



**International  
Standard**

**ISO 21001**

**Educational organizations —  
Management systems for  
educational organizations —  
Requirements with guidance for use**

*Organismes d'éducation/formation — Systèmes de management  
des organismes d'éducation/formation — Exigences et  
recommandations pour leur application*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents). ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 232, *Education and learning services*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 21001:2018), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows: assessment related text has been revised to reflect current best practices in educational assessment.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

### 0.1 General

This document provides a common management tool for organizations providing educational products and services capable of meeting learners' and other beneficiaries' requirements.

### 0.2 Relevance

There is a critical and continuous need for educational organizations to evaluate the degree to which they meet the requirements of learners and other beneficiaries, as well as other relevant interested parties and to improve their ability to continue to do so.

NOTE 1 A classification of interested parties in educational organizations is provided in [Annex C](#).

Although educational organizations and learners worldwide are the main beneficiaries of this document, all interested parties will benefit from standardized management systems in educational organizations.

EXAMPLE Employers who sponsor and encourage staff to participate in educational services can also benefit from this document.

The potential benefits to an organization of implementing an educational organizations management system (EOMS) based on this document are:

- a) better alignment of objectives and activities with policy (including mission and vision);
- b) enhanced social responsibility by providing inclusive and equitable quality education for all;
- c) more personalized learning and effective response to all learners and particularly to learners with special education needs, distance learners and lifelong learning opportunities;
- d) consistent processes and evaluation tools to demonstrate and increase effectiveness and efficiency;
- e) increased credibility of the organization;
- f) a means that enables educational organizations to demonstrate their commitment to effective educational management practices;
- g) a culture for educational organization improvement;
- h) harmonization of regional, national, open, proprietary and other standards within an international framework;
- i) widened participation of interested parties;
- j) stimulation of excellence and innovation.
- k) continual improvement of the design and development of study programs to ensure the development of the competencies of learners to meet the needs of all interested parties

### 0.3 Relationship between this document and other International Standards

This document is a stand-alone management system standard, aligned with ISO 9001. It focuses on the management systems of educational organizations as well as the impact of these on learners and other relevant interested parties.

This document conforms to ISO's requirements for management system standards. These requirements include a high level structure, identical core text, and common terms with core definitions, designed to benefit users implementing multiple ISO management system standards.

This document can be implemented alongside regional, national, open, proprietary and other standards or related documents.

NOTE 2 [Annex F](#) provides an example of how to implement this document alongside the European Quality Assurance Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET).

#### 0.4 Principles for an EOMS

The EOMS entails the following management principles:

- a) focus on learners and other beneficiaries;
- b) visionary leadership;
- c) engagement of people;
- d) process approach;
- e) improvement;
- f) evidence-based decisions;
- g) relationship management;
- h) social responsibility;
- i) accessibility and equity;
- j) ethical conduct in education;
- k) data security and protection.

NOTE 3 The details of these principles are analysed in [Annex B](#).

#### 0.5 Process approach

##### 0.5.1 General

This document promotes the adoption of a process approach when developing, implementing and improving the effectiveness of an EOMS, to enhance learner and other beneficiary satisfaction by meeting learner and other beneficiary requirements. Specific requirements considered essential to the adoption of a process approach are included in [4.4](#).

Understanding and managing interrelated processes as a system contributes to the educational organization's effectiveness and efficiency in achieving its intended results. This approach enables the educational organization to control the interrelationships and interdependencies among the processes of the system, so that the overall performance of the educational organization can be enhanced.

The process approach involves the systematic definition and management of processes, and their interactions, so as to achieve the intended results in accordance with the policy, objectives and strategic plan of the educational organization. Management of the processes and the system as a whole can be achieved using the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle (see 0.5.2) with an overall focus on risk-based thinking (see 0.5.3) aimed at taking advantage of opportunities and preventing undesirable results. The application of the process approach in an EOMS enables:

- understanding and consistency in meeting requirements;
- the consideration of processes in terms of added value;
- achievement of effective process performance;
- improvement of processes based on continuous evaluation of data and information.

Figure 1 gives a schematic representation of any process (such as assessment of the educational effectiveness process) and shows the interaction of its elements. The monitoring and measuring check points, which are necessary for control, are specific to each process and will vary depending on the related risks.

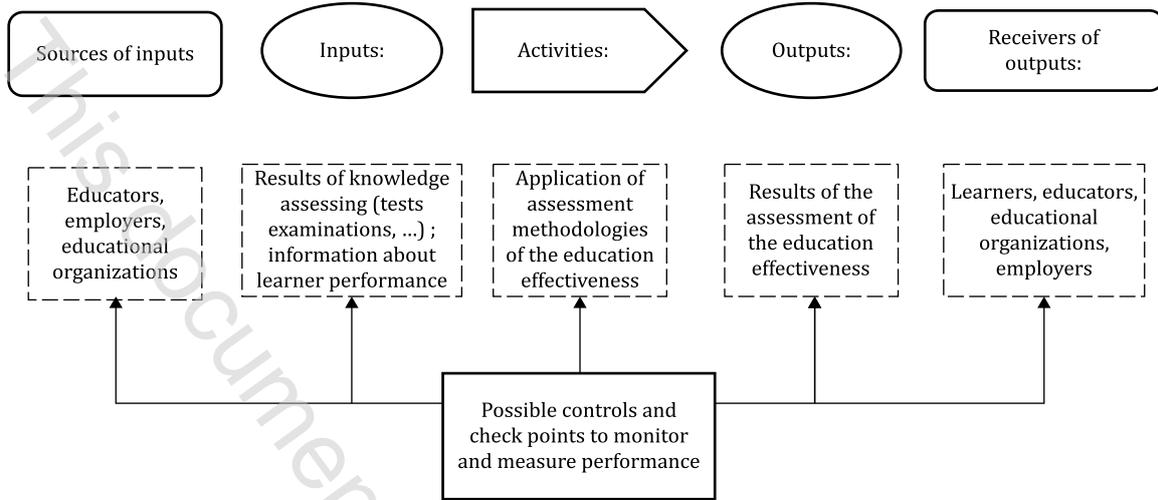
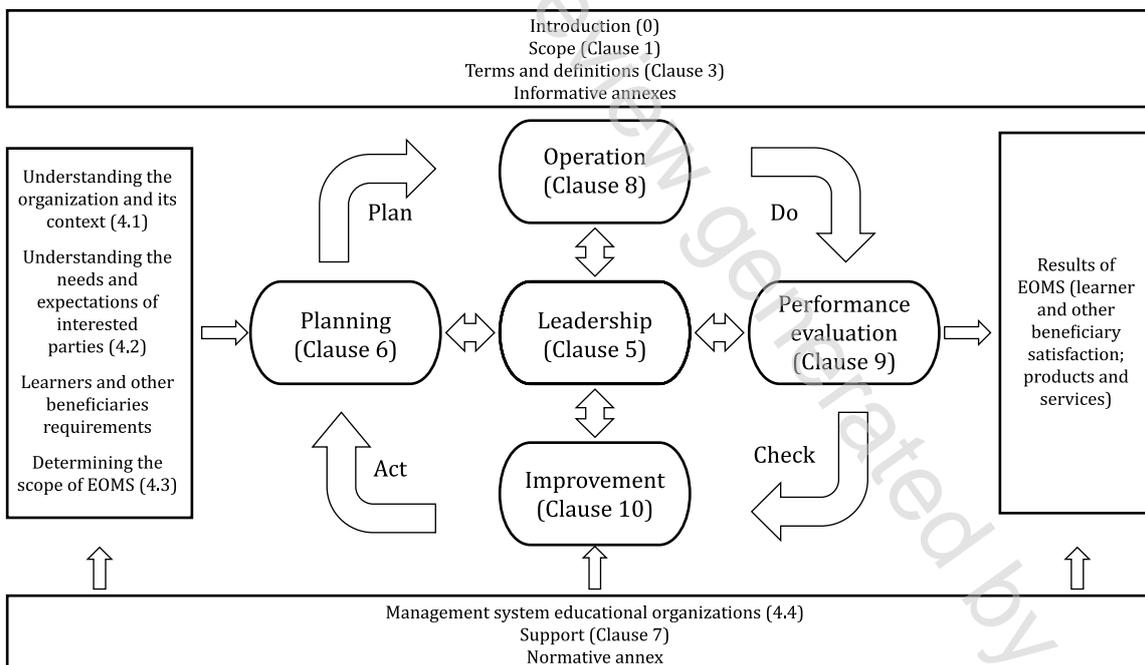


Figure 1 — Schematic representation of the elements of a single process (assessment of the educational effectiveness process)

### 0.5.2 Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle

The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle can be applied to all processes and to the EOMS as a whole. Figure 2 illustrates how Clauses 4 to 10 can be grouped in relation to the PDCA cycle.



NOTE Numbers in brackets refer to clauses in this document.

Figure 2 — Representation of the structure of this document in the PDCA cycle

The PDCA cycle can be briefly described as follows:

- **Plan:** establish the objectives of the system and its processes, and the resources needed to deliver results in accordance with learners' and other beneficiaries' requirements and the educational organization's policies, and identify and address risks and opportunities;
- **Do:** implement what was planned;
- **Check:** monitor and (where applicable) measure processes and the resulting products and services against policies, objectives, requirements and planned activities, and report the results;
- **Act:** take actions to improve performance, as necessary.

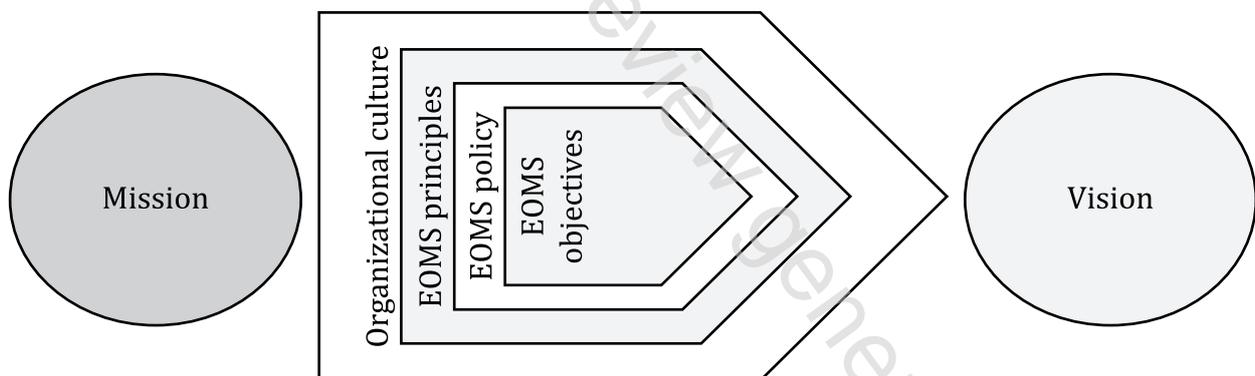
### 0.5.3 Risk-based thinking

Risk-based thinking is essential for achieving an effective EOMS. To conform to the requirements of this document, an educational organization needs to plan and implement actions to address risks and opportunities. Addressing both risks and opportunities establishes a basis for increasing the effectiveness of the quality management system, achieving improved results and preventing negative effects.

Opportunities can arise as a result of a situation favourable to achieving an intended result, e.g. a set of circumstances that allow the educational organization to attract learners and other beneficiaries, develop new products and services, reduce waste or improve productivity. Actions to address opportunities can also include consideration of associated risks. Risk is the effect of uncertainty and any such uncertainty can have positive or negative effects. A positive deviation arising from a risk can provide an opportunity, but not all positive effects of risk result in opportunities.

### 0.6 Educational organization mission, vision and strategy

[Figure 3](#) illustrates EOMS strategy as related to mission and vision.



**Figure 3 — EOMS strategy as related to mission and vision**

The EOMS policy statements are framed by the educational organization's culture (the complete set of beliefs and values that condition its behaviour) and by the EOMS principles. In turn, the EOMS policy statements provide the framework for the establishment of the EOMS objectives, which are periodically revised to ensure the educational organization's mission is effectively and efficiently accomplished while walking the continuous path towards the achievement of the educational organization's vision.

### 0.7 Additional requirements and guidance

[Annex A](#) specifies additional requirements for early childhood education for educational organizations that provide this service.

[Annex B](#) outlines the principles for an EOMS.

[Annex C](#) provides a classification of interested parties.

[Annex D](#) provides guidelines for communication with interested parties.

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[Annex E](#) provides guidance on processes, measures and tools in educational organizations.

[Annex F](#) gives an example of mapping to regional standards.

[Annex G](#) outlines health and safety considerations for educational organizations.

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# Educational organizations — Management systems for educational organizations — Requirements with guidance for use

## 1 Scope

This document specifies requirements and provides guidance for a management system for educational organizations (EOMS) when such an organization:

- a) needs to demonstrate its ability to support the acquisition and development of competence through teaching, learning or research;
- b) aims to enhance satisfaction of learners, other beneficiaries and staff through the effective application of its EOMS, including processes for improvement of the system and assurance of conformity to the requirements of learners and other beneficiaries.

All requirements of this document are generic and intended to be applicable to any educational organization that uses a curriculum to support the development of competence through teaching, learning, training or research, regardless of the type, size or method of delivery.

This document can be applied to educational organizations within larger organizations whose core business is not education, such as professional training departments.

This document also provides guidance for the use of a EOMS.

This document does not apply to organizations that only produce or manufacture educational products.

## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### **organization**

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its *objectives* (3.6)

Note 1 to entry: The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to, sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

Note 2 to entry: If the organization is part of a larger entity, the term “organization” refers only to the part of the larger entity that is within the scope of the educational organization *management system* (3.4).