

Annex H (normative)

Verbal forms for the expression of provisions

NOTE Only singular forms are shown.

The verbal forms shown in Table H.1 shall be used to indicate requirements strictly to be followed in order to conform to the document and from which no deviation is permitted.

Table H.1 — Requirement

Verbal form	Equivalent expressions for use in exceptional cases (see 6.6.1.3)
shall	is to is required to it is required that has to only ... is permitted it is necessary
shall not	is not allowed [permitted] [acceptable] [permissible] is required to be not is required that ... be not is not to be
<p>Do not use “must” as an alternative for “shall”. (This will avoid any confusion between the requirements of a document and external statutory obligations.)</p> <p>Do not use “may not” instead of “shall not” to express a prohibition.</p> <p>To express a direct instruction, for example referring to steps to be taken in a test method, use the imperative mood in English.</p> <p>EXAMPLE “Switch on the recorder.”</p>	

The verbal forms shown in Table H.2 shall be used to indicate that among several possibilities one is recommended as particularly suitable, without mentioning or excluding others, or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required, or that (in the negative form) a certain possibility or course of action is deprecated but not prohibited.

Table H.2 — Recommendation

Verbal form	Equivalent expressions for use in exceptional cases (see 6.6.1.3)
should	it is recommended that ought to
should not	it is not recommended that ought not to
In French, do not use “devrait” in this context.	

The verbal forms shown in Table H.3 shall be used to indicate a course of action permissible within the limits of the document.

Table H.3 — Permission

Verbal form	Equivalent expressions for use in exceptional cases (see 6.6.1.3)
may	is permitted is allowed is permissible
need not	it is not required that no ... is required
<p>Do not use "possible" or "impossible" in this context.</p> <p>Do not use "can" instead of "may" in this context.</p> <p>NOTE 1 "May" signifies permission expressed by the document, whereas "can" refers to the ability of a user of the document or to a possibility open to him/her.</p> <p>NOTE 2 The French verb "pouvoir" can indicate both permission and possibility. For clarity, the use of other expressions is advisable if otherwise there is a risk of misunderstanding.</p>	

The verbal forms shown in Table H.4 shall be used for statements of possibility and capability, whether material, physical or causal.

Table H.4 — Possibility and capability

Verbal form	Equivalent expressions for use in exceptional cases (see 6.6.1.3)
can	be able to there is a possibility of it is possible to
cannot	be unable to there is no possibility of it is not possible to
NOTE See Notes 1 and 2 to Table H.3.	