

ISO 42001

8-step quick start guide



Eight steps to building an effective roadmap for ISO 42001 certification

Why ISO 42001 matters

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming industries and driving economic growth. But with rapid adoption comes new risks, governance challenges and societal impacts. Organisations need a clear framework to manage AI responsibly and confidently.

ISO 42001 is the world's first AI-specific management system standard.

It provides a structured approach to help you govern AI through an AI Management System (AIMS) – strengthening compliance, improving performance and building trust with stakeholders.

Certification against ISO 42001 helps you demonstrate best practice in AI governance, meet regulatory and stakeholder expectations and position your organisation as a responsible leader in AI adoption.

1



Gain leadership commitment

Senior management must lead the AIMS – setting clear objectives that define what success looks like for your organisation. Whether it's enhancing oversight, meeting regulatory expectations or building trust, leadership should allocate the resources and direction needed to embed responsible AI use throughout the business.

2

Understand your AI context

Assess how AI is developed, deployed or used across your organisation. Consider legal obligations, sector-specific risks and stakeholder expectations. This understanding should inform your resourcing – including the time, skills and budget needed to manage AI responsibly and effectively.



3



Assess training requirements

AI governance spans technical, ethical, legal and operational domains. Engage cross-functional teams and ensure tailored training is in place – from awareness for wider teams to audit training for specialists. Building capability across roles is key to effective, scalable implementation. LRQA offers a range of ISO 42001 training courses to support your teams at every level.

4

Define the AIMS scope

Clarify which teams, systems and geographic locations your AIMS will cover – including internally developed AI, third-party tools and high-risk use cases. A well-defined scope will keep your governance focused and fit for purpose.



5



Plan and implement your AIMS

Develop a realistic implementation plan that covers timelines, responsibilities and required resources. Introduce the necessary controls, documentation and governance processes. Build in regular reviews, feedback loops and performance monitoring to ensure your AIMS evolves with your business and the AI landscape.

6

Conduct a gap analysis

Review your AIMS to assess where your organisation already meets ISO 42001 requirements – and where gaps or vulnerabilities exist. To gain a clearer picture and prioritise actions, consider an independent gap analysis with LRQA's experts, who can highlight critical, high-risk or weak areas before you plan your certification audit.



7



Book your certification audit

Once your AIMS is in place, schedule your ISO 42001 certification audit with LRQA. Certification demonstrates to customers, partners and regulators that you have implemented a rigorous, accountable approach to AI governance. Our two-phase audit will assess your system design and implementation – helping you prove integrity, responsible innovation and leadership in the responsible use of AI.

8

Embed continuous improvement and response

A mature AIMS includes more than initial implementation – it requires mechanisms for continuous learning and improvement. Establish feedback loops, regular audits and performance metrics to adapt to evolving AI risks and technologies. Implement an AI-specific incident response plan to ensure that errors, bias or system failures are addressed quickly, transparently and effectively.



Our ISO 42001 services



Training

Build your knowledge of ISO 42001 with a range of courses designed for different experience levels – delivered via multiple learning styles.



Gap analysis

An optional service where one of our expert auditors will help you identify any critical, high-risk or weak areas of your system prior to certification.



Certification

We assess your AIMS in line with the requirements of ISO 42001 – with a particular focus on Annex A controls and how they impact your system.



Integrated assessments

If you've implemented multiple management systems, you could benefit from an integrated audit and surveillance programme – a more efficient and cost-effective way to manage risk.



About LRQA

LRQA is the leading global assurance partner, bringing together decades of unrivalled expertise in assessment, advisory, inspection and cybersecurity services.

Our solutions-based partnerships are supported by data-driven insights that help our clients solve their biggest business challenges. Operating in more than 150 countries with a team of more than 5,000 people, LRQA's award-winning compliance, supply chain, cybersecurity and ESG specialists help more than 61,000 clients across almost every sector to anticipate, mitigate and manage risk wherever they operate.

In everything we do, we are committed to shaping a better future for our people, our clients, our communities and our planet.

Get in touch

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