

1.4.2_2 Test Monitoring and control

Management of any activity does not stop with planning it. We need to control and measure progress against the plan. So, test control is an ongoing activity. We need to compare actual progress against the planned progress, and report to the project manager and customer on the current status of testing, including any changes or deviations from the plan. We'll need to take actions where necessary to meet the objectives of the project. Such actions may entail changing our original plan, which often happens. When different groups perform different review and test activities within the project, the planning and control needs to happen within each of those groups but also across the groups to coordinate between them, allowing smooth hand-offs between each stage of testing. Test planning takes into account the feedback from monitoring and control activities which take place through out the project.

Test control has the following major tasks:

- **Measure and analyze the results of reviews and testing:**

We need to know how many reviews and tests we have done. We need to track how many tests have passed and how many failed, along with the number, type and importance of the defects reported.

- **Monitor and document progress, test coverage and exit criteria:**

It is important that we inform the project team how much testing has been done, what the results are, and what conclusions and risk assessment we have made. We must make the test outcome visible and useful to the whole team.

- **Provide information on testing:**

We should expect to make regular and exceptional reports to the project manager, project sponsor, customer and other key stakeholders to help them make informed decisions about project status. We should also use the information we have to analyze the testing itself.

- **Initiate corrective actions:**

For example, tighten exit criteria for defects fixed, ask for more effort to be put into debugging or prioritize defects for fixing test blockers.

- **Make decisions:**

Based on the measures and information gathered during testing and any changes to business and project risks or our increased understanding of technical and product risks, we'll make decisions or enable others to make decisions: to continue testing, to stop testing, to release the software or to retain it for further work for example.