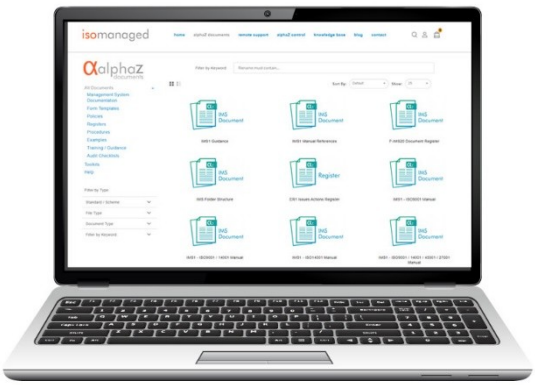
# Management Systems Setup Guidance

This document provides an overview of how to go about setting up and implementing a comprehensive and effective management system using the **alphaZ** document package including the IMS1 manual.



## Introduction

A ***Management System*** or ***Integrated Management System*** (**IMS**) is essentially an overview or summary of how a business or organisation operates. The purpose of the **IMS** is to formally document and provide an overview of the key areas and processes within the business, to ensure these areas are being managed effectively and to improve business performance while also ensuring and demonstrating compliance with relevant ISO and other standards, industry schemes, legislative, regulatory and other requirements.

Setting up an **IMS** will include preparing a management systems manual or overview document (such as the **alphaZ** IMS1 manual) which will provide an overview of all the processes and systems, documents, activities and other relevant areas within your organisation and may also include various procedures that should be followed. This document will also cover all the relevant **ISO** and other requirements and will assist with the achievement of **ISO certification** where required.

The management system can also incorporate all the associated folders containing the relevant policies, forms, registers etc... with IMS1 summarising which policies, forms and registers make up the management system and where they are filed.

When setting up an **IMS** it is important that consideration is given to all existing good practice and processes, procedures, policies and other relevant documentation or systems so that these can be incorporated into the **IMS** or referenced.

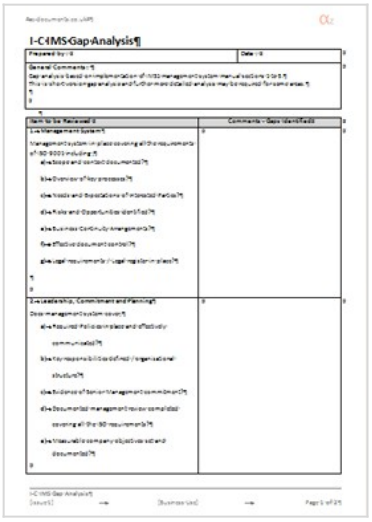
## Setting up Management Systems

Setting up management systems can be daunting but using the **alphaZ** documents package can greatly assist with the process and also ensure systems developed are useful and easy to understand.

**alphaZ documents** includes a selection of different documents organised by type and also toolkits where documents have been organised into a ready to use management system which can be downloaded and adapted to suit your organisation. With the toolkit management system all the files have been included within a filing structure which doubles as an evidence folder for ISO certification audits and various implementation checklists are also available based on the folder structure, the IMS1 manual or ISO standard requirements. Using a toolkit will ensure all the documents you need for compliance are in place and includes audit guidance and ISO correlation documents to assist during the audit.

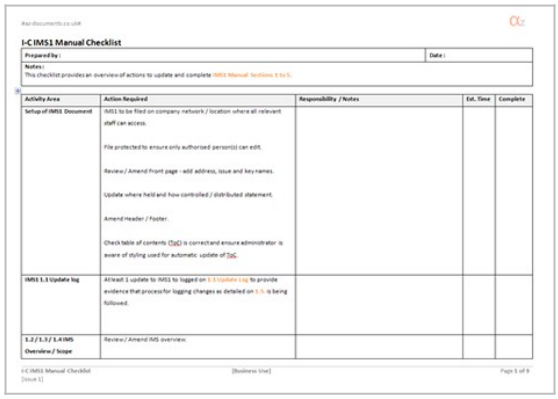
## The main stages when setting up a management system are as follows;

### Stage 1 - Review Current Systems



When setting up management systems it is important that consideration is given to all existing good practice, processes, procedures, policies and other relevant documentation or systems so that these can be incorporated or referenced. Some form of gap analysis / review of existing systems should be completed to establish what systems relevant to the management system are already in place and whether currently compliant with applicable standards.

**Ask yourself;** What currently works well and is useful?



Then complete a review of everything;

- Existing form templates, documented procedures and policy documents;
- Any existing management system documentation;
- Details of any additional standards, industry guidelines or applicable legislation;
- Any existing guidance or procedures such as work instructions, method statements, operational procedures or policy procedures;
- Any other documents that may include relevant guidance or procedures such as employee contracts, staff handbooks or other documents;
- Overview of products / services / operations / activities i.e. details from web site / other marketing literature;
- Details of management structure and responsibilities i.e. organisational chart or responsibilities matrix and any job descriptions;
- Overview of Software and other operational systems used.

This review can be completed using one of the gap analysis or implementation checklists supplied in the **\IMS\0 - IMS Setup** folder of each toolkit, which are also available at:

**alphaZ documents > Implementation Checklists**

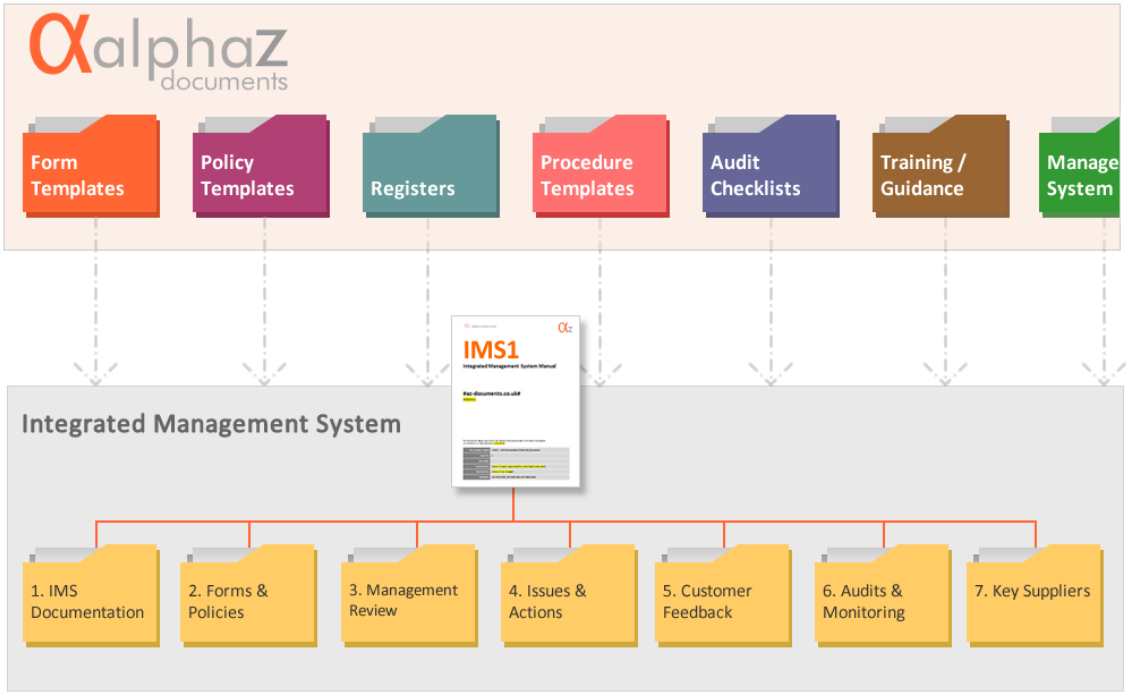
Most organisations will find that the systems that they have in place to effectively run and manage their operations are consistent with ISO standard requirements, and it should just be a case of taking credit for these existing systems to demonstrate ISO compliance. The knowledge base article Gap Analysis explains this review in more detail.

## Stage 2 - Review alphaZ Documents

There are **A LOT** of documents available on the **alphaZ documents** site but only some will be relevant or useful to your organisation, and it is recommended that a general review of the documents available is completed before setting anything up, to better understand what is available, what might be useful and how everything is organised.

> **Ask yourself;** What is better than what we are currently using and what would be useful and improve how things are managed?

**alphaZ Documents**




All the documents available on the web site have a description and some may have comments with additional information about what they are useful for or advice regarding their use and implementation.

## Stage 3 - Initial Setup of Management Systems

In most cases the initial setup of a new or updated management system will follow these simple steps:

1. **Download relevant IMS1 toolkit**

2. **Download any additional files required;**
    - Other relevant Registers
    - Form Templates
    - Policies and Procedures
    - Any other checklists or other files
3. **Update and format the files**
4. **Update and Implement** the management systems (Ref. **Stage 4**)

(**Note:** document preparation is included free with every toolkit - email your logo to support@isomanaged.com and confirm your company name, and **ALL** the documents are supplied with your company name and logo already added. See **document preparation**.)

**IMS Filing / Folder Setup -** It is important that files used are organised and that everyone understands where everything is filed and has full appreciation of the documents being used. To assist with this, a filing structure is written into the **IMS1** document (Appendix ii) and the toolkits all use this folder structure. The IMS folder index in **\IMS\0 - IMS Setup** is a printable index sheet for use with a lever arch file if a paper copy is kept.

**Filing System / Evidence Folders**

A good filing system can be useful for ensuring everyone within the organisation is aware of where key forms, policies and other key documents are located and also demonstrates to an auditor effective document control.

A correctly mapped out filing system also helps to prevent any misfiling and potential duplication where copies of the same file are saved in more than 1 location.

As well as resources from **alphaZ documents** there will be various other resources that are already in place within your organisation that can be transferred or signposted as key components in the management system.

**Update the templates** - before reviewing and amending the content of the template forms and policies, an initial task may be to update the header on all the files to replace the **#alphaZ-documents#** text with your company name. This is already done where document preparation has been used.

All the resources provided are simple to use and have instructions included or additional guidance is available on the web site to assist with implementation and ongoing use.

**Note:** The toolkit folders include **\Draft** folders for optional files and alternative versions. When reviewing the files, move any that are not currently in use into the relevant **\Draft** folder and move them back into the filing system when they are put in place for use.

**Company Documentation**

It is important to demonstrate that your company documents are adequately controlled and managed. To achieve this all the forms supplied as part of the **alphaZ** package are uniquely numbered, issue controlled and also include an information classification so that ***confidential***, ***business use*** or ***public*** documents are all clearly marked.

**Policies** - the ISO standards include very specific requirements regarding policies and what they must cover. The supplied policies meet the stipulated requirements, and if you intend to amend them to better reflect your organisation, take care not to remove any content that is required for ISO compliance.

## Stage 4 - Update and Implement Management Systems

**The IMS1 Document** is the key overview document for the management system and is designed to cover all the key areas that the business manages in a logical way so that the primary function is to be a useful management system overview while also ensuring ISO compliance.

This should be the key document for your organisation by providing an overview of how your organisation is organised, what the key activities are, what other processes need to be managed and who is responsible for these key processes. Someone new to the company, an auditor or any other interested party, should be able to read this document and understand how all the key activities are managed.

**Implementation** - the IMS1 document in itself can be used for gap analysis and as an implementation checklist; if everything covered in this document is completed and correct it will ensure ISO compliance. Alternatively there are various implementation checklists available to assist with update and implementation of the management systems.

If one of the gap analysis or implementation checklists has been completed this should have highlighted any gaps and areas where further development is required and may also detail the main steps to be followed when setting up the management systems.

Where gaps have been identified additional procedures can be downloaded from;

**All Documents > Procedures**

**Linking with existing systems** - the IMS1 document is intended to act as a top-level overview of the management systems, and the supplied content can be deleted and replaced with references / signposts to other documents / software / systems.

**Note :** An understanding of the minimum requirements for ISO compliance is required if you wish to omit or alter any sections of the IMS1 document.

**Avoid Duplication** - if documented procedures have already been prepared it is not necessary to include these in **IMS1** and a summary or signpost / Link to the other document may be an easier approach. When doing this it is important that all documents follow the document management procedure in IMS1.

When preparing other documents it is recommended that all links point upwards to the relevant section in the IMS1 document rather than having one document referencing other documents. This will then allow documents to be added / removed /renamed without having to then locate and update multiple other references.

**Links -** IMS1 includes links to various other files supplied as part of the alphaZ package. If these files are not being used the links should be removed or if referencing other files or documents the links can be added with orange text.

## Stage 5 - Check and Maintain

Once the management systems have been prepared and implemented various checks then need to be completed to ensure that everything is correct and accurately reflects the activities and processes within the organisation.

The main document for review will be the IMS1 manual which will provide an overview of all the other documents including a filing structure and associated files and it is therefore important that this file is properly reviewed and updated and that ownership is taken of this document.
Ref. IMS1-Manual-Guidance in \IMS\0 - IMS Setup\

As well as IMS1 there may be several other files needing reviewed and updated, and to assist with this it may be useful to use one of the implementation checklists in \IMS\0 - IMS Setup\.

Where the management systems have been prepared for ISO compliance there will be the additional requirement to have completed and documented a programme of internal audits and the internal audits can be combined with this process of reviewing and checking the management systems; completing the internal audits will also confirm that everything is correct and ready for external audit. To assist with internal audits there are various pre-prepared audit checklists covering the ISO standards, all the sections of IMS1 or even individual processes or activities.
Ref. alphaZ documents > Audit Checklists and the knowledge base Internal Auditing section

A further requirement for ISO certification is to have completed and documented a management review and set and documented objectives. Completing a management review using the supplied F-Q3 Management Review form will ensure all areas for ISO compliance are covered, as well as completing a review of the recently implemented or updated management systems. Company objectives are set or confirmed on the same form - see Management Review Explained in the knowledge base.

**Additional Help** - If you require assistance with setting up the IMS1 document or developing management systems in general, please contact us or arrange remote support. The stages in this document are also covered online in the knowledge base article Setting Up a Management System.