



Knowledge to lead

## General Guidelines for Quality Assurance

This toolkit aims to give you a general idea of what steps need to be taken for successful Quality Assurance. However, it is highly recommended to consult Quality Assurance experts when you are planning to undertake such a complex endeavor.

### The PDSA model

The PDSA model, also known as the Shewhart cycle is the most popular tool used to determine quality assurance.

Each letter represents a step in the quality assurance process:

**Plan:** Setting up clear, appropriate and measurable goals and objectives in terms of policies, procedures, tasks and human resources. When possible, start on a small scale to test possible effects.

**Do:** Implement the established procedures to ensure the achievement of goals and objectives.

**Study:** Monitor and evaluate the implemented process by checking the results against the predefined objectives

**Act:** Implement actions based on the evaluation results and if the results call for changes, apply them.

This is an iterative process which needs to be repeated throughout the life-cycle of a product or service.

### Developing a Quality Assurance Plan

#### Step by Step

- **Form a team:** you need a number of key professionals from different departments to work together with the quality monitoring department to develop the plan.
- **Set the objective:** this contains expected project-results, quality goals, etc.
- **Determine all the required processes:** Use different methods, tools, techniques and previous experience to anticipate potential problems that might occur during the project which might affect its performance.



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- **Plan quality control activities:** the plan should explain clearly and in detail all kinds of investigations and testing that should be conducted at the different stages of the project. The plan should also contain the frequency and dates of these inspections. Make sure that the plan contains the quality standards to be followed and the criteria for the selection of samples.
- **Plan for the resources required:** this list should contain all the equipment necessary during the process.
- **Submit for feedback and approval:** discuss the plan with management and concerned personnel. The final plan has to be released to all key personnel and its implementation should be continuously monitored.

## Implementation (the three-stage process)

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There are different approaches to Quality Assurance, but in general they follow this three-stage process

1. Self-assessment
2. External review
3. Decision-making and reporting the outcome

## Guiding principles

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- "Fit for purpose": the product or service should be aligned with the intended purpose
- "Right first time": mistakes should be eliminated
- Institution wide thinking
- Involvement of all the staff in both assessment and improvement
- Self-assessors should look beyond self
- Train staff members to be able to perform the needed tasks in QA
- Be objective



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