

Even Better Quality Standards!

ABL has recently been awarded the latest ISO 9001 quality standard by independent assessor, NQA – one of the UK's leading quality assurance accreditation bodies.

Originally published in 1987, ISO 9001 underwent revisions in 1994, 2000 and again in 2008. The latest revision was published in September 2015 by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), an agency composed of the national standards bodies of more than 160 countries.



Plan-do-check-act

ISO 9001 is based on the *plan-do-check-act methodology* and provides a *process-oriented approach* to documenting and reviewing the structure, responsibilities, and procedures required to achieve effective quality management in an organisation. Specific sections of the standard contain information on topics such as:

- Requirements for a quality management system (QMS)
- Responsibilities of management
- Management of resources, including human resources and an organization's work environment
- Product realization, including the steps from design to delivery
- Measurement, analysis, and improvement of the QMS through activities like internal audits and corrective / preventive action

Companies use the standard to demonstrate the ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements.

Organizations of all types and sizes find that using the ISO 9001 standard helps them:

- Organize processes
- Improve the efficiency of processes
- Continually improve

2015 changes introduced

Changes introduced in the 2015 revision are intended to ensure that ISO 9001 continues to adapt to the changing environments in which organizations operate.

Some of the key updates in ISO 9001:2015 include the introduction of new terminology, restructuring some of the information, an emphasis on risk-based thinking to enhance the application of the process approach, improved applicability for services, and increased leadership requirements.

Extensive assessment

During the extensive two day assessment, ABL had to demonstrate its commitment to the enhanced features contained in the updated version. This included a series of meetings with many members of staff, all departments and the ABL management team.

The process was led by ABL Quality Manager Mike Doherty who commented, *"The transitional audit was a huge success as it allowed us to demonstrate the Business Strategic Plan was linked to the Quality System, Objectives & Customer feedback."*

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