



PREPARING FOR YOUR REMOTE AUDIT WITH NQA



Martin Graham, NQA Auditor

8th February 2021

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THE WORLD CAN
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NQA specialises in certification in **high technology** and engineering sectors.



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Certification body in
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Certification body in
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TOP 3 IN THE UK

ISO 9001, ISO 14001,
ISO 45001, ISO 27001

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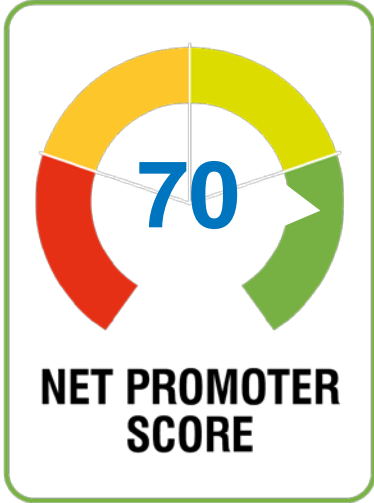
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UK'S NO.2

Certification body in
Aerospace sector

OUR PROMISE TO YOU



NQA'S EXPERIENCE PROMISE

-  We promise to update you on industry changes
-  We will ensure our auditors are technically competent for your industry
-  We promise our experience will add value to your audit schedule
-  We will deliver excellent customer service
-  We promise to ensure your certification remains flexible to your business
-  We will provide added value through our audits and reports
-  We will ensure all fees are all inclusive

“ I have worked with NQA for 15 years and this was an exceptional audit during exceptional times.

Our business has changed over the last few months, but in fairness the whole experience was refreshing.

We look forward in meeting up with you next year and hopefully we will continue our longstanding relationship with NQA. ”

**JOHN AUSTEN, QUALITY
& EHS MANAGER AT
INCODIA**



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AGENDA

This webinar is aimed to help you prepare for your remote audit with NQA, supporting you with advanced preparation and what to expect from the audit itself.

During this webinar you will also benefit from tips and techniques to effectively complete remote internal audits within your organisation.

YOUR PRESENTER



Martin Graham

ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001,
ISO 50001, SSIP

NQA Training Manager / Lead Auditor



Martin is an experienced lead auditor, with 20 years' exposure to the certification industry covering sectors including retail, manufacturing and assembly, construction, engineering, testing, mechanical & electrical installations, transport logistics, communication, education and training providers. Having knowledge of managing each step of the certification process, he is well positioned to understand clients' needs and support them through the certification process as well as develop their knowledge and skills as part of NQA Training.

REMOTE AUDITS

WHAT IS A REMOTE AUDIT?

- It is a 'normal' audit that is undertaken using a suitable ICT platform.
 - A remote audit is one that is conducted partially or completely off site. The audit will cover everything that is usually covered on site but uses technology to support the auditor when a site visit is not possible / appropriate.
 - There may be use of emails, phone calls, screen share, videos and photographs.
 - Scope of the audit remains the same.
 - Duration may change – to allow for site-based activity – case by case basis.
 - The purpose remains the same and we will support you through it.
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WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT?

- The remote audit will typically be the same duration as your onsite audit.
 - You will need to be available at all times and will be dialled into a conference call for most of the audit duration.
 - Remote audits are also best delivered using screen share. This reduces the amount of data and information transferred between your organisation and NQA.
 - You may be asked to email documents to the Assessor for review.
 - Any information you send us will be managed in accordance to our confidentiality and data privacy policies, which are available on our website and within the NQA Rules Related to Registration.
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PREPARATION



PREPARING FOR A REMOTE AUDIT

- Which platform will you use? Teams, Skype, Zoom, Go to Meeting, Google – determine which will suit you and auditees – AND test them at both ends.
 - What resources will need to be available for the audit and when – at the premises, at their home?
 - Are the resources familiar with the technology? Do you need to provide training / instruction? Do they have the hardware / software needed?
 - What areas is it practical to audit remotely? Are they functioning?
 - Do you need to confirm information security arrangements? Is transmittal secure? What will you do with transmitted information? Is permission needed – check contracts! – obtain authorisation if required.
-

PREPARING FOR A REMOTE AUDIT

- As you would expect, remote auditing is heavily reliant on technology (ICT)
 - There are a few simple logistical points you need to make sure of to be ready for your remote audit:
 - A system which will allow an online conference call (with video where possible) such as GoTo Meeting, Teams, Google Hangouts or Skype.
 - If you do not have access to a system like this, then your NQA Assessor will send you a meeting invitation via MS Teams.
 - If online connectivity is not possible, the Assessor may ask you to send them information via email and follow up with a telephone call.
 - Please ensure you are familiar with the technology prior to your audit to avoid unnecessary delays.
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PREPARING FOR A REMOTE AUDIT

- Documentation will inevitably be requested. If you've been subject to audit before then hopefully the requirements are well practiced. If this is your first time then the auditor may need exposure to all policies and activities under scope.
 - Collating these prior to the audit date and understanding where to obtain pertinent audit information is good preparatory activity.
 - Equally as important – relax! We're here to help and let you maintain your management system through this time of resilience - it's just as important to us as it is to you.
 - Take breaks as you would normally...
-

PREPARING FOR A REMOTE AUDIT

- Confirm the availability of the relevant personnel – e.g. Top Management, H&S representatives, process owners.
 - ...and that they have access to the relevant information – e.g. process records, maintenance records, training information, inspection / test records – anything that you would normally expect to see – what evidence do you need to see.
 - Establish how you are going to review / share information – screen sharing, scanned documents, job files / route cards, POs, screen shots, photos, videos etc.
 - The critical part is to plan and communicate – especially if there is an audit team.
 - Confirm what the objective of the audit is and agree it can be achieved.
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Personnel

- The person(s) responsible will need to be available for the entirety of the audit as a point of contact – as with on site.
 - Any key personnel will need to be available for the relevant parts of the audit. They can either dial in separately or from the same point as other personnel where possible.
 - Leadership individuals will need to be available during the leadership part of the audit (if part of the audit plan) as well as the opening and closing meetings.
-

Documentation

- We will review as much of the management system as possible remotely. This can be done via screen share or by sending the information to your Assessor via email / wetransfer / dropbox etc.
 - Be aware of any information security processes you have internally.
 - If there have been changes since your last visit then a visual aid (change font colour) will help to guide through the audit.
 - Be prepared to talk through documents / processes as you would during an on-site audit.
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Site Tours

- For standards and certifications that require a site tour or specific processes to be followed on the “shop floor” where possible you should show the Assessor around using a webcam or video call from a mobile (in a safe manner).
 - If this is not possible due to technology, health and safety or the closure of a location, then this will be followed up on site in a subsequent special audit or at the next audit.**
 - It is also possible, with some prior arrangement to capture relevant images as a recording before the audit – engage with your auditor early to explore the possibility.
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PREPARING FOR A REMOTE AUDIT

- Engage early with management to outline / agree any changes.
 - Understand the level of paper v. electronic based evidence - scanning or other preparation of paper document can save time.
 - Keep on top of document requests / request for information – track it.
 - ‘ad hoc’ at desk interviews may not be possible, identify key personnel and schedule in time.
 - Do you need to consider time zones?
 - Reconsider what is in scope – have working practices affected the activities / functions of the business?
 - Establish what can be audited effectively remotely - in person visits may still be required.
-

PREPARING FOR A REMOTE AUDIT

- Develop a good plan – this will likely need to be more detailed than previously – establish the criteria.
 - Give detail on timings, personnel needed, specific areas to cover, example (or actual) records / evidence to be made available (example on next slide).
 - Give instruction on preparation – more time may be needed for auditees to prepare.
 - Give instruction on the methods and approach to the audit – they may not be welcome at the best of times! – maybe have a ‘dry run’.
 - Minimise distraction – may be more relevant when working at home – set boundaries.
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HOW HAS REMOTE AUDITING CHANGED THINGS?

Theoretically it should not change anything, in many ways it may improve your sample:

PROS	CONS
It thoroughly tests a system	Potential to hide evidence
Communication is critical	You may not speak with as many employees as you may like
More creative questions	Technology failure
You can plan more effectively	
Less stress for client	

USE OF ICT

EFFECTIVE USE OF ICT

- Find a platform that works for you – Teams, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Skype, phone, email, plastic cups and string...
 - A more ‘interactive’ platform is more effective – one that allows for webcam / screen share are particularly effective.
 - Test! Don’t get to the day to find out someone is still on Windows 98 or has no microphone, check connectivity stability – make sure people can present effectively.
 - Generate ‘work instructions’ / training and or update your management system to reflect the change in practice.
 - Will the platform be effective in achieving objectives.
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PREPARING FOR EXTERNAL AUDIT

PREPARING FOR EXTERNAL AUDIT

- Request a plan
- Confirm auditees required
- Confirm timings
- Confirm documentation / evidence that is required
- Confirm communication platform
- Test platform!
- Confirm internet connectivity.



PREPARING FOR EXTERNAL AUDIT

- Confirm information security arrangements
 - Communicate with your team
 - Confirm if site tours / photos / videos are required
 - Confirm arrangements if the visit cannot be completed for whatever reason
 - Be prepared to demonstrate how your system has been reviewed / updated
 - Be prepared to explain the remote internal auditing arrangements.
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INTERNAL AUDITS

What am I auditing?

- Scope – The certification body will provide this, however the scope of the audit requires thought in terms of what you expect to see to verify conformity, for example process based, clause based, procedural adherence.
 - Desktop or live – paperwork will evidence traceability and give a sense of compliance but what's really going on?
 - Checklist or improvement tools – An internal audit is a great opportunity to look deeply into business process and assess areas which may benefit from improvement.
-

PLANNING YOUR AUDITS

- Prepare your client or staff – what is the best method to view the information and communicate?
- Who do you need involved?
 - You will need a member of the leadership team, people from each department, and preferably the freedom to invite whoever you like within the organisation to demonstrate awareness and communication as your evidence.
- In advance of the agreed audit dates send a detailed plan for distribution.





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EXAMPLE

Member/ Role	Judith Hargreaves		
Date	06.07.2020		
Time	Location/Department/Function	Method	Indicative Records Required
09.00	Opening Meeting	Skype Zoom Or <u>Whatsapp</u> Facetime – Please confirm	
09.30	Local Internal and External Issues / Risks and Opportunities	Document Transmittal by email.	SWOT / PESTLE / Risk and Opportunity Analysis Internal and External Issues List Relevant Procedures Compliance Obligations Register Documented Statement of Scope Management Manual and Procedures
10.00	Interviews: Site Leader; Management legally responsible for H&S; Personnel responsible for monitoring workers health; Risk and Strategy	Interview / Discussion	None
11.00	Performance Evaluation / Improvement processes: Internal Audit, Non-Conformances,	Document Transmittal by email.	Internal Audit Plan and Records Management Review Minutes Non Conformity Records Improvements Log
12.30	Planning Processes: Objectives	Document Transmittal by email.	Risk Assessments / <u>SSoW</u> Management review

13.30	Lunch		
14.00	Operations – Manufacture; Goods in	Video Footage to be Provided / Streamed is possible.	Sales documentation, items required to be purchased,

APPROACH

- Ensure everybody knows their role for the day and availability
- Test the communication methods e.g. TEAMS, Zoom, Skype
- Make sure all required know how to use the platform (**including the internal auditor!**)
- Prepare the buy from the company, this is one of the MOST useful tools in the ISO standard, and sometimes a great tool to assess how to make peoples jobs easier!



THE AUDIT ITSELF

The words/phrase “**documented information**” appears 59 times in the ISO 9001:2015 Standard and this includes the prelude.

We as auditors need to ensure that we can meet the Standard requirements by collecting and assessing this evidence – of course not everything needs to be documented.

Importantly, from experience; it is an exceptionally tiring day for all being kept on screen for 8 hours, and then add 4 – 5 hours on to write your report.

KEEP IT SIMPLE, EFFECTIVE, AND ENJOY IT!

This has been the part of the Standard that has foxed people whilst auditing remotely.

Lets keep it simple! Hopefully your prior planning has paid off and we have arranged a virtual tour, ensuring the person with the mobile phone, camera or even drone is safe and social distancing can be maintained.

The level of documentation will be industry and scope dependent, and the aim is to ensure a process exists so people know what they are conforming to and standardisation can be achieved, the company determines the level of information to be documented.





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OPERATIONS

- Can we demonstrate that a process is in place and users know what it is – can we see a live example?
 - What is the order process which we adhere to, can we see examples of compliance at random? If the process is online, it may be best to screenshare so you can select the orders at random and document enquiry, quote, order process. Alternatively you can pick live jobs on the tour.
 - We can trace purchases of materials required and review approved supplier method all over screen share. Similarly we can pick stock off the shelf and follow back.
 - We can then follow this process live – if we have done the paperwork review first.
 - Design processes must have documented information and these can be reviewed over screen share, email or photographs.
 - Ostensibly we are expecting to see evidence of orders all of the way through with a fully traceable system and controlled process.
-

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

This is often the forgotten part of the Standard which can be difficult to evidence:

- Documented information is required to show the effectiveness of the QMS, what is required to be monitored and how – this can be emailed over.
- Management review is required to have documented information – this can be emailed over and reviewed during leadership in conversation.
- Internal audits need to be robust to ensure you can evidence a full system audit and contain objective evidence.
- Non-conformances can also be emailed over.



WHAT TO TAKE AWAY

- Make your life easier, if documents can be emailed over (we now have a quick reference with these slides), request the documents and give yourself time to review them so that you have a bank of informed questions and a basic overview of how the system SHOULD work.
 - Let's not lose the art of conversation! On review of documents we have an opportunity to engage fully with the company, we will have seen if there have been issues and how they have been dealt with, and we will have a better chance of verifying conformity and adding value through opportunities.
 - **Don't panic!** The external auditor has the responsibility of managing audit day and ensuring it goes smoothly and pleasantly on the day. The internal auditor has the opportunity to conduct the audit in a relaxed timeframe and get used to the new way of doing things.
 - Be aware of secure transmittal of information, confidentiality, GDPR and permission to take screen shots if this is a method of evidence collection you wish to use.
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Q&A





COVID-19 SUPPORTIVE TOOLS AND RESOURCES

How can we support you work/return to work safely?

PHASE 1

Free supportive tools



Return To Work Safely Guide



Remote Auditing Guide



ISO 22301 Implementation Guide

Email marketing@nqa.com to get a copy for free

PHASE 2

Low cost virtual training



NQA Risk Assessment Training Returning To Work Post COVID-19 Lockdown



NQA Remote Internal Audit Training

Book online at www.nqa.com/training or call 0800 052 2424 (option 3)

PHASE 3

Get COVID SECURE



COVID SECURE Guideline Verification

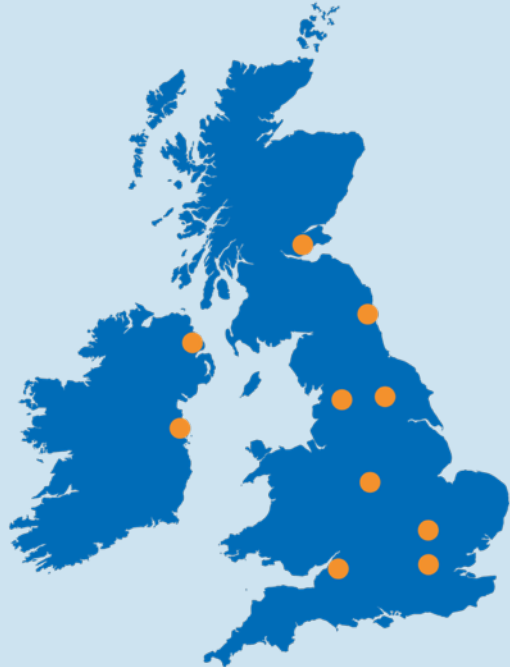


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