Vocabularies and terminologies
Best practices

ISO produces International Standards using XML files. From these files, the terms and definitions in terminologies and vocabularies are uploaded automatically on the Online Browsing Platform (OBP) (www.iso.org/obp) where they can be browsed free of charge by members of the public (but not downloaded).

Here are some tips to help you best prepare your drafts.

1 – Prepare and submit the different languages as separate Word files

Vocabularies and terminologies can no longer be published in electronic files with the different languages displayed in separate aligned columns. Such a display is now offered by the OBP viewing options.

2 – When structuring and styling the document, follow the basic rules listed on page 2

Do not put terms and definitions in an annex.

3 – Prepare indexes (optional)

Indexes are no longer automatically generated. They are not needed as terms can be found on the OBP and a PDF file can be searched. However, indexes can be published if provided by the committee.

4 – Choice of deliverable

A Technical Report is not an appropriate deliverable for a Vocabulary or Terminology because it will be used as a Normative reference.

For more information

The requirements for the drafting and structuring of terminological entries in International Standards are available in ISO 10241-1:2011
See also Clause 16 of ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2

Should you need assistance, please contact your Technical Programme Manager or your Editorial Programme Manager. Find out more about the search capabilities of the OBP here.

Clauses shall be numbered as in other documents, i.e. the Scope has to be numbered

A fixed structure consisting of
1   Scope
2   Normative references
3   Terms and definitions
is required in all documents; there shall be a clause for normative references even if there are no normative references in the document

All vocabularies shall contain one clause with a heading labelled "Terms and definitions" including the introductory text with the references to the ISO and IEC terminological databases

Sub-headings for categories of terms are allowed only if they are sub-divisions of the parent "Terms and definitions" clause

Even if there is only one note to entry in a terminological entry, it shall be numbered

Italics shall be used for cross-referenced terms
Terms from other vocabularies should be, as far as possible, only referred to and not actually repeated or copied

1   Scope

This document defines terms relating to …

2   Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3   Terms and definitions

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:
- IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/
- ISO Online browsing platform: available at http://www.iso.org/obp

3.1   Terms for structure properties
3.1.1
void
enclosed cavity of an undefined shape, containing air or some other gas

Note 1 to entry: In cable insulation, voids may contain water.
…/…

3.5   Terms for optical properties
…/…
3.5.8
colour retention
degree of permanence of a *colour* (3.5.1)