

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO ISO CERTIFICATION & ONGOING COMPLIANCE

For UK Businesses | ISO 9001 – ISO 14001 – ISO 45001

Stage 1: Understanding ISO & Selecting the Right Standards

Step 1: Identify Business Needs

- ISO 9001 – Quality Management (customer satisfaction, consistency, continual improvement)
- ISO 14001 – Environmental Management (waste, energy, legal compliance)
- ISO 45001 – Occupational Health & Safety (risk control, worker safety, legal compliance)

Step 2: Set Clear Objectives

- Legal compliance?
- Tender requirements?
- Improved internal processes?
- Culture change?

Tip: For Construction & Trades, ISO + SSIP (CHAS, SMAS, SafeContractor) = greater market access.

Stage 2: Gap Analysis & Planning

Step 3: Conduct a Gap Analysis

- Compare current systems against ISO clauses.
- Use checklists or bring in a consultant for an objective review.

Step 4: Build an Implementation Plan

- Assign responsibilities
- Set realistic timelines
- Prioritise legal compliance and risk-based thinking

Tools to Prepare:

- Gap analysis tool
- Project plan template
- Legal register (especially for ISO 14001 & 45001)

Stage 3: Developing Your Management System

Step 5: Draft Core Documents

Mandatory Documents may include:

- Quality/Environmental/Health & Safety Policies
- Objectives and plans
- Risk Assessments / Aspect & Impact Registers
- Internal Audit Programme
- Management Review Minutes
- Training Records
- Legal Compliance Registers
- Emergency Response Procedures

Step 6: Establish Document Control

- Version control, review dates, access permissions

Step 7: Communicate & Train

- Brief all staff on new procedures, responsibilities, and system purpose
- Toolbox talks, inductions, and refresher training

Stage 4: Implement & Operate

Step 8: Start Using the System

- Complete records: training logs, inspections, audits, NCRs
- Apply procedures in live work (e.g., method statements, procurement checks)

Step 9: Monitor Performance

- Use KPIs, inspections, incident tracking, legal checks
- For ISO 14001/45001: Monitor environmental impact and safety stats

Step 10: Conduct Internal Audits

- At planned intervals
- Include audit reports, findings, corrective actions
- Feed into management reviews

Stage 5: Certification Audit

Step 11: Choose a UKAS-Accredited Certification Body

Examples: BSI, NQA, SGS, Interface NRM, SSAIB,

Step 12: Stage 1 Audit (Readiness Review)

- Auditor reviews documentation
- Identifies any gaps
- You resolve findings before Stage 2

Step 13: Stage 2 Audit (Full Assessment)

- Auditor assesses system implementation and effectiveness
- Findings = minor or major nonconformities (NCRs)
- Corrective actions required for certification

Step 14: Receive Certification

Stage 6: Maintaining Compliance

Step 15: Continue Internal Audits & Reviews

- Minimum annually or as risk/complexity requires
- Feed results into your improvement cycle

Step 16: Track and Improve

- Use corrective & preventive actions (CAPA)
- Review objectives and KPIs

Step 17: Prepare for Surveillance Audits (Annual)

- Certification bodies check ongoing compliance
- Keep all records, reviews, training and risk assessments current

Step 18: Stay Legally Compliant

- Use HSE guidance, Environmental Agency regs, COSHH, PUWER, etc.
- Review changes in UK law that affect your operations

BONUS TIPS:

- **Integrate Systems:** Combine ISO 9001, 14001, and 45001 for streamlined management (Integrated Management System – IMS).
- **Use a Consultant (Like Us):** Avoid common pitfalls and accelerate your success.
- **Engage Staff:** Culture change starts with clear communication and buy-in.