



Part XXXIV: Alignment of the IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Framework with ISO 21001, ISO 9001, ISO 29990 and ISO 29995

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Applicable Scope: The IQA Office; accredited institutions; peer review experts; and any stakeholder seeking to understand the relationship between the IAPUC-IQA regulatory framework and relevant international standards.

Preface

In developing its Internal Quality Accreditation (IQA) System, the International Association of Private Universities and Colleges (IAPUC) has consistently upheld one conviction: genuine quality assurance requires both profound insight into the particular characteristics of private higher education and an open dialogue and alignment with internationally recognized management-system standards. This dialogue is not one-way compliance, but organic integration: absorbing the global consensus embodied in international standards while preserving the IQA Accreditation System's distinctive understanding of how private institutions operate.

Building on the earlier alignment with ISO 21001:2018, *Educational Organizations Management Systems*, this document extends the frame of reference to three further international standards:

- ISO 9001:2015, *Quality Management Systems - Requirements*, the parent standard for management-system standards generally;
- ISO 29990:2010, *Learning Services for Non-Formal Education and Training - Basic Requirements for Service Providers*, which focuses on the core processes of learning services; and
- ISO 29995:2021, *Educational Organizations Management Systems - Requirements for Bodies Auditing and Certifying*, which provides guidance for the proper operation of certification bodies themselves.

Through this extension, IAPUC seeks to demonstrate comprehensively the international alignment of its regulatory framework at four levels: general principles of quality management, core processes of learning services, specialized requirements for educational management and operating standards for certification bodies. This document is more than a cross-reference table. It is IAPUC's public statement to the international quality-assurance community that the IQA Accreditation System rests on a solid foundation aligned with international best practice.

Chapter I Core Frameworks of the Four International Standards

I. ISO 9001:2015 - General Requirements for Quality Management Systems

ISO 9001:2015 is the most influential management-system standard published by the International Organization for Standardization and applies to organizations of every type and size. Its core framework adopts the PDCA cycle and the process approach, and covers seven principal clauses:

- Clause 4, Context of the Organization: understanding the organization and its context, needs of interested parties and scope of the management system;

- Clause 5, Leadership: leadership and commitment, quality policy, and organizational roles and responsibilities;
- Clause 6, Planning: actions to address risks and opportunities, quality objectives and planning to achieve them;
- Clause 7, Support: resources, competence, awareness, communication and documented information;
- Clause 8, Operation: operational planning and control, requirements for products and services, design and development, externally provided processes, production and service provision, release of products and services, and control of nonconforming outputs;
- Clause 9, Performance Evaluation: monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation, internal audit and management review; and
- Clause 10, Improvement: nonconformity and corrective action, and continual improvement.

ISO 9001 provides the basic language of quality management for all sectors. ISO 21001:2018 adapts these general quality-management requirements to the particular context of educational organizations.

II. ISO 21001:2018 - Educational Organizations Management Systems

This standard was introduced in detail in the first edition of this alignment statement; see document IAPUC/GOV/ISO-2026-001. Building on the ISO 9001 framework, its core clauses are specialized for the characteristics of educational organizations. It places particular emphasis on the design, delivery and assurance of outcomes in educational services, as well as attention to the special needs of learners.

III. ISO 29990:2010 - Learning Services for Non-Formal Education and Training

ISO 29990:2010, now superseded by ISO 29993:2017 although its core framework remains consistent, focuses on basic requirements for learning-service providers. Its principal areas of concern include:

- determination of learning services: needs analysis, definition of learning objectives and delimitation of service scope;
- provision of learning services: delivery of instructional design, learning resources, learning environments and learning support; and
- management of the learning-service provider: the management system, resource management, internal audit and improvement.

This standard treats the "learning service" itself as the core process and is particularly relevant to short-term training, vocational education and

continuing-education programmes widely provided by private institutions. The updated ISO 29993:2017 further strengthens its learner-centred focus.

IV. ISO 29995:2021 - Requirements for Bodies Auditing and Certifying Educational Organizations Management Systems

ISO 29995:2021 sets requirements specifically for bodies that audit and certify against ISO 21001, or against ISO 9001 as applied in education. The object of its requirements is the certification body itself. Its principal requirements include:

- impartiality and independence: the certification body must maintain independent decision-making free from commercial or external pressure;
- competence management: qualifications, training and ongoing evaluation of auditors and certification personnel;
- audit process: the complete process from application and audit planning through on-site audit and certification decision;
- post-certification surveillance: continuing surveillance and periodic re-assessment of certified organizations; and
- handling of appeals and complaints: independent appeal channels and transparent procedures.

As the body that awards IQA accreditation, IAPUC has an inherent reason to benchmark its own operating standards against ISO 29995.

Chapter II Integrated Alignment of the IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Framework with the Four International Standards

I. Explanation of the Alignment Table

The following table maps the principal IAPUC-IQA regulatory documents against the core clauses of ISO 9001, ISO 21001, ISO 29990 and ISO 29995. Because ISO 21001 and ISO 9001 are closely aligned structurally, ISO 21001 clauses form the main axis of the table and their ISO 9001 equivalents are shown in parentheses. ISO 29990 and ISO 29995 clauses are identified separately where applicable.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Co rrespondenc e	ISO 29995 Co rrespondenc e	Integration Explanation
4.1 Understanding the organization and its context (4.1)	Environmental analysis in the <i>Strategic Development Plan; Interim Risk Assessment and Management Measures</i>	4.2 Interested- party needs	4.1 Context analysis of the certification body	Strategic scanning and risk assessment jointly satisfy requirements for analysing the internal and external context.
4.2 Understanding the needs of interested parties (4.2)	Standard A-Q3 in the <i>Academic Quality Standards Manual; Annual Information Disclosure Guidelines</i>	4.2 Determination of learner needs	5.1.2 Public information	The interested -party matrix covers students, employers, communities and others, while annual disclosure responds to external needs.
4.3 Determining the scope of the management system (4.3)	General Provisions of the <i>Accreditation Manual; Multi-Campus Accreditation Review Criteria</i>	3.1 Scope of learning services	7.1 Scope of the certification scheme	The accreditation scope is defined clearly, with further detail for multiple campuses.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Co rrespondenc e	ISO 29995 Co rrespondenc e	Integration Explanation
4.4 Management system and its processes (4.4)	The complete framework of more than thirty regulatory documents	4.1 General m anagement-sy stem requirements	4.4 Management system	A complete pr ocess-oriente d regulatory closed loop has been established.
5.1 Leadership and commitment (5.1)	Governance structure in the <i>IAPUC Constitution</i> ; Standard 1 of the <i>Accreditation Manual</i>	4.3 Management commitment	5.1 Commitment to impartiality	Governing-lev el commitment to quality is institutionally assured and accreditation decisions are independent.
5.2 Policy (5.2)	Mission statement and core values in the <i>Founding Philosophy and Authoritative Statement</i>	4.2 Needs determination	5.2 Impartiality policy	The core-value framework is complete, and the mission-driven philosophy aligns with policy-setting requirements.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Co rrespondenc e	ISO 29995 Co rrespondenc e	Integration Explanation
5.3 Organizational roles and resp onsibilities (5.3)	Organizational bodies in the <i>Constitution</i> ; <i>Quality Repre sentative Management Measures</i> ; <i>Peer Review Expert Selection and Code of Conduct</i>	4.5 Responsib ilities and authority	5.3 Organizational responsibility	Roles and res ponsibilities extend across the Association and institutional sides with clear delegation.
6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities (6.1)	<i>Interim Risk Assessment Measures</i> ; reserve funds under the <i>Financial Regulations</i> ; <i>Digital Security Regulations</i>	4.6 Risks and opportunities	4.5 Risk-based thinking	A unified risk framework provides controls across multiple domains.
6.2 Quality objectives and planning to achieve them (6.2)	Key indicators in the <i>Strategic Development Plan</i> ; Standard 8 of the <i>Accreditation Manual</i>	4.4 Objectives and planning	7.3 Audit and certification objectives	Strategic objectives are quantified and measurable.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Correspondence	ISO 29995 Correspondence	Integration Explanation
7.1 Resources (7.1)	<i>Financial Regulations; Staff Handbook; resource centre under the Capacity-Building Guidelines</i>	5.1 Provision of resources	5.4 Resources	Management covers human, financial, physical and technological resources.
7.2 Competence (7.2)	Training and levels under the <i>Peer Review Expert Selection Code; Trainer Management Measures</i> ; training under the <i>Quality Representative Management Measures</i>	6.1 Competence	6.1 Auditor competence	Three-dimensional competence management covers experts, trainers and Quality Representatives.
7.3 Awareness (7.3)	Advocacy under the <i>Quality Representative Management Measures</i> ; ethics education under the <i>Academic Ethics and Conduct Code</i>	6.2 Awareness	6.2 Personnel awareness	Quality-culture advocacy and ethics education operate in parallel.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Co rrespondenc e	ISO 29995 Co rrespondenc e	Integration Explanation
7.4 Communic ation (7.4)	Liaison duties under the <i>Quality Repre sentative Management Measures</i> ; <i>Public Relations and Media Commu nications Measures</i>	7.4 Communic ation	8.4 Communic ation	Internal and external com munication standards form a coherent system.
7.5 Documented information (7.5)	Complete suite of regulatory documents; <i>Accreditation Records and Data Retention Rules</i>	7.5 Documented information	8.2 Documented information	The regulatory framework is complete and records retention is standardized.
8.1 Operational planning and control (8.1)	Full process in the <i>Accreditation Procedure Specifications</i> ; controls in the <i>Risk Assessment Measures</i>	7.1 Service planning	7.1 Audit programme	Accreditation processes are controlled end to end, with risk responses at critical points.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Co rrespondenc e	ISO 29995 Co rrespondenc e	Integration Explanation
8.2 Requirements for educational services (8.2)	Curriculum-de sign standards in the <i>Academic Quality Standards Manual; Suppl ementary Standards for Distance Education</i>	3.2 Determination of learning-ser vice requirements	Implicit in audit understanding of service requirements	Learning outcomes align with mission, with dedicated standards for distance provision.
8.3 Design and development of educational services (8.3)	Curriculum design under the <i>Academic Quality Standards Manual</i> ; design chapter of the <i>Supplementar y Standards for Distance Education</i>	3.3 Learning-s ervice design	Implicit in audit evaluation of design	Design requirements cover every mode of teaching.
8.4 Delivery of educational services (8.4)	Teaching-effe ctiveness standards in the <i>Academic Quality Standards Manual</i> ; interaction chapter of the <i>Supplementar y Standards for Distance Education</i>	3.4 Provision of learning services	Audit focus on actual delivery	Standards cover quality of both face-to-face and distance delivery.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Co rrespondenc e	ISO 29995 Co rrespondenc e	Integration Explanation
8.5 Release of educational services (8.5)	Assurance of Learning (AoL) in the <i>Academic Quality Standards Manual; Credit Recognition and RPL Criteria</i>	3.5 Evaluation of learning services	Audit verification of effective release	The assessment system is complete and credit recognition is governed by dedicated criteria.
8.6 Control of nonconformity (8.6)	Accreditation levels under the <i>Accreditation Procedure Specifications; Appeals, Complaints and Dispute Resolution Measures</i> ; handling of misconduct under the <i>Ethics Code</i>	3.6 Nonconformity and correction	8.7 Management of nonconformity	Categories and graduated treatment of nonconformity are clearly defined.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Correspondence	ISO 29995 Correspondence	Integration Explanation
9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation (9.1)	Annual reports under the <i>Accreditation Procedure Specifications</i> ; <i>Data Analysis and Sector Report Compilation Standards</i> ; expert performance assessment under the <i>Expert Code</i>	8.1 Monitoring and measurement	9.1 Monitoring and measurement	Data collection and analysis are systematic, with annual reporting.
9.2 Internal audit (9.2)	Internal inspections under the <i>Records Rules</i> ; internal supervision under the <i>Financial Regulations</i>	8.2 Internal audit	9.2 Internal audit	Periodic internal checks are in place, while institutional internal-audit capacity continues to be developed.
9.3 Management review (9.3)	Annual monitoring and mid-term evaluation under the <i>Strategic Plan</i> ; annual reporting under the <i>Risk Assessment Measures</i>	8.3 Management review	9.3 Management review	Strategic review and risk review together perform the management-review function.

ISO 21001 Clause (ISO 9001 Equivalent)	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Correspondence	ISO 29995 Correspondence	Integration Explanation
10.1 Nonconformity and corrective action (10.1)	Post-accreditation surveillance under the <i>Accreditation Procedure Specifications; Appeals, Complaints and Dispute Resolution Measures</i> ; handling of expert violations under the <i>Expert Code</i>	9.1 Nonconformity and correction	10.1 Nonconformity and corrective action	Correction and verification mechanisms are complete.
10.2 Continual improvement (10.2)	Standard 8 of the <i>Accreditation Manual</i> ; PDCA cycle in the <i>Academic Quality Standards Manual</i>	9.2 Continual improvement	10.2 Continual improvement	PDCA runs throughout the system and is one of its three pillars.

II. Requirements Specific to Certification Bodies

Specialized Requirement	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Correspondence	ISO 29995 Correspondence	Integration Explanation
Safeguarding Impartiality	Independent decision-making under the <i>Accreditation Manual</i> ; dual oversight under the <i>Financial Regulations</i> ; conflicts of interest under the <i>Expert Code</i>	-	Clause 5, Impartiality	Independent decisions, conflict-of-interest recusals and financial checks and balances fully cover impartiality requirements.
Auditor Competence	Three-tier classification under the <i>Peer Review Expert Selection and Code of Conduct</i> ; <i>Trainer Management Measures</i>	-	Clause 6, Competence	Expert selection, training, classification and evaluation form a complete system.
Appeals and Complaints	<i>Appeals, Complaints and Dispute Resolution Measures</i>	-	Clause 8.8, Appeals and Complaints	Three channels of redress for appeals, complaints and disputes align strictly with ISO 29995.

Specialized Requirement	Corresponding IAPUC-IQA Regulatory Documents	ISO 29990 Correspondence	ISO 29995 Correspondence	Integration Explanation
Post-Certification Surveillance	Annual reporting, mid-term review and comprehensive re-accreditation under the <i>Accreditation Procedure Specifications; Annual Information Disclosure Guidelines</i>	-	Clause 8.6, Post-Certification Surveillance	The frequency and form of continuing surveillance satisfy the requirements.

Chapter III Analysis of Conceptual Integration

I. The PDCA Cycle - A Shared Gene of Continual Improvement

All four ISO standards use the PDCA cycle of Plan, Do, Check and Act as a methodological foundation, as does the IAPUC-IQA regulatory framework. Within IQA, PDCA operates at three levels:

- institutional level: self-evaluation and gap analysis (Plan) -> implementation of improvement (Do) -> annual monitoring and mid-term review (Check) -> institutionalization and renewed planning (Act);
- accreditation-system level: formulation and revision of standards (Plan) -> operation of accreditation processes (Do) -> sector data analysis (Check) -> system optimization (Act); and
- personnel-development level: training planning (Plan) -> review practice (Do) -> evaluation and calibration (Check) -> competence enhancement (Act).

This comprehensive embedding of PDCA gives the IQA System the same fundamental quality-management methodology as the four international standards.

II. The Process Approach - A Shared Language of Systematic Management

ISO 9001, ISO 21001, ISO 29990 and ISO 29995 all advocate understanding and managing organizational activity through the process approach. The IAPUC-IQA System is built on precisely this approach: from accreditation application as input, through self-evaluation and improvement as process, to review decision as output and post-accreditation surveillance as feedback, it forms a complete accreditation process chain. At the same time, IQA treats institutional educational services as core processes, namely curriculum design, teaching delivery and learning assessment, closely aligning with ISO 29990's focus on the core processes of learning services.

III. Risk-Based Thinking - A Shared Foundation for Forward-Looking Governance

ISO 9001:2015 elevated risk-based thinking to a core management-system concept, and ISO 21001 and ISO 29990 extend it to education. The IAPUC-IQA System not only establishes an integrated risk framework through the *Interim Risk Assessment and Management Measures*, but also places preventive controls in multiple areas including finance, digital security and expert management. It thereby demonstrates an organizational commitment to embedding risk-based thinking in regulatory design.

IV. Learner-Centredness - A Shared Direction for Educational Quality

ISO 21001 and ISO 29990 both emphasize attention to learners' needs and expectations. The IQA pillar of "Outcomes Orientation" is the practical accreditation expression of that concept: quality evaluation focuses on what students have learned, what they can do and what kind of professionals they become. Establishment of the Assurance of Learning (AoL) system, attention to student interaction and experience in distance education, and insistence on equivalence of learning outcomes in credit recognition all embody a learner-centred value orientation.

Chapter IV Conclusion

The relationship between the IAPUC-IQA regulatory framework and ISO 9001, ISO 21001, ISO 29990 and ISO 29995 is not a simple clause-by-clause correspondence, but a deep structural dialogue. At four levels - general principles of quality management, core processes of educational services, operation of management systems and operating requirements for certification bodies - the IQA framework demonstrates the dual qualities of close alignment with international standards and distinctive institutional character.

This integration is not accidental. From the outset, the IAPUC-IQA project expressly sought to "integrate advanced international accreditation concepts." The global consensus embodied in ISO standards - the PDCA cycle, process approach, risk-based thinking and learner-centredness - is embedded deeply in IQA's regulatory DNA. At the same time, IQA's three pillars of Mission-Driven Quality, Outcomes Orientation and Performance Excellence, together with its deep respect for the diverse forms of private higher education, enable it to remain theoretically grounded and practically relevant while sustaining international dialogue.

IAPUC will continue to review and optimize alignment between the IQA regulatory framework and relevant international standards in light of operational experience and the development of those standards. This statement will be updated as appropriate when the IQA framework develops or ISO standards are revised, serving as IAPUC's continuing public response to the international quality-assurance community.

Document Approval

Role	Name/Position	Date
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