



International Organization for Standardization



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## **ISO 9001 Auditing Practices Group** **Guidance on:**

### **Effective use of ISO 19011**

ISO 19011 *Guidelines for auditing management systems* provides guidelines for first, second and third-party auditing of management systems. The standard contains options relating to auditing methods and auditor competence but the content is not mandatory. The guidance is intended to be flexible and the application can differ according to the size, nature and complexity of the organisation to be audited. It is up to each third party auditing body to use the guidelines to the extent appropriate to their needs and relevance to their own working practices.

The standard is divided into a number of sections including the following:

#### **Principles of auditing**

An auditor should be familiar with the 6 principles of auditing and apply them to the audit process.

#### **Managing an audit programme**

This will generally be the responsibility of the management of a third party auditing body and not an individual auditor. Auditors should be aware that audit programmes are monitored and reviewed at appropriate intervals. Auditors should provide input for improvement of audit programmes.

#### **Performing an audit**

This guidance emphasises the importance of and the techniques for planning, conducting and reporting an audit and is of particular relevance to an auditor. Auditors should be very familiar with the guidance in Clause 6 of ISO 19011 on these issues.

## Competence and evaluation of auditors

The guidance on the competence and evaluation of auditors gives new emphasis to the importance of team competence as well as that of the individual. Auditors should possess the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the intended results of the audits they are expected to perform. All auditors should possess generic knowledge and skills and should also be expected to possess some discipline and sector-specific knowledge and skills. Audit team leaders should have the additional knowledge and skills necessary to provide leadership to the audit team

Competence is now defined as the “*ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results*”.

ISO 19011 states that

- “*Confidence in the audit process and the ability to achieve its objectives depends on the competence of those individuals who are involved in planning and conducting audits, including auditors and audit team leaders.*”
- “*Competence should be evaluated through a process that considers personal behaviour and the ability to apply the knowledge and skills gained through education, work experience, auditor training and audit experience.*”
- “*This process should take into consideration the needs of the audit programme and its objectives*”

Much of this guidance will be used by third party auditing bodies when setting their own competence criteria for auditors. However, individual auditors should be aware of the content of this section so that they can maintain, improve and work within the limits of their professional competence.

Practical help can be found throughout the guidelines and provides examples and additional clarification on various topics, although some may not be applicable to third party auditing.

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For further information on the ISO 9001 Auditing Practices Group, please refer to the paper: *Introduction to the ISO 9001 Auditing Practices Group*

Feedback from users will be used by the *ISO 9001 Auditing Practices Group* to determine whether additional guidance documents should be developed, or if these current ones should be revised.

Comments on the papers or presentations can be sent to the following email address: [charles.corrie@bsigroup.com](mailto:charles.corrie@bsigroup.com) .

The other ISO 9001 Auditing Practices Group papers and presentations may be downloaded from the web sites:

[www.iaf.nu](http://www.iaf.nu)

[www.iso.org/tc176/ISO9001AuditingPracticesGroup](http://www.iso.org/tc176/ISO9001AuditingPracticesGroup)

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