PECB BEYOND RECOGNITION

Exam Preparation Guide

ISO 9001 Internal Auditor

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The objective of the "PECB Certified ISO 9001 Internal Auditor" exam is to ensure that the candidate has the necessary competence and skills to perform a quality management system (QMS) internal audit by applying widely recognized audit principles, procedures, and techniques. The aim of the exam is to evaluate that the candidate possesses the knowledge and skills to plan and carry out internal audits in compliance with the requirements of ISO 9001 and based on the recommendations of ISO 19011 and other good audit practices.

The ISO 9001 Internal Auditor exam is intended for:

- Auditors seeking to perform and lead quality management system (QMS) internal audits
- Individuals responsible for improving the processes within an organization
- Managers or consultants seeking to master the QMS internal audit process
- Managers or consultants responsible for maintaining conformance with the requirements of ISO 9001
- Technical experts seeking to prepare for a QMS internal audit
- Expert advisors in quality management

The exam covers the following competency domains:

- **Domain 1:** Fundamental principles and concepts of a quality management system (QMS)
- **Domain 2:** Fundamental audit concepts and principles
- **Domain 3:** Preparing and conducting an ISO 9001 internal audit
- **Domain 4:** Managing the ISO 9001 internal audit program
- **Domain 5:** Preparing for a QMS certification audit

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The content of the exam is divided as follows:

Domain 1: Fundamental principles and concepts of an quality management system (QMS)

Main objective: Ensure that the candidate understands and is able to interpret **ISO 9001** principles and concepts

Competencies	Knowledge statements
1. Ability to define the concepts of quality and quality management 2. Ability to understand and explain the operations of the ISO and the development of ISO 9001 3. Ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate the quality management compliance requirements for an organization 4. Ability to comprehend understand the ISO 9001 structure, terms, and definitions which are specific to the quality management system standard 5. Ability to understand the concept of the risk-based thinking and how it affects the quality management system 6. Ability to understand the quality management tools and techniques 7. Ability to explain and illustrate the main concepts of quality management	1. Knowledge of the ISO 9000 family of standards 2. Knowledge of the importance of the good quality and consequences of poor quality of products and services 3. Knowledge of the main standards in quality management 4. Knowledge of the application of the seven ISO quality management principles 5. Knowledge of laws, regulations, international and industry standards, contracts, market practices, internal policies, etc., an organization must comply with 6. Knowledge of the main concepts and terminology of ISO 9001 7. Knowledge of the process approach, and the concepts that it incorporates: the PDCA cycle and risk-based thinking 8. Knowledge of the principal characteristics of an integrated management system

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Domain 2: Fundamental audit concepts and principles

Main objective: Ensure that the candidate understands, is able to interpret, and identify the requirements for a quality management system based on ISO 9001

Competencies	Knowledge statements
1. Ability to distinguish between the accreditation bodies, certification bodies, personnel certification bodies, and training organizations	1. Knowledge of the certification process
2. Ability to understand, explain, and illustrate the application of the audit principles in the context of a QMS internal audit.	2. Knowledge of the main audit concepts and terminology as described in ISO 19011
3. Ability to identify and judge situations that would discredit the professionalism of the internal auditor and violate the PECB Code of Ethics	3. Knowledge of the differences between first, second, and third party audits
4. Ability to identify and judge ethical issues considering the obligations to the audit client, auditee, law enforcement, and regulatory authorities.	4. Knowledge of the audit principles as defined by ISO 19011: integrity, fair presentation, due professional care, professional judgment, professional skepticism, confidentiality, independence, and risk-based approach
5. Ability to develop clear and concise audit objectives	5. Knowledge of the professional responsibility of an internal auditor and the PECB Code of Ethics
6. Ability to determine and evaluate the level of materiality and apply the risk-based approach throughout the different stages of a QMS internal audit	6. Knowledge of the requirements for developing appropriate audit objectives
7. Ability to judge the appropriate level of reasonable assurance needed for a specific ISO 9001 audit mission	7. Knowledge of the evidence-based approach in an audit
	8. Knowledge of the different types of evidence: physical, mathematical, confirmative, technical, analytical, documentary, and verbal
	9. Knowledge of the application of risk-based approach in an audit and the different types of risks related to audit activities
	10. Knowledge of the concept of materiality and its application to QMS audits
	11. Knowledge of the concept of reasonable assurance and its application in audits

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Domain 3: Preparing and conducting an ISO 9001 internal audit

Main objective: Ensure that the candidate is able to prepare and conduct a QMS internal audit based on the requirements of ISO 9001 and other good audit practices

Competencies	Knowledge statements
1. Ability to use techniques for determining the context of an organization	1. Knowledge of the approaches and techniques used for determining the context of the organization
2. Ability to define the organizational structure and to understand the responsibilities of various functions within an organization	2. Knowledge of the main responsibilities of the audit team leader, audit team members, and technical experts involved in QMS internal audit
3. Ability to understand and explain the steps and activities to prepare a QMS internal audit	3. Knowledge of the main responsibilities of other functions within the organization
4. Ability to understand and explain the roles and responsibilities of each audit team member and technical expert involved in a QMS internal audit	4. Knowledge of the preparation process of an audit plan
5. Ability to explain, illustrate, and apply the evidence-based approach in the context of an ISO 9001 internal audit	5. Knowledge of the objectives and the content of the opening meeting of an internal audit
6. Ability to explain and compare the types and characteristics of audit evidences	6. Knowledge of the different types of audit evidence
7. Ability to conduct a QMS internal audit by taking into account the documentation review conditions and criteria	7. Knowledge of the main factors that influence the evidence reliability
8. Ability to explain, illustrate, and apply statistical techniques and main audit sampling methods	8. Knowledge of the requirements for documented information as stated in ISO 9001
9. Ability to gather appropriate evidence from the available sources of information during the internal audit and evaluate it objectively.	9. Knowledge of the best communication practices during an internal audit
10. Ability to apply audit methods	10. Knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of guides and observers during an audit
	11. Knowledge of the conflict resolution techniques
	12. Knowledge of the evidence collection procedures: observation, documentation review, interviews, analysis, and technical verification
	13. Knowledge of evidence analysis procedures: corroboration and evaluation
	14. Knowledge of the main audit sampling methods and their characteristics
	15. Knowledge of the types and the application of the audit methods

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Domain 4: Managing an ISO 9001 internal audit program

Main objective: Ensure that the candidate understands how to establish and manage a QMS internal audit program

Competencies	Knowledge statements
1. Ability to understand and explain the establishment of an internal audit program and the application of the PDCA cycle 2. Ability to understand and explain the implementation of internal audit program 3. Ability to plan the internal audit activities 4. Ability to understand and explain the importance of maintaining the independence, objectivity, and impartiality of the internal audit function 5. Ability to draft and issue nonconformity reports 6. Ability to develop complete, accurate, and concise audit reports 7. Ability to understand the evaluation of the efficiency of the internal audit program by monitoring the performance of each audit team member 8. Ability to demonstrate the application of the personal attributes and behaviors associated with professional auditors	1. Knowledge of the application of the PDCA cycle in the management of an internal audit program 2. Knowledge of the requirements, guidelines, and best practices regarding audit resources, procedures, and policies 3. Knowledge of the main internal audit services and activities 4. Knowledge of the types of tools used by professional auditors 5. Knowledge of the requirements, guidelines, and best practices regarding the management and maintenance of the audit program records 6. Knowledge of the application of the concept of continual improvement to the management of an internal audit program 7. Knowledge of the particularities of the implementation and management of an internal audit program 8. Knowledge of the considerations for nonconformity reports 9. Knowledge of the elements that need to be included in an audit report 10. Knowledge of the competency concept and its application to internal auditors 11. Knowledge of the personal attributes and behaviors of a professional internal auditor

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Domain 5: Preparing for a QMS certification audit

Main objective: Ensure that the candidate is able to prepare an organization for the certification against ISO 9001

Competencies	Knowledge statements
1. Ability to understand the main steps, processes, and activities related to an ISO 9001 certification audit	1. Knowledge of the evidence-based approach in the QMS certification audit
2. Ability to understand, explain, and illustrate the evidence-based approach in a QMS audit	2. Knowledge of the differences between stage 1 and stage 2 audit
3. Ability to counsel an organization to identify and select a certification body that meets their needs	3. Knowledge of stage 1 audit requirements, steps, and activities
4. Ability to review the readiness of an organization for an ISO 9001 certification audit	4. Knowledge of the documentation review criteria
5. Ability to coach and prepare an organization's personnel for an ISO 9001 certification audit	5. Knowledge of stage 2 audit requirements, steps, and activities
6. Ability to discuss the audit findings and conclusions with external auditors	6. Knowledge of follow-up audit requirements, steps, and activities
	7. Knowledge of the requirements, guidelines, and best practices to develop action plans following an ISO 9001 certification audit

Based on the above-mentioned domains and their relevance, 7 questions are included in the exam, as summarized in the table below:

		Points per question	Questions that measure comprehension, application, and analysis	Level of understanding (Cognitive/Taxonomy) required — Questions that measure synthesis and evaluation	Number of questions per competency domain	% of the exam devoted to each competency domain	Number of points per competency domain	% of points per competency domain
Competency domains	Fundamental principles and concepts of a quality management system (QMS)	5	X		1	14.28	5	10
	Fundamental audit concepts and principles	5	X		2	28.58	10	20
		5		X				
	Preparing and conducting an ISO 9001 internal audit	10		X	2	28.58	20	40
		10	X					
	Managing an ISO 9001 internal audit program	10	X		1	14.28	10	20
	Preparing for a QMS certification audit	5		X	1	14.28	5	10
	Total points	50						
	Number of questions per level of understanding		4	3				
	% of the exam devoted to each level of understanding (cognitive/taxonomy)		57.14	42.86				

The exam passing score is **70%**.

After successfully passing the exam, candidates will be able to apply for the "PECB Certified ISO 9001 Internal Auditor" credential depending on their level of experience.

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General Information on the Exam

Candidates are required to arrive/be present at least 30 minutes before the exam starts. Candidates who arrive late will not be given additional time to compensate for the late arrival and may not be allowed to sit for the exam.

Candidates are required to bring a valid identity card (a national ID card, driver's license, or passport) and show it to the invigilator.

If requested on the day of the exam (paper-based exams), additional time can be provided to candidates taking the exam in a non-native language, as follows:

- 10 additional minutes for Foundation exams
- 20 additional minutes for Manager exams
- 30 additional minutes for Lead exams

PECB Exam Format and Type

1. Paper-based: Exams are provided on paper, where candidates are not allowed to use anything but the exam paper and a pen. The use of electronic devices, such as laptops, tablets, or phones, is not allowed. The exam session is supervised by a PECB approved Invigilator at the location where the Reseller has organized the training course.

2. Online: Exams are provided electronically via the PECB Exams application. The use of electronic devices, such as tablets and cell phones, is not allowed. The exam session is supervised remotely by a PECB Invigilator via the PECB Exams application and an external/integrated camera.

For more detailed information about the online format, please refer to the PECB Online Exam Guide.

PECB exams are available in two types:
1. Essay-type question exam
2. Multiple-choice question exam

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This exam comprises essay-type questions. They are used to determine and evaluate whether a candidate can clearly answer questions related to the defined competency domains. Additionally, problem-solving techniques and arguments that are supported with reasoning and evidence will also be evaluated.

The exam is open book and is not intended to measure memorizing or recalling information. It aims to evaluate candidates' comprehension, analytical skills, and applied knowledge. Therefore, candidates are required to provide logical and convincing answers and explanations in order to demonstrate that they have understood the content and the main concepts of the competency domains.

Since the exam is "open book," candidates are authorized to use the following reference materials:

- A hard copy of ISO 9001 standard
- Training course materials(accessed through PECB Exams app and/or printed)
- Any personal notes made by the candidate during the training course(accessed through PECB Exams app and/or printed)
- A hard copy dictionary

Any attempts to copy, collude, or otherwise cheat during the exam session will automatically lead to failure of the exam.

PECB exams are available in English and other languages. For the availability of the exam in a particular language, please contact examination@pecb.com.

Note: PECB will progressively transition to multiple-choice exams. They will also be open book and comprise scenario-based questions that will allow PECB to evaluate candidates' knowledge, abilities, and skills to use information in new situations (apply), draw connections among ideas (analyze), and justify a stand or decision (evaluate). All PECB multiple-choice exams have one question and three alternatives, of which only one is correct.

For specific information about exam types, languages available, and other details, visit the List of PECB Exams.

Receiving the Exam Results

Exam results will be communicated via email. The only possible results are *pass* and *fail;* no specific grade will be included.

- The time span for the communication starts from the exam date and lasts three to eight weeks for essay type exams and two to four weeks for multiple-choice paper-based exams

- For online multiple-choice exams, candidates receive their results instantly

Candidates who successfully complete the exam will be able to apply for one of the credentials of the respective certification scheme.

For candidates who fail the exam, a list of the domains where they have performed poorly will be added to the email to help them prepare better for a retake.

Candidates that disagree with the results may request for a re-evaluation by writing to results@pecb.com within 30 working days of receiving the results. Re-evaluation requests received after 30 days will not be processed. If candidates do not agree with the results of the reevaluation, they have 30 working days from the date when they received the reevaluated exam results to file a complaint through the PECB Ticketing System. Complaints received after 30 days will not be processed.

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Exam Retake Policy

There is no limit on the number of times that a candidate may retake an exam. However, there are certain limitations in terms of the allowed time frames between exam retakes.

- If a candidate does not pass the exam on the 1st attempt, they must wait 15 days from the initial date of the exam for the next attempt (1st retake). Retake fees apply.
  Note: Candidates who have completed the training course but failed the exam are eligible to retake the exam once for free within a 12-month period from the initial date of the exam.

- If a candidate does not pass the exam on the 2nd attempt, they must wait three months after the initial date of the exam for the next attempt (2nd retake). Retake fees apply.
  Note: For candidates that fail the exam in the 2nd retake, PECB recommends them to attend a training course in order to be better prepared for the exam.

- If a candidate does not pass the exam on the 3rd attempt, they must wait six months after the initial date of the exam for the next attempt (3rd retake). Retake fees apply.

- After the 4th attempt, the waiting period for further retake exams is 12 months from the date of the last attempt. Retake fees apply.

To arrange exam retakes (date, time, place, costs), candidates need to contact the PECB Reseller/Distributor who has initially organized the session.

Reschedule the Exam

For any changes with regard to the exam date, time, location, or other details, please contact examination@pecb.com.

Closing a Case

If a candidate does not apply for the certificate within three years, their case will be closed. Candidates whose case has been closed due to the expiration of the certification period have the right to request to reopen their case. However, PECB will no longer be responsible for any changes in the conditions, standards, policies, candidate handbook, or exam preparation guide that were applicable before the case was closed. A candidate requesting their case to reopen must do so in writing and pay the required fee.

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A significant component of a successful and respected professional certification credential is maintaining the security and confidentiality of the exam. PECB relies upon the ethical behavior of certificate holders and applicants to maintain the security and confidentiality of PECB exams. Any disclosure of information about the content of PECB exams indicates violation of PECB's Code of Ethics. PECB will take action against individuals who violate PECB Policies and the Code of Ethics. These actions include permanently barring individuals from pursuing PECB credentials and revoking the awarded credentials. PECB will also pursue legal action against individuals or organizations who infringe upon its copyrights, proprietary rights, and intellectual property.

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Sample Exam Questions

Question 1: Provide an action plan with at least two actions that would be acceptable to ensure conformity to the requirements of the respective clause of ISO 9001.

Clause 5.5.2 Communication of the quality policy

Possible answer:

•   *Organize awareness sessions to communicate the quality policy and its importance to all employees within the organization*

•   *Develop a communication strategy and maintain it as documented information*

Question 2: Having received a corrective action plan for review, you need to evaluate the adequacy of the proposed corrective actions. If you agree with the proposed corrective actions, explain why. If you disagree with them, explain why and propose an alternative that you consider as more adequate.

•   Nonconformity: A nonconformity has been issued because the Human Resources department was not aware of a procedure that requires them to record the education, training, and experience of all employees

•   Corrective action: Inform (Timeframe: immediately) and train (Timeframe: within six months) the Human Resources team with regard to this procedure and require each employee of the department to follow it

Possible answer:

I agree with the proposed corrective action. This solves the problem regarding the lack of awareness about the existence of the procedure. In order to verify the validity and effectiveness of this corrective action and to ensure that the procedure is being followed appropriately, I would select a sample during the next internal audit and evaluate it objectively. to find out whether the procedure is being followed as required.

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