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Developing an annual audit plan

Application & application review

Application & Application Review [cont'd]

Module 4 | Lesson C

Step 1: Scoping Call

- Initial meeting to discuss high-level scope, pricing, and timelines

Step 2: Formal Application Submission

- Applicant completes a detailed form with all relevant information

Step 3: Application Review

- Certification body ensures completeness and addresses inconsistencies
- Confirm scope is within technical area
- Provide pricing within a proposal

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Application & application review

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Application & Application Review [cont'd]

Organizational Context: Size, industry, locations

Scope: Boundaries of certification including offices, departments, and processes

Audit Criteria: Determines which standards are being pursued (e.g., ISO 27001, ISO 27701, ISO 42001)

Previous 3rd Party Assurance: Identifies overlaps or readiness based on prior assessments (e.g., SOC 2)

Timeline: Applicant must communicate scheduling constraints or deadlines

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## Application & application review



## Application & Application Review [cont'd]

- **Prior Compliance Initiatives**
  - Leverages overlaps with prior audits (e.g., SOC 2) to streamline processes
- **Statement of Applicability**
  - Verifies justified controls and identifies areas requiring for testing
- **Audit Methodology**
  - Determines whether remote or on-site auditing is appropriate based on the organization's structure (e.g., remote-only or multi-site)

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Application & Application Review [cont'd]

Scope of the Audit

Standards, headcount, locations, departments, processes, and products

Ensures appropriate audit team size and competence

Risk and Complexity

Assesses external risks such as data sensitivity and regulatory requirements

Audit Time

Estimate the total audit required to assess the scope based on application inputs and accreditation requirements

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Application & Application Review [cont'd]

Take the Application submission seriously

Clarity in Scope

Avoids confusion and inefficiencies for both auditors and applicant organizations

Adequate Audit Team

Ensures team size and competence match the scope, preventing resource wastage

Impact of Poor Scope Definition

Broad or undefined scopes can lead to miscommunication, rework, and inefficient audits

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✓ **Audit team roles**  
VIDEO - 10 MIN - REQUIRED

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## Building an audit program





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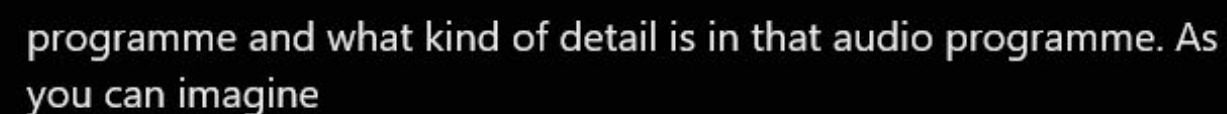
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## Building an audit program





## Building an Audit Program [cont'd]

- **Step 1: Determine the Audit Scope**
  - Completed during the application process and serves as a foundational input
- **Step 2: Confirm Audit Criteria**
  - Specifies standards being audited (e.g., ISO 27001, ISO 27701, ISO 42001)
- **Step 3: Establish the Audit Frequency**
  - Usually, spans a 3-year cycle but could vary based on transfer audits from another certification body; special audits





## Building an Audit Program [cont'd]

- **Step 4: Determine Audit Time Requirements**
  - Based on headcount and audit criteria
- **Step 5: Establish Audit Team and Resources**
  - Lead auditors, supporting staff, and technical experts, as needed
- **Step 6: Develop the Audit Schedule**
  - Initial certification audits require two stages





## Building an Audit Program [cont'd]

### Reviewing & Adjusting the Audit Program

- **Annual Review**
  - Conducted ahead of the audit and after reapplication to ensure suitability
- **Reasons for Adjustments**
  - Findings from prior audits necessitating additional focus
  - New risks to the management system requiring updates
  - Organizational changes, such as scope expansion or turnover, affecting criteria, team composition, or time requirements





## Building an Audit Program [cont'd]

### Tips for a Successful Audit Program

- **Scalability:** flexible to accommodate changes in scope year-over-year
- **Consistency:** a well-structured audit plan promotes professionalism and thoroughness
- **Resource Allocation:** properly allocated time and competent auditors ensure audit objectives are met
  - Periodic auditor rotation maintains impartiality and independence



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Formal document detailing audit scope, criteria, objectives, resources, & schedule

Scope: what will be audited, serving as a mutual source of truth

Criteria: standards, controls, and sites

Resources: audit team roles and resources needed from the auditee (e.g., meeting spaces, contacts)

Schedule: audit timeline, meeting-by-meeting, for clear expectations

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we're seeing here on my screen is we have scope criteria resources schedule. This is a



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objectives and define the scope. 17 thousand twenty one might have references twenty



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Step 1: Establish Audit Objectives and Define Scope

Reference the audit program to confirm criteria (standards, controls, sites, etc.)

Align audit criteria with the auditee's defined scope to avoid inaccuracies

Example objectives

- For Stage 1, verify readiness for Stage 2
- Review corrective actions for prior nonconformities
- Confirm ISMS compliance with ISO 27001 and other requirements

Developing an Annual Audit Plan [cont'd]

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Step 2: Perform a Risk Analysis Ahead of the Audit

Prioritize high-risk areas based on industry risks, prior nonconformities, or new products/services

Address operational risks, such as remote auditing challenges, regional conflicts, or auditee resource constraints

Scheduling conflicts

Developing an Annual Audit Plan [cont'd]

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Step 3: Establish Necessary Resources

Build the audit team and assign roles

Confirm auditee-provided resources, such as: AV equipment, meeting rooms, stakeholder availability, facility access, and local contacts.

Developing an Annual Audit Plan [cont'd]

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Step 4: Develop the Audit Schedule

Clearly define the schedule, including:

- Opening meeting time/date
- Specific audit sessions for key stakeholders
- Closing meeting time/date
- Evidence submission deadlines

Ensure mutual agreement on the schedule with flexibility for unforeseen issues

Developing an Annual Audit Plan [cont'd]

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Tips for a Successful Audit Plan

Get Ahead of It

Share the audit plan early to give the auditee time to review and address scope or scheduling issues

Be Flexible

Build buffer time into sessions for unexpected audit trails or contingencies

Get Stakeholder Buy-in

Ensure auditee approval of the plan and coordination with required participants

Developing an Annual Audit Plan [cont'd]

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deliver this audit plan again in front of your sponsor so to speak with an organisation