

# Halderstone



Training module

# Auditing Operational Control

Assess whether operational controls and process interactions work reliably in day-to-day practice



# Do operational controls and process handovers work in practice or only on paper?

## Overview

Operational controls translate management system requirements into day-to-day work. In practice, documented procedures and process descriptions often appear complete while real operation reveals gaps: unclear handovers, rework loops, workarounds, or controls that do not operate consistently under real conditions.

This module develops the capability to audit whether operational controls and process interactions actually function as intended. Participants first review how operational controls and processes are expected to work within management systems and then learn how auditors test control effectiveness, follow operational evidence trails, and detect systemic failure patterns across interfaces, sites, and outsourced activities.



## Target audience

- Aspiring auditors who want to audit management systems following best practices
- Practising management system auditors who want to strengthen their audit knowledge, judgement, and effectiveness

# Is this module for you?

## It is a good fit for you if you...

- audit whether operational controls actually work in day-to-day practice.
- seek to distinguish documented control intent from real operational behaviour.
- want to follow evidence trails across activities, interfaces, and handovers.
- aim to assess end-to-end process flow rather than isolated activities.
- are prepared to judge whether control failures indicate systemic weaknesses.

## It may be less suitable for you if you...

- primarily want to design or optimise operational controls or processes.
- are looking for process modelling, mapping, or improvement facilitation techniques.
- prefer audits limited to documentation review or local procedure compliance.
- do not intend to audit operational control or process interactions as part of a management system.

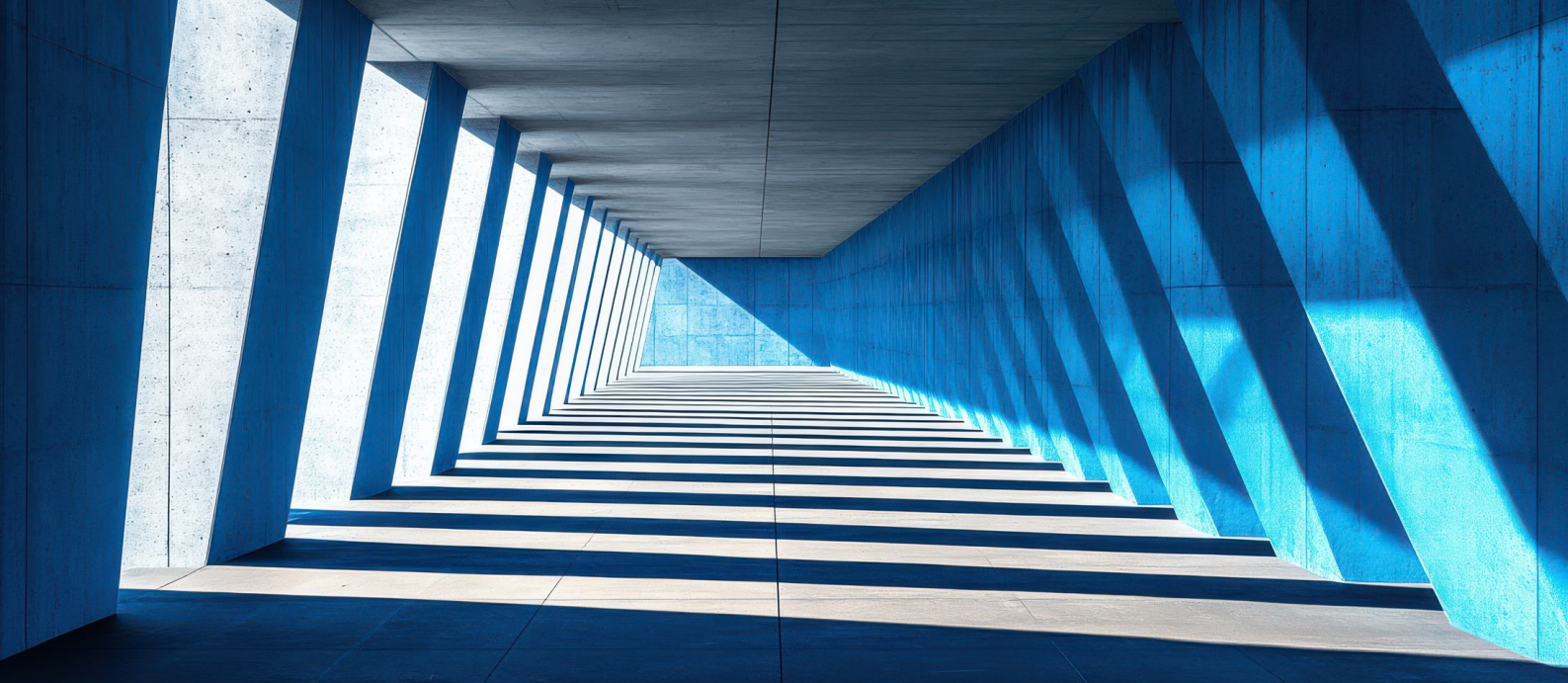
# Learning outcomes

## Key outcomes

- Translate operational control intent into clear and testable audit questions
- Follow operational evidence trails across activities, handovers, and process interfaces
- Judge whether operational controls and process interactions reliably achieve intended outcomes

## Additional capabilities

- Identify common failure patterns such as “paper controls”, ambiguous handovers, and hidden rework loops
- Distinguish isolated deviations from systemic control failures using evidence patterns over time
- Select meaningful sampling targets when auditing operational controls and process flows
- Form defensible audit conclusions on operational control effectiveness



# Agenda

## **Foundations of operational control and process flow in management systems**

How operational controls, process interactions, and handovers translate management system requirements into day-to-day work

## **What effective auditing of operational control looks like**

How auditors judge whether controls function reliably under real operating conditions rather than simply existing in procedures

## **From control intent to testable audit questions**

How to derive audit questions from control intent and anticipated failure modes

## **Following operational evidence trails across process flows**

How to trace transactions, activities, or cases through operational records, system data, and observations across functions and interfaces

## **Testing interfaces, handovers, and responsibility transfer**

How to evaluate acceptance criteria, ownership, timing, and information flow at handover points

## **Detecting rework loops and hidden operational failures**

How to identify repeated corrections, iteration loops, and “hidden factory” work using operational evidence

## **Case-based audit simulation**

Applying the learned concepts, methods, and approaches in a realistic case setting

# Included materials

## Learning materials

- Slide deck
- Participant workbook

## Templates & tools

- Audit interview planning tool
- Documented information checklist
- Sampling tool
- Audit analysis worksheets
- Failure pattern library
- Supporting AI prompt set

## Confirmation

- Confirmation of participation

# Preparation guidance

## Assumed background

This module assumes participants can perform basic audit activities and apply evidence-based judgement.

Helpful background includes:

- General understanding of management systems and organisational structures
- Ability to follow audit trails across operational records, system data, and observations
- Basic familiarity with how organisations translate requirements into operational controls and procedures

## Preparatory modules

### Foundation (depending on background)

Useful if you are new to the underlying concepts

- Audit Principles

### Supporting (optional)

Helpful but not required to participate effectively

- Audit Communication & Interviewing
- Audit Reporting & Follow-up

# Logistics

## Available languages

- English
- German

## Standard delivery options

- Virtual live teaching
- Blended learning (e-learning + live)

## Bespoke delivery options

- On-site delivery at your place
- Content adapted to your organization



# Halderstone

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