

# Introduction and support package: Guidance on the Terminology used in ISO 9001 and ISO 9004

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## 1. Introduction

Great care has been taken during the development of ISO 9001 and ISO 9004 to use the correct English words and terms to describe their concepts and requirements, to assist in their readability and translation. The objective is to use simple technically accurate terms, and to the greatest extent possible, rely on common dictionary definitions. As with most technical subjects, there are some terms that have a very specific meaning different from the common dictionary one; in such cases, the appropriate technical definition is provided in one of the following:

- n [ISO 9000:2005, Quality management systems - Fundamentals and Vocabulary](#)
- n [ISO Guide 2:2004, Standardization and related activities – General vocabulary](#)
- n [ISO/IEC Directives - Part 2:2004, Rules for the Structure and drafting of International Standards](#)
- n [ISO/IEC Guide 99:2007, International Vocabulary of Metrology – Basic and General Concepts and Associated Terms \(VIM\)](#)

In all other cases, for the purpose of this guidance, definitions are selected from the Concise Oxford Dictionary. Definitions in ISO 9000:2005 have normative status, which takes precedence over their common dictionary definitions.

The table below provides the selected dictionary definitions for common words, which should be applied when using the standards.

## 2. Table of important words and terms used in the ISO 9000 family of Standards

Word	Form	Meaning
accordance	noun	(In accordance with) in a manner conforming with
activity	noun	something done in pursuit of an objective
adequacy	noun	sufficiency to satisfy a requirement or meet a need
adjustment	noun	operation of bringing a measuring instrument into a state of performance suitable for its use [VIM]
analysis	noun	Detailed examination of the elements or structure of something
appropriate	adjective	suitable (for, to)
applicable	adjective	- relevant - appropriate
assess	verb	- evaluate - estimate the value of
assure	verb	synonym: ensure

		make certain
authority	noun	- right to command or give a final decision - body that has legal powers and rights
available	adjective	able to be used or obtained
awareness	noun	knowledge or perception of a situation or fact
calibration	noun	- set of operations that establish, under specified conditions, the relationship between values of quantities indicated by a measuring instrument or measuring system, or values represented by a material measure or a reference material, and the corresponding values realized by standards - [VIM]
can	verb	ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 Annex G - be able to - there is a possibility of - it is possible to
cannot	verb	ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 Annex G - be unable to - there is no possibility of - it is not possible to state of being dedicated to a cause or policy
commitment	noun	state of being dedicated to a cause or policy
communication	noun	action of sharing or exchanging information ideas
complain	verb	express discontent, displeasure
comply	verb	(person or organization) meet specified standards
compromise	noun	support or establish the certainty or validity of
confirm	verb	(item) meet specified requirements
consistent	adjective	(consistent with) conforming to or in agreement with
consistently	adverb	unchanging over time
control	noun	- power to direct or to restrain something - means of restraining or regulating
control	verb	- direct or restrain something - restrain or regulate
data	noun	- facts and/or statistics, used for reference or analysis - information based on facts
deficiency	noun	lack or shortage
define	verb	state or describe exactly the nature, scope or meaning of
demonstrate	verb	show clearly (with objective evidence)
deploy	verb	put into use or action
deployment	noun	implementation
determine	verb	establish or find out with certainty by research, examination or calculation
distribution	noun	act of allocating to recipients
disposition	noun	action of dealing with things in a particular way
documentation	noun	see Note 2 to ISO 9000:2005 clause 3.7.2 A set of documents, for example specifications and records, is frequently called "documentation".
enhance	verb	Improve the quality, value or extent of

ensure	verb	synonym: assure make certain
essential	adjective	absolutely necessary, fundamental
establish	verb	set up
evaluate	verb	assess
exclusion	noun	- process or state of keeping out or preventing the occurrence of - item or eventuality specifically not covered
expectation	noun	- belief about (or mental picture of) the future - wishing with confidence of fulfilment
experience	noun	practical contact with and observation of facts and events
facilitate	verb	- make easy or easier - promote, help forward (an action, result, etc.)
facility	noun	building, service or piece of equipment provided for a particular purpose
feedback	noun	information given in response to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc., used as a basis for improvement
focus	noun	centre of interest or activity
framework	noun	essential supporting or underlying structure
functional	adjective	designed to be practical and useful rather than attractive
hardware	noun	see the definition of "product" in ISO 9000:2005 clause 3.4.2
identify	verb	establish the identity of someone or somebody
identity	noun	the individual characteristics by which a thing or person is recognized or known
identifiable	adjective	recognizable through a unique characteristic
impartiality	noun	state of being without prejudice or bias
implement	verb	put into effect
improvement	noun	action or process of making or becoming better, also see "continual improvement" and "quality improvement" in this table.
independent (noun: independence)	adjective	- not connected with another; separate - not subject to another's authority
integrity	noun	- state of being whole; the condition of being unified or sound in construction - quality of having strong moral principles
irrespective	adjective	in spite of everything
justification	noun	evidence proving that something is right or reasonable
learning organization	noun	institution, place, organization, etc. where the cognitive process of acquiring skill and knowledge is carried out
legible	adjective	possible to be read by a person or a machine for intended use
liaison	noun	communication or cooperation between people or organizations
maintain	verb	cause or enable (a condition or state of affairs) to continue

maintenance	noun	process or state of keeping (a system, building, machine, etc) in good condition by checking or repairing it regularly
may	verb	ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 Annex G - is permitted - is allowed - is permissible
measurable	adjective	adjectiveable to be measured
measure	verb	ascertain the size, amount, or degree of (something) by comparison with a standard unit or with an object of known size
methodology	noun	system of methods used in a particular field
monitor	verb	observe and check over a period of time; maintain regular close observation over
necessary	adjective	required to be done, achieved or present
need	noun	something that is wanted or required
objective	noun	something to be achieved
objective	adjective	not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering or representing facts
obsolete	adjective	no longer produced or used; out of date
origin	noun	point at which something begins or arises
outsource	verb	obtain goods or services from an outside supplier
perception	noun	way of regarding, understanding or interpreting something
performance	noun	- the ability to achieve something - the achievement itself
periodic	adjective	- recurring or reappearing at regular or any intervals (of time or space) - intermittent
permissible	adjective	- that can or ought to be permitted - allowable
personal qualification	noun	attribute that must be met or complied with and that fits a person for something
physical	adjective	tangible or concrete
plan	noun	scheme, programme or method worked out beforehand for the accomplishment of an objective
plan	verb	decide on and arrange in advance
preservation	noun	action or act of maintaining something in its original or existing state
prevention	noun	action of keeping something from happening or arising
previous	adjective	existing or occurring before something else in time or in order
process approach	noun	systematic identification and management of the processes employed within an organization and particularly the interactions between such processes
promote	verb	further the progress of, support or encourage
property	noun	thing or things belonging to a person, persons or organization
protect	verb	keep safe from damage

quotation	noun	contractor's (supplier's) estimate for a specified job, etc.
rationale	noun	exposition of principles or reasons
realization	noun	action of achieving something desired or anticipated; fulfilment
recognize	verb	be fully aware of
regulatory	adjective	required, permitted or enacted by a rule or directive passed by an authority
relevant	adjective	closely connected or appropriate to the matter in hand
require	verb	need because it is essential to the fulfilment of something
resource	noun	stock or supply of materials or assets
responsibility	noun	something which a person or organization is required to do or control as part of a job, role or legal obligation
responsible	adjective	having an obligation to do something or having control over or care for someone
retain	verb	keep possession of; not abolish, discard or alter
retrievable	adjective	capable of being brought back
safeguard	verb	protect or prevent something undesirable (from happening)
scope	noun	extent of the area or subject matter that something deals with or to which it is relevant
sequence	noun	a particular order in which related events, movements, etc, follow each other
shall	verb	ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 Annex G - is to - is required to - it is required that - has to - only ... is permitted - it is necessary
shall not	verb	ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 Annex G - is not allowed [permitted] [acceptable] [permissible] - is required to be not - is required that ... be not - is not to be
should	verb	ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 Annex G - it is recommended that - ought to
should not	verb	ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 Annex G - it is not recommended that - ought not to
skill	noun	ability to do something well
software	noun	see definition of "product" in ISO 9000:2005 clause 3.4.2
specific	adjective	of or relating to a particular subject
specify	verb	state explicitly, clearly and definitely
statutory	adjective	required, permitted or enacted by a written law passed by a body having the power to make laws
strategy	noun	an elaborate and systematic plan of action
suitability	noun	characteristics that are right or appropriate for a particular

		purpose
suitable	adjective	right or appropriate for a particular purpose
supply	verb	make available for use
systematic	adjective	done or acting according to a fixed plan or system; methodical
training	noun	act of teaching a particular skill or type of behaviour through practice and instruction
unambiguous	adjective	having only one meaning
utilities	noun	services such as gas, water, electricity, telecommunication, etc.
validate	verb	carry out validation, see ISO 9000:2005 clause 3.8.5
validity	noun	conformity to fact, accuracy or precision
verify	verb	carry out verification, See ISO 9000:2005 clause 3.8.4
workspace	noun	area in which work is performed