BS ISO 30401:2018+A2:2024

BSI Standards Publication

Knowledge management systems — Requirements

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Full document details: BS ISO 30401:2018+A2:2024

National foreword

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The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee KMS/1, Knowledge management systems.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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Published by BSI Standards Limited 2024

ISBN 978 0 539 30734 4

ICS 03.100.30

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This British Standard was published under the authority of the Standards Policy and Strategy Committee on 30 November 2018.

Amendments/corrigenda issued since publication

Date	Text affected
31 July 2022	Implementation of ISO amendment 1:2022
31 March 2024	Implementation of ISO amendment 2:2024

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INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO 30401: 2018+A2

First edition
2018-11

Amendment 2
2024-02

Knowledge management systems — Requirements

Systèmes de management des connaissances — Exigences

Reference number
ISO 30401:2018(E)

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 260, *Human resource management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

0.1 Purpose

The purpose of this ISO management system standard for knowledge management is to support organizations to develop a management system that effectively promotes and enables value-creation through knowledge.

Knowledge management is a discipline focused on ways that organizations create and use knowledge. Knowledge management has no single accepted definition and no global standards predate this management system standard. There are many well-known barriers to successful knowledge management which still need to be overcome, many confusions with other disciplines such as information management, and many common misconceptions about how to do knowledge management, for example the view that simply buying a technology system will be enough for knowledge management to add value.

Each organization will craft a knowledge management approach, with respect to its own business and operational environment, reflecting their specific needs and desired outcomes

The intent of this document is to set sound knowledge management principles and requirements

a) as guidance for organizations that aim to be competent in optimizing the value of organizational knowledge;

b) as a basis for auditing, certifying, evaluating and recognizing such competent organizations by internal and external recognized auditing bodies.

0.2 The importance of knowledge management

a) The aim of work is to produce valuable results. Valuable results are derived from applied knowledge. Organizational knowledge is becoming a key differentiator for effectiveness, increased collaboration and competition.

b) Knowledge work is increasingly important in many societies and organizations. Many economies aspire to become knowledge economies, where knowledge is the main source of wealth. In this context, knowledge becomes a core asset for organizations. Knowledge is especially important in many areas: it allows effective decisions to be made, supports the efficiency of processes and contributes to their enhancement, creates resilience and adaptability, creates competitive advantage and may even become a product in its own right.

c) An increased access to knowledge will create opportunities for the professional development of people in the organization through learning, practices and exchanges.

d) Organizations can no longer rely on the spontaneous diffusion of knowledge to keep up with the pace of change. Instead knowledge must be deliberately created, consolidated, applied, and reused faster than the rate of change.

e) Geographically dispersed and decentralized organizations, conducting the same processes and delivering the same services in multiple locations, can gain tremendous advantage through sharing practices, expertise and learning across organizational boundaries.

f) Workforce attrition and turnover in today's society has implications for knowledge management. In many organizations, critical knowledge is often siloed and/or retained by experts, at the risk of being lost when the organization changes or these experts leave.

g) Effective knowledge management supports collaboration between different organisations to achieve shared objectives.

Knowledge is an intangible organizational asset that needs to be managed like any other asset. It needs to be developed, consolidated, retained, shared, adapted and applied so that workers can make effective decisions and take aligned actions, solving problems based on the experience of the past and

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new insights into the future. Knowledge management is a holistic approach to improving learning and effectiveness through optimization of the use of knowledge, in order to create value for the organization. Knowledge management supports existing process and development strategies. As such, it needs to be integrated with other organizational functions.

0.3 Guiding principles

a) Nature of knowledge: knowledge is intangible and complex; it is created by people.

b) Value: knowledge is a key source of value for organizations to meet their objectives. The determinable value of knowledge is in its impact on organizational purpose, vision, objectives, policies, processes and performance. Knowledge management is a means of unlocking the potential value of knowledge.

c) Focus: knowledge management serves the organizational objectives, strategies and needs.

d) Adaptive: there is no one knowledge management solution that fits all organizations within all contexts. Organizations may develop their own approach to the scope of knowledge and knowledge management and how to implement these efforts, based on the needs and context.

e) Shared understanding: people create their own knowledge by their own understanding of the input they receive. For shared understanding, knowledge management should include interactions between people, using content, processes and technologies where appropriate.

f) Environment: knowledge is not managed directly; knowledge management focuses on managing the working environment, thus nurturing the knowledge lifecycle.

g) Culture: culture is critical to the effectiveness of knowledge management.

h) Iterative: knowledge management should be phased, incorporating learning and feedback cycles.

0.4 Range of knowledge management

Knowledge management varies between different organizations.

Annex A explains the range, viewing the various states of knowledge as a continuum.

Annex B explains knowledge management areas of interest, comparing it with adjacent disciplines.

0.5 Summary

This document defines the requirements for knowledge management systems in organizations, promising successful implementation of knowledge management. This document, however, maintains flexibility within the context of the requirements that enables conformity for every type of organization and alignment with all characteristics and needs.

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Knowledge management systems — Requirements

1 Scope

This document sets requirements and provides guidelines for establishing, implementing, maintaining, reviewing and improving an effective management system for knowledge management in organizations. All the requirements of this document are applicable to any organization, regardless of its type or size, or the products and services it provides.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
organization
person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its *objectives* (3.8)

Note 1 to entry: The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

A1 **3.2**
interested party (preferred term)
stakeholder **(admitted term)**
person or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision or activity

EXAMPLE Customers, owners, people in an organization, suppliers, bankers, unions, work councils, partners or societies that can include competitive or pressure groups. A1

3.3
requirement
need or expectation that is stated, generally implied or obligatory

Note 1 to entry: "Generally implied" means that it is custom or common practice for the organization and interested parties that the need or expectation under consideration is implied.

Note 2 to entry: A specified requirement is one that is stated, for example in *documented information* (3.11).

A1 **3.4**
management system
set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organization to establish policies and objectives and processes to achieve those objectives

Note 1 to entry: A management system can address a single discipline or several disciplines.

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