

## Auditing 'where appropriate' requirements

The auditee should determine the application of the ISO 9001 'where appropriate' requirements, as this will affect its ability to satisfy its customers' requirements. (It may be useful to refer the auditee to ISO 9001 clause 1.1 'where an organization needs to demonstrate its ability to consistently provide product that meets customer and applicable regulatory requirements.)

An auditor should ensure that the 'where appropriate' requirements are really 'appropriate' in relation to the proposed/actual [scope of the auditee's quality management system \(QMS\)](#). Therefore the basis of the audit should be against this criterion, which should form the benchmark when deciding what is appropriate or not.

Issues that should be considered include:

- does this requirement add value to this element of confidence, without the 'where appropriate' being addressed?
- does it increase the risk that the organization cannot meet its customer requirements? (This may be more than a specific set of customer requirements, as it can include the demands and expectations of end users, consumers, or the supply chain.)

### Need for experience to make a judgement on a technical issue

An auditing body should be able to demonstrate that its auditor has the necessary sector knowledge, competence and auditing skills. The auditor needs to be able to demonstrate knowledge of a process that is being examined and to be able to apply their skill in evaluating whether the 'where appropriate' requirements are appropriate or not.

The auditor will need to understand how the 'where appropriate' requirements fit into the context of how a process is established and its expected outcomes. When the requirements are not considered to be 'appropriate', the audit should provide objective evidence to demonstrate that the system is effective and that customer requirements are being consistently met.

An auditing body should have the necessary processes in place to ensure that an auditor has the specific skills for the organization that is to be audited.

This article is an edited version of 'Determination of the "where appropriate" processes' from the website of the ISO 9001 Auditing Practices Group, and is reproduced courtesy of ISO and the IAF. These papers were developed on current best practice and therefore have not been formally endorsed as International Accreditation Forum (IAF) guidance or ISO TC176 interpretations. For further information about the Auditing Practices Group <http://isotc.iso.org/livelink/livelink/fetch/2000/2122/138402/138403/%203541460/customview.html?func=ll&objId=3541460&objAction=browse&sort=name>.

# ISO/IAF Auditing Practices Group Papers

[www.irca.org](http://www.irca.org)

The ISO 9001 Auditing Practices Group is an informal group of QMS experts, auditors and practitioners drawn from the ISO Technical Committee 176 Quality Management and Quality Assurance (ISO/TC 176) and the IAF. It has developed a number of guidance papers and presentations that contain explanations about the auditing of QMSs. These reflect the process-based approach that is essential for auditing the requirements of ISO 9001.

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