Management systems · ISO 45001:2018

ISO 45001 Internal Audit Checklist

Clause-by-clause internal audit checklist covering Clauses 4–10 of ISO 45001:2018 — the auditable clauses. Use it to prepare for your Clause 9.2 internal audit programme, self-assess before a Stage 2 certification audit, or train new internal auditors on the evidence certification bodies actually sample.

Audit reference	Date
Site / scope	Lead auditor

Clauses 1–3 (scope, references, definitions) are informational and not auditable.

Clause 4 — Context of the organisation

Y / N / N/A	Audit question	Evidence / notes
[ ]	Written analysis of internal + external issues affecting the OH&S; management system (4.1).	
[ ]	Documented list of interested parties (workers, contractors, regulators, communities) with their needs and expectations (4.2).	
[ ]	Scope statement of the OH&S; management system documented, with any exclusions justified (4.3).	
[ ]	OH&S; processes, their inputs/outputs, and their interactions defined (4.4).	

Clause 5 — Leadership & worker participation

Y / N / N/A	Audit question	Evidence / notes
[ ]	Signed OH&S; policy from top management committing to legal compliance, prevention of injury/ill-health, and continual improvement (5.2).	
[ ]	OH&S; roles, responsibilities and authorities documented and communicated (5.3).	
[ ]	Evidence of consultation with non-managerial workers on hazard ID, risk assessment, incident investigation, and change (5.4).	
[ ]	Worker participation mechanisms are free of retaliation, cost, or time barriers (5.4).	

Clause 6 — Planning: risks, opportunities & objectives

Y / N / N/A	Audit question	Evidence / notes
[ ]	Hazard identification is ongoing and proactive, covering routine + non-routine work, human factors, and change (6.1.2).	
[ ]	Documented process to assess OH&S; risks and opportunities, and risks/opportunities to the management system itself (6.1.2).	
[ ]	Legal register up to date with a documented compliance evaluation cycle (6.1.3).	
[ ]	OH&S; objectives are measurable, resourced, time-bound, and tracked against a plan (6.2).	

Clause 7 — Support: resources, competence, awareness, communication

Y / N / N/A	Audit question	Evidence / notes
[ ]	Competence requirements defined per role; training records complete and current (7.2).	
[ ]	Workers demonstrate awareness of the policy, their hazards, and consequences of non-conformance (7.3).	
[ ]	Documented internal + external communication plan (what, when, to whom, how) (7.4).	
[ ]	Documented information is version-controlled, retrievable, and protected from unauthorised change (7.5).	

Clause 8 — Operation: controls, MoC, procurement, emergency

Y / N / N/A	Audit question	Evidence / notes
[ ]	Operational controls applied using the hierarchy of controls (elimination → PPE) and documented per activity (8.1.2).	
[ ]	Management-of-change process covers new/altered activities, equipment, and legal changes (8.1.3).	
[ ]	Procurement, contractor, and outsourcing controls extend OH&S; requirements to third parties (8.1.4).	
[ ]	Emergency preparedness plans documented, drilled at least annually, and reviewed after every activation (8.2).	

Clause 9 — Performance evaluation

Y / N / N/A	Audit question	Evidence / notes
[ ]	Documented plan for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation of OH&S; performance (9.1.1).	
[ ]	Compliance evaluation against the legal register performed and evidenced at a defined frequency (9.1.2).	
[ ]	Internal audit programme is risk-based, with auditor competence, scope, criteria, and independence documented (9.2).	
[ ]	Management reviews held at planned intervals with all Clause 9.3 inputs and documented outputs (9.3).	

Clause 10 — Improvement

Y / N / N/A	Audit question	Evidence / notes
[ ]	Incidents and nonconformities investigated, root-caused, and closed with corrective actions verified for effectiveness (10.2).	
[ ]	Evidence of continual improvement across suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the OH&S; management system (10.3).	
[ ]	Trend data (incidents, near misses, audit findings, corrective actions) feed the management review inputs (10.3).	

The six-step audit process

The audit programme required by Clause 9.2, from planning to closing the loop into management review.

Step 1 — Plan the audit programme

Build a 12-month programme covering every clause and site at a frequency proportionate to risk. Assign competent, independent auditors and document their qualifications.

Step 2 — Prepare the audit checklist

Use the Clause 4–10 checklist as the baseline. Add site-specific items for high-risk activities (confined space, LOTO, contractor management) and applicable legal register clauses.

Step 3 — Conduct the audit

Interview workers at all levels, sample records, and observe operations. For each item, capture conforming evidence, minor nonconformities, and major nonconformities separately.

Step 4 — Report findings

Issue a written report within two weeks: scope, methodology, evidence, findings by clause, and severity. Findings must trace back to the specific ISO 45001 clause they breach.

Step 5 — Track corrective actions

Log every nonconformity with owner, due date, and effectiveness verification. Verification is separate from closure — signing an action off is not proof it worked.

Step 6 — Feed the management review

Roll audit results, trends, and open corrective actions into the next management review (Clause 9.3). This closes the ISO 45001 improvement loop.

Sign-off

Lead auditor	Management representative
Signature / date	Signature / date