

IAASB GUIDE SERIES

Applying the IAASB's Quality Management Standards to AI-Enabled Technological Tools

Introduction to the Guide Series

1. Purpose and How to Use This Guide

Purpose, Status and Audience

1. The guide series is non-authoritative material intended to support the consistent and effective application of International Standard on Quality Management 1¹ and International Standard on Auditing 220 (Revised).² The guide series addresses technological tools enabled by artificial intelligence (AI-enabled technological tools). Technological tools,³ in the context of the IAASB's quality management and engagement standards, are a subset of technological resources used directly by engagement teams to in the performance of audit and other assurance engagements (collectively engagements). They facilitate the design or performance of engagement procedures in obtaining evidence.
2. The guides do not create ~~new requirements, amend the standards~~ or establish a separate AI governance framework. ~~In addition, they~~They do not amend or override the IAASB quality management and engagement standards, the text of which alone is authoritative. Reading the guides is not a substitute for reading the relevant standards; the guides are not intended to be exhaustive and reference should always be made to the IAASB standards. Terms described in the glossary in Appendix 2 of Guide 1 are shown in teal.
3. The guide series is intended ~~for a broad~~primarily for those who apply ISQM 1 and ISA 220 (Revised) and the audit oversight authorities that oversee their application. It is also intended for a broader range of stakeholders with an interest in the quality management implications of AI-enabled technological tools used in ~~audit and other assurance engagements, referred to collectively as~~ engagements. It is relevant to:

¹ International Standard on Quality Management (ISQM) 1, *Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Statements, or Other Assurance or Related Services Engagements*.

² International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 220 (Revised), *Quality Management for an Audit of Financial Statements*.

³ At the time the Introduction to the Guide Series and Guide 1 ~~was~~were approved by the IAASB, proposed conforming and consequential amendments to ISQM 1 and the ISAs were on exposure. They arose from concurrent proposed revisions to ISA 330, The Auditor's Responses to Assessed Risks, ISA 500, Audit Evidence, and ISA 520, Analytical Procedures. Paragraph A99A104 of ISQM 1 identifies technological resources used directly by engagement teams in the performance of engagements as one category of technological resources. Proposed paragraph A99A in the exposure draft would clarify that these include "technological tools" that facilitate the design or performance of engagement procedures in obtaining evidence. Accordingly, AI-enabled technological tools within the scope of this guide series are a subset of technological tools, which are themselves a subset of technological resources. The proposals would also replace references in the ISAs to "automated tools and techniques" with "technological tools."

- ~~F~~irm personnel responsible for the design, implementation and operation of the system of quality management (SOQM), including related methodology, technology, risk management and ~~enablement~~ activities;
 - ~~e~~Engagement partners and engagement teams; ~~regulators and oversight bodies; professional accountancy organizations and~~
 - ~~Regulators, including audit oversight authorities and securities regulators;~~
 - ~~Jurisdictional auditing~~ standard setters; ~~and academics~~
 - ~~Professional accountancy organizations;~~
 - ~~Service providers that develop or provide AI-enabled technological tools, or elements of them, for use by firms;~~
 - ~~Those charged with governance of entities subject to audit and other assurance engagements, including audit committee members;~~
 - ~~Investors, analysts and other users of entities' external reporting; and~~
 - ~~Academics~~ and researchers.
4. References in the guide series to ISA 220 (Revised) are directly relevant to audits of financial statements. The engagement-level guidance is therefore framed in the context of an audit. The engagement-level quality management requirements in the IAASB's other assurance standards are largely based on ISA 220 (Revised). For other assurance engagements, practitioners apply the relevant engagement-level quality management requirements in those standards and may adapt the guidance in the guide series as appropriate by applying the quality management principles on which it is based.
5. ~~This~~The guide series recognizes that firms may structure their technology, governance, workflows and controls in different ways. Firms apply professional judgment in designing, implementing and operating their SOQMs in light of the nature and circumstances of the firm and the engagements it performs.⁴

~~2. Scope and Why AI-Enabled Technological Tools Warrant Focused Guidance~~

6. The IAASB recognizes the potential of technology to enhance audit and assurance quality. The IAASB is committed to facilitating and, where appropriate, encouraging the appropriate use of technology by practitioners in their engagements.⁵

~~2.2 Why Focused Guidance Is Needed~~

- ~~6.7. When appropriately obtained or developed, implemented, maintained and used,~~The IAASB believes that AI-enabled technological tools offer significant opportunities to support and can enhance engagement quality.~~They when firms and practitioners manage their use appropriately in accordance~~

⁴ ISQM 1, paragraph 21.

⁵ Refer specifically to the Technology Position Statement in Component 1 of the IAASB's Technology Position (September 2024). The Technology Position also commits the IAASB to striking an appropriate balance when describing the opportunities and risks associated with technology, and emphasizes the importance of sound quality management practices by firms and practitioners.

with the IAASB's quality management standards. For example, they may help engagement teams analyze larger or more complex bodies of information, identify patterns or exceptions, interpret unstructured information, and perform procedures with greater accuracy, ~~speed—of consistency~~ consistency or efficiency. The guide series is intended to support that outcome.

- 7-8. ~~Technological tools have long been used in engagements, and many behave in a transparent and deterministic way. However, AI-enabled technological tools may exhibit characteristics⁶ that may give rise to particular quality management challenges. Four characteristics of these tools that may be particularly significant are: such as opacity, probabilistic behavior, adaptivity and autonomy—, which can give rise to practical challenges (see Section 4.2 of Guide 1) and questions about how to apply the principles in ISQM 1 and ISA 220 (Revised). For example, questions emerged about what testing is sufficient before a firm approves an AI-enabled technological tool for use, how to monitor the tool after deployment and how to evaluate its outputs or actions on engagements.~~
9. The IAASB explored these questions through information gathering in the second half of 2025, including eight roundtables held around the world. Stakeholders generally did not see these questions as arising from deficiencies in the IAASB's quality management standards. Rather, they described practical challenges in applying the principles in those standards consistently and effectively to AI-enabled technological tools, across different firm structures, network arrangements and levels of technological maturity.
10. This feedback indicates that the objectives of quality management do not change because a tool is enabled by AI. What may change is how the tool behaves, what could go wrong as a result and the information available to evaluate the tool and its outputs. These may, in turn, affect the nature and extent of the responses to quality risks (see Section 4.4 of Guide 1), such as testing before deployment, human involvement in its use and monitoring afterward.
11. In December 2025, the IAASB decided that non-authoritative guidance, rather than new or amended standards, was the most appropriate response at this stage. Guidance can be developed and updated more quickly than a standard, and it can remain closely tied to the existing principles in ISQM 1 and ISA 220 (Revised) while the underlying technology continues to evolve.
12. By remaining grounded in the standards and relevant to current practice, the guide series aims to promote a common understanding among firms and audit oversight authorities across jurisdictions about how those standards are applied, which is in the public interest.

6. Scalability and Proportionality Across the Guide Series

8-13. Like ISQM 1, the guide series is intended to support scalable and proportionate quality management and to be relevant to firms of different sizes, structures and levels of technological maturity. It does not suggest or specify a single approach to managing ~~the~~ quality ~~of~~when AI-enabled technological tools are used.

9-14. The quality objectives specified in ISQM 1 and the underlying quality management principles apply to all firms, but ~~the way in which a firm applies those principles, including~~ the nature, timing, extent,

⁶ The International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA) has identified certain of these characteristics in its staff publication, [Emerging Technologies: A Characteristics-Based Approach to Ethical Considerations for Professional Accountants](#) (July 2026). The [guidance publication](#) considers, on a non-exhaustive basis, how such characteristics may give rise to circumstances that create or amplify threats to compliance with the fundamental principles.

formality and complexity of ~~its~~ a firm's processes and responses, to quality risks will vary according to the nature and circumstances of the firm and the engagements it performs. ~~The nature and extent of the firm's work will depend on the relevant circumstances and the quality risks identified and assessed, including the reasons for those assessments. The considerations outlined in Section 5.2 will vary in relevance and relative importance depending on the circumstances.~~ Firm size may influence those circumstances, but is not, by itself, determinative.

~~10. For example, a less complex firm may use a well-defined tool obtained from a service provider, assign several responsibilities to one appropriately qualified individual, use external expertise when needed, restrict functionality or information, and use less formal processes and documentation where appropriate. A firm with more complex circumstances may develop or materially configure relevant elements of multiple tools, distribute responsibilities among several functions, and use more formal technical, governance, testing, monitoring and communication processes. Both apply the same quality management principles, but the manner in which they do so may differ.~~

~~14.15.~~ Throughout the guide series, the explanations, examples and illustrations are intended to demonstrate how the quality management standards may be applied in different circumstances. ~~A~~ Using an AI-enabled technological tool does not, by itself, mean that a firm ~~is not expected~~ needs to replicate the governance structures, technical resources, testing processes or other arrangements of a ~~larger or more firm whose use of such tools is more extensive or~~ complex firm ~~merely because it uses an AI-enabled technological tool~~. Conversely, the scale or complexity of a firm's use of AI-enabled technological tools may call for more specialized, formal or extensive processes and responses.

~~16. Factors that may affect the complexity of a firm's circumstances include:~~

- ~~• The nature and number of AI-enabled technological tools it uses;~~
- ~~• The intended uses or categories of use for those tools;~~
- ~~• How relevant elements of those tools are developed, provided or controlled; and~~
- ~~• Whether those tools are connected to other systems or tools, such as the firm's engagement software or document repositories.~~

~~Other matters may also be relevant, including what the firm identifies when applying the risk assessment considerations in Section 4.2 of Guide 1.~~

3. How the Guide Series Is Organized: ~~The Quality Management Life Cycle~~

~~12.17.~~ **Guide 1** provides the common conceptual foundation ~~for, including the glossary in its Appendix 2, which applies across~~ the guide series. ~~It explains the scope of the series; why AI-enabled technological tools may warrant focused quality management guidance; how firm-level quality management under ISQM 1 and engagement-level quality management under ISA 220 (Revised) operate together; and how the firm's risk assessment process applies. It also introduces the common concepts and terminology⁴ used throughout the series and the quality management life cycle that provides the navigation structure for Guides 2 to 4. Guides 2 to 4 apply this common conceptual~~ that foundation in specific contexts across the quality management life cycle (see **Section 3 of Guide 1**).

⁴-Refer to **Appendix 1** for the glossary of terms used throughout the guide series, including terms that are defined or described specifically for purposes of the guides.

Guide 2 addresses firm-level quality management before **deployment**, focusing on pre-deployment design, evaluation and **enablement**, including design and configuration considerations when the firm or, when relevant, its network controls those activities. **Guide 3** addresses engagement-level use and oversight. **Guide 4** addresses post-deployment monitoring, change, revalidation, remediation and decommissioning. The figure below illustrates how the guides relate to one another.

