
Technical Documentation Training Course: User Guides, Manuals and Document Control

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Barcelona





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Programme Summary

Technical documentation is the subject of this one-week training course for managers of technical publications, product, quality and operations teams, ending in a documentation control pack for one product line. Equipment and software now reach users faster than anyone can explain them, and unclear manuals cost support teams, auditors and customers time. The programme moves from the user and the task to structure, writing, review and control, working on real manuals from manufacturing and software settings. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on technical documentation to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

A manual is a control as well as a service. When instructions are ambiguous, users misuse products, support queues grow and audits find documents that nobody can show to be current. A common method lets managers decide what must be written, who checks it and how each revision is released and withdrawn, so that documentation becomes a managed asset instead of a late task.

- Support Demand: Falls as user guides answer the tasks that users actually perform.
- Safety and Compliance Exposure: Falls as warnings, reviews and approvals are recorded and traceable.
- Release Cycle Time: Improves as templates and review roles are set before writing begins.

Principles and Evidence Base

- IEC/IEEE 82079-1: Sets principles and general requirements for preparing information for use of products, applied in Sessions 1, 2 and 3.
- ISO 9001 Documented Information Requirements: Define how documents are created, updated and controlled, applied in Session 4.
- Task-Based Information Design Principles: Organise content around what the user must do, applied in Sessions 2 and 3.

Intended Participants

- Heads of technical publications who plan and staff manual production.
- Product and engineering managers who supply technical content for guides.
- Quality and compliance leads who approve and audit controlled documents.
- Operations managers who rely on procedures and operating manuals on site.
- Customer support leads who see the cost of unclear instructions.



Typical settings include equipment manufacturing, software and platform companies, utilities and healthcare technology.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to prioritise documentation needs by user task, risk and cost of error.
2. Participants will be able to construct a user guide structure that follows the tasks users perform.
3. Participants will be able to evaluate draft instructions against a plain language style guide.
4. Participants will be able to diagnose gaps in warnings, terminology and illustrations across a manual.
5. Participants will be able to design a document control procedure with review, approval and revision records.
6. Participants will be able to justify a documentation control pack for one product line.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Technical Documentation Needs and Audience Analysis

Who uses the documentation, and what must they be able to do with it?

- User and Task Analysis
- Information Needs Inventory
- Documentation Risk Register
- IEC/IEEE 82079-1 Requirements Map
- Documentation Plan Template

Day 2: Structure of User Guides and Operating Manuals

How is content organised so that users find the right step quickly?

- Task-Based Topic Design
- Operating Manual Structure Model
- Warning and Caution Hierarchy
- Numbered Step Patterns
- Glossary and Terminology List

Day 3: Clear Writing and Visual Instructions

How is each instruction made unambiguous in words and pictures?

- Plain Language Style Guide
- Procedure Writing Checklist
- Illustration and Callout Standards
- Bilingual Terminology Alignment
- Readability Test on Sample Pages



Day 4: Review, Approval and Document Control

How are manuals checked, released and kept current?

- Technical Review Matrix
- Usability Test with Novice Users
- Document Control Procedure
- Version and Revision Log
- ISO 9001 Documented Information Check

Day 5: Documentation Control Pack for One Product Line

Do the earlier records form one pack that a team can run?

- Applying the Session 1 Documentation Plan Template
- Testing the Session 2 Operating Manual Structure Model
- Reviewing the Session 3 Procedure Writing Checklist
- Checking the Session 4 Document Control Procedure
- Completing the Documentation Control Pack

Methodology

The programme uses a structured exercise method built on a shared case: a product line whose manual has generated support calls and an audit finding. Participants rewrite sections, test them with a colleague who has not seen the product and then adapt each template to their own documents.

- Suggested activity: Rewriting a poor maintenance procedure as numbered steps with warnings.
- Suggested activity: Running a usability test of one page with a novice reader.
- Suggested activity: Tracing one revision through review, approval and release records.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a documentation control pack for one product line. It holds a documentation plan, a user guide outline, a style guide extract, a review matrix and a document control procedure. The pack is used at work to brief authors, set review roles with engineering and quality, and show an auditor how documents are controlled.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is technical documentation training suitable for managers who do not write manuals themselves?

Yes. Technical documentation is taught through templates, reviews and control records. It assumes responsibility for products, procedures or quality, but no training in technical writing or publishing tools.



Which standard does technical documentation training rest on?

Technical documentation training rests on IEC/IEEE 82079-1 for preparing information for use of products, together with the ISO 9001 requirements for documented information and task-based design principles.

How is the pack from technical documentation training used at work?

You use the documentation control pack to brief authors, agree review and approval roles, and show auditors how manuals and user guides are issued and revised.

How does technical documentation differ from general business writing training?

Technical documentation covers instructions, warnings, illustrations and controlled revisions for products and procedures, while general business writing training covers reports, emails and persuasion for readers inside organisations.