

What is new in the ISO 9001:2026 standard?

We compared the current standard (ISO 9001:2015) against the new draft version (ISO/DIS 9001:2025) – soon to be ISO 9001:2026. The biggest takeaway is that the draft does not radically restructure ISO 9001; Clauses 4 through 10 remain in place. The main changes are a mix of:

- new explicit requirements,
- new subclause structure, and
- new terminology/themes that make the standard more explicit about climate, culture, ethics, knowledge, digitalization, and opportunity management.

A very important caution: the “new version” is a draft international standard, circulated for comment and subject to change before publication. The comparison below is a comparison to the DIS draft, not a final published ISO 9001:2026 revision.



Executive Summary

Compared with ISO 9001:2015, the draft ISO/DIS 9001:2025 introduces these notable changes:

- Climate change becomes explicit in Clause 4.1, instead of only being inferable through context analysis.
- Interested party requirements may include climate-related expectations, made explicit in Annex A.
- Clause 6.1 is split into three subclauses: determining risks/opportunities, actions for risks, and actions for opportunities. In 2015, these were combined.
- The draft elevates quality culture and ethical behavior as recurring concepts, especially in leadership, policy, awareness, and customer communication.



- Organizational knowledge is expanded from simple retention/access into a fuller lifecycle: retain, apply, share, update, acquire.
- The draft adds stronger language around emerging technologies, digitalization, remote/hybrid work, data dependency, and confidentiality/information-loss risk.
- Several Annex A explanations expand interpretation around sustainability, ethics, customer experience, and integration with other management systems.

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1) New sections and structural changes

A. Clause 6.1 is reorganized

ISO 9001:2015 had...	In the draft, Clause 6.1 is expanded into...
6.1.1 determine risks and opportunities	6.1.1 Determining risks and opportunities
6.1.2 plan actions and evaluate effectiveness.	6.1.2 Actions to address risks
	6.1.3 Actions to address opportunities.

This is one of the clearest structural changes. It signals that the draft wants organizations to treat risk and opportunity more distinctly, instead of as one blended planning activity.

B. Clause titles are refined

The draft keeps the same overall clause map, but there are several title refinements. For example:

- 4.4 becomes simply “Quality management system” in the draft, whereas 2015 used “Quality management system and its processes.”
- 5.3 becomes “Roles, responsibilities and authorities” instead of “Organizational roles, responsibilities and authorities.”
- 10.1 in Annex commentary is framed as continual improvement, with more discussion of other forms of improvement such as digitalization and change.

These are not dramatic requirement changes by themselves, but they reflect a move toward broader systems language.

2) New terms and terminology

The draft introduces or emphasizes several terms and concepts that were either absent, implicit, or far less visible in ISO 9001:2015.

Term	Discussion
Climate change	This is the most visible new theme. In 4.1, the draft explicitly requires the organization to determine whether climate change is a relevant issue. That wording does not appear in ISO 9001:2015. Annex A further explains that climate relevance should be judged based on potential impact on the QMS’s intended results, including ability to provide conforming products/services, meet legal requirements, and enhance customer satisfaction.

Term	Discussion
Quality culture	The phrase quality culture becomes prominent in the draft, especially in leadership, awareness, and policy discussion. Annex A says ethical behavior is part of quality culture and points to ISO 10010 for guidance. This is a meaningful terminology shift because 2015 referred to culture only in the context notes for understanding internal issues; it did not foreground “quality culture” as a recurring concept in the same way.
Ethical behavior	Ethical behavior is repeatedly emphasized in the draft: • part of leadership commitment, • aligned with quality policy, • relevant in customer communication, • relevant when using emerging technologies. This is a notable evolution from 2015, where ethics was not a major stated theme in the requirement structure.
Opportunity-based thinking	2015 focused on risk-based thinking, with opportunities included but less distinctly handled. The draft more visibly uses risk-based thinking and opportunity-based thinking, including in context, process approach, and planning language.
Emerging technologies / digitalization / hybrid and remote work	The draft repeatedly refers to: • emerging technologies • digitalization • hybrid and remote work • growing dependency on valid and reliable data. None of these themes is explicit in ISO 9001:2015.
Sustainability and customer experience	The draft’s Annex A explicitly says design and development may relate not only to physical/functional characteristics but also to sustainability, ethics and customer experience, where relevant. This is a strong terminology expansion even if it appears mainly in explanatory text rather than as a standalone “shall.”

3) New or changed requirements

A. New explicit requirement: determine whether climate change is relevant

This is the clearest new requirement. The draft 4.1 states the organization shall determine external and internal issues relevant to purpose and strategic direction, and then adds: **“The organization shall determine whether climate change is a relevant issue.”**

That is new compared with ISO 9001:2015. In 2015, environmental or social matters could be considered under context, but climate change was not specifically called out.

B. Interested parties: climate-related requirements made explicit

Clause 4.2 itself appears broadly similar in structure, but Annex A clarifies that relevant interested parties can have **requirements related to climate change** and that these should be monitored and reviewed if relevant.

So this is partly a new interpretation and partly an operational expectation.

C. Risk and opportunity actions are separated

The new split into 6.1.2 and 6.1.3 suggests a more disciplined treatment:

- risks are not just the mirror image of opportunities,
- opportunity planning now has clearer standalone recognition.

Even where the draft remains conceptually similar to 2015, this separation is likely to affect how organizations document planning, management review inputs, and improvement projects.

D. Organizational knowledge becomes more demanding

2015 required the organization to determine and maintain knowledge and to acquire/access additional knowledge when needs and trends change; the annex emphasized safeguarding against knowledge loss and encouraging learning.

The draft strengthens this by requiring that knowledge be **retained, applied and shared** as necessary, and that changing needs/trends trigger consideration of current knowledge, acquisition of additional knowledge, and updates. Annex A also frames knowledge management as acquiring/creating, applying, maintaining, and sharing knowledge.

That is more mature than the 2015 treatment and will matter for competence, succession, and lessons-learned systems.

E. Support requirements reflect modern work environments

The draft adds explicit examples and implications tied to:

- remote/on-site/hybrid infrastructure (7.1.3),
- information and communication technology,
- psychological work environment factors,
- burnout prevention,
- remote environments not under direct control.

This is more than editorial modernization. It widens what organizations should consider when determining infrastructure and operating environment.

F. Customer communication is tied to ethical behavior

Annex A makes ethical behavior in customer communication explicit, especially to avoid creating expectations the organization cannot meet.

This is not just a marketing concern; it affects quotation review, commitment review, and promise management.

G. Documented information: modern information-security/data-loss emphasis

The draft adds commentary that emerging technologies make documented information easier to use but also create risks such as:

- massive information loss from failures,
- confidentiality loss,
- inadvertent alteration or deletion.

While much of this is in Annex A, it clearly signals a stronger expectation that documented information controls address digital risk realities.

H. Improvement language expands beyond classic continual improvement

ISO 9001:2015 already allowed improvement examples such as innovation and reorganization.

The draft goes further in Annex A by connecting improvement to:

- sudden or unexpected contextual change,
- response to risks,
- exploitation of opportunities,
- new skills/resource decisions,
- emerging technologies and digitalization.

That broadens the practical interpretation of improvement planning.

4) Areas that are mostly unchanged

Despite the new language, the draft does **not** appear to overturn the core architecture of ISO 9001:

- process approach remains central,
- customer focus remains central,
- documented information is still flexible rather than prescribing a manual,
- the main clauses 4–10 remain in place,
- the standard remains generic and applicable to any organization.

So this is best read as an **evolutionary revision**, not a complete rewrite.

5) Practical impact for organizations

For implementation purposes, the draft would likely require organizations to update:

- The **Quality Manual**
- The **Quality Policy**
- **context analysis** to explicitly assess climate change relevance,
- **interested-party analysis** to consider climate/sustainability-related requirements where relevant,
- **risk and opportunity registers** to separate treatment of risks vs opportunities,
- **leadership and policy messaging** to reflect ethics and quality culture,
- **knowledge management** processes to cover sharing and updating, not just retention,
- **infrastructure/environment reviews** to address hybrid work, ICT, psychological factors, and technology-related risks,
- **document control / IT controls** to address confidentiality, integrity, and loss of digital information.
- Any **training materials** associated with the QMS

6) Concise clause-by-clause delta summary

Clause	Delta Summary
Clause 4 — Context	New explicit climate-change relevance requirement; interested-party expectations may include climate/sustainability.
Clause 5 — Leadership	Much stronger emphasis on quality culture and ethical behavior.
Clause 6 — Planning	Major structural change: separate subclauses for risks and opportunities.
Clause 7 — Support	Modernized for hybrid work, ICT, psychological environment, broader knowledge management, and technology-related risks.
Clause 8 — Operation	Explanatory text adds ethics, sustainability, customer experience, and clearer commitment realism in customer communication.
Clause 10 — Improvement	Improvement is discussed in a broader context of digitalization, emerging technologies, contextual change, and opportunity response.

The Bottom line

The draft “new version” keeps ISO 9001’s familiar structure, but it clearly modernizes the standard in five directions:

1. climate awareness,
2. ethical behavior and quality culture,
3. clearer treatment of opportunities,
4. stronger knowledge management, and
5. adaptation to digital, technology-enabled, hybrid working environments.

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