

Technical Bulletin: Environmental Management Systems (EMS) - ISO 14001:2026

07 May 2026

Introduction

This technical bulletin is applicable to all Environmental Management System (EMS) Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs).

Following the publication of the ISO 14001:2026 international standard, this bulletin has been produced to update CABs and other relevant stakeholders on the UKAS assessment process and overall timelines for transitioning to the revised standard.

Compared with the previous version of the EMS standard (ISO 14001:2015), the main changes in the revised edition include:

- Updating of environmental concepts
- Linking of clauses to improve clarity and traceability
- New or strengthened requirements (structural changes)
- Greater emphasis on evidence and documentation availability
- Strengthening control of external providers
- Clarifications for some requirements that are maintained from the current version

The new version introduces updated terminology, refined content and a stronger focus on environmental performance while retaining the high-level structure informed by core Appendix SL. Revisions have been made to many clauses, as well as Annex A of the standard. Several new clauses and sub-clauses have been introduced due to the relocation of text within the Standard, the subdivision of clauses, or the addition of a requirement.

Revisions to the Standard are mostly minor compared to previous revisions, but the implications will require careful consideration. A high-level summary of the changes is provided in [Appendix A](#) of this bulletin.

UKAS transition plan

To progress the transition in a timely manner, UKAS accredited CABs are required to submit a **self-declaration** ([Appendix B](#)), supported by a gap analysis and clear evidence of the implementation of the revised requirements. UKAS is now accepting submissions following the publication of the revised standard. The transition deadline for CABs is **30th April 2027**.

The UKAS transition assessment will include a combination of desktop and remote assessments to ensure all information required to support a clear recommendation is obtained, and feedback is provided to the CAB. The assessment will be conducted by an authorised UKAS Technical Assessor, in line with the UKAS gap analysis document.

Two transition decision tranches are scheduled. The first will be completed for CABs that are ready to transition at the end of October 2026, with decisions being completed by 30th November 2026. The second tranche of decisions will be completed on a first-come, first-served basis from 1st December 2026 until the transition deadline.

Where evidence submitted by a CAB is insufficient to confirm full implementation of the revised requirements, including authorisation of a sufficient number of personnel for certification activity to the revised standard, mandatory improvement actions may be raised and must be addressed in line with UKAS procedures.

CABs will have until **30th April 2029** to transition their certified customers, and no new applications to the current version shall be accepted after 18 months of the date of publication of the revised standard. CABs are reminded that certification to ISO 14001:2026 shall only be issued under accreditation following a positive UKAS accreditation decision. Any certification issued prior to this shall be considered unaccredited and managed in line with [UKAS TPS 65](#) and [IAF PR7](#) requirements.

NB. In the unlikely event that any part of the UKAS transition plan materially conflicts with the anticipated publication of the Global ACI mandatory document for the ISO 14001:2026 transition, the UKAS transition plan will be updated, and a further communication will be issued to the affected CABs.

UKAS assessment effort

Given the limited nature of changes expected in ISO 14001:2026, the effort required for transition assessment is estimated as follows:

- **Technical Assessor:**
 - 0.25 days office (preparation and reporting)
 - Minimum 0.5 days desktop assessment of evidence submitted; this may be increased depending on CB size, complexity and volume of documentation submitted
- **Assessment Manager:**
 - Minimum of 0.5 office days for planning, reviewing provided information, updating assessment schedules/programmes, and completing required actions for the independent decision-making process (it is anticipated that cabs will be increased to anything up to 1 day depending on size and complexity of CAB)
- **Total effort proposed (minimum):**
 - 1.50 days

NB. Any issues raised by UKAS may be addressed by Mandatory Improvement Actions (MIAs) via the Assessment Portal. If significant concerns are raised, additional assessment activity may be recommended, and the CAB will be notified. The normal 1-month deadline will be provided, and all MIAs will be required to be satisfactorily addressed by the CAB within the transition period.

Transition timeline

Date	Milestone / Activity
15 April 2026	Publication of ISO 14001:2026 and date from which UKAS is accepting self-declarations and evidence of implementation from CABs
04 May 2026	UKAS ready to start receiving applications and begin transition assessments
30 November 2026	1 st tranche of transition decisions will be completed by UKAS for CABs that have submitted complete and sufficient evidence of implementation to UKAS by the end of October 2026
01 December 2026	The second and final tranche of transition decisions begins on a first-come, first-served basis until the transition deadline
31 October 2027	CABs to stop all new certifications to the previous version of the standard
30 April 2027	All UKAS transition decisions to be completed
30 April 2029	CABs to transition all certified customers to the revised standard

As with any transition, failure to meet any defined milestones and to successfully complete the transition by the deadlines may put accreditation in the relevant scope at risk.

Should you require any clarification on the above, please contact your UKAS Assessment Manager in the first instance. In the absence of your UKAS Assessment Manager, one of the following may be able to assist:

- Richard McFarlane: Head of Technical - richard.mcfarlane@ukas.com
- Adam Ward: Accreditation Specialist - adam.ward@ukas.com
- Mark Webster: EMS Technical Focus Person - mark.webster@ukas.com
- Leanie du Toit: Director of Corporate, Certification & Verification - leanie.dutoit@ukas.com

Links to appendices

- [Appendix A - UKAS Gap Analysis Summary Document](#)
- [Appendix B - Declaration by Accredited Conformity Assessment Body \(CAB\)](#)