

ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018

ISO/IEC 20000 is an international standard for establishing and improving IT service management to ensure reliable, business-aligned service delivery.



What it is

ISO/IEC 20000 is an international standard for IT Service Management Systems (ITSMS) that enables organizations to establish, implement, maintain, and continually improve service management processes. This framework focuses on ensuring the quality, reliability, and effective delivery of IT services aligned with business needs, while supporting operational efficiency and risk management.

Developed and published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), ISO/IEC 20000 is used by IT service providers, managed service organizations, and internal IT departments across various industries. The standard covers areas such as service delivery planning, incident and problem management, change control, and continual service improvement, aligning with broader compliance and cybersecurity management practices.

At a glance

PUBLISHER International Organization for Standardization (ISO)	TYPE Standard	VERSION ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018
EFFECTIVE December 2018	DOMAIN IT Governance	FAMILY ISO Management Systems
REGION International	ADOPTION MODEL Certification	IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY High

Source: <https://www.iso.org/standard/70636.html>

Why it matters

- **Strengthen service management governance** Implement systematic processes that improve oversight, accountability, and transparency across all IT service delivery activities.
- **Enhance operational efficiency** Standardize procedures and workflows to reduce errors, eliminate redundancy, and better allocate resources, supporting cost-effective service delivery.
- **Improve incident response readiness** Enable prompt identification, escalation, and resolution of service incidents, minimizing disruptions and maintaining business continuity.
- **Support regulatory and compliance initiatives** Facilitate alignment with industry regulations and other standards through well-documented, auditable service management practices.

How SmartSuite supports ISO/IEC 20000-1

IT Service Management (ITSM) Governance Centralize service policies, SLAs, roles, and service management processes.	Incident and Problem Management Workflows Track incidents, root causes, and resolution activities with full audit trails.	Change and Release Management Manage change requests, approvals, and release activities across IT services.
Service Level and Performance Monitoring Track SLA metrics, service availability, and performance against targets.	Supplier and Service Provider Management Monitor third-party service providers, contracts, and performance obligations.	Service Reporting and Continuous Improvement Provide dashboards showing service quality, trends, and improvement initiatives.

Common framework mappings

- COBIT 2019
- ISO 27001:2022
- ISO 27002:2022
- ISO 27017
- ISO 27701
- ITIL 4
- NIST CSF 2.0

Official resources

ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018 Standard Defines requirements for establishing an IT service management system. iso.org/standard/70636.html	ISO/IEC 20000-2:2019 Guidelines Provides guidance on the application of service management systems. iso.org/standard/69321.html
ISO/IEC 20000-3:2019 Service Providers Guidance Outlines how service providers demonstrate conformity with ISO/IEC 20000-1. iso.org/standard/72067.html	ISO/IEC 20000-5:2013 Exemplar Implementation Plan Describes a sample implementation plan for IT service management systems. iso.org/standard/60004.html

Frequently asked questions

- What is ISO/IEC 20000 used for?**
ISO/IEC 20000 is an international standard designed to help organizations establish, implement, maintain, and continually improve an IT Service Management System (ITSMS). It provides a structured approach to delivering high-quality IT services that align with business needs, improve service reliability, and manage operational risks.
- Is ISO/IEC 20000 certification required or mandatory?**
ISO/IEC 20000 certification is voluntary and not mandatory by law, but many organizations pursue certification to demonstrate best practice IT service management and meet contractual or customer requirements. Certification is achieved through an independent audit by an accredited body.
- Who can apply ISO/IEC 20000, and what is its scope?**
ISO/IEC 20000 is applicable to any organization providing IT services, including internal IT departments, managed service providers, and outsourcing companies. The scope is defined by the organization, covering specific business units, services, or the entire IT function as described in the ITSMS documentation.
- What are the key requirements or artifacts in ISO/IEC 20000?**
Key requirements include documented IT service management policies, service level agreements (SLAs), risk assessments, change management records, incident and problem logs, and continual improvement plans. Organizations must maintain evidence of process implementation and regular performance monitoring.

How do organizations implement ISO/IEC 20000?

Implementation starts with a gap analysis, followed by establishment of policies, roles, documented procedures, and control mechanisms for core ITSM processes such as service delivery, incident management, and change control. Organizations typically use the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) lifecycle to drive continual service improvement and compliance.

How does ISO/IEC 20000 relate to other frameworks like ISO 27001?

ISO/IEC 20000 complements other standards such as ISO 27001 by addressing IT service management, while ISO 27001 focuses on information security. Both can be integrated within an organization's broader governance, risk, and compliance programs for holistic risk and control management.

What are the ongoing compliance requirements for ISO/IEC 20000?

To maintain compliance, organizations must continually monitor and improve IT service processes, conduct regular internal audits, review performance metrics, remediate nonconformities, and sustain required documentation. Periodic external audits are required to retain certification.

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Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/iso-iec-20000-1-it-service-management-system-itsms