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**IPOA CIVILIAN COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ICCMS).**

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**Alliance:** This proposal is submitted to Zetech University in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Information Technology program requirements.

# **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this proposal is my original work and has not been submitted for any other degree or award in any other institution of higher learning. Any secondary sources of information used have been appropriately acknowledged and referenced.

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**Date**: 19th November, 2024

# **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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To my wonderful parents, I am deeply indebted to you. Thank you for teaching me the value of academic excellence and inspiring me never to give up. To my wife, your love, support, and encouragement have been fantastic, and I thank you also for taking pride in my work and life. Thank you to all my friends who have been there for me throughout, particularly Mr. Calton Maloba. Finally, I extend my gratitude to the Independent Policing Oversight Authority for the inspiration behind this project and their ongoing efforts to improve police accountability within the NPS in Kenya.

God bless you all.

# **ACRONYMS & DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**ACRONYMS:**

1. **COK**: The Constitution of Kenya – The supreme legal document that establishes the framework for governance in Kenya that outlines the rights and responsibilities of citizens, the structure of government and the principles of democracy, justice, and accountability.
2. **IPOA**: Independent Policing Oversight Authority – The body established to oversee the conduct of the National Police Service in Kenya.
3. **NPS**: National Police Service – The principal law enforcement agency in Kenya responsible for maintaining peace and order.
4. **CRM**: Customer Relationship Management – Is a method used by IPOA to manage and analyze its interactions with civilians (customers) and effectively handle customer data over time.
5. **CCMS**: Civilian Complaints Management System – The proposed digital system for streamlining the management of complaints against police officers.
6. **IPID**: Independent Police Investigative Directorate – The primary oversight body tasked with overseeing police conduct in South Africa.
7. **UAT**: User Acceptance Testing – The final phase in the software testing process where end-users validate the functionality, usability and overall performance of the system in real-world scenarios, ensuring it meets their requirements and is ready for deployment.
8. **PAT**:Public Accountability Theory – This theory seeks to create systems where public institutions remain open to scrutiny, promote good governance and are responsive to the people they serve.
9. **AT**: Agency Theory or Principal-Agent Theory – It deals with managing the challenges that arise from delegation and ensuring that agents (police) act in the best interests of the principals (civilians) who employ them.

**DEFINITION OF TERMS:**

1. **Civilian Oversight**: The monitoring and evaluation of law enforcement activities by an independent body to ensure accountability and adherence to the law.
2. **Complaint Resolution**: The process of investigating and addressing grievances raised by civilians against police officers.
3. **Transparency**: The quality of being open and clear in processes, ensuring accountability and public trust.
4. **Accountability**: The obligation of police officers and agencies to report on their actions and accept responsibility for them.
5. **Efficiency**: The ability to manage resources effectively to achieve desired outcomes with minimal waste or delays.
6. **Real-Time Tracking**: A system feature allowing users to monitor the progress of their complaints instantly and continuously.

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# **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

The Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) was established under the Independent Policing Oversight Authority Act No. 35 of 2011, to provide civilian oversight of the work of the National Police Service (NPS) in Kenya. This oversight role includes receiving and investigating complaints against police officers, with the goal of promoting accountability, professionalism, and discipline within the force. Currently, the process of managing and resolving civilian complaints against police officers is manual, inefficient, and often lacks transparency, which undermines public trust in the police. There is a growing need to modernize this process to ensure that complaints are handled in a timely, fair and transparent manner.

In light of this, the development of **Civilian Complaints Management System** for IPOA would streamline the process of receiving, tracking and resolving complaints. This system would not only increase efficiency in managing cases but also help rebuild public trust in the NPS by providing real-time tracking, transparent reporting and efficient resolutions.

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The establishment of an effective mechanism for addressing complaints against police officers is essential for maintaining the overall quality, transparency and accountability within police oversight mechanisms. Such a system not only enhances the integrity of law enforcement but also fosters a sense of trust within the community. By ensuring that complaints are handled fairly and efficiently, this mechanism reinforces public confidence in the National Police Service while encouraging community engagement and cooperation thus, allowing citizens to feel empowered to voice their grievances. This, in turn, helps identify and resolve systematic issues within the police service, leading to improved policing practices. Ultimately, prioritizing accountability in police oversight aids in building a more just and equitable society where the rights and concerns of all individuals are respected and valued.

In the United Kingdom, recent advances in technology, such as the combination of artificial intelligence powered Chatbots and customer relationship management systems have ushered in a new era of complaint handling. Sandu, N., & Gide, E. (2019) assert that Chatbots powered by artificial intelligence are quickly becoming indispensable in customer service roles across a wide range of sectors. When deployed in police oversight, these Smart technologies can provide instant, automated responses to concerns and questions. They have the potential to direct complaints to relevant desk officers and reduce workload of administrative staff so that they can focus on more strategic endeavors (Strom, 2016).

Strom (2016) contends that over the past several decades, law enforcement agencies have implemented a range of technological advancements to improve operational efficiency and outcomes, particularly in times of diminished resources and increased public scrutiny of law enforcement activity. This highlights the necessity for law enforcement agencies adapting to evolving circumstances through technology thus, enabling them to maintain efficiency and accountability in their operations despite challenges such as resource constraints and heightened public scrutiny.

In South Africa, the IPID is the primary oversight body tasked with overseeing police conduct. The IPID was established under section 206(6) of SA Constitution as an independent police complaints body. Its mandate includes investigating complaints related to deaths and serious injuries, as well as allegations of misconduct against police officers and systematic corruption within the law enforcement. By acting as an independent police complaints body, IPID plays an important role in ensuring accountability and upholding public trust in the country’s law enforcement agencies.

In Kenya, police misconduct has been an enduring feature of policing largely due to the police being under the control of ruling regimes. This is linked to the colonial misuse of the police. The independent policing oversight authority executes various functions towards ensuring police accountability. These include receiving and processing complaints regarding police misconduct, conducting independent investigations, inspecting police premises including lock-up facilities and monitoring police operations that affect members of the public. Section 35 of IPOA Act No. 35 of 2011 requires the Authority to ensure independent oversight of the handling of complaints against the National Police Service.

Police oversight is an integrated system of internal and external mechanisms to monitor and assess police performance, ensuring that police are held accountable if they fail to carry out their duties properly and in accordance with the law (APCOF, 2013). By combining both internal and external mechanisms, these systems aim to enhance police performance while safeguarding the rights of individuals and communities. Therefore, having a robust police oversight system in place is important for fostering accountability, transparency and public trust in the Police Service.

The traditional methods of reporting complaints are slow and inefficient, highlighting the need for a faster, more modern approach that leverages technology to hold perpetrators accountable. It is therefore important to have a well-organized system for reporting complaints against police officers. By utilizing remote delivery of complaints, the reliance on physical visits to IPOA offices is greatly reduced, making the process more accessible and convenient for the public (Kommey K., et al. 2023). This modern approach would not only improve response times but also encourage more civilians to come forward with grievances, ultimately fostering greater transparency and accountability within the National Police Service.

According to IPOA Regulations\_2022, the complaints are received through walk-in, letters, telephones, across social media and emails. This outdated approach limits the public to express their grievances and fails to ensure that individuals have accessible options for reporting issues related to police misconduct. Therefore, by utilizing the IPOA CCMS, the authority can capture a wider range of complaints, fostering greater community engagement and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the complaints management system.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The Independent Policing Oversight Authority is tasked with receiving and investigating complaints against the police, but it faces challenges in efficiently managing and resolving these complaints. These challenges lead to delays in investigations, loss of information and a lack of transparency in the resolution process. Such issues undermine the accountability of the National Police Service and erode public trust. Civilians often lose faith in the system due to the lengthy durations required to process complaints, the inability to track complaint progress and perceived or actual biases in the resolution process. Without a streamlined, automated system for managing complaints, accountability within the police service remains weak, undermining IPOA's mission to effectively provide oversight and ensure justice for all parties.

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 envisions a police service that complies with the principles of National Security as enshrined in Article 238(2). This constitutional imperative calls on all organs of National Security to be subordinate to civilian authority. To operationalize this constitutional requirement, the IPOA Act was enacted in 2011 to ensure civilian oversight over the National Police Service Officers.

The Independent Police Oversight Authority Act 2011 under section 6(1) recognizes the following as ways of lodging a complaint to the Authority: Orally, in writing, electronically, by sign language, by braille, or through any other communication formats and technology accessible to members of the public. Section 6(2) envisions the complaint received to be reduced by a designated officer in writing by transferring the details of the complaint into IPOA Form C. These systems underscore a system that is largely manual and paperwork-based. This state of affairs reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of processing citizen complaints against the police.

## **1.3 PROPOSED SOLUTION**

The **IPOA Civilian Complaints Management System** will be an automated web-based platform designed to handle the submission, tracking, investigation, and resolution of complaints against police officers. The system will:

1. Allow civilians to submit complaints online avoiding physical visits at IPOA offices.
2. Enable tracking of the status of complaints in real time.
3. Automate communication between IPOA investigators, complainants and the ODPP (Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions).
4. Store all complaint-related data in a secure, centralized database.
5. Provide reporting tools for generating complaint resolution metrics and identifying trends in police misconduct.
6. Facilitate transparent and timely investigations, boosting public trust in both IPOA and National Police Service.

## **1.4 OBJECTIVES**

1. **General Objective:**

To develop an efficient, transparent and accountable **IPOA Civilian Complaints Management System** to handle civilian complaints against police officers**.**

1. **Specific Objectives:**
2. To develop an interface that enables civilians to easily submit complaints against police officers.
3. To implement a real-time tracking system that allows civilians to monitor the progress of their submitted complaints.
4. To provide IPOA with a centralized database for storing and managing complaints.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. How can a user-friendly interface be designed to enable civilians to easily submit complaints against police officers, and what features are essential for enhancing user engagement and accessibility?
2. What technologies and methodologies can be used to implement a real-time tracking system for monitoring the progress of submitted complaints, and how can these elements improve transparency and trust in the complaint process?
3. How can a centralized database be effectively developed and managed to support IPOA in storing and handling complaints efficiently, ensuring data security, accessibility, and efficient retrieval of information?

## **1.6 JUSTIFICATION**

This project is essential to enhancing the public’s trust in the NPS by providing a more transparent and accountable system for handling complaints against police officers. The proposed system will address the inefficiencies of the current manual processes, ensuring that complaints are processed in a timely manner, complainants receive real-time updates and all parties involved in the complaints process are held accountable for their actions. By improving the efficiency of complaint handling, IPOA can contribute to the reduction of police misconduct and build a more trustworthy police service.

## **1.7 PROPOSED RESEARCH AND SYSTEM METHODOLOGIES**

The proposed research methodology integrates both **qualitative** and **quantitative approaches** to gather comprehensive data and insights that inform the design of the complaint management system for the Independent Policing Oversight Authority. This methodology not only ensures a thorough understanding of the current system and its challenges but also lays the foundation for the effective development of a solution that meets the needs of civilians, police officers, and IPOA staff. Below, we will explore the research design, research tools, and the steps involved in each stage of the proposed research methodology.

1. **Qualitative Research**:
2. Literature Review: This step involves a systematic examination of existing literature on complaint management systems, police accountability frameworks, and similar solutions in other jurisdictions. By reviewing scholarly articles, reports, and case studies, researchers can gain insights into best practices, challenges, and emerging trends.
3. Interviews and Surveys: Semi-structured interviews and surveys will be conducted with key stakeholders, including civilians, police officers, and IPOA staff. These qualitative methods will allow researchers to gather rich, contextual data on their experiences, perceptions, and needs regarding complaint submission and resolution.
4. Focus Groups: Focus group discussions will be facilitated to encourage open dialogue and collaborative exploration of issues. This technique can help identify shared concerns, uncover hidden challenges, and generate innovative ideas.
5. **Quantitative Research**:
6. Data Analysis: Historical complaint data from IPOA will be analyzed using statistical techniques to identify patterns, trends, and areas for improvement. This quantitative approach will provide valuable insights into the current state of complaint management and inform the design of the new system.
7. Case Studies: Case studies of similar systems implemented in other jurisdictions will be conducted to identify best practices and potential challenges. By analyzing these case studies, researchers can learn from the experiences of others and adapt successful strategies to the local context.

## **1.8 SCOPE**

This study focuses on Kenya, specifically targeting three key groups including, the Independent Policing Oversight Authority, the National Police Service, and the civilian population interacting with law enforcement. The geographical scope encompasses the Nairobi region, ensuring that the CCMS is accessible to all residents, regardless of their specific location. IPOA, as Kenya's primary institution for police accountability, is tasked with monitoring police conduct and investigating civilian complaints, making it essential to align the CCMS with Kenya's legal, administrative, and cultural frameworks. This tailored approach will enhance compatibility with local oversight mechanisms and improve police accountability while addressing public concerns about police misconduct and inefficiencies in complaint-handling processes.

The project aims to restore public trust in the Police Service by addressing localized needs and ensuring system integration with IPOA’s existing infrastructure, such as databases of civilian complaints, misconduct records, and investigation outcomes. Streamlining data management will enhance operational efficiency and prevent duplication. The initiative includes targeted training for IPOA staff, equipping them to manage complaints and engage with civilians effectively. Public awareness campaigns, customized to Kenya's cultural and linguistic diversity, will promote CCMS adoption and accessibility. This localized approach will ensures that the system meets the specific needs of Kenyan users, fostering transparency, accountability, and trust in law enforcement oversight.

# **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

The establishment of an efficient mechanism for addressing complaints against police officers is fundamental to promoting transparency, accountability, and community trust in law enforcement. Effective oversight fosters a sense of empowerment among citizens to voice grievances, which in turn helps in identifying and resolving systemic issues within the police service. As technology evolves, it offers new opportunities to enhance these oversight mechanisms. For example, artificial intelligence-powered systems, such as Chatbots, are being increasingly integrated into various sectors, including police oversight, to improve response times and reduce administrative burdens. This literature review explores the theoretical foundations of police oversight, critiques existing studies and identifies gaps in research regarding the application of modern technology in police oversight in various jurisdictions.

## **2.1 THEORETICAL REVIEW**

In examining the theoretical foundation and empirical relevance of police oversight systems, two major theories stand out, namely; Public Accountability Theory (PAT), and Principal-Agent Theory. These theories serve as the basis for understanding the role and development of a civilian complaints management system, such as the one proposed for the IPOA in Kenya.

**2.1.1** Public Accountability Theory (PAT)

This theory was developed in the late 20th century, is central to oversight systems and governance. Its key tenets, commonly summarized as TAEP, include Transparency, Answerability, Enforcement, and Participation. These tenets aim to ensure that public institutions remain open to scrutiny and respond to the needs of the populace. Transparency ensures clear and accessible information about institutional actions. Answerability obligates officials to justify their decisions to the public, while Enforcement provides mechanisms to impose consequences for misconduct. Lastly, Participation offers channels for the public to question and scrutinize institutional actions. For police oversight systems, PAT aligns with ensuring that law enforcement remains open, accountable, and responsive to citizen concerns. By facilitating transparent complaint-handling processes, a management system based on PAT principles can promote public trust in IPOA and ultimately strengthen police accountability in Kenya.

**2.1.2** Agency Theory

It is also known as Principal-Agent Theory which analyzes the relationship between two parties where one (the principal) delegates authority to another (the agent). In police oversight, the public is the principal, and the police are the agents. Oversight bodies, such as IPOA, are tasked with ensuring that agents act in the principal's best interest. Challenges such as asymmetric information (where agents have more information than principals) and conflicting interests (where agents may prioritize personal goals over public interest) can lead to misalignment. To mitigate these challenges, oversight bodies implement monitoring and incentives to align police actions with public welfare. In the Kenyan context, IPOA serves as an essential intermediary that bridges the gap between the public and law enforcement by ensuring that complaints are addressed fairly and impartially. By applying the Principal-Agent Theory, a civilian complaints management system enables IPOA to track and resolve issues effectively, reducing moral hazards and safeguarding public interests.

## **2.2 EMPIRICAL REVIEW AND RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH**

Developing an efficient, transparent, and accountable IPOA Civilian Complaints Management System aligns with global advancements in leveraging technology to enhance oversight mechanisms. Studies and cases, such as those on AI-driven systems in the UK and oversight mechanisms in South Africa, demonstrate how technology and structured accountability improve oversight efficiency. However, much of the existing literature lacks depth on AI's practical challenges and implications in such systems, which this research aims to address. By grounding itself in PAT (Public Accountability Theory) and Agency Theory, this research seeks to fulfill the general objective of creating a CCMS that fosters accountability while balancing technical innovation with local oversight requirements, thereby improving trust and transparency in the National Police Service.

In terms of empirical evidence, the integration of technology in oversight systems has yielded positive outcomes in similar oversight bodies globally. For instance, the IPID in South Africa has adopted certain technological tools to enhance its investigative capabilities, though the literature emphasizes a continued reliance on traditional, non-digital methods. Research on the United Kingdom's use of technology in public complaint handling highlights that AI tools and customer relationship management systems have expedited complaint processes, promoting a responsive approach to accountability (Strom, 2016).

Furthermore, a study by Kommey et al. (2023) in the African context underscores the importance of remote reporting mechanisms for increasing citizen access to police oversight systems, though there is limited empirical data on their effectiveness. These insights are directly relevant to the specific objectives of developing an interface for civilians to easily submit complaints and implementing a real-time tracking system to allow civilians to monitor the progress of their complaints.

The theoretical foundation for this research strongly supports the objectives. PAT’s emphasis on transparency and accountability directly addresses citizens' need for accessible, fair, and timely responses to complaints. Similarly, the Principal-Agent Theory highlights IPOA’s role in monitoring and correcting police actions, reinforcing public confidence.

The empirical review also supports the need for a centralized database, a critical objective of the CCMS. A centralized system enhances data management, enabling efficient storage, retrieval, and analysis of complaints. This aligns with international best practices, such as those observed in South Africa and the UK, where centralized complaint-handling mechanisms have proven instrumental in improving oversight efficiency.

For IPOA, the development of a management system leveraging these theories provides a pathway to address current gaps in transparency and efficiency. It positions IPOA to respond to the evolving demands for police accountability and enhances public trust in the NPS. The system aligns with global best practices through AI-driven tools, real-time tracking, and enhanced data management, adapting them to Kenya’s unique legal, social, and cultural framework.

This framework is designed to meet the general and specific objectives of creating a robust CCMS that allows civilians to submit complaints easily, track their progress, and ensure efficient, centralized data management, ultimately enhancing accountability and public trust in police oversight.

## **2.3 CRITIQUE OF EXISTING LITERATURE**

Existing literature on police oversight largely focuses on traditional complaint-handling methods and their shortcomings. For example, Strom (2016) highlights the growing role of technology in law enforcement, yet much of this research centers on operational tools such as body cameras and data analytics, rather than on the integration of AI in administrative functions like complaint handling. Sandu and Gide (2019) argue that AI-powered systems can alleviate administrative burdens, but the scope of their research remains limited to the theoretical benefits of AI, without addressing the practical challenges of implementation in police oversight bodies. Additionally, they overlook the potential privacy and security risks associated with storing sensitive data through AI systems.

In the African context, studies like those by APCOF (2013) and Kommey et al. (2023) emphasize the critical role of oversight bodies in promoting accountability, yet they fail to adequately explore the use of technology in improving these systems. For example, while APCOF (2013) discusses internal and external oversight mechanisms, it does not provide a comprehensive analysis of how these systems can be modernized through technology. Kommey et al. (2023) advocate for remote reporting mechanisms but stop short of examining the technical infrastructure required to ensure that such systems are secure and user-friendly.

Despite the recognition of AI's potential to transform complaint-handling processes, there is a lack of empirical research on the deployment and efficacy of AI tools such as Chatbots in police oversight. Studies focus more on the theoretical benefits rather than practical implementation challenges, including issues related to data privacy, user adoption and system security. Additionally, there is limited exploration of public perceptions and trust in AI-driven oversight systems. Future research should focus on the practical application of AI in oversight mechanisms, evaluate the challenges of implementation, and explore ways to enhance public trust in these modern systems. Furthermore, comparative studies between different countries and their adoption of technological solutions in police oversight would provide valuable insights into the best practices for fostering accountability and transparency in law enforcement.

# **CONCLUSION**

The existing body of literature acknowledges the importance of police oversight in maintaining accountability and public trust. Studies also highlight the potential for technology to improve operational efficiency within law enforcement agencies, including oversight bodies. However, research is limited in terms of the practical application of these technologies, especially AI, in complaint-handling processes. There is also a noticeable gap in the literature regarding public engagement with these technological systems, as well as how data privacy and security concerns are addressed when using AI-powered platforms in police oversight.

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**APPENDICES: Instruments. Budget, Work plan**

**APPENDIX A: Instruments**

This appendix would include all the tools and instruments used in the complaint management process such as IPOA Form C, complaint tracking system, and survey instruments. These instruments should be presented in their final form, as they were used during the data collection process.

**APPENDIX B: Budget**

This appendix can provide a detailed breakdown of the project budget, including estimated costs for various expenditures, such as:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ITEM** | **DESCRIPTION** | **QUANTITY** | **COST ESTIMATE (KES)** |
| **System Development** | Software development, database design and user interface (UI) design. | 1 | 200,000/- |
| **Licenses and Hosting** | Software licenses, cloud storage and Server hosting. | 1 | 150,000/- |
| **Security Measures** | Security audits and Data encryption tools. | 1 | 120,000/- |
| **System Testing** | User testing, performance testing and bug fixes. | 1 | 100,000/- |
| **Training and Documentation** | Training materials, manuals and training sessions. | 1 | 130,000/- |
| **Public awareness campaigns** | Encourage civilians across the country (Kenya) to use the CCMS. | 1 | 120,000/- |
| **Maintenance and Support** | System updates, maintenance and user support, (Annual). | 1 | 65,000/- |
| **Contingency** | Unforeseen expenses during project development. | 1 | 15,000/- |
| **GRAND TOTAL** | **900,000/-** | | |

**APPENDIX C: Work Plan**

The work plan should outline the timeline and key milestones for implementing the new system. The work plan can be divided into the following phases:

1. **Phase 1: Weeks 1-8**

* Needs Assessment: Planning and Requirements Gathering

1. Weeks 1-2: Initial planning and stakeholder meetings
2. Weeks 3-4: Gathering requirements and drafting documents
3. Weeks 5-6: Reviewing and finalizing requirements
4. Weeks 7-8: Approval and preparation for system design
5. **Phase 2**: **Weeks 9-16**

* System Design: Design and Architecture

1. Weeks 9-10: Designing system architecture and UI mockups
2. Weeks 11-12: Finalizing system design System Development:
3. Weeks 13-14: Developing the User Interface (UI)
4. Weeks 15-16: Developing the database and backend
5. **Phase 3: Weeks 17-18**

* System Development;

1. User Interface (UI)
2. Database and Backend
3. **Phase 4: Weeks 19-20**

* Integration with Third-Party Services, Piloting Testing and Quality Assurance

1. Weeks 19: Integration with Third-Party Services
2. Weeks 20: Testing and Quality Assurance
3. **Phase 5**: **Weeks 21-24**

* Staff Training: User Training and Documentation
* System Deployment and Go-Live

1. Weeks 21-22: Staff training and documentation preparation
2. Weeks 23-24: Full system implementation and go-live
3. **Phase 6**: **Weeks 25-28**

* Post-Implementation Review, Support and Adjustments

1. Weeks 25-26: Review and adjustments based on feedback
2. Weeks 27-28: Ongoing support and final adjustments

**APPENDIX D: Additional Supporting Materials**

This appendix can include any additional supporting materials that may be relevant to the project, such as:

1. Technical documentation or diagrams
2. Data flow diagrams or entity-relationship diagrams
3. Risk assessment and mitigation plans
4. Change management procedures
5. Stakeholder feedback summaries
6. Case studies
7. Research findings.
8. Any other relevant supplementary materials.