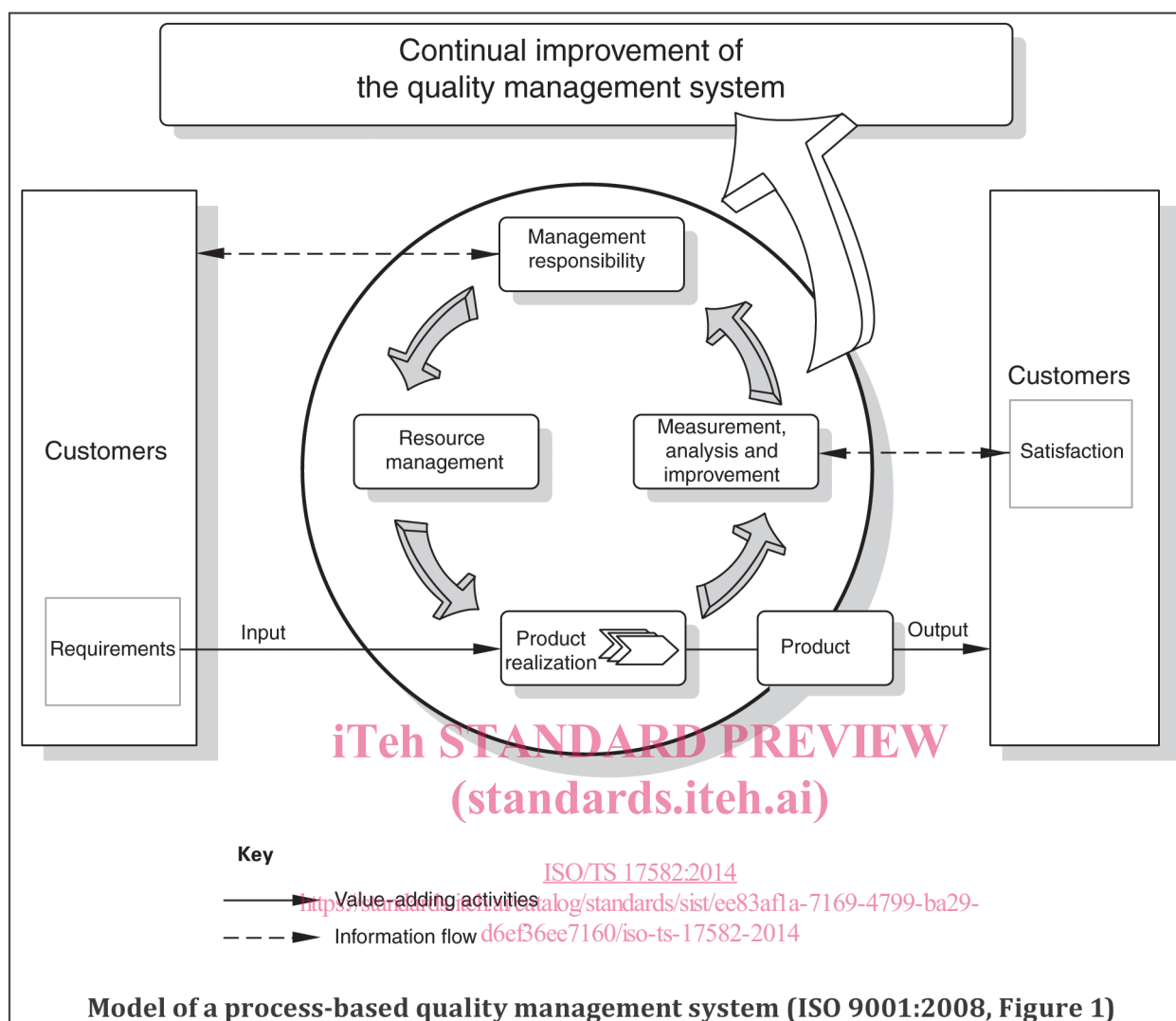
NOTE In addition, the methodology known as “Plan-Do-Check-Act” (PDCA) can be applied to all processes. PDCA can be briefly described as follows.

Plan: establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with customer requirements and the organization’s policies.

Do: implement the processes.

Check: monitor and measure processes and product against policies, objectives and requirements for the product and report the results.

Act: take actions to continually improve process performance.



Elections can only occur when citizens exercise their right to vote. Voter registration is a condition for the establishment of the electoral process. Identification of eligibility and registration of eligible voters are essential to the electoral process.

By registering to contest elections, political organizations and candidates legally formalize their participation in the electoral process. This may entitle them to receive public funding for their campaign in accordance with the applicable legal framework as well as the establishment of clear and unambiguous criteria to determine who is eligible to vote.

The electoral bodies must plan the election day logistics well in advance of the electoral event. Key factors in logistics are the efficient distribution of electoral materials, establishment of voting stations and provision of voting equipment.

Vote casting and vote counting go hand in hand. Counting votes is a task of paramount importance, since the results of the process reflect the will of the electorate. When done in a transparent and accurate manner it increases confidence in elections and acceptance of the final results.

It is essential that voters are aware of the different stages of the electoral process. Electoral education is a continual process that spans the entire electoral process. Processes are established to ensure that information relating to candidates, ballot proposals and voting locations is available to voters prior to the election.

The declaration of results is the legally binding conclusion of the process by which the electoral body proclaims the results of the election. Additionally, there should be fair and timely resolution and communication of electoral complaints and appeals.

The full and transparent implementation of each electoral process constitutes the basis for the electoral body to achieve legitimacy. Collectively, these processes constitute an electoral event and occur in three stages: before, during and after the election.

0.3 Relationship with ISO 9004

ISO 9001:2008, Quality management systems — Requirements

Introduction

0.3 Relationship with ISO 9004

ISO 9001 and ISO 9004 are quality management system standards which have been designed to complement each other, but can also be used independently.

ISO 9001 specifies requirements for a quality management system that can be used for internal application by organizations, or for certification, or for contractual purposes. It focuses on the effectiveness of the quality management system in meeting customer requirements.

At the time of publication of this International Standard, ISO 9004 is under revision. The revised edition of ISO 9004 will provide guidance to management for achieving sustained success for any organization in a complex, demanding, and ever changing, environment. ISO 9004 provides a wider focus on quality management than ISO 9001; it addresses the needs and expectations of all interested parties and their satisfaction, by the systematic and continual improvement of the organization's performance. However, it is not intended for certification, regulatory or contractual use.

NOTE Since the publication of ISO 9001:2008, and at the time of publication of this Technical Specification, the revision of ISO 9004 has been completed and ISO 9004:2009 has been published.

There is no sector-specific guidance. [ISO/TS 17582:2014](https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/ce83afla-7169-4799-ba29-7e7070707070/iso-ts-17582-2014)
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0.4 Compatibility with other management systems

ISO 9001:2008, Quality management systems — Requirements

Introduction

0.4 Compatibility with other management systems

During the development of this International Standard, due consideration was given to the provisions of ISO 14001:2004 to enhance the compatibility of the two standards for the benefit of the user community.

Annex A shows the correspondence between ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 14001:2004.

This International Standard does not include requirements specific to other management systems, such as those particular to environmental management, occupational health and safety management, financial management or risk management. However, this International Standard enables an organization to align or integrate its own quality management system with related management system requirements. It is possible for an organization to adapt its existing management system(s) in order to establish a quality management system that complies with the requirements of this International Standard.

There is no sector-specific guidance.

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Quality management systems — Particular requirements for the application of ISO 9001:2008 for electoral organizations at all levels of government

1 Scope

1.1 General

ISO 9001:2008, Quality management systems — Requirements

1 Scope

1.1 General

This International Standard specifies requirements for a quality management system where an organization

a) needs to demonstrate its ability to consistently provide product that meets customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, and

b) aims to enhance customer satisfaction through the effective application of the system, including processes for continual improvement of the system and the assurance of conformity to customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

NOTE 1 In this International Standard, the term “product” only applies to

a) product intended for, or required by, a customer,

b) any intended output resulting from the product realization processes.

NOTE 2 Statutory and regulatory requirements can be expressed as legal requirements.

This Technical Specification specifies requirements for a quality management system where an electoral organization

- a) needs to demonstrate its ability to manage elections by secret ballot, which provide reliable, transparent, free and fair results that comply with electoral requirements;
- b) within the established legal framework, aims to enhance the trust and confidence of citizens, candidates, political organizations, and other electoral interested parties through the effective implementation of the electoral quality management system, including processes for continual improvement.

NOTE 1 Electoral bodies can be constituted to reflect local legal requirements.

NOTE 2 In this Technical Specification the term “product” only applies to the electoral service provided by an electoral body.

1.2 Application

ISO 9001:2008, Quality management systems — Requirements

1 Scope

1.2 Application

All requirements of this International Standard are generic and are intended to be applicable to all organizations, regardless of type, size and product provided.

Where any requirement(s) of this International Standard cannot be applied due to the nature of an organization and its product, this can be considered for exclusion.

Where exclusions are made, claims of conformity to this International Standard are not acceptable unless these exclusions are limited to requirements within Clause 7, and such exclusions do not affect the organization's ability, or responsibility, to provide product that meets customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

This Technical Specification applies to the election period, including pre-election and post-election activities or processes.

This Technical Specification applies to all electoral bodies involved in any aspect of the electoral process, whether they are permanent organizations or temporary organizations established in support of a particular election period.

This Technical Specification is applicable to elections at all levels of government, whether local, regional or national. Where exclusions are made outside of [Clause 7](#), claims of conformity to this Technical Specification are not acceptable unless these exclusions resolve conflicts with the applicable legal framework and do not contravene the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Subject to the stated scope of the electoral quality management system [see [4.2.2](#)], the requirements of this Technical Specification apply to the electoral body's implementation of the following electoral processes, as specified in [Annex B](#):

- a) voter registration;
- b) registration of political organizations and candidates;
- c) electoral logistics;
- d) vote casting;
- e) vote counting and declaration of results;
- f) electoral education;
- g) oversight of campaign financing;
- h) resolution of electoral disputes.

2 Normative references

ISO 9001:2008, Quality management systems — Requirements

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 9000:2005, *Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary*

There is no sector-specific guidance.

3 Terms and definitions

ISO 9001:2008, Quality management systems — Requirements

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 9000 apply.

Throughout the text of this International Standard, wherever the term “product” occurs, it can also mean “service”.

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 9000 and the following apply.

3.1 Terms related to electoral quality management system

3.1.1

electoral body

public institution having legal and administrative responsibility for the preparation and conduct of *elections* (3.2.7) according to the legal framework of the country

Note 1 to entry: The responsibility involves all aspects of conducting an *election* (3.2.7) and includes related activities such as referenda, citizen initiatives or revocation of the mandate and balloting.

3.1.2

outsourced electoral process

process that the *electoral body* (3.1.1) needs for its *electoral quality management system* (3.1.6) and that the electoral body chooses to have performed by an external party

3.1.3

ballot proposal

legislation proposal or policy question submitted for vote by the *electorate* (3.2.8)

Note 1 to entry: There are several types of ballot proposal. These differ based on who is motivating the ballot proposal, whether it is a citizen or the legislature, and the people who are to form the electorate for the ballot proposal.

Note 2 to entry: Proposals concerning the election of *candidates* (3.2.1) for public office are generally not considered to be ballot proposals.

3.1.4

electoral service development plan

specification of the requirements to be met by an *electoral body* (3.1.1) in the delivery of its *electoral service* (3.1.5) in documented form

3.1.5

electoral service

legal and administrative practices and processes performed by the *electoral body* (3.1.1)

Note 1 to entry: The electoral service is required to fulfil the electoral body's responsibilities to the electorate and other *electoral clients* (3.1.11) in compliance with the legal framework.

3.1.6

electoral quality management system

quality management system for *electoral bodies* (3.1.1)

3.1.7

electoral quality manual

document specifying the *electoral quality management system* (3.1.6) for an *electoral body* (3.1.1)

3.1.8

resolution of electoral disputes

process by which the *electoral body* (3.1.1) resolves disputes arising out of the electoral process

3.1.9

challenge

action that questions an aspect of, or the entirety of, the *electoral service* (3.1.5)

Note 1 to entry: The distinction between a challenge and an *electoral complaint* (3.1.10) is that an electoral complaint is formally lodged with the competent electoral authority. Disputes include both challenges and electoral complaints.

3.1.10

electoral complaint

formal *challenge* (3.1.9) expressing dissatisfaction

3.1.11

electoral client

person or organization that receives an *electoral service* (3.1.5)

Note 1 to entry: Electoral clients include voters, *political organizations* (3.2.2), *candidates* (3.2.1) and other people or organizations that receive electoral services from the *electoral body* (3.1.1) according to the applicable legal framework

3.2 Terms related to electoral infrastructure and logistics

3.2.1

candidate

person who competes for public office in an *election* (3.2.7)

3.2.2

political organization

organization with similar political aims and opinions that seeks to influence public policy by getting its candidates elected to public office

3.2.3

registration of political organizations or candidates

process of registering the entitlement of *political organizations* (3.2.2) or *candidates* (3.2.1) to participate in *elections* (3.2.7)

3.2.4

electoral logistics

process that establishes the steps needed to organize and conduct an *election* (3.2.7)

3.2.5

campaign financing oversight plan

document specifying the activities, responsibilities and resources for monitoring the finances of political campaigns

3.2.6

oversight of campaign financing

process for evaluating the mechanisms that regulate the legal framework and its enforcement mechanisms for resources made available to *candidates* (3.2.1) or *political organizations* (3.2.2) within an electoral process

3.2.7

election

occasion providing the means for an *electorate* (3.2.8) to communicate a choice by casting a vote

Note 1 to entry: The choice is generally made between contesting *candidates* (3.2.1) or *political organizations* (3.2.2), or may be between *ballot proposals* (3.1.3)

3.2.8

electorate

group of people in a country or other designated area who have the right to vote

3.2.9**voting equipment**

object, device or implement for capturing the votes of the electorate

3.2.10**electoral education**

process of informing people of the electoral system and electoral processes

Note 1 to entry: Electoral education includes informing people of their democratic rights, eligibility to vote, election procedures, such as dates, times and places of voting, registration of *political organizations* (3.2.2) and *candidates* (3.2.1) requirements, and voting mechanisms and other issues within the electoral process.

3.2.11**voter registry**

database of voters

3.2.12**voter list**

part of *voter registry* (3.2.11) used by poll workers at each voting location

3.3 Terms related to voting**3.3.1****voting location**

venue containing one or more *polling stations* (3.3.2)

3.3.2**polling station**

place where a voter can cast a vote in secret

3.3.3**vote casting**

act through which a voter expresses a preference for a *candidate* (3.2.1) that runs for public office or for a *ballot proposal* (3.1.3)

Note 1 to entry: Casting of the vote should be universal, secret and personal.

3.3.4**voting incident**

event which is not part of the standard operation of the voting process and which causes, or may cause, disruption to or a reduction in the quality of the voting process

3.3.5**vote counting**

process of taking account of votes cast by the electorate in order to determine the final results of an electoral process

3.3.6**preliminary election results**

uncertified information provided by the *electoral body* (3.1.1), or any other lawfully designated body, regarding the outcome of the *election* (3.2.7), after the polls have closed but before the final results are declared

3.3.7**declaration of results**

process of officially announcing the results of *vote counting* (3.3.5) to convey the validity of the *election* (3.2.7)