

# Process auditing, How do process audits differ from procedure audits?

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## What is a process audit?

A process audit is an examination of results to determine whether the activities, resources and behaviours that cause them are being managed efficiently and effectively. A process audit is not simply following a trail through a department from input to output - this is a transaction audit. Processes generate results therefore for an audit to be a process audit it has to establish whether the results are being generated by an effectively managed process.

## What is an effectively managed process?

An effective process is one that achieves the results that are intended – i.e. the objectives. An effectively managed process is a process in which the activities, resources and behaviours are planned, organized and controlled in a way that the outputs achieve specified objectives as illustrated right:

## How do process audits differ from procedure audits?

As indicated above, process audits focus on results and this is the principal difference between procedures audits that in general focus on tasks.



Procedures Audits	Process Audits
Identifies what tasks are being performed	Identifies what objectives are required to be achieved
Identifies who performs the tasks	Identifies the factors affecting success
Identifies the procedures governing the tasks	Establishes what the process is for achieving the objectives
Establishes whether the procedures are being followed	Verifies that the controls in place are consistent with the success factors
Establishes whether the person is trained to perform the task	Establishes the competences and capabilities required to deliver the process outputs
Verifies that the documentation is current and the equipment is calibrated	Establishes that competence and capability is being assessed effectively
Verifies that the working conditions are suitable	Establishes what results are being achieved
Establishes where the inputs come from and where the outputs go to	Establishes how outputs are being measured
Verifies that the personnel making acceptance decisions are authorised to do so	Verifies the integrity of the results
Verifies maintenance of records	Establishes that performance, efficiency and effectiveness is reviewed
Verifies conformity with ISO 9001	Establishes that improvement in performance, efficiency and effectiveness is pursued