SOP STUDIO

SOP Audit-Readiness Checklist

Score your SOP program in 15 minutes.

40-point self-assessment · 7 categories · sopstudio.io

1. Inventory & ownership

- ☐ Every active SOP across the organization is captured in a single inventory — one document, one row, with a current version number.
- ☐ Each SOP has exactly one named owner. Not a team. Not "QA." A person.
- ☐ Every owner can be reached by name and email today (no orphaned SOPs whose owner has left).
- ☐ Each SOP has a stated purpose and a clear scope (what it covers and what it does not).
- ☐ Each SOP is tagged to the business area, function, or process it governs.
- ☐ Retired SOPs are marked retired — not deleted, not moved to an "archive" folder no one looks at.
- ☐ You know the count of active SOPs without having to count them right now.
- ☐ You can produce the inventory as a single export — CSV, table, or report — without rebuilding it from sources.

2. Version control

- ☐ Each SOP shows a current version number visible in the document itself, not just in metadata.
- ☐ Version history is tracked — you can produce a list of every prior version, who changed what, and when.
- ☐ You have one canonical "this is current" location per SOP. Not three.
- ☐ Field copies (printouts, wiki copies, intranet pages) are either eliminated or systematically refreshed when the canonical version changes.
- ☐ When a new version is approved, the old version is automatically archived — not left in place.
- ☐ You can produce evidence of which version was effective on any given past date.

3. Approvals

- ☐ Each SOP has a documented approval chain — who approves what, in what order.
- ☐ The approval chain has no more than two approvers per SOP. (More than two and approvals stall in practice.)
- ☐ Every approved SOP has an approval record showing approver name, role, and date.
- ☐ Approval records are timestamped by a system, not back-filled by hand.
- ☐ You can pull any SOP's approval record in under five minutes.

4. Acknowledgment & adoption

- You know which SOPs require acknowledgment. (Not every SOP does. Be deliberate.)
- Acknowledgment is captured at the moment a person becomes responsible for the SOP — not in a quarterly sweep.
- You can produce a list of who has acknowledged any given SOP, by version, with dates.
- When a new version is published, prior acknowledgments are invalidated and re-collection is triggered automatically.
- You can produce evidence that the team is actually following the SOP (sample checks, supervisor sign-off, system enforcement, KPI), not just acknowledging it.
- You have a defined response when acknowledgment lapses (a person leaves a role, a new hire joins, a version updates).

5. Review cadence

- Each SOP has a stated review cadence (annual, semi-annual, quarterly, on-event).
- The next review date for each SOP is on a calendar with a real date.
- The owner of the SOP receives an automatic alert when the review date approaches.
- When a review happens, the review itself is recorded — date, reviewer, outcome (no change / minor edit / major rewrite / retire).
- Overdue reviews are visible and flagged. You know how many are overdue right now.

6. Policy-to-control mapping

- You know which compliance frameworks apply to your business (SOC 2, ISO 9001, HIPAA, CMMC, etc.).
- For each applicable framework, you have a mapping of which SOPs satisfy which controls.
- The mapping is structured — a table or system, not narrative text in a binder.
- Gaps in the mapping (controls with no SOP, SOPs with no control coverage) are visible without manually cross-referencing.
- When a framework updates (e.g., SOC 2 TSC revision), you can re-map without rebuilding from scratch.

7. Evidence & traceability

- You can produce, for any SOP, a single "evidence packet" containing: current version, approval record, acknowledgment list, last review record, control mapping.
- Producing that packet takes minutes, not days.
- You can produce the same packet for any prior point in time (point-in-time evidence).
- Evidence is exportable in a format an auditor will accept (PDF, signed export, system-generated report) — not a screenshot.
- An auditor asking for proof of a control gets a single response, not a scavenger hunt.

Scoring

Total possible: 40 points.

Score	Status	What to do
35–40	Audit-ready.	Keep what is working. The audit will be a non-event.
28–34	Mostly there.	Two or three specific gaps. List them, name an owner per gap, and close them in the next 30 days.
20–27	Real gaps.	The audit will surface most of these. Triage by risk: ownership and acknowledgment first, evidence second, mapping third.
12–19	Audit will hurt.	Start with inventory and ownership — the rest cannot be fixed without those.
Below 12	At-risk.	Pick one audit-critical area, focus there for 60 days, and repeat.

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