

ITIL® Maturity Model and Self-assessment Service User Guide

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1 Introduction

1.1 TERMINOLOGY

This user guide makes use of certain words and terms specific to the ITIL Maturity Model and Self-assessment Service. Here are a few common terms used in this guide:

- The terms 'process' and 'function' refer to the ITIL processes and functions listed at Appendix A.
- The term 'benchmarking facility' refers to the use of the full self-assessment service to compare process or function maturity values with those of other organizations. (This functionality will become available to subscribers of the full self-assessment service once we have gathered enough data - we estimate that this will be between three and six months after launch.)
- A 'site' is the location or instance of an IT operation for which the maturity of one or more processes or functions is assessed. An organization may have one or more sites within its overall structure, and users of the full self-assessment service will be able to add sites to their organization profile.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT SERVICE

The self-assessment service allows organizations to understand the maturity of their IT service management processes and functions based on the ITIL framework. ITIL defines five levels of maturity:

- Initial
- Repeatable
- Defined
- Managed
- Optimized

A process or function that is completely absent is considered to be at Level 0. Maturity level definitions and characteristics can be found at Appendix B. By answering a set of questions related to a process or function, the self-assessment service will calculate a value for the maturity of that process or function within the range of 0-5. Subscribers to the full self-assessment service will receive a precise maturity level to one even decimal place. Users of the high-level self-assessment service will receive an indicative maturity level to 0.5 of a decimal place.

The service is available in two ways:

- **As a high-level self-assessment** This offers a reduced set of questions for each process and function to provide an indicative maturity score to 0.5 of a decimal place. The high-level self-assessment is a **one-month trial** service.
- **As a full self-assessment** This provides access to more than 2,600 additional questions. The full question set enables users to thoroughly assess and understand the maturity of their processes and functions, gaining a precise maturity score to one even decimal place. In addition, the full self-assessment provides:
 - A detailed breakdown of what your maturity score means, including a description of your maturity level, the characteristics of that maturity level, and how to improve your score
 - The ability to save your results and track your improvement
 - A benchmarking facility so that you can compare your score against other organizations.

The full self-assessment is a paid-for service.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF HOW THE SERVICE WORKS

The self-assessment service calculates the maturity of each process or function from your answers to a set of questions. All questions have two possible responses - 'Yes' or 'No'. Each question corresponds to one of the five levels of maturity. The full self-assessment service comprehensively covers the requirements of a particular process or function at all maturity levels. Therefore, there is not an option to partially meet the requirements, and users should only answer 'Yes' if they can satisfy all the requirements of the statement.

Full self-assessment only

If you answer questions on all the processes and functions associated with one stage of the service lifecycle, the service will also calculate the average maturity of that stage of the lifecycle. It is possible to see both a lifecycle view and a capability view of your results. In addition, the benchmarking facility allows you to compare or benchmark your maturity levels against those of other organizations, based on a range of criteria.

1.4 ORGANIZATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Full self-assessment only

The information provided by an organization is associated with a 'site'. Some organizations may only have a single site supporting the entire organization. Larger organizations may consist of two or more sites. The full self-assessment service allows multiple sites to be associated with the same organization using one login. Where there are multiple sites within an organization, the organization can choose which site or sites to assess via the 'organization profile'. Sites can be assessed separately and at different times. In other words, questionnaires for each site can be completed independently and at any time yet still be associated with each other and recognized as part of the same organization.

1.5 SUPPORT FOR DIFFERENT IT SUPPLIER TYPES

The self-assessment service is equally applicable for the complete range of supplier types. These types include suppliers of IT services to:

- Internal customers where the service is completely insourced, i.e. not dependent on any third-party organization for its processes or functions
- Internal customers where the service is partially dependent on one or more third parties for its processes or functions
- Internal customers where the service is fully outsourced to one or more third parties for its processes or functions
- External customers where the organization is an outsourcer or managed service provider supplying IT services to other organizations.

1.6 HOW WE USE THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE

The information you provide is of two types: your organization demographics and your responses to the questionnaires. This information is described as 'source data'. The maturity values that are calculated and any other numeric data provided by the service are described as 'result data'.

The information you provide will be used in two ways:

- To determine which result data could be used to contribute to the benchmarking facility
- For trend analysis, to contribute to the publication of trend information of interest to our customers and stakeholders. The result data will be used by us to provide the benchmarking facility, but in such a way that no result data can ever be attributed to a specific organization.

2 Getting started

All users have access to 30 questionnaires. Users of the high-level self-assessment service can access a reduced number of questions, whereas subscribers to the full self-assessment service can access the full set of questions – in excess of 4,000. Subscribers to the full self-assessment service can also use the service to assess (and optionally benchmark) the maturity of:

- A single process or function
- All processes and functions within one part of the service lifecycle or within one capability set
- All 26 processes and four functions of the service lifecycle.

2.1 HOW TO USE THE SELF-ASSESSMENT SERVICE

2.1.1 Step 1

Complete the 'organization profile' by providing information about your organization demographics and IT demographics. Once you have submitted this information, go to 'assessments' and you will be able to select the process/function assessments that you wish to complete for your site by selecting the relevant tick boxes.

Full self-assessment only

It's not possible to add additional assessments once you have made your selection, so we recommend that you select all the available assessments at this step. When returning to the service after your first visit, go to the 'organization profile' and select the site you wish to assess. This is where you can also add an additional site.

2.1.2 Step 2

In the 'assessments' area of the service, you can access the questionnaires that you selected at Step 1. To begin an assessment, click on the process or function questionnaire that you wish to complete.

2.1.3 Step 3

The process/function questionnaires are made up of five parts:

- Process/function demographic questions
- Process/function-generic attributes
- Process/function-specific attributes
- Process/function outcomes and outputs
- Interfaces and inputs.

Users of the high-level self-assessment service will have access to a reduced set of questions across these five areas; subscribers to the full self-assessment service will have access to the full set. Complete the first set of questions that relate to the demographics of your organization. This information allows the service to recognize the structure of your organization and how your result data may be used in benchmarks.

For the other pages, select 'Yes' or 'No' against the attribute to indicate whether it exists in your organization. Respond to the attributes as comprehensively as you can and only answer 'Yes' if you can satisfy all the requirements of the statement. You must select 'Yes' or 'No' against all the attributes in order to submit the questionnaire. If you try to submit a questionnaire without having done this, the service will inform you that you must answer all the questions. You can scroll backwards and forwards through the assessment pages and the unanswered attributes will be flagged in pink. Answered attributes will show as blue.

If you wish to leave a questionnaire at any time, then don't forget to click 'Save and finish later' to ensure that your answers are not lost.

Full self-assessment only

Please note that, once you submit your questionnaire, you will be unable to re-take that particular assessment for three calendar months.

2.2 YOUR RESULTS

Once you have submitted your answers to the questionnaire, the service will provide you with a maturity level. Users of the high-level self-assessment service will receive an indicative maturity level to 0.5 of a decimal place.

Full self-assessment only

You will receive a more precise maturity level to one even decimal place. The results page will include information on what your maturity level means, plus guidance on how to improve your maturity level and where to find more information on that process or function in the core publications (AXELOS, 2011).

2.3 BENCHMARKING YOUR RESULTS

Full self-assessment only

Using the result data of organizations that have completed the self-assessment questionnaires, you can benchmark:

- An individual process or function
- A lifecycle stage
- A capability set
- Your overall service management environment.

You can benchmark against:

- Organizations of the same size
- Organizations of the same scale
- Organizations in the same geographical region
- Organizations of the same industry type.

The results of your benchmarking exercise will be shown in a graph.

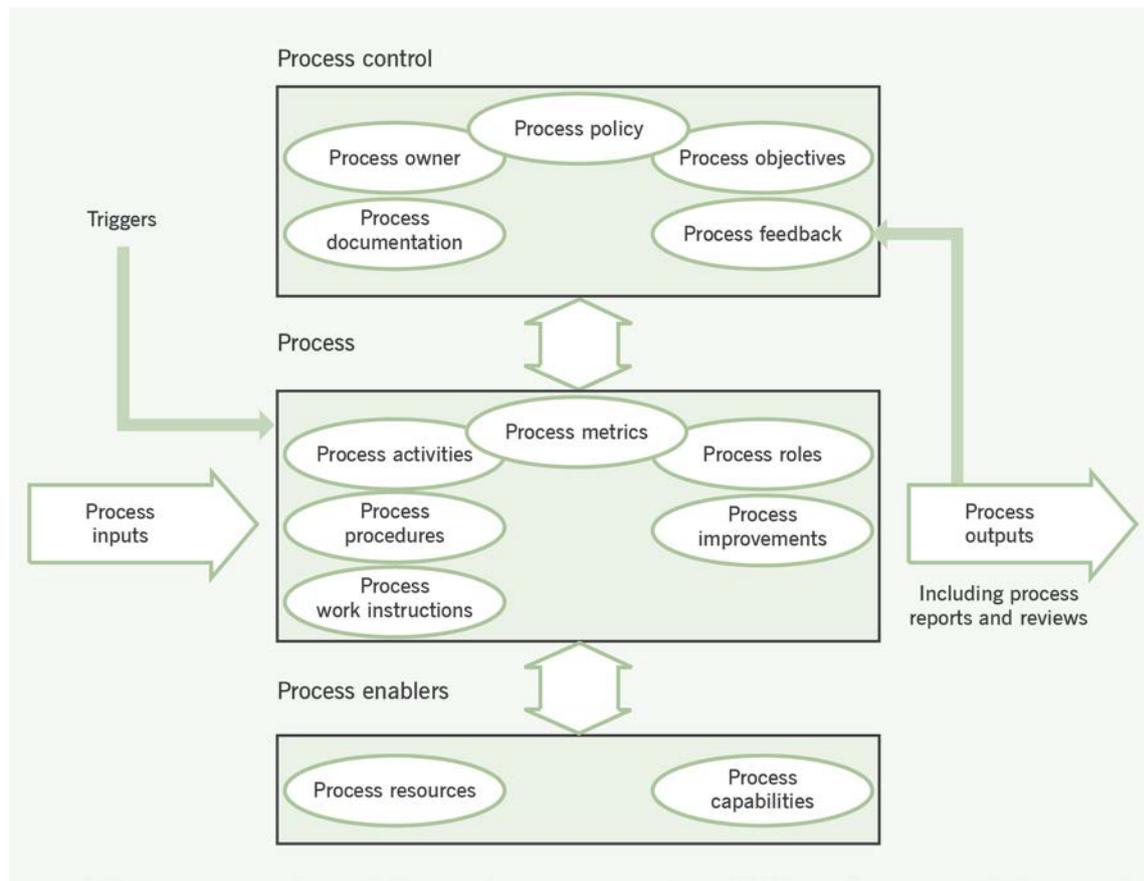


Figure 2.1 Process model from *ITIL Service Strategy*

2.4 TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS

Full self-assessment only

The 'maturity tracker' will contain a list of the process/function questionnaires that you have completed, organized by either lifecycle or capability view. To give you the opportunity to improve your process or function maturity level between assessments, the ITIL Maturity Model and Self-assessment Service allows you to re-take an assessment three calendar months after your previous assessment for a specific process or function. To see a graphical representation of your results, or to view previous assessment results for a particular process or function, select the completed process/function on the maturity tracker page.

3 Information about process and function maturity

What do we mean by 'maturity' and how does the self-assessment service add value? Maturity in ITIL terms is essentially a way of describing the extent to which a process or function exists and is under control. This is important because when an activity such as diagnosing and resolving incidents is subject to a controlled process (incident management), the activity and the outcomes are likely to be more:

- efficient;
- effective;
- consistent;
- reliable;
- predictable,

and are more likely to meet the requirements of the user or customer. The aspects of 'control' are referenced in the top section of Figure 1 and provide a level of governance over the activities in the central section. Every organization that uses information technology has to deal with incidents. Typically the organization provides a function such as a service desk to which users can report incidents and from which they can receive help. The service desk can provide support without having any process for doing so and without any knowledge of IT service management. However, without a defined process for managing incidents, activities such as logging, prioritizing, diagnosing and resolving are likely to take longer and be less effective. By adopting the following process controls, the organization can ensure that process activities are undertaken consistently, efficiently and effectively wherever they are conducted. These process controls include:

- Having a defined policy and agreed objectives
- Appointing an owner accountable for the process across the entire organization
- Providing appropriate procedural documentation
- Communicating awareness of the process to all users and stakeholders.

Higher maturity levels are derived from greater process control and standardization, and an increasing ability to detect and react to non-compliance, and to use this to drive continual improvement. Higher maturity levels therefore typically deliver closer alignment between IT and business processes, and a greater ability to satisfy business objectives.

Full self-assessment only

The full self-assessment service is an accurate and easy-to-use method to help you understand the current maturity of any or all of your processes and functions (separately by site if you wish) and how to attain higher levels of maturity. Implicitly this will lead to greater alignment with business processes and objectives. The benchmarking facility will show you how your maturity compares with other organizations of a similar size, scale, industry type or region.

3.1 THE LIMITATIONS OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

There are two main reasons why organizations and people want to know the maturity value of their processes and functions. The first is to establish a baseline, i.e. Where are we now? The second is to understand the potential for improvement. If the self-assessment generates a maturity value of less than 5, you could say that there is scope for improvement. Likewise in a benchmarking exercise, if the value of your process is less than that of other organizations, you might assume that there is scope for improvement. However, if you have a higher value than other organizations, this does not mean that there is no need to improve. Users of the ITIL Maturity Model and Self-assessment Service need to be aware of its limitations and those of any other self-assessment facility. Critically, a self-assessment cannot answer the following important questions:

- What should the maturity value be for this process in our organization at this point in time?
- What return would we gain by improving the maturity of this process?
- If we should be aiming at a higher maturity value, how do we achieve it?
- Should we improve maturity levels one process at a time or all at once or by groups of processes?

The maturity value generated by the self-assessment service is derived only from the answers provided to the questionnaires and the accuracy of the result is entirely dependent on the quality of the answers to the questions. The answers should reflect the actual approach and practices within the organization - i.e. not how they are documented or should operate but how they are actually performed. Another limitation of self-assessment to consider is that of process relationships. All ITIL processes interface with each other. The extent to which these interfaces operate successfully for any specific organization can only be partially tested in a questionnaire, particularly if an organization assesses only a sub-set of the processes. Process relationships and inter-dependencies are an important aspect of the ITIL framework that can only be partially evaluated in this way. Finally, there will be several perspectives on each process: that of the process owner, the process manager(s), the process practitioners, and the customers and users of the process. Unless all of these roles contribute to the self-assessment exercise and agree the answers to the questions, then there is a risk that the maturity value will reflect only one of those perspectives. The alternative to self-assessment is an assessment provided by an external organization, usually on payment of a fee.

4 Appendix A: Process and function assessments

The ITIL Maturity Model and Self-assessment Service comprises 26 process and four function questionnaires (30 in total), covering the ITIL service lifecycle (see Table A.1).

<i>Service Strategy</i>	<i>Service Design</i>	<i>Service Transition</i>	<i>Service Operation</i>	<i>Continual Service Improvement</i>
Strategy management for IT services	Design coordination	Transition planning and support	Event management	Seven-step improvement process
Service portfolio management	Service catalogue management	Change management	Incident management	
Financial management for IT services	Service level management	Service asset and configuration management	Request fulfilment	
Demand management	Availability management	Release and deployment management	Problem management	
Business relationship management	Capacity management	Service validation and testing	Access management	
	IT service continuity management	Change evaluation	Service desk function	
	Information security management	Knowledge management	Technical management function	
	Supplier management		IT operations management function	
			Application management function	

Table A.1 Processes and functions across the ITIL service lifecycle

5 Appendix B: Maturity level definitions and characteristics

5.1 MATURITY LEVEL DEFINITIONS

The ITIL Maturity Model and Self-assessment Service is based on five levels of maturity, as defined below. These maturity level definitions are aligned with COBIT® and CMMI® definitions.

5.1.1 Level 1

Processes or functions are ad hoc, disorganized or chaotic. There is evidence that the organization has recognized that the issues exist and need to be addressed. There are, however, no standardized procedures or process/function management activity, and the process/function is regarded as of minor importance, with few resources allocated to it within the organization. There are instead ad hoc approaches that tend to be applied on an individual or case-by-case basis. The overall approach to management is disorganized.

5.1.2 Level 2

Processes or functions follow a regular pattern. They have developed to the stage where similar procedures are followed by different people undertaking the same task. Training is informal, there is no communication of standard procedures, and responsibility is left to the individual. There is a high degree of reliance on the knowledge of individuals and therefore errors are likely. In general, activities related to the process or function are uncoordinated, irregular and directed towards process or function efficiency.

5.1.3 Level 3

The process or function has been recognized and procedures have been standardized, documented and communicated through training. The procedures themselves are not sophisticated but are the formalization of existing practices. It is, however, left to the individual to follow these procedures and deviations may occur. The process has a process owner, formal objectives and targets with allocated resources, and is focused on both efficiency and effectiveness. Activities are becoming more proactive and less reactive.

5.1.4 Level 4

The process or function has now been fully recognized and accepted throughout IT. It is service-focused and has objectives and targets that are based on business objectives and goals. It is fully defined, managed and is becoming pre-emptive, with documented and established interfaces and dependencies with other IT processes. Processes and functions are monitored and measured. Procedures are monitored and measured for compliance and action taken where processes or functions appear not to be working effectively. Processes or functions are under constant improvement and demonstrate good practice. Automation and tools are increasingly used to deliver efficient operations.

5.1.5 Level 5

Leading practices are followed and automated. A self-contained continuous process of improvement is established, which has now resulted in a pre-emptive approach. IT is used in an integrated way to automate the workflow, providing tools to improve quality and effectiveness, making the organization quick to adapt. The process or function has strategic objectives and goals aligned with overall strategic business and IT goals. These have now become 'institutionalized' as part of the everyday activity for everyone involved with the process or function.

5.2 MATURITY LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS

Below is a list of the generic characteristics of each maturity level. These characteristics are derived from a variety of sources, including the generic attributes of the ITIL Maturity Model and Self-assessment Service.

5.2.1 Level 0: absence (chaos)

If the process or function is partially present, there is no structure around it, no defined responsibilities and no consistency in its operation.

5.2.2 Level 1: initial (reactive)

- There is little management commitment.
- No process or function governance exists.
- There is no defined vision.
- Activities respond only reactively to appropriate triggers; there is no pro-activity.
- There is no strategic direction; activities are uncoordinated with little or no consistency.
- There are few, if any, documented procedures.
- There is no definition of process or functional roles.
- Performance of the activities varies according to who undertakes them.
- There is little, or no, automation of any activities.
- Few, if any, records are kept of performance.
- There is no formal procedure for making improvements.
- People performing the role receive little training beyond 'on-the-job' learning.
- Performance of the activities is subject to no, or only basic, measures such as volume and failure rate.
- Activities have a technical rather than customer or service focus.
- No stakeholder feedback is gathered or sought.

5.2.3 Level 2: repeatable (active)

- Some management commitment exists.
- The activities are formally resourced.
- Goals and objectives are defined.
- The scope of the process or function and its interfaces with other dependent processes or functions are defined and agreed.
- Procedures exist but may not be fully documented.
- Procedures are usually followed but vary from person to person and team to team.
- People carrying out the activities have the skills, experience, competence and knowledge to perform their role.
- Roles are recognized, even if they are not formally defined.
- Performance is measured and reported to at least internal stakeholders.
- Performance is becoming more consistent but is still variable.

- Some automation is starting to be used to improve efficiency.
- Significant failings are recognized and remedial action taken, although in a somewhat ad hoc way.
- People performing the role receive basic, job-related training when they join, but little, if any, thereafter.
- Some stakeholder feedback is provided and major issues are responded to on an ad hoc basis.
- Improvements are focused on the activities rather than the stakeholder outcomes.

5.2.4 Level 3: defined (proactive)

- Management commitment is visible and evident.
- The activities are appropriately resourced, although occasionally, and in unusual circumstances, may be inadequate.
- There is starting to be a focus on operating proactively, although the majority of work is still reactive.
- Important documents are version-numbered and subject to change control.
- The scope of the process or function and its interfaces with other dependent processes or functions are documented.
- Procedures and work instructions are documented and kept up to date.
- Activities are carried out with a reasonable degree of consistency.
- Outcomes are increasingly predictable and usually meet stakeholder needs.
- Variations between people and teams performing the activities are minimal.
- Roles are formally recognized, defined and assigned.
- Performance is measured using a range of metrics.
- Performance is reported to both internal and external stakeholders.
- At least some of the activities are automated.
- Mistakes and failures to follow procedure are the exception.
- When errors are made, these are often recognized and are starting to be investigated to improve performance and reduce subsequent errors.
- People performing the role receive both initial and some ongoing training.
- Feedback from stakeholders is actively sought and acted on.
- Inter-process relationships and dependencies are recognized.
- Activities are subject to planning and rarely taken on an ad hoc or unplanned basis.
- The process or function is consistently employed throughout the organization.
- People skills are assessed and validated against changing requirements.
- There is a formal method for managing changes to the process or function.
- Routine activities are automated.
- Procedures and activities are tested for compliance, and clear exceptions logged and used as the basis for improvement.
- The internal (technical) and external (customer) focus is balanced.

5.2.5 Level 4: managed (pre-emptive)

- The process or function and the associated activities are robust and rarely fail to perform as planned. The organization has considered what might disrupt services and put in place measures to eliminate these or reduce their impact.
- There is a single process owner responsible for all sites within the organization.
- There is funding to invest and resources available to prevent failures or reduced performance.
- Process documentation is consistent (based on a standard process template) and includes the policy, purpose, objectives, procedures, roles and metrics.
- Documentation is protected from unauthorized change, centrally stored and backed up.
- Activities are performed in a highly consistent way with only rare exceptions.

- Most activities that can be automated are automated.
- Refresher training and updates are given in advance of a procedure or activity changing.
- Inter-process relationships and dependencies are fully recognized and actively embedded.
- There is a clear and documented definition of authority levels for each role.
- Skills matrices or their equivalent are used to validate people's capabilities.
- Changes to procedures rarely fail or have unexpected consequences.
- The focus is more on customer and service outcomes than technical considerations.
- Funds and resources are planned and allocated in plenty of time.
- Performance and activity are continuously measured and monitored.
- Activities are subject to a defined strategy and direction with clear objectives.
- Processes are integrated.
- Toolsets are integrated.
- There is regular measurement and review of process and function effectiveness from the customer perspective.
- Metrics and measurements are used to assess process performance against agreed process targets and objectives.
- Thresholds are established that generate warning alerts if a threshold is reached so that action can be taken before services are affected.
- Process and procedural interfaces and dependencies are recognized, documented and tested for compliance.
- Process activities and responsibilities that span more than one team are subject to operational level agreements.
- Activities are performed seamlessly across functional interfaces both internally and externally.
- Regular process reviews are completed by the process owner and reviewed with stakeholders to validate continued effectiveness.
- Compliance to the process and procedures is regularly checked against documented procedures by independent assessment or audit.
- Warnings, non-compliances and variations are actively used as a source of continual service improvement (CSI).
- Activities are highly consistent and generate predictable outcomes, regardless of who performs them.
- Improvements are identified based on audits and reviews of the process and are recorded in a CSI register.

5.2.6 Level 5: optimized

- All activities are subject to management control, governance and leadership.
- Activities are performed consistently and reliably across all areas of the organization in which they are used.
- Process improvements are actively sought, registered, prioritized and implemented, based on the business value and a business case.
- Plans are based, wherever appropriate, on business and service considerations.
- Metrics and measurements are used to assess the effectiveness and quality of the process outcomes and stakeholders' requirements and expectations.
- Measures, monitoring, reviews, alerts and reporting are part of a coordinated commitment to continual improvement.
- IT planning and activities are integrated with business plans and activities.
- Processes, procedures and functions are regularly audited for efficiency and effectiveness.
- Service governance including measures, roles and procedures span the entire supply chain to include inter-related and inter-dependent internal and third-party relationships.
- Redundant or sub-optimized procedures are identified and removed.
- Improvements are introduced across the entire organization to maintain operational consistency.
- Performance data and stakeholder feedback are retained and analysed for trends and improvement potential.
- There is regular communication between the service provider and its stakeholders to ensure that services and activities remain relevant and effective.

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Figure 2.1 Process model from *ITIL Service Strategy*. Copyright © AXELOS Limited

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