SmartSuite

Framework / IT Governance / Other

ITIL 4

ITIL 4 is AXELOS's 2019 IT service management framework, owned by PeopleCert: the service value system, 7 principles, 34 practices; ITIL (Version 5) now follows.



What it is

ITIL 4 is the edition of the ITIL framework for IT service management that AXELOS launched in February 2019 and that PeopleCert has owned since 2021. It is guidance, not a law or a certifiable management-system standard: IT teams and service providers adopt it voluntarily, and individuals earn ITIL 4 certifications. PeopleCert now also publishes ITIL (Version 5), and its ITIL FAQ states that the current plan is to sunset all ITIL 4 certification modules on 31 December 2027, so new programs should plan for Version 5.

ITIL 4 organizes service management around the service value system (SVS): seven guiding principles, governance, the service value chain, 34 management practices and continual improvement, applied across four dimensions (organizations and people, information and technology, partners and suppliers, value streams and processes). The service value chain has six activities: plan, improve, engage, design and transition, obtain/build, and deliver and support. The SVS replaced the lifecycle of ITIL v3.

At a glance

PUBLISHER AXELOS (now part of PeopleCert)	TYPE Framework	VERSION ITIL 4 (ITIL 4 Edition, 2019); succeeded by ITIL (Version 5), with ITIL 4 certification modules planned to sunset 31 December 2027
EFFECTIVE February 2019 (ITIL 4 Foundation launch)	DOMAIN IT Governance	FAMILY Other
REGION United Kingdom	ADOPTION MODEL Voluntary	IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY Medium

Source: peoplecert.org/browse-certifications/it-governance-and-service-management/ITIL-1/itil-4-foundation-2565

Why it matters

- **A shared language for value** The SVS and its guiding principles describe how demand and opportunity become value, so IT, product and business teams discuss services in the same terms.
- **Practice-level guidance** 34 management practices, including incident management, change enablement, problem management and service desk, give teams a named scope for each capability.
- **Flexible adoption** Organizations choose the practices and guidance that fit them, and the framework presents them as principles to adapt, not rules to apply.
- **A recognized qualification path** ITIL 4 Foundation leads to the Managing Professional, Strategic Leader and Practice Manager designations and, at the top, ITIL Master.

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How SmartSuite supports ITIL 4

Practice Catalog

Record the ITIL 4 practices your organization has adopted, with the owner, the four-dimension coverage and the linked policies and procedures.

Incident and Problem Workflows

Run incidents and problems in IT Service Management (ITSM) with routing, ownership, linked records and a history of changes.

Change Enablement Workflow

Capture change requests, approvals and implementation status in one system, linked to the services and assets they affect.

Service Catalog and Requests

Define the services you offer and handle service requests with approvals, owners and due dates.

Asset and Configuration Visibility

Track assets and their relationships in IT Asset Management (ITAM) so incidents and changes reference the right items.

Continual Improvement Register

Log improvement ideas, owners and actions against practices and value chain activities, and report on progress.

Common framework mappings

COBIT 2019 | ISO/IEC 20000-1 | ISO 27001:2022 | ISO 27002:2022

Official resources

AXELOS ITIL 4 Framework

Defines the structure and key components of ITIL 4 for IT service management.

axelos.com/best-practice-solutions/itil

AXELOS ITIL 4 Foundation Guidance

Outlines foundational principles and practices for implementing ITIL 4 in organizations.

peoplecert.org/browse-certifications/it-governance-and-service-management/ITIL-1/itil-4-foundation-2565

AXELOS ITIL 4 Update Information

Provides official updates and revisions to the ITIL 4 framework.

peoplecert.org/browse-certifications/it-governance-and-service-management/ITIL-1

AXELOS ITIL Practices Guidance

Describes detailed implementation guidance for ITIL 4 practices in IT service management.

peoplecert.org/browse-certifications/it-governance-and-service-management/ITIL-1

Frequently asked questions

What is ITIL 4 and who publishes it?

ITIL 4 is the 2019 edition of ITIL, a framework of guidance for IT service management that AXELOS launched in February 2019. PeopleCert, which acquired AXELOS in 2021, now publishes ITIL and its certifications. It is voluntary guidance with an individual qualification scheme, not a regulation or a standard that certifies an organization.

What are the main parts of the ITIL 4 service value system?

The SVS has five components: the seven guiding principles, governance, the service value chain, practices and continual improvement. The service value chain has six activities (plan, improve, engage, design and transition, obtain/build, deliver and support), and the four dimensions apply to every practice.

How many practices does ITIL 4 have?

ITIL 4 describes 34 management practices: 14 general management practices, 17 service management practices and 3 technical management practices. Incident management, change enablement, problem management, service desk and IT asset management are service management practices, and each has an official practice guide from the publisher.

Is ITIL 4 being replaced by ITIL 5?

PeopleCert has introduced ITIL (Version 5) and says it is being released in phases, with ITIL 4 still available in the meantime. Its ITIL FAQ states that the current plan is to sunset all ITIL 4 modules on 31 December 2027, with exam voucher dates to be announced. ITIL 4 certificates remain valid prerequisites for ITIL (Version 5) advanced modules.

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How does ITIL 4 relate to ISO/IEC 20000-1?

ITIL 4 is guidance that an organization adapts, while ISO/IEC 20000-1 is a certifiable requirements standard for a service management system. Organizations often use ITIL 4 practices to meet ISO/IEC 20000-1 requirements, but holding ITIL certifications does not certify the organization to the ISO standard.

License included / downloadable: No ITIL is proprietary: ITIL 4 publications, training materials and exams are products of PeopleCert (AXELOS) and are sold, so the platform links to the publisher and does not include the framework text.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/itil-4-information-technology-infrastructure-library

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