

**Information Technology Service Management —  
Requirements for bodies providing audit and Certification of  
IT Service Management Systems under the APMG  
Certification Scheme**

**Document Reference APMG 15/015**

## Introduction

Certification for the IT service management system (SMS) of an IT service provider organization is one means of providing assurance that the organization has implemented an SMS for the effective delivery of IT services. Requirements for an SMS can originate from a number of sources and this document has been developed to assist with the certification of SMS that fulfil the requirements of the International IT service management standard, ISO/IEC 20000-1:2011.

The criteria for bodies operating audit and certification of management systems are contained in the International Standard, ISO/IEC 17021:2011. If such bodies are to be accredited as complying with ISO/IEC 17021:2011 with the objective of auditing and certifying SMS in accordance with ISO/IEC 20000-1:2011 and the APMG Scheme, some additional requirements to, and guidance for ISO/IEC 17021:2011 are necessary. These are provided by this document.

The text in this document follows the structure of ISO/IEC 17021:2011, and the additional APMG-specific requirements and guidance on the application of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 for SMS certification are identified by the letters "SM".

The term "shall" is used throughout this document to indicate those provisions which, reflecting the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 and ISO/IEC 20000-1:2011, are mandatory. The term "should" is used to indicate those provisions which, although they constitute guidance for the application of the requirements, are expected to be adopted by a certification body.

NOTE: Until December 2010, this Scheme was owned and managed by itSMF. On 1 January 2011, ownership and management transferred to APM Group Ltd (APMG) and the Scheme name was changed appropriately. Version 2 and subsequent versions of this document reflect this change of ownership and name.

## 1 Scope

This document specifies requirements and provides guidance, in addition to the requirements contained within ISO/IEC 17021:2011 for bodies providing audit and certification of SMS within the APMG Scheme. It is primarily intended to support the registration by APMG of certification bodies providing APMG certification against the criteria contained within the ISO/IEC 20000-1:2011 standard.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 17021:2011, *Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems*  
ISO/IEC 20000-1:2011, *Information technology - Service management – Part 1: Specification*  
PD ISO/IEC TR 20000-3:2009 *Information Technology – Service management – Part 3: guidance on scope definition and applicability of ISO/IEC 20000-1*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 17021:2011 and the following apply.

**Certificate:** a document indicating that a client organization's SMS conforms to specified SMS standards and any supplementary documentation required under the Scheme. The certificate is issued by a certification body in accordance with the conditions of its registration by APMG and bearing the APMG Certification Scheme mark

**Certification body:** third party registered with APMG that assesses and certifies the SMS of a client organization with respect to published APMG Scheme requirements, and any supplementary documentation required under the Scheme. Within the APMG Scheme these are frequently referred to as Registered Certification Bodies (RCBs).

**Information Technology (IT):** the use of technology for the storage, communication or processing of information. The technology typically includes computers, telecommunications, applications and other software. The information may include business data, voice, images, video etc. IT is often used to support business processes, through the use of IT services.

**Mark:** legally registered trade mark or otherwise protected symbol which is issued under the rules of a registration by APMG or of a certification body, indicating that adequate confidence in the management system operated by a body has been demonstrated

**Organization;** the entity seeking certification that may be a company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private, that has its own functions and administration and is able to ensure that effective service management is exercised. Such an organization is frequently referred to as a 'Service Provider'.

## **4 Principles**

There are no additional requirements.

## **5 General requirements**

### **5.1 Legal and contractual matters**

#### **5.1.1 Legal responsibility**

There are no additional requirements.

#### **5.1.2 Certification agreement**

There are no additional requirements.

#### **5.1.3 Responsibility for certification decisions**

The decision shall be based upon the findings and certification recommendation of the audit team as provided in their certification audit report and any other relevant information available to the certification body.

## **6 Structural requirements**

There are no additional requirements.

## 7 Resource requirements

### 7.1 Competence of management and personnel

There are no additional requirements.

### 7.2 Personnel involved in the certification activities

**7.2.1** There are no additional requirements.

**7.2.2** There are no additional requirements.

**7.2.3** There are no additional requirements.

**SM 7.2.4:** All technical experts used on audits must have successfully completed the three day *itSMF* accredited ISO/IEC 20000 Consultant training course or the APMG Practitioner equivalent, hold the associated certificate and have two years relevant IT service management experience.

**SM 7.2.5:** The following criteria shall be applied for each auditor in the SMS audit team. The auditor shall have:

- a) at least four years full time practical workplace experience in information technology, of which at least two years in a role or function relating to IT Service Management;
- b) successfully completed a minimum of a five day training programme on the subject of auditing and audit management, two days of which shall have been an *itSMF* accredited ISO/IEC 20000 Auditor training course or the APMG equivalent and hold the associated certificate;
- c) prior to assuming responsibility for performing as an auditor, the candidate should have gained experience in the entire process of assessing an SMS. This experience should have been gained by participation in a minimum of two SMS assessments, including review of documentation and improvement programmes, implementation assessment and audit reporting;
- d) Maintained their own knowledge and skill in auditing SMS.

Auditors performing as lead auditor shall additionally fulfil the following requirements:

1. have acted in the role of audit team leader in at least three SMS audits, under the direction and guidance of an auditor competent as an audit team leader
2. have demonstrated they possess adequate knowledge and attributes to manage the assessment process;

Any variations to these pre-requisite levels shall be documented by the certification body e.g. for personnel already qualified as auditors in a related discipline.

**7.2.6** There are no additional requirements.

**7.2.7** There are no additional requirements.

**7.2.8** There are no additional requirements.

**7.2.9** There are no additional requirements.

**SM 7.2.10:** Auditors shall be able to demonstrate their knowledge and experience, as outlined above, for example through:

- a) recognized SMS-specific qualifications;
- b) registration as an auditor;
- c) approved SMS training courses;
- d) up to date continual professional development records;
- e) practical demonstration through witnessing auditors going through the SMS audit process on real client systems
- f) at least annually recorded personal reviews and feedback

## **8 Information requirements**

### **8.1 Publicly accessible information**

**SM 8.1:** The certification body shall inform APMG of any new certifications or changes in certification status within twenty working days of the decision being taken.

### **8.2 Certification documents**

There are no additional requirements.

### **8.3 Directory of certified clients**

There are no additional requirements.

### **8.4 Reference to certification and use of marks (itSMF)**

**SM 8.4.1:** The APMG Scheme certification mark is a registered trademark. Certification bodies are licensed to use the logo, either in colour or black and white, for the following purposes:

- a) in marketing collateral describing the APMG Certification Scheme and any specific associated service that they offer
- b) on certificates issued to organisations successfully passing an audit

When used in colour, the mark shall be reproduced in the exact colours and font of the issued logo. The mark will be supplied to certification bodies on acceptance of their application to join the Scheme.

The certification body may sub-license organisations, which they have certified under the Scheme, to use the mark subject to the conditions above on their corporate collateral. The certification body will inform such organisations of the permitted uses of the mark when issuing a certificate.

In particular the mark must not be altered or used in a misleading way, for example to imply certification of something which is not certified. No other use of the logo is permitted and APMG will take strong action against any perceived abuse of the mark, whether by a certification body or any other organisation.

The certification body shall exercise proper control over ownership, use and display of its SMS certification marks. If the certification body confers the right to use a mark to indicate certification of an SMS, the certification body shall ensure that the client organization uses the specified mark only as authorized in writing by the certification body.

## **9 Process requirements**

### **9.1 General requirements**

**SM 9.1.1:** A certification body may offer other management system certification linked with SMS certification, or may offer SMS certification only. The SMS audit can be combined with audits of other management systems. This combination is possible provided it can be demonstrated that the audit satisfies all requirements for certification of the SMS. All the elements important to an SMS shall appear clearly, and be readily identifiable, in the audit reports. The quality of the audit shall not be adversely affected by the combination of the audits.

**9.1.2** There are no additional requirements.

**SM 9.1.3:** The following requirements apply to the audit team as a whole.

a) In each of the following areas at least one audit team member shall satisfy the certification body's criteria for taking responsibility within the team:

- 1) managing the team,
- 2) management systems and process applicable to SMS,
- 3) knowledge of SMS processes and their implementation,
- 4) knowledge of SMS effectiveness review and measurement of the processes,
- 5) related and/or relevant SMS standards, industry best practices and procedures,
- 6) knowledge of incident handling methods,
- 7) knowledge of the current technology where service management might be relevant or an issue,
- 8) knowledge of risk management processes and methods.

b) The audit team shall be competent to review all aspects of the service level agreements in the client organization's SMS back to the appropriate elements of the SMS.

c) The audit team shall have appropriate work experience and practical application of the service management processes (this does not mean that an auditor needs a complete range of experience of all areas of service management, but the audit team as whole shall have enough appreciation and experience to cover the SMS scope being audited).

Technical experts with specific knowledge regarding the process and IT service management issues and legislation affecting the client organization, but who do not satisfy all of the above criteria, may be part of the audit team. Technical experts shall work under the supervision of the lead auditor. An audit team may consist of one person provided that the person meets all the criteria set out in a) above.7.3

**SM 9.1.4** Certification bodies shall allow auditors sufficient time to perform the activities related to an assessment. Annex A provides a framework for determining auditor time expected for an effective audit.

**SM 9.1.5:** Multiple site sampling decisions in the area of SMS certification are more complex than the same decisions are for quality management systems. Where a client organization has a number of sites meeting the criteria from a) to c) below, certification bodies may consider using a sample-based approach to multiple-site certification audit:

- a) all sites are operating under the same SMS, which is centrally administered and audited and subject to central management review;
- b) all sites are included within the client organization's internal SMS audit programme;
- c) all sites are included within the client organization's SMS management review programme.

A certification body wishing to use a sample-based approach shall have procedures in place to ensure the following.

- a) The initial contract review identifies, to the greatest extent possible, the difference between sites such that an adequate level of sampling is determined.
- b) A representative number of sites have been sampled by the certification body, taking into account:

- 1) the results of internal audits of head office and the sites,
- 2) the results of management review,
- 3) variations in the size of the sites,
- 4) variations in the business purpose of the sites,
- 5) complexity of the SMS,
- 6) complexity of the service management systems at the different sites,
- 7) variations in working practices,
- 8) variations in activities undertaken,
- 9) any differing legal requirements.

c) A representative sample is selected from all sites within the scope of the client organization's SMS; this selection should be based upon judgmental choice to reflect the factors presented in item c) above as well as a random element.

d) The surveillance programme has been designed in the light of the above requirements and covers all sites of the client organization or within the scope of the SMS certification within a reasonable time.

The audit shall address the client organization's head office activities to ensure that a single SMS applies to all sites and delivers central management at the operational level. The audit shall address all the issues outlined above.

**9.1.6** There are no additional requirements.

**9.1.7** There are no additional requirements.

**9.1.8** There are no additional requirements.

**SM 9.1.9:** The audit plan shall identify any network-assisted auditing techniques that will be utilized during the audit, as appropriate.

NOTE Network assisted auditing techniques may include, for example, teleconferencing, web meeting, interactive web based communications and remote electronic access to the SMS documentation and/or SMS processes. The focus of such techniques should be to enhance audit effectiveness and efficiency, and should support the integrity of the audit process.

**SM 9.1.10:** The certification body may adopt reporting procedures that suit its needs but as a minimum these procedures shall ensure that:

- a) a meeting takes place between the audit team and the client organization's management prior to leaving the premises, at which the audit team provides
  - 1) a written or oral indication regarding the conformity of the client organization's SMS with the particular certification requirements,
  - 2) an opportunity for the client organization to ask questions about the findings and their basis;

The audit report should provide the following information:

- a) an account of the audit including a summary of the document review;
- b) an account of the certification audit of the client organization's implementation of the service management core processes;

**9.1.11** There are no additional requirements.

**9.1.12** There are no additional requirements.

**9.1.13** There are no additional requirements.

**SM 9.1.14:** Those who make the certification decision shall not have participated in the audit.

## **9.2 Initial audit and certification**

### **9.2.1 Application**

**SM 9.2.1:** The certification body shall ensure that the scope and boundaries of the SMS of the client organization are clearly defined in terms of the characteristics of the business and the organization.

Information on scope statements is contained in the document *PD ISO/IEC TR 20000-3:2009 Information Technology – Service management – Part 3*.

ISO/IEC 20000-1:2011 1.2 contains advice on the application of the standard, and 4.5.1 gives explicit requirements for scope definition.

APMG have also published requirements specific to the APMG Scheme in a document titled *Requirements for scope statements*.

## **9.2.2 Application review**

There are no additional requirements.

**9.2.2.1:** There are no additional requirements.

**9.2.2.2:** There are no additional requirements.

**9.2.2.3:** There are no additional requirements.

**SM 9.2.2.4:** The entity, which may be an individual, which takes the decision on granting/withdrawing a certification within the certification body, should incorporate a level of knowledge and experience in all areas which is sufficient to evaluate the audit processes and associated recommendations made by the audit team.

## **9.2.3 Initial certification audit**

There are no additional requirements.

**9.2.3:1** There are no additional requirements.

### **SM 9.2.3.1.1: Integration of SMS documentation with that for other management systems.**

The client organization can combine the documentation for SMS and other management systems (such as quality, information security, health and safety, and environment) as long as the SMS can be clearly identified together with the appropriate interfaces to the other systems.

Note: ITSM organizations and SMS processes can be complex and subsequent to frequent change. In such situations annual audits may not be appropriate and certification bodies should demonstrate they have considered these issues.

## **9.2.4: Initial certification audit conclusions**

There are no additional requirements.

## **9.2.5: Information for granting initial certification**

There are no additional requirements.

**9.2.5.1:** There are no additional requirements.

**9.2.5.2:** The entity which takes the decision on granting certification should not normally overturn a negative recommendation of the audit team. If such a situation does arise, the certification body shall document and justify the basis for the decision to overturn the recommendation.

## **9.3 Surveillance activities**

There are no additional requirements.

## **9.4 Recertification**

There are no additional requirements.

## **9.5 Special audits**

There are no additional requirements.

## **9.6 Suspending, withdrawing or reducing the scope of certification**

**SM 9.6.1:** Any suspensions, withdrawals or reductions of certification or certification scope shall be notified to APMG within twenty working days of the occurrence.



## **10 Management system requirements for certification bodies**

There are no additional requirements.

## Annex A: Audit times based on IAF guidelines

This table provides a framework for determining the amount of auditor time required for conducting an SMS audit of a Service Provider organization, based on the number of employees within the scope of the certification audit.

These figures relate to total on and offsite time. A minimum of 80% of this time should spent on-site

Number of employees in IT	Auditor time required in a certification audit	Annual auditor time required in a surveillance audit
1 - 25	3	1
26 - 45	4	1 or 2
46 - 65	5	2
66 - 85	6	2
86 - 125	7	2 or 3
126 - 175	8	3
176 - 275	9	3
276 - 425	10	3 or 4
426 - 625	11	4
626 - 875	12	4
876 - 1175	13	4 or 5
1176 - 1550	14	5
1551 - 2025	15	5
2026 - 2675	16	5 or 6
2676 - 3450	17	6
3451 - 4350	18	6
4351 - 5450	19	6 or 7
5451 - 6800	20	7
6801 - 8500	21	7
8501 - 10700	22	7 or 8
> 10700	Follow progression above	

**Note:** The number of days within this table relates to both stage 1 and stage 2 audits and assumes that the organization is located within a single site with a normally scoped certification.

**Note:** The auditor time required for a re-certification audit is estimated at 66% of the time required for the initial certification audit.

**Note:** The auditor time for surveillance audits each year is normally 33% of the auditor time required for the initial certification audit.