ISO 45001 internal audit checklist

A clause-by-clause question list for one internal audit of an occupational health and safety (OH&S) management system against ISO 45001: 80 questions on clauses 4 to 10, each with the evidence to look for, a result, an evidence reference and notes. This page holds the audit details and the result key; the last page counts the results by clause and lists the findings. The questions are ours, in the order of the qhsetech.com guide to an ISO 45001 internal audit checklist. They are not the text of the standard, and the clause references are our own mapping, so check them against your copy. Mark a question N/A, with the reason, when it is outside the scope you audit; add your own questions; and keep the wording the same from one audit to the next so that results can be compared; there is space for added questions after question 80. The audit plan, sample and conclusion can go on the internal audit plan and report template. A completed checklist records what one audit saw on the days it ran: it is not a certificate and does not by itself show conformity.

Edition	What this checklist is written against
Version 1.0, 21 October 2026	Written against **ISO 45001:2018 with Amendment 1:2024** (climate action changes, which add climate change to the issues and interested-party needs considered under clauses 4.1 and 4.2). ISO's catalogue, checked on 21 October 2026, lists the 2018 edition as current and to be revised. For the revision status see qhsetech.com/glossary/iso-45001; when a new edition is published, check every clause reference before using this version.

Audit details

Audit reference	Organisation and site	Audit programme reference (if any)

Audit scope: clauses, sites, processes and shifts covered, and what is excluded

Audit criteria: the edition above, your own OH&S procedures (with revisions), the legal register reference

Lead auditor and team (name, role)	Does any auditor audit their own work? ☐ No ☐ Yes: how it was handled is in Notes

Auditee: area owner, and the people interviewed (roles)

Planned date	Opening meeting	Fieldwork (from, to)	Closing meeting	Report issued

Result key

Result	Code	Use it when (write the evidence reference in the same row)	Points (optional)
Conforms	C	What you saw, read or were told meets the requirement as your audit criteria state it. Write the evidence reference.	2
Opportunity for improvement	OFI	The requirement is met, but it could be done better or is at risk of slipping. No corrective action is required; the owner decides.	1
Minor nonconformity	Mi	A requirement is not met, but the failure does not affect whether the system can achieve its intended outcomes (for example, one lapse in an otherwise working process).	0
Major nonconformity	Ma	A requirement is not met and the failure does affect whether the system can achieve its intended outcomes: for example, a requirement not addressed at all, or several minor ones on the same requirement that show a systemic failure.	-1
Not applicable	N/A	The question does not apply inside the scope audited (for example, no contractors on the site) or is outside this audit's scope. Write which, and why, in Notes.	none

The five results and the points are this template's own scale, the one used in the qhsetech.com guide. Certification bodies grade major and minor nonconformities under ISO/IEC 17021-1; your own audit procedure may use other names. Leave all five boxes empty for a question you did not look at, and count it as not answered. Every result needs at least one piece of objective evidence: a document or record, an interview, a system screen or something seen on site.

No.	Clause	Audit question (our wording)	Evidence to look for	Result					Evidence reference	Notes
				C	OFI	Mi	Ma	N/A		
Clause 4 Context of the organization (8 questions) **Gaps to look for** (drawn from the requirements, not from audit statistics): the context review is not kept up to date; climate change is not considered at all; contractors' work that the organisation controls or influences is left out of the scope.										
1	4.1	Has the organisation determined the internal and external issues that affect its OH&S results, and decided whether climate change is one of them?	Context analysis; the climate change decision and its reason	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
2	4.2	Are the relevant interested parties and their needs and expectations identified, with the needs that bind the organisation now, or may in future, marked as legal or other requirements?	Interested-parties register; link to the legal register	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

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No.	Clause	Audit question (our wording)	Evidence to look for	Result					Evidence reference	Notes
				C	OFI	Mi	Ma	N/A		
3	4.3	Is the scope of the OH&S management system available as documented information?	Scope statement, with version and date	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
4	4.3	Does the scope name the sites, units and activities covered, and take in work the organisation controls or can influence where that work affects OH&S results?	Scope against the site list, activity list and contracts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
5	4.2	Are workers, and their representatives where they exist, included among the interested parties?	Interested-parties register; worker interviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
6	4.1, 9.3	Are external factors (legal, technological, economic, social) reviewed at planned intervals, for example as a management review input?	Dated context review; management review minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
7	4.1, 4.3	Does the scope still match the organisation's strategic direction and its current operations?	Scope against the business plan, sites and products	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
8	4.3	Does the scope say how contractors, visitors and remote or mobile workers are covered?	Scope statement; contractor and visitor arrangements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Clause 5 Leadership and worker participation (12 questions) **Gaps to look for** (drawn from the requirements, not from audit statistics): policy commitments that cannot be checked; no record of workers taking part in risk assessment; consultation results that never reach the management review.										
9	5.2	Is there a current OH&S policy, kept as documented information, with its approval and date shown?	Policy, its version and approval record	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
10	5.2	Does the policy commit to safe and healthy working conditions, to eliminating hazards and to reducing OH&S risks?	Policy text	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
11	5.2	Does it commit to consultation and participation of workers and, where they exist, their representatives?	Policy text	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
12	5.2	Does it commit to meeting legal and other requirements and to continual improvement?	Policy text	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
13	5.2	Is the policy communicated, understood and applied in the organisation, and available to interested parties as appropriate?	Notice boards, induction pack; interviews at several levels	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
14	5.1	Can top management show how it takes overall responsibility and accountability for OH&S (role descriptions, agendas, decisions)?	Role descriptions; board or management minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
15	5.3	Are OH&S roles, responsibilities and authorities assigned and communicated at all levels?	Organisation chart, role descriptions; interviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
16	5.1	Is there evidence that top management leads OH&S in practice, not only by signing the policy?	Resource decisions, site visits, review minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
17	5.4	Do non-managerial workers take part in hazard identification, risk assessment, choosing controls and investigating incidents?	Participant lists on assessments and investigations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
18	5.4	Are non-managerial workers consulted on the policy, the objectives and the audit programme?	Consultation or committee minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
19	5.4	Is the consultation evidence specific (who, when, what was decided) rather than generic?	Minutes with names, dates and decisions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
20	5.1, 5.4	Can workers raise OH&S concerns without fear of reprisal, and do they know how?	Reporting route; concerns raised and answered; interviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Clause 6 Planning (14 questions) **Gaps to look for** (drawn from the requirements, not from audit statistics): risk assessments not revised after incidents; recent legal changes missing from the register; objectives set but never tracked.										
21	6.1.2.1	Is there a hazard identification process that covers routine and non-routine activities and emergency situations?	Procedure; hazard register	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
22	6.1.2.1	Does it cover physical, chemical, biological, ergonomic and psychosocial hazards, including how work is organised?	Hazard categories in the register; psychosocial assessment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
23	6.1.2.1	Are human factors (fatigue, error, behaviour) considered?	Risk assessments; task analyses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
24	6.1.2.2	Is there a current risk assessment for each significant activity?	Risk register against the activity list, with dates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

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No.	Clause	Audit question (our wording)	Evidence to look for	Result					Evidence reference	Notes
				C	OFI	Mi	Ma	N/A		
25	6.1.2.2	Are risk assessments reviewed after incidents, after changes and at the intervals your procedure sets?	Revision history compared with the incident log	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
26	6.1.4, 8.1.2	Are controls chosen in the order of the hierarchy of controls (eliminate, substitute, engineering, administrative, PPE)?	Control column of a sample of risk assessments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
27	6.1.3	Is there a register of the OH&S legal requirements and other requirements that apply?	Legal register	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
28	6.1.3	Is the register updated when requirements change, with the source and date of each change?	Register change log; one recent change in law traced	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
29	6.2.1	Are OH&S objectives measurable (or able to be evaluated), and does each have an owner?	Objectives tracker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
30	6.2.1	Are the objectives consistent with the policy and based on the risk assessment and worker consultation?	Objectives against the policy and risk register	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
31	6.2	Is progress against each objective checked at set intervals?	Tracker updates; review minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
32	6.1.1, 8.1.3	Are planned changes (organisational, process, technology, legal) assessed for OH&S risks and opportunities before they are made?	Change records with their assessments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
33	6.1.1, 8.1.3	Are temporary changes (one-off jobs, trials) assessed in the same way?	Change log entries for temporary changes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
34	6.1.2.1, 8.2	Are potential emergency situations identified, with a planned response for each?	Emergency scenario list; response plans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Clause 7 Support (10 questions) **Gaps to look for** (drawn from the requirements, not from audit statistics): a competence matrix that leaves out contractors; procedures kept at head office but not where the work is done; no retention rules.										
35	7.1	Are the resources OH&S needs (people, time, budget, equipment) determined and provided?	Budget, staffing, resource requests and answers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
36	7.2	Is there a competence matrix linking each role to the training and qualifications it needs?	Competence or training matrix	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
37	7.2	Are training and competence records current and easy to retrieve?	Sample of records against the matrix	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
38	7.3	Are workers aware of the OH&S policy and objectives and of the hazards and risks of their own work?	Interviews; induction records	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
39	7.3	Do workers know the consequences of not following the OH&S arrangements?	Interviews; induction content	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
40	7.4.2	Is internal communication planned and recorded (toolbox talks, alerts, briefings)?	Communication log; briefing records	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
41	7.4.3	Is external communication (regulators, neighbours, contractors) handled, with who says what?	External communication log; correspondence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
42	7.5.2, 7.5.3	Are OH&S procedures version-controlled and available where the work is done?	Document register; the copy at the point of use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
43	7.5.3	Are records (training, audits, incidents) kept for the periods your own retention rules set?	Retention schedule; sample of records	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
44	7.5.3	Is documented information protected against unauthorised change and loss?	Access rights; backups; change history	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Clause 8 Operation (14 questions) **Gaps to look for** (drawn from the requirements, not from audit statistics): subcontractors not inducted; permits issued without the isolation being checked; drills held with no lessons recorded; substances on site without a safety data sheet.										
45	8.1.1	Are operational controls in place for the risks identified?	Procedures, work instructions; site observation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
46	8.1.1	Are permits to work used for high-risk work (hot work, confined space, work at height, excavation) as your procedure requires?	Permit log; a sample of closed permits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
47	8.1.3	Is management of change applied before changes are put into use?	Change records signed off before go-live	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
48	8.1.4.2	Are contractors selected on OH&S criteria, not only commercial ones?	Prequalification records; selection criteria	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

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No.	Clause	Audit question (our wording)	Evidence to look for	Result					Evidence reference	Notes
				C	OFI	Mi	Ma	N/A		
49	8.1.4.2	Are contractors' OH&S performance and incidents monitored?	Contractor reviews; incident log	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
50	8.1.4.1	Does procurement take OH&S into account (PPE, plant, chemicals)?	Purchase specifications; approval steps	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
51	8.1.4.2	Are subcontractors brought into the OH&S arrangements (induction, method statements, incident reporting)?	Induction records; method statements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
52	8.1.1, 9.1.1	Are workplace inspections carried out and their findings closed by the target dates?	Inspection reports; action log	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
53	8.1.1	Are plant and equipment inspected and maintained on schedule?	Maintenance plan; inspection certificates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
54	8.1.1	Are safety data sheets current and accessible for every hazardous substance on site?	SDS register against the substances seen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
55	8.1.2	Is the issue of PPE recorded and its replacement planned?	PPE issue log	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
56	8.2	Is the emergency response tested and exercised (drills, equipment, training), with lessons recorded?	Drill reports; equipment checks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
57	8.2	Is first aid provided for, with trained first-aiders whose training is current?	First aid assessment; certificates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
58	8.1.1	Is occupational health provision in place where the risks call for it (for example hearing or lung function checks)?	Health surveillance plan (no individual health data in audit notes)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Clause 9 Performance evaluation (12 questions) **Gaps to look for** (drawn from the requirements, not from audit statistics): only lagging indicators; a compliance evaluation with no date; a management review without the worker consultation input; actions decided but not done.										
59	9.1.1	Are OH&S indicators defined (for example TRIR, LTIFR, near-miss rate, audit closure rate)?	Indicator definitions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
60	9.1.1	Are the indicators reported to top management at set intervals?	Indicator reports; minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
61	9.1.1	Are leading indicators (training completion, inspection rate, close-out time) tracked as well as lagging ones?	Indicator dashboard	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
62	9.1.2	Is compliance with legal and other requirements evaluated at the frequency the organisation has set?	Evaluation schedule and records	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
63	9.1.2	Are the results of the compliance evaluation kept as documented information, with a date?	Dated evaluation report	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
64	9.2.2	Is there an audit programme that covers the whole system over a set cycle, weighted by the importance of processes and earlier results?	Audit programme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
65	9.2.2	Are auditors selected so that audits are objective and impartial (for example, nobody audits their own work)?	Auditor list against the areas audited	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
66	9.2.2	Are audit findings recorded, reported to the relevant managers, assigned and tracked to closure?	Audit reports; action log	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
67	9.3	Is the management review held at planned intervals?	Review schedule; minutes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
68	9.3	Does the management review cover the required inputs (audit results, incidents, indicators, consultation, changes and the rest)?	Minutes against your input list	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
69	9.3	Are review outputs recorded as decisions and actions with owners?	Minutes; action log	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
70	9.3	Are review outputs carried out, followed up and communicated to workers?	Action log; briefings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Clause 10 Improvement (10 questions) **Gaps to look for** (drawn from the requirements, not from audit statistics): a root cause written as "human error" with nothing behind it; corrective actions closed without an effectiveness check; no way for one site to learn from another.										
71	10.2	Are all incidents (injuries, ill health, near misses) reported through a defined process?	Incident procedure; register	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
72	10.2	Is the depth of each investigation matched to the potential severity?	Sample of investigations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

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No.	Clause	Audit question (our wording)	Evidence to look for	Result					Evidence reference	Notes
				C	OFI	Mi	Ma	N/A		
73	10.2	Is root cause analysis used (5 Whys, fishbone or an equivalent), with workers taking part?	Root cause records	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
74	10.2	Are corrective actions defined, assigned and tracked to closure?	Corrective action tracker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
75	10.2	Is the effectiveness of each corrective action checked?	Effectiveness checks with dates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
76	10.2	Do nonconformities from audits, inspections and worker reports go through the same process?	Source column of the nonconformity log	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
77	10.2, 10.3	Is learning from incidents shared across sites and teams?	Bulletins; briefing records	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
78	10.3	Is there evidence of continual improvement (indicator trends, fewer repeat incidents)?	Year-on-year trends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
79	10.3	Is the OH&S management system itself reviewed for ways to improve it?	Improvement plan; review outputs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
80	10.1, 10.3	Are improvement ideas collected outside audits (worker suggestions, supplier feedback)?	Suggestion log; feedback records	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

Questions added for this audit (number them from 81)

No.	Clause	Audit question (your wording)	Evidence to look for	Result (C, OFI, Mi, Ma, N/A)	Evidence reference	Notes

Add each question you add to the count of its clause in the results table, and keep it for the next audit of the same scope.

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Results by clause (counts for this audit)

Clause	Questions	C	OFI	Mi	Ma	N/A	Not answered	Points (optional)	Maximum points
4 Context of the organization	8								
5 Leadership and worker participation	12								
6 Planning	14								
7 Support	10								
8 Operation	14								
9 Performance evaluation	12								
10 Improvement	10								
All clauses	80								

Points (optional, this template's own rubric): C 2, OFI 1, Mi 0, Ma -1; N/A and unanswered questions score nothing. Maximum points = 2 x (questions answered, not counting N/A). Check that C + OFI + Mi + Ma + N/A + not answered equals the number of questions in each row. Points help compare one audit with the next on the same scope; they are not an ISO measure, and one major nonconformity matters more than any total. Read the findings, not only the counts.

Findings (one line for each Mi, Ma and OFI)

No.	Q no.	Clause	Result	Finding: the requirement, what was seen, what is missing	Evidence ref.	NCR or CAPA ref.	Owner	Due
Ex.	*46*	*8.1.1*	*Mi*	*Example (invented): 1 of 20 hot work permits sampled was closed without the fire-watch sign-off that the site's permit procedure asks for; the other 19 were complete.*	*Permit HW-118*	*CAPA-031*	*Example: maintenance lead*	*30 days*

Major nonconformities: decide containment first, then the permanent fix. Every Mi and Ma gets a corrective action with an owner and a due date on your nonconformance or CAPA record; check that it worked before you close it.

Report, conclusion and sign-off

Results reported to (relevant managers; workers or their representatives) and the date

Conclusion: is the system, within this scope, conforming and effective? What could not be examined (limits)?

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Lead auditor			
Auditee (area owner)			
Report reviewed by (manager)			

Next audit of this scope (date, from the audit programme)	Where this record is kept, and for how long

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