FREE ISO CERTIFICATION READINESS TEMPLATE

ISO Readiness Audit Checklist

Use this 60-point checklist to assess management-system scope, context, leadership, risks, objectives, resources, operational controls, performance evaluation, internal audit, corrective action, management review, and certification readiness.

Target ISO standard	Audit date	Readiness reviewer	System owner

1. Audit scope, target ISO standard, certification stage, and requirement mapping

1 **Confirm the target ISO management-system standard, edition, amendments, certification scope, sites, functions, products or services, and organizational boundaries included in the readiness review.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

NAME Enter | DATE / TIME Enter | APPROVAL Sign

Execution tip: Start by locking the exact target standard, edition, amendments, scope, and certification boundaries. Readiness cannot be judged reliably against a vague or outdated requirement set.

2 **Verify the organization has access to the current applicable requirements of the selected standard and has identified any sector, legal, customer, or certification-program requirements that also affect readiness.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Start by locking the exact target standard, edition, amendments, scope, and certification boundaries. Readiness cannot be judged reliably against a vague or outdated requirement set.

3 **Map each applicable requirement or clause to the responsible process, owner, documented information, operating control, evidence source, and current readiness status.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Start by locking the exact target standard, edition, amendments, scope, and certification boundaries. Readiness cannot be judged reliably against a vague or outdated requirement set.

4 Confirm exclusions, non-applicable requirements, outsourced activities, shared services, remote functions, and multi-site arrangements are justified and reflected consistently in the management-system scope.

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Start by locking the exact target standard, edition, amendments, scope, and certification boundaries. Readiness cannot be judged reliably against a vague or outdated requirement set.

5 **Review previous certification audits, internal audits, customer audits, gap assessments, regulatory findings, complaints, incidents, and open corrective actions that may affect readiness.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Start by locking the exact target standard, edition, amendments, scope, and certification boundaries. Readiness cannot be judged reliably against a vague or outdated requirement set.

6 Assign ownership for gap closure, document updates, process implementation, internal audits, management review, evidence readiness, certification coordination, and final approval.

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Start by locking the exact target standard, edition, amendments, scope, and certification boundaries. Readiness cannot be judged reliably against a vague or outdated requirement set.

2. Organizational context, interested parties, system scope, leadership, and policy

7 **Verify the organization has identified relevant internal and external issues that can affect the intended outcomes of the management system.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Interview leadership and process owners as well as reviewing documents. Certification readiness depends on the management system being understood and integrated into real business processes.

8 **Confirm relevant interested parties, their applicable needs or expectations, and any resulting compliance, customer, contractual, employee, supplier, or stakeholder requirements are understood.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Interview leadership and process owners as well as reviewing documents. Certification readiness depends on the management system being understood and integrated into real business processes.

9 **Check the management-system scope is documented, appropriate to the organization's context, and aligned with actual activities, sites, products, services, and outsourced processes.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Interview leadership and process owners as well as reviewing documents. Certification readiness depends on the management system being understood and integrated into real business processes.

10 **Verify top management demonstrates accountability for the management system through direction, integration into business processes, resources, review, and support for continual improvement.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Interview leadership and process owners as well as reviewing documents. Certification readiness depends on the management system being understood and integrated into real business processes.

11 **Confirm the policy required by the selected ISO standard is approved, communicated, available where appropriate, and consistent with organizational purpose and management-system commitments.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Interview leadership and process owners as well as reviewing documents. Certification readiness depends on the management system being understood and integrated into real business processes.

12 Check responsibilities, authorities, reporting lines, process ownership, escalation, and accountability for the management system are clear and understood.

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Interview leadership and process owners as well as reviewing documents. Certification readiness depends on the management system being understood and integrated into real business processes.

3. Risks, opportunities, objectives, planning, obligations, and management of change

13 **Verify risks and opportunities relevant to the management system are identified, evaluated, prioritized, and linked to planned controls or actions.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Translate risks, obligations, and objectives into visible actions and evidence. A register alone does not prove that planning has been implemented.

14 **Confirm applicable legal, regulatory, contractual, customer, environmental, safety, quality, information, or other obligations required by the selected standard are identified and kept current.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Translate risks, obligations, and objectives into visible actions and evidence. A register alone does not prove that planning has been implemented.

15 **Check measurable management-system objectives are established at relevant functions and levels with owners, targets, timelines, resources, and methods for evaluating results.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

ACTUAL / STATUS Enter | REQUIREMENT Enter | RESULT Record

Execution tip: Translate risks, obligations, and objectives into visible actions and evidence. A register alone does not prove that planning has been implemented.

16 **Verify action plans explain how objectives will be achieved, who is responsible, what resources are needed, when actions will be completed, and how results will be evaluated.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

ACTUAL / STATUS Enter | REQUIREMENT Enter | RESULT Record

Execution tip: Translate risks, obligations, and objectives into visible actions and evidence. A register alone does not prove that planning has been implemented.

17 **Confirm planned changes to processes, organization, technology, suppliers, facilities, products, services, or controls are reviewed for management-system impact before implementation.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Translate risks, obligations, and objectives into visible actions and evidence. A register alone does not prove that planning has been implemented.

18 **Verify the organization has considered current external issues required by the selected standard, including climate-related relevance where applicable to that standard and organizational context.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Translate risks, obligations, and objectives into visible actions and evidence. A register alone does not prove that planning has been implemented.

4. Resources, competence, awareness, communication, infrastructure, and documented information

19 **Confirm the organization has identified and provided the people, infrastructure, work environment, technology, knowledge, monitoring resources, and support needed for effective system operation.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Sample competence and document control in the field. The strongest evidence is that people use current information and can explain how their work affects system performance.

20 **Verify people performing work that affects management-system performance are competent based on appropriate education, training, skills, experience, or demonstrated capability.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Sample competence and document control in the field. The strongest evidence is that people use current information and can explain how their work affects system performance.

21 **Check employees and relevant contractors understand the policy, objectives, their contribution, applicable requirements, significant risks, and consequences of not following the management system.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Sample competence and document control in the field. The strongest evidence is that people use current information and can explain how their work affects system performance.

22 Confirm internal and external communication requirements define what will be communicated, when, with whom, by whom, through which channels, and how records are retained where needed.

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Sample competence and document control in the field. The strongest evidence is that people use current information and can explain how their work affects system performance.

23 **Verify required documented information is approved, current, identifiable, accessible, protected, version-controlled, retained, and prevented from unintended use when obsolete.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Sample competence and document control in the field. The strongest evidence is that people use current information and can explain how their work affects system performance.

24 Check organizational knowledge, records, templates, forms, systems, instructions, and external documents needed to operate and demonstrate conformity are controlled and available.

ISO READINESS

Requirement	Current	Owner	Evidence	Gap / Action

Execution tip: Sample competence and document control in the field. The strongest evidence is that people use current information and can explain how their work affects system performance.

5. Operational planning, process controls, supplier controls, emergency or contingency readiness, and execut

25 **Verify operational processes needed to meet management-system requirements are defined with criteria, responsibilities, resources, controls, and records.** CRITICAL
ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Follow one core process from inputs to outputs, including supplier controls, exceptions, records, and standard-specific operating controls, to test whether the system works end to end.

26 **Confirm process inputs, outputs, sequence, interactions, acceptance criteria, risks, quality or compliance gates, and required evidence are understood by process owners.** CRITICAL
ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Follow one core process from inputs to outputs, including supplier controls, exceptions, records, and standard-specific operating controls, to test whether the system works end to end.

27 **Check externally provided processes, suppliers, contractors, service providers, and outsourced activities are selected, controlled, monitored, and evaluated according to their impact and risk.** CRITICAL
ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Follow one core process from inputs to outputs, including supplier controls, exceptions, records, and standard-specific operating controls, to test whether the system works end to end.

28 Verify operational changes, deviations, exceptions, temporary controls, rework, emergency conditions, and abnormal situations follow approved authorization and control methods.
ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Follow one core process from inputs to outputs, including supplier controls, exceptions, records, and standard-specific operating controls, to test whether the system works end to end.

29 **Confirm the organization has implemented standard-specific operational controls such as customer requirements, environmental aspects, OH&S hazards, information risks, food-safety controls, or other applicable requirements.** CRITICAL
ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Follow one core process from inputs to outputs, including supplier controls, exceptions, records, and standard-specific operating controls, to test whether the system works end to end.

30 **Where the selected standard requires emergency, contingency, response, continuity, or preparedness arrangements, verify plans are practical, communicated, tested, reviewed, and supported by evidence.** CRITICAL
ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Follow one core process from inputs to outputs, including supplier controls, exceptions, records, and standard-specific operating controls, to test whether the system works end to end.

6. Monitoring, measurement, evaluation, compliance, data integrity, and performance results

31 **Confirm the organization has defined what must be monitored or measured, the methods used, frequency, responsibilities, acceptance criteria, records, and evaluation of results.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Trace one performance indicator from source data to calculation, review, action, and management decision to test the reliability of performance evaluation.

32 **Verify monitoring and measuring equipment or systems are suitable, maintained, calibrated or verified where required, and protected from use when results may be unreliable.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Trace one performance indicator from source data to calculation, review, action, and management decision to test the reliability of performance evaluation.

33 **Check performance indicators and management-system results are analyzed for trends, target achievement, recurring gaps, process variation, incidents, complaints, defects, or other relevant outcomes.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

ACTUAL / STATUS Enter | REQUIREMENT Enter | RESULT Record

Execution tip: Trace one performance indicator from source data to calculation, review, action, and management decision to test the reliability of performance evaluation.

34 **Confirm evaluation of applicable compliance or other obligations is completed at planned intervals where required by the selected standard.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

ACTUAL / STATUS Enter | REQUIREMENT Enter | RESULT Record

Execution tip: Trace one performance indicator from source data to calculation, review, action, and management decision to test the reliability of performance evaluation.

35 Verify customer, employee, supplier, environmental, safety, service, quality, security, or other relevant performance feedback is collected and evaluated as applicable.

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Trace one performance indicator from source data to calculation, review, action, and management decision to test the reliability of performance evaluation.

36 **Check reported metrics can be traced to reliable source data and that calculation methods, assumptions, corrections, exceptions, and reporting periods are controlled.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Trace one performance indicator from source data to calculation, review, action, and management decision to test the reliability of performance evaluation.

7. Internal audit programme, auditor competence, audit evidence, and follow-up

37 **Verify an internal audit programme covers the full management-system scope, all applicable requirements, key processes, locations, shifts, outsourced activities, and prior problem areas over the planned cycle.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Use the internal audit as a realistic rehearsal. Audit the full system using objective evidence and do not avoid difficult processes or known weak areas.

38 **Confirm audit frequency and priority consider process importance, risk, organizational change, previous audit results, complaints, incidents, nonconformities, and performance trends.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Use the internal audit as a realistic rehearsal. Audit the full system using objective evidence and do not avoid difficult processes or known weak areas.

39 **Check internal auditors are competent and sufficiently independent or objective for the work being audited, with conflicts of interest appropriately managed.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Use the internal audit as a realistic rehearsal. Audit the full system using objective evidence and do not avoid difficult processes or known weak areas.

40 Verify audit plans define scope, criteria, methods, samples, timing, responsibilities, interview or observation needs, and evidence sources before the audit starts.

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Use the internal audit as a realistic rehearsal. Audit the full system using objective evidence and do not avoid difficult processes or known weak areas.

41 **Confirm audit findings are based on objective evidence, clearly linked to requirements, classified consistently, communicated to responsible management, and recorded.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Use the internal audit as a realistic rehearsal. Audit the full system using objective evidence and do not avoid difficult processes or known weak areas.

42 **Check internal audit findings are assigned, corrected, investigated where needed, verified for closure, and used to improve the audit programme and management system.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Use the internal audit as a realistic rehearsal. Audit the full system using objective evidence and do not avoid difficult processes or known weak areas.

8. Nonconformity, corrective action, root cause, effectiveness, and continual improvement

43 **Verify nonconformities from audits, complaints, incidents, process failures, monitoring, supplier issues, or other sources are recorded and controlled consistently.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Do not close gaps at correction only. Significant findings should show cause, corrective action, implementation evidence, and effectiveness where appropriate.

44 **Confirm immediate correction and containment address the current issue and prevent further unintended use, release, impact, or recurrence while investigation continues.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Do not close gaps at correction only. Significant findings should show cause, corrective action, implementation evidence, and effectiveness where appropriate.

45 **Check significant or recurring nonconformities receive evidence-based root-cause analysis rather than being closed only with correction, reminders, or retraining.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Do not close gaps at correction only. Significant findings should show cause, corrective action, implementation evidence, and effectiveness where appropriate.

46 **Verify corrective actions address verified causes, have named owners and deadlines, consider similar risks elsewhere, and are supported by objective implementation evidence.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Do not close gaps at correction only. Significant findings should show cause, corrective action, implementation evidence, and effectiveness where appropriate.

47 **Confirm effectiveness checks demonstrate that corrective actions reduced recurrence and did not create new management-system risks or unintended consequences.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Do not close gaps at correction only. Significant findings should show cause, corrective action, implementation evidence, and effectiveness where appropriate.

48 **Review recurring findings, weak controls, missed objectives, audit trends, complaints, incidents, inefficiencies, and improvement opportunities for evidence of continual improvement.** CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Do not close gaps at correction only. Significant findings should show cause, corrective action, implementation evidence, and effectiveness where appropriate.

9. Management review, leadership decisions, resources, strategic alignment, and system effectiveness

49 **Verify management review is completed at planned intervals and includes the inputs required by the selected standard and the organization's own management-system needs.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Management review should result in decisions, resources, and actions. A slide deck or meeting calendar alone is not evidence that leadership has evaluated system effectiveness.

50 **Confirm management review considers previous actions, context changes, interested-party needs, performance results, objective status, audit findings, nonconformities, compliance, and improvement opportunities as applicable.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Management review should result in decisions, resources, and actions. A slide deck or meeting calendar alone is not evidence that leadership has evaluated system effectiveness.

51 **Check management receives enough accurate information to evaluate whether the management system remains suitable, adequate, effective, and aligned with strategic direction.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Management review should result in decisions, resources, and actions. A slide deck or meeting calendar alone is not evidence that leadership has evaluated system effectiveness.

52 **Verify management-review outputs include clear decisions and actions related to improvement, changes, resources, risks, objectives, process controls, and system priorities where needed.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Management review should result in decisions, resources, and actions. A slide deck or meeting calendar alone is not evidence that leadership has evaluated system effectiveness.

53 Confirm management-review actions have named owners, due dates, follow-up, evidence, and escalation rather than remaining as untracked meeting notes.

ISO READINESS

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Management review should result in decisions, resources, and actions. A slide deck or meeting calendar alone is not evidence that leadership has evaluated system effectiveness.

54 **Check leadership can explain major system risks, performance gaps, open critical actions, readiness status, and the evidence supporting the decision to proceed toward certification.**

CRITICAL

ISO READINESS

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Management review should result in decisions, resources, and actions. A slide deck or meeting calendar alone is not evidence that leadership has evaluated system effectiveness.

10. Certification readiness, gap closure, evidence pack, audit logistics, and final sign-off

55 **Confirm all applicable requirements have been assessed and each identified gap has a clear owner, priority, due date, closure evidence, and verification status.**
ISO READINESS
CRITICAL

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Readiness means the system can demonstrate implementation. Before certification, verify that evidence is retrievable, people understand their roles, and major gaps are genuinely closed.

56 **Verify required processes are not only documented but have operated long enough to produce credible evidence of implementation, monitoring, internal audit, corrective action, and management review.**
ISO READINESS
CRITICAL

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Readiness means the system can demonstrate implementation. Before certification, verify that evidence is retrievable, people understand their roles, and major gaps are genuinely closed.

57 **Check the organization can quickly retrieve policies, scope, objectives, risk records, operational evidence, competence records, monitoring results, audit reports, management-review records, and corrective-action evidence.**
ISO READINESS
CRITICAL

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Readiness means the system can demonstrate implementation. Before certification, verify that evidence is retrievable, people understand their roles, and major gaps are genuinely closed.

58 **Confirm sampled employees and process owners can explain how the management system applies to their work, where relevant information is found, and how deviations or improvements are reported.**
ISO READINESS
CRITICAL

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Readiness means the system can demonstrate implementation. Before certification, verify that evidence is retrievable, people understand their roles, and major gaps are genuinely closed.

59 **Verify certification-audit logistics are ready, including audit scope, site list, key contacts, process schedule, access arrangements, evidence locations, language needs, remote-access needs, and responsible escorts or process owners.**
ISO READINESS
CRITICAL

Ready | Partial | Gap | N/A

Execution tip: Readiness means the system can demonstrate implementation. Before certification, verify that evidence is retrievable, people understand their roles, and major gaps are genuinely closed.

60 **Record the final readiness status, unresolved major gaps, residual risks, go or no-go decision, target audit date, readiness reviewer, management-system owner, executive approver, date, time, and sign-off.**
ISO READINESS
CRITICAL

Ready | Needs action | Major gap | EVIDENCE Add

Execution tip: Readiness means the system can demonstrate implementation. Before certification, verify that evidence is retrievable, people understand their roles, and major gaps are genuinely closed.