



CSI Technical Guidance

The Difference Between ISO 9001 Certification and Product Certification

Why Consumers, Industry and Regulators Should Know the Difference

Document No.	CTG_001-I1-R0	Issue Date	2 July 2026
Document Title	The Difference Between ISO 9001 Certification and Product Certification	Status	Final
Document Type	CSI Technical Guidance	Classification	Public Technical Guidance
Prepared By	Certification Solutions International Pty Ltd	Approved By	CSI Board of Directors
Review Frequency	24 months	Next Review	July 2028
Controlled Copy	Uncontrolled when printed unless issued through CSI document control	File Reference	CTG Series



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CTG_001 I1-R0_ISO_9001_vs_Product_Certification

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Revision History

Issue	Revision	Date	Description	Approved By
I1	R0	2 July 2026	Initial draft prepared for internal review.	Pending Board approval
I1	R1	2 July 2026	Initial document released for public access.	Sam Mac Kenzie

Distribution and Use

This guidance paper may be used by CSi personnel, clients and interested parties to explain the distinction between management system certification and product certification in Australia and New Zealand. Once approved, it may be issued as public technical guidance.

1. Executive Summary

ISO 9001 certification and product certification are both valuable parts of the conformity assessment system. They are not the same thing. ISO 9001 certification confirms that an organisation has a quality management system that has been assessed against the ISO 9001 requirements. Product certification provides assurance that a specific product, process or service conforms to specified requirements, such as an Australian Standard, New Zealand Standard, joint AS/NZS Standard, building code requirement, scheme rule or regulatory specification.

The distinction matters because consumers, builders, specifiers, regulators and procurement officers may rely on certification statements when making decisions. A statement that a company operates an ISO 9001 certified management system should not be presented in a way that implies the product itself is certified, tested, approved or compliant with a product standard unless separate evidence supports that claim.

In Australia and New Zealand, product compliance may involve Australian Standards, New Zealand Standards, joint AS/NZS Standards, national construction requirements, product certification schemes, testing, inspection and documented technical evidence. For many safety-related building products, management system certification can support consistent production, but it does not replace product conformity assessment.

CSI's position is simple: management system certification should be represented accurately, product certification should be represented accurately, and marketing claims should clearly identify what has been certified, by whom, to what standard, and under what scope.

2. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to provide clear technical guidance on the difference between ISO 9001 certification and product certification for the Australian and New Zealand markets.

This document applies to public claims, technical documentation, certification communication and client education involving products used in building, construction, plumbing, fire protection, glazing, windows, doors, swimming pools and other sectors in which CSI operates.

This document explains:

- what ISO 9001 certification means;
- what product certification means;
- how Australian and New Zealand Standards support product compliance;
- how accreditation supports confidence in certification bodies;
- why misleading or unclear certification claims can create risk;
- how to word certification claims more accurately.

This document does not determine whether any specific company or advertisement breaches law. That assessment requires review of the full representation, evidence held by the company, market context and applicable legal advice.

3. Key Terms

Term	Meaning in this guidance document
Accreditation	Formal recognition that a conformity assessment body is competent to perform specific certification, inspection or testing activities.
Certification	Written assurance by an independent body that a product, service, process or system meets specified requirements.
ISO 9001 Certification	Certification that an organisation's quality management system conforms to ISO 9001.
Product Certification	Certification that a product, process or service conforms to specified product requirements, normally under a product certification scheme.
Product Compliance	Demonstrated conformity of a product with applicable standards, codes, regulatory requirements, specifications or certification scheme rules.
Scope of Certification	The defined activities, sites, products, services, standards and limitations covered by a certificate.

4. Understanding ISO 9001 Certification

ISO 9001 is a quality management system standard. It is used to assess whether an organisation has established and implemented a system for managing quality-related activities. It addresses matters such as leadership, planning, support, operational control, performance evaluation, improvement, document control, nonconformity and corrective action.

An ISO 9001 certificate may provide confidence that an organisation has structured management controls in place. It may also support consistency of processes. However, it is not, by itself, a product certificate and should not be used as if it were evidence that every product produced by the organisation conforms to a specific product standard.

ISO 9001 may support:

- controlled production processes;
- documented procedures and records;
- supplier and purchasing controls;
- inspection and release controls;
- corrective action and continual improvement;
- management oversight.

ISO 9001 does not automatically prove:

- a product has been independently tested;
- a product complies with an Australian or New Zealand product standard;
- a product is certified under ISO/IEC 17065;
- a product is approved by a regulator;
- all product performance claims are substantiated.

5. Understanding Product Certification

Product certification is a different form of conformity assessment. It is directed at the product, process or service and the specified requirements that apply to it. Product certification normally requires defined scheme rules, assessment of technical evidence, testing or inspection as required, evaluation of results, certification decision-making, surveillance and rules for the use of certificates and marks.

Product certification is commonly associated with ISO/IEC 17065, which sets requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services. Product certification is particularly important where products affect safety, structural performance, durability, health, fire performance, water services, energy performance or regulatory compliance.

Question	ISO 9001 Certification	Product Certification
What is assessed?	The organisation's quality management system.	The product, process or service against specified requirements.
Main purpose	Confidence in management controls and consistent processes.	Confidence that the product conforms to stated requirements.
Typical standard for the certification body	ISO/IEC 17021-1 for management system certification bodies.	ISO/IEC 17065 for product certification bodies.
Does it certify the product?	No, not unless the certificate expressly includes product certification under a separate product scheme.	Yes, within the defined scope of the product certification.
Example claim	"Our facility operates an ISO 9001 certified quality management system."	"This product is certified to AS/NZS [standard] under certificate number [number]."

6. Australian and New Zealand Standards and Product Compliance

Australian Standards, New Zealand Standards and joint AS/NZS Standards provide technical requirements, test methods, design criteria, installation criteria and performance benchmarks across many industries. Where a product standard applies, it should be considered separately from an organisation's management system certification.

A product may be manufactured by an ISO 9001 certified organisation and still require separate evidence that the product complies with a relevant Australian or New Zealand product standard. Conversely, a product may comply with a product standard through testing and technical evidence even where the manufacturer does not hold ISO 9001 certification, although an effective quality system may be required by a certification scheme or regulator.

Examples relevant to CSI markets

Sector	Examples of relevant product compliance focus	Why ISO 9001 alone is not enough
Fibreglass swimming pools	AS 1838 for pre-moulded fibre reinforced plastics design and fabrication; AS 1839 for installation.	The product standard addresses design, fabrication and installation requirements that are not proven merely by management system certification.
Windows and doors	AS 2047 and related performance, labelling and test evidence.	A quality system does not by itself prove window structural, water penetration, air infiltration or operating force performance.
Safety glazing	AS/NZS 2208 and other applicable safety glass standards.	Product performance and marking require specific testing, certification and control evidence.
Plumbing products	WaterMark and relevant product specifications or standards.	Regulatory acceptance may require product certification and inclusion in the applicable scheme records.
Fire protection products	Applicable product standards, listing, testing and certification requirements.	Safety-critical performance claims require specific technical evidence and certification controls.

The correct compliance question is not simply whether the manufacturer is ISO 9001 certified. The correct question is: what product requirement applies, what evidence demonstrates conformity, who evaluated the evidence, and what is the scope and limitation of the certification or claim?

7. Accreditation, Certification and Conformity Assessment

Accreditation is a higher-level confidence mechanism. It provides recognition that a certification body, inspection body or testing laboratory is competent to perform defined conformity assessment activities. In Australia and New Zealand, JASANZ is the government-appointed accreditation body for certification and inspection activities in many sectors.

JASANZ is a signatory member of the Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated. Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated commenced full operations on 1 January 2026 and brings together the former international accreditation arrangements of IAF and ILAC into a single global cooperation structure. This supports cross-border confidence in accredited conformity assessment results.

The conformity assessment hierarchy can be described as follows:

Level	Role	Example
1. Global recognition	International cooperation and mutual recognition arrangements.	Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated MRA.
2. Accreditation body	Accredits competent conformity assessment bodies.	JASANZ.
3. Certification body	Certifies management systems or products within a defined scope.	Management system CB or product certification body (CSI).
4. Certified organisation/product	Holds a certificate within a defined scope.	ISO 9001 certified organisation or product certified to an applicable standard.
5. Market claim	Public statement made to consumers, builders,	Claim must match the certificate scope and supporting

	specifiers or regulators.	evidence.
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Accreditation does not remove the obligation to communicate certification accurately. In fact, accredited certification relies on accurate, non-misleading use of certificates and certification marks.

8. Marketing Claims and Consumer Protection

In both Australia and New Zealand, businesses should take care that claims about product quality, performance, testing, certification, approval, endorsement or compliance are accurate and capable of being substantiated. The risk is not limited to statements that are deliberately false. A statement may be problematic if it creates a misleading impression when viewed as a whole.

This is particularly important where technical terms are used in public advertising. Many consumers will not understand the difference between accreditation, certification, ISO 9001, product testing, product approval and product compliance. If marketing material presents ISO 9001 certification beside claims about product strength, durability or compliance, the overall impression may need careful review.

Higher-risk expressions

- “ISO certified product” where the certificate is only an ISO 9001 management system certificate;
- “approved” without identifying the approving body and scope;
- “certified to Australian Standards” without identifying the standard, certificate number and certification body;
- “guaranteed compliant” without evidence and limitation;
- using certification marks or accreditation references outside their permitted scope;
- combining management system certification with product performance claims in a way that implies product certification.

Lower-risk expressions

- “Our manufacturing facility operates an ISO 9001 certified quality management system.”
- “Product compliance is verified separately against applicable Australian and New Zealand Standards.”
- “CSi Certificate number [number] applies to [product/model/scope] certified to [standard/scheme].”
- “Testing was undertaken by an accredited [laboratory] to [test method], report number [number], date [completion date of report].”

9. Case Study - Fibreglass Swimming Pools

Fibreglass swimming pools provide a useful example because there are specific Australian Standards dealing with pre-moulded fibre reinforced plastics swimming pools. A manufacturer may hold ISO 9001 certification for its manufacturing facility. That may be relevant to process control and quality management. However, the existence of an ISO 9001 certificate should not be treated as a substitute for product compliance evidence against the applicable pool standards.

Relevant product compliance focus

- AS 1838:2021 - Swimming pools - Pre-moulded fibre reinforced plastics - Design and fabrication.
- AS 1839:2021 - Swimming pools - Pre-moulded fibre reinforced plastics - Installation.
- Supporting evidence may include technical specifications, design records, material controls, inspection records, test reports, installation requirements and certification scheme requirements where applicable.

A technically accurate statement would separate the management system claim from the product compliance claim. For example:

Example: “Our manufacturing facility operates an ISO 9001 certified quality management system. Product compliance with applicable Australian and New Zealand requirements is addressed separately through design, fabrication, installation and verification controls relevant to the applicable product standards.”

A less clear statement would be one that refers to ISO 9001 certification and then immediately suggests that product strength, durability or compliance is guaranteed without explaining the product standard, evidence base or certification scope.

10. Correct Wording Examples

Claim type	Avoid	Preferred wording
Management system	"Our products are ISO 9001 certified."	"Our organisation/facility operates an ISO 9001 certified quality management system."
Product standard	"Made to Australian/New Zealand Standards."	"This product is (CSi) certified/verified to [standard] under [certificate/report number], within the stated scope."
Accreditation	"JASANZ approved product."	"Certification was issued by a JASANZ-accredited certification body (CSi) for the scope stated on the certificate."
Testing	"Fully tested and approved."	"Tested by accredited [laboratory] to [test method/standard], report number [number], date [date of report completion]."
General quality	"Guaranteed optimum strength and durability."	"Designed and manufactured under documented controls, with product performance supported by [specified evidence]."

11. CSi Position Statement

CSi supports accurate, evidence-based and transparent use of certification claims in Australia and New Zealand. ISO 9001 certification is a valuable management system credential when used correctly. It should not be used as a substitute for product certification, product testing, regulatory approval or product compliance evidence.

Where a product standard applies, claims of conformity should identify the applicable standard, scope, evidence, certification body, certificate number and any limitations. Where accreditation is referenced, the claim should identify the accredited certification activity and should not imply that the accreditation body has certified or approved the product unless that is expressly the case under the applicable scheme.

CSi encourages manufacturers, suppliers and scheme participants to adopt the following principles:

- state exactly what has been certified;
- state the standard, scheme or specification relied upon;
- state who issued the certificate or report;
- avoid implying product certification from management system certification;
- keep evidence available to substantiate product performance and compliance claims;
- ensure certification marks and accreditation references are used only within their permitted scope.

The integrity of accredited conformity assessment depends on the market being able to understand and trust the meaning of certificates, marks, reports and compliance statements. Clear wording protects consumers, protects competent manufacturers and protects the value of accredited certification.

12. References and Further Reading

Reference	Source / document	Relevance
ISO - Certification	https://www.iso.org/certification.html	Defines certification and accreditation and explains the role of certification bodies.
Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated launch notice	https://iaf.nu/en/news/global-accreditation-cooperation-incorporated-launch-unifies-international-accreditation-organisations-and-strengthens-worldwide-trust/	Confirms the commencement of Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated from 1 January 2026.
JASANZ Accreditation - EESS	https://www.eess.gov.au/safety-requirements/certification-general/recognised-external-certification-scheme-recs-certifiers/jasanz-accreditation/	States that JASANZ is the government-appointed body for Australia and New Zealand responsible for accreditation of conformity assessment bodies in certification and

		inspection.
ACCC - False or misleading claims	https://www.accc.gov.au/business/advertising-and-promotions/false-or-misleading-claims	Guidance that product and service claims must be accurate, truthful and based on reasonable grounds.
New Zealand Commerce Commission - Making accurate claims	https://www.comcom.govt.nz/business/dealing-with-typical-situations/making-accurate-claims/	Guidance that claims should be clear, accurate and substantiated.
New Zealand Commerce Commission - Claiming you are something you are not	https://www.comcom.govt.nz/business/dealing-with-typical-situations/advertising-your-product-or-service/claiming-youre-something-youre-not/	Guidance on endorsements, product safety certification and the risk of misleading impressions.
ISO/IEC 17021-1	Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems	Relevant to management system certification bodies.
ISO/IEC 17065	Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services	Relevant to product certification bodies.

Note: Standards are controlled documents. Users should obtain current authorised copies from the relevant standards publisher or scheme owner and confirm current regulatory requirements before relying on them.

Appendix A - Certification Claim Review Checklist

The following checklist may be used when reviewing marketing copy, certificates, website content, product brochures and tender submissions.

No.	Review question	Evidence / comments
1	Does the claim identify what is certified: organisation, management system, product, process or service?	
2	Does the claim identify the applicable standard, scheme or specification?	
3	Does the claim identify the certification body, test laboratory or inspection body where relevant?	
4	Is the certificate or report current and within scope?	
5	Are any accreditation marks or references used according to the permitted rules?	
6	Could an ordinary consumer misunderstand the claim as product certification when it is only ISO 9001 certification?	
7	Are words such as approved, certified, compliant, guaranteed, tested or endorsed supported by evidence?	
8	Are limitations, exclusions or conditions clearly stated?	
9	Would the same claim remain accurate if separated from supporting fine print?	
10	Has technical, legal or certification review been completed before publication?	