

Guide to Understanding the Standard Requirements Self Assessments



Version 1.0

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What is the Value of the Self Assessment?

Great question – The details for the value proposition will be different for every client as this is a highly personal question and the answer depends on the maturity of your organization and the experience you have with assessments and audits.

However, in general the value of the Self Assessment lies in the fact that the granularity of the questions will help to guide the team towards a single focus for the implementation of a topic.

In other words: Purchasing a The Art of Service Self Assessment will spur new ideas, fast track project strategy and advance your professional skills. We've developed a set of criteria that will aid in gaining approval and give you the ability to validate and review your Self-Assessment investment

Each questionnaire has a few hundred questions. Some are standard process related questions that are appropriate for the topic, other questions are specifically written for the topic at hand.

Each Self Assessment Questionnaire follows the same structure – the 7 phases:

Phase 1: Recognize the value

Phase 2: Define what this topic means within the context of our business

Phase 3: Measure how we currently manage this topic

Phase 4: Analyze our findings

Phase 5: Improve the processes and implementation

Phase 6: Control the deliverables and results

Phase 7: Sustain the practices into the future

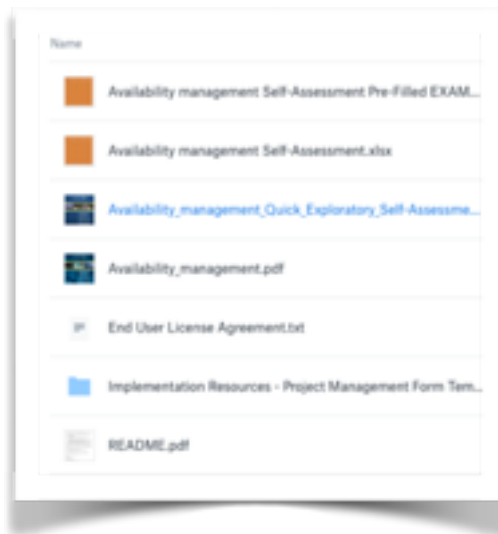
Once you've answered the questions that apply to your situation, you will see in the graphs where your implementation focus should be and where there is low hanging fruit. By naming the participants you can also clearly identify the team members with most knowledge about the way this topic is currently managed in the company.

After that you can check the auto-generated RACI diagram with the action steps for the next 60 – 90 days to ensure your improvement project hits the ground running.

I bought the Self Assessment Book – how do I get the spreadsheet?

The Standard Requirement Self Assessment is more than just a book, it's a complete package to perform a Self Assessment in your organisation (or your client's organisation). To get the most out of your Self Assessment purchase it's important that you also have access to the Spreadsheet and additional resources.

When you purchase the Self Assessment from our online store you receive a package that looks like this:



AVAILABILITY MANAGEMENT SELF ASSESSMENT

Sample content of Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guide for Availability Management

The complete package has 2 spreadsheets (the full version of the tool and a sample file) , 2 PDF files (the full version of the book and a sample file) and a folder with Implementation resources.

The best way to get the spreadsheet is to follow the instruction in the front of the book. There is an email address mentioned. Send your proof of purchase to that email address and you will receive the resources via return email.

What is proof of purchase?

Firstly – let me tell you what it is NOT... a photo of the front cover of your book is not a proof of purchase. That's a proof of possession 😊 Slight difference but important distinction.

A proof of purchase is your email receipt from your online book store purchase or the receipt from the till when you've purchased the book in a physical store.

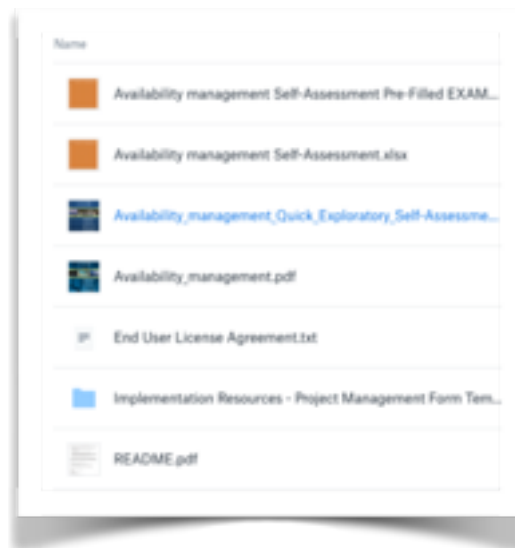
How do the book and spreadsheet work in the Standard Requirements Self Assessments?

The Standard Requirements Self Assessment comes in a book format when you purchased the Self Assessment at your favourite book store, or as a PDF document when you've purchased the Self Assessment directly from our online store. Irrespective of your place of purchase, it is important that you also request access to the accompanying resources. The Standard Requirements Self Assessment works best when you use the book and the Excel Spreadsheet together.

When you purchase the Standard requirement Self Assessment you receive a portfolio of tools:

- **Your book** with all the questions
- The second component to the Self Assessment is an **Excel spreadsheet**
- The third component is a series of specific **implementation resources**

In addition you also receive a PDF and an Excel spreadsheet with a pre-filled example to guide you through the process of completing the Standard Requirement Self Assessments.



Availability Management Self Assessment Sample content of Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guide for Availability Management

While you can do the Self Assessment with the book alone by entering your personal answers in the column in front of the questions, if you want to make this assessment more of a team effort you will need to use the Excel Spreadsheet.

The spreadsheet is set up for teams up to 10 participants. Each of the participants has a column for their answers.

The additional value of the Spreadsheet is that the tool uses the answers from all participants and turns it into graphs and overviews that help you make decisions on the gaps and areas of improvement.

Pro Tip: while the questions in the book are identical to the questions in the spreadsheet there may be a discrepancy in the order in which the questions are listed. Don't worry about this too much as the questions are exactly the same, use the ctrl-F or command-F function when you need to search for a specific question in the spreadsheet.

Do I have to answer all the questions in the Standard Requirements Self Assessment?

When you first open your Standard Requirement Self Assessment book it can be a bit daunting... most books have over 600 questions that all relate to the subject and that in itself is quite a lot to take in.

It's important to remember why you purchased the Self Assessment Guide in the first place... To get an understanding of where the gaps in the processes are, and which part of the process is solid and mature in your company. (When I say 'your company' this can also be your customer's company because we notice many of our Self Assessment clients are consultants and independent contractors.)

The questions in the Self Assessment are organised in 7 different phases that follow the natural progression of maturity:

- Phase 1: Recognize the value
- Phase 2: Define what this topic means within the context of our business
- Phase 3: Measure how we currently manage this topic
- Phase 4: Analyze our findings
- Phase 5: Improve the processes and implementation
- Phase 6: Control the deliverables and results
- Phase 7: Sustain the practices into the future

When you go through the Self Assessment you try to answer as many questions as you can. However, this doesn't mean that you must answer all of them. Remember – these assessments are for a wide variety of organisations. We've managed to curate and create a wide range of questions that can be used all across the globe. Having said that, It's impossible to be 100% applicable to each and every company where these Self Assessments are used.

When a question doesn't make sense in your business context – you can skip it. This doesn't impact the overall rating and results of the assessment. What is important that by going through the list of questions, you have to think about them and make conscious and educated decisions on if and how you answer this specific question... that's where the true value lies.

Unsure about how to use the Self Assessment in your specific situation? Feel free to [contact us](#) for additional support and to answer any of your questions.

How do I use the Standard Requirements Self Assessment?

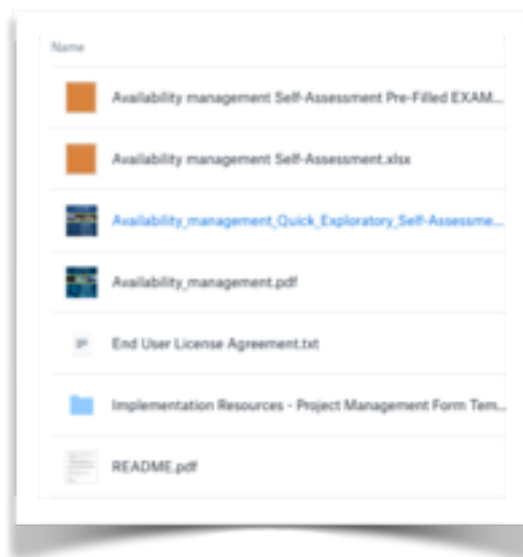
When you purchase the Standard requirement Self Assessment you receive a portfolio of tools:

Your book with all the questions, separated in their various sections. This book can be a PDF version when you purchase it directly from The Art of Service online website, or it can be a physical book when you purchase from your favourite book seller.

The second component to the Self Assessment is an Excel spreadsheet with all the questions and the automation included to create a snapshot overview of your current situation plus a RACI diagram with the most important activities to start on to achieve the most value in the next 60 – 90 days.

The third component is a series of specific implementation resources to help you achieve the goals set in the action plan that is one of the results of the Self Assessment.

In addition you also receive a PDF and an Excel spreadsheet with a pre-filled example to guide you through the process of completing the Standard Requirement Self Assessments.



*Availability Management Self Assessment
Sample content of Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guide for Availability Management*

Step 1: Once you've received your full package we recommend you read through the example files. This will give you a great understanding of the type of questions and how the results are shown in the spreadsheets and graphs.

Step 2:

a) Go through the spreadsheet and answer as many of the questions you can. Skip the questions that don't make sense, or do not apply to your situation.

OR

b) Invite up to 10 team members for a 4 hour workshop. This is a perfect opportunity to go through the questionnaire and build awareness and buy-in from the stakeholders at the same time. You can use this time to also discuss the way forward and the priorities for the implementation projects.

Step 3: Initiate the necessary projects to start implementing the deliverables that came out of the Self Assessment process.

And of course – feel free to [contact us](#) for additional support and to answer any of your questions.

Is the Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guide based on current information?

When you do a self assessment you want to make sure you're asking the right questions. Isn't that why you're interested in our Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guide in the first place?

The guides help you to get clarity on the current position of your company (or your client's company) in relation to a specific topic. They also give you a clear way forward to start implementing some changes to bridge the gaps you've identified in the current processes and work practices.

The topics range from very specific technical products to a general methodology like agile project management.

To give you an idea – In the last week our clients needed Self Assessment Guides on the following topics:

GDPR Standard Requirements
Service Catalog Standard Requirements
Information Security Management Standard Requirements
Cyber Security Risk Management Standard Requirements

Many of these topics are dynamic in nature. What I mean by that is that the general body of knowledge around these subjects are always growing and our understanding is changing with a rising maturity around the topic.

In addition to this, the business environment changes more rapidly than ever before. This is even more so the case for anything to do with the IT industry. That is why our team is consistently looking for more and better questions to ask as part of our Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guides.

To help our clients we have decided to bring out a new version of the Self Assessment Guides every 6 months, and clients who have purchased a Self Assessment Guide will receive these updates for free. This way we can guarantee that the product you purchase and the product you use in your organisation is always based on the most current levels of understanding and knowledge.

What if I have questions about the Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guides?

The Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guides are designed to help a wide range of organizations to take important steps towards understanding their current awareness and maturity in relation to the topic.

The questions help as discussion starters, but also to identify where knowledge is present in the company that can help with the process and maturity improvement.

To support you on this ongoing journey we built the guides to cover the following implementation phases:

Each Self Assessment Questionnaire follows the same structure – the 7 phases:

Phase 1: Recognize the value

Phase 2: Define what this topic means within the context of our business

Phase 3: Measure how we currently manage this topic

Phase 4: Analyze our findings

Phase 5: Improve the processes and implementation

Phase 6: Control the deliverables and results

Phase 7: Sustain the practices into the future

The questions relate to one of these phases so that the end result of the Self Assessment is that you can clearly see in the graphs where your strengths and weaknesses are as an organization on the journey of maturity and implementation.

You can do this assessment at regular intervals to gain more clarity on the improvements your company has implemented. It's also a great tool to keep the momentum going and to celebrate the successes.

Where do you start?

When you first receive the Self Assessment Guide it can be a little overwhelming. That's why we have included a sample questionnaire and pre-filled spreadsheet to give you an idea on how to approach this process.



If you have further questions in relation to the Self Assessment, or are looking for more guidance, feel free to contact us directly by entering your details in the [contact us](#) form.

Of course you can call as well! Just keep in mind the timezone difference – we are based in Brisbane, Australia (UTC +10). **Our office number is +61 7 3205 2596.** Just leave a message if you happen to call us outside of office hours – we'll get in touch with you as soon as possible.

Can I use the Self Assessment Guides as part of an audit?

The Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guides are created to be used by individuals or small teams within an organization to assess the current completeness of the processes that are needed to gauge maturity for a specific topic.

This doesn't mean that you can't be creative with the Self Assessments. For example- some of our clients chose to only look at the first 2 sections in the book and spreadsheet and walk through those questions first. The reason behind this is that they want to achieve a solid foundation before moving forward with the implementation processes.

Other clients have chosen an approach that is closer to an audit, where every person who answered a question has to show the documented evidence of their answer.

Does the company collect personally Identifiable information electronically?

For example if you can answer the question by saying: "In my belief, the answer to this question is clearly defined"

You will need to show documented evidence of where the personally identifiable information is collected and stored.

You can use the information gathered during the collection phase of the process as input for a workshop where all participants sit together and discuss/compare their findings.

Another option is to make a grading of the questions in the Self Assessment and to create a priority list of questions that must be answered by every participant. This will identify communication breakdowns between teams or departments. It becomes really obvious when one group has all the information so they can answer with "YES – in my belief the answer to this question is clearly defined" and the other group doesn't have access to this information and knowledge.

The Self Assessment book and spreadsheet are only the beginning – while you can successfully use it as a stand alone tool there is no limitation to the different ways you can utilise the content in the Self Assessment Guides.

How often should I do the Self Assessment?

Completing the Standard Requirements Self Assessment is a great benchmarking tool. You can complete the questionnaire individually, or you can choose a team of people who are most knowledgeable about the subject within the company.

The Self Assessment gives a clear overview of the gaps in the processes and where improvements can be made for increased process maturity. Because of this, many of our clients choose to perform the Self Assessment at the starting point -or during the due diligence portion – of an implementation project.

So how does this work?

The principles behind the Standard Requirements Self Assessment is that the basis of great processes and business practices is sharing knowledge through deliberate communication. That's why we ask you to assess each question and answer truthfully:

On a scale of 1 – 5 (where 1 is non existent and 5 is strongly confident) “In my belief, the answer to this question is clearly defined” [within our company]

It doesn't ask you to answer the question with a theoretical approach, but rather your opinion. In your opinion or belief, is the answer to this question clearly defined?

For example, there may be questions around Project organisation setup. Do we follow clearly defined strategies on how we approach a project? And is everybody on the same page in relation to this understanding and definition?

That's the strength of the Self Assessment, that it makes you think about how we utilise theories, methodologies, processes and procedures to improve our business model.

In some cases the answer to the question is YES – it is clearly defined that we consciously and deliberately do not follow this approach. And that's OK. As long as everybody knows 😊

How often do we need to do the Self Assessments?

That's up to you and your organisation really. My recommendation is to do it every quarter at the start of a project, and pick 3 or 4 big priorities for the next 90 days. Once you're in a rhythm of implementing the action items you can continue to do the Self Assessments annually or after major changes in the business. This will keep everybody focused on doing the right things and not veering off course following the next shiny object that we're hearing too much about lately.

So many questions, I'm confused – can you help?

The Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guides contain a lot of information. Important information, helpful information but also an overwhelming amount of information. When you first flick through the book you can't help but notice the never ending lists of questions. Your first question is most likely: **where do I start?**

Followed closely by:

- Do I have to start at the beginning and work my way to the end?
- Do I have to answer all the questions in the book?
- What if I don't know the answer to the question, what happens then? and
- "Who do I invite to help me fill out these questionnaires?"

When you realise that the books and associated tools are split up in 7 business lifecycle stages it becomes a little less confusing. Once you realise you don't have to answer all the questions and that it's quite OK to skip some questions, most anxiety will ease off.

Let's walk through the questions I mentioned above:

Do I have to start at the beginning and work my way to the end?

Yes – that's what will give you a great overview of the maturity of the processes in your organisation. Once you get to the graphs you will see what I mean.

Do I have to answer all the questions in the book?

No – if a question has no relevance to your specific situation, just skip it. You won't be penalised for it so it's easy to simply skip these questions.

What if I don't know the answer to a question?

Well, there could be 2 reasons: this question has no relation to what you're doing in your organisation and you have no idea how to even start answering the question.. in which case you simply skip the question.

OR – it means that in your opinion the answer to this question is not clearly defined in your organisation. In which case your answer is 1.

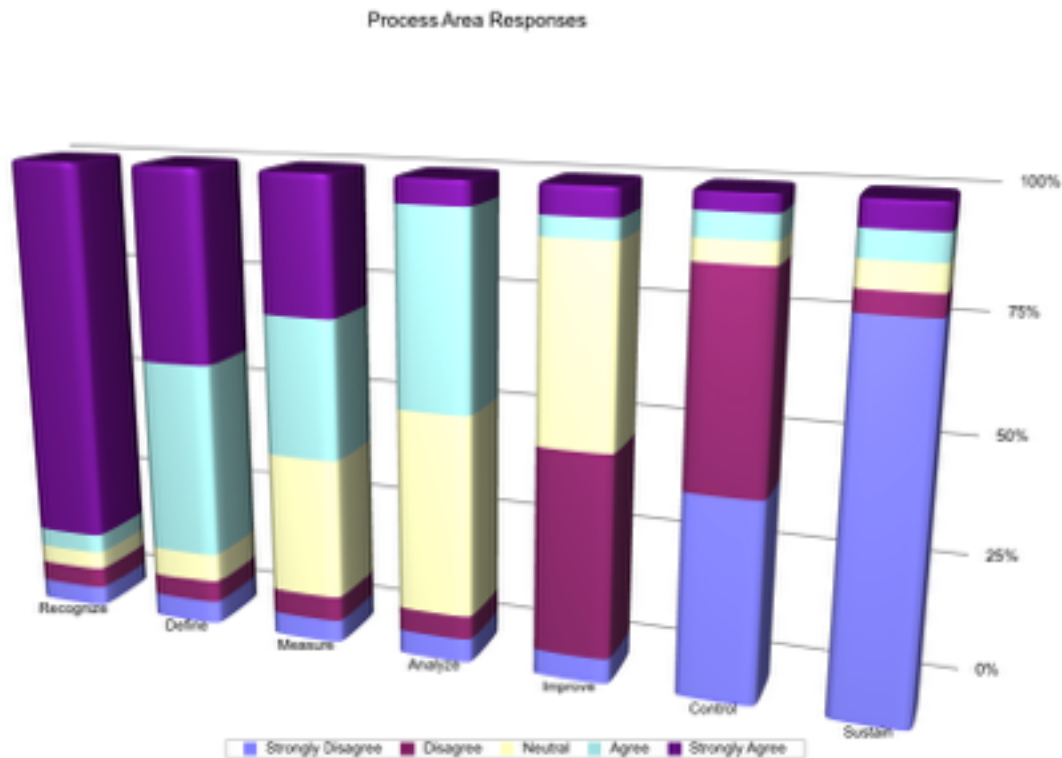
Who do I invite to answer these questions?

Most people invite the stakeholders in the process or methodology that you're assessing. People who you feel are subject matter experts, but also people who need to be aware of what is involved in adopting this system/process/idea/methodology.

Answering the questions is one thing – reading the resulting graphs and illustrations is another. We do explain the graphs in this article – but by all means, feel free to contact us as we are happy to answer all your questions in relation to the Standard Requirements Self Assessments.

How to read the charts in the Self Assessment spreadsheet

You just spent a few hours going through all the questions and you can't wait to see the results... you quickly go to the Summary responses tab to see what the graph looks like and you see this:



What does it mean? How should you read this graph?

Well, first of all you can see that questions in all process areas have been answered as the graphs are rendered for each of the 7 areas.

You also see a large difference between the answers in the 'recognize' area in comparison to the 'sustain' area. In recognize most participants are confident in their opinion that the answers to these questions are well defined.

The questions in the recognize area are all around the fact that we recognize that this subject has value to the business. The initial awareness activities have been successful in this company as most participants score it very high.

You also notice that the number of questions answered with 'strongly agree' drops off quite quickly between Measure and Analyze. What you can read from this is that in this company the awareness around this subject is established and they have defined what the value is of this subject for the company. They even started measuring to come up with KPIs and progress results. However, not a lot of analysis is done on the data. They measure, but fail to turn the raw data into management information that can be used for execution and decision making.

When you're at the start of an implementation and improvement project you can choose to solidify the first 3 process areas or to improve the analytics and data analysis processes.

I think there is a lot of benefit to be gained in improving define and measure at first - there will be some low hanging fruit to help with the quick wins for the project. You can execute these tasks while you tackle the more difficult part of the implementation project: How to improve the way we analyse the results.

What are the priorities?

RACI Matrix: Cyber Security Risk Management

Auto Populated with Top 3 Questions to Address:

Project Deliverable (or Activity)	Role	Project Leadership				
		Executive Sponsor	Project Sponsor	Steering Committee	Advisory Committee	Role #5
Recognize						
Do we use IT personnel directly, use outsourcing, or use both approaches to address IT issues?					A/C	
Will a response program recognize when a crisis occurs and provide some level of response?						I
NIST Cybersecurity Framework Criterion RC.CO-2: Reputation after an event is repaired		C	C	R/A		
Define						
Are approval levels defined for contracts and supplements to contracts?						
What baselines are required to be defined and managed?			A/C	R/A		C/I
Do we all define Cyber Security Risk Management in the same way?			R		C	
Measure						
Does the Cyber Security Risk Management task fit the client's priorities?		R/A				
How is progress measured?					C	C
Are the units of measure consistent?			C	I	C	I
Analyze						
What will drive Cyber Security Risk Management change?		R/A		C		
What project management qualifications does the Project Manager have?			R/A		C	
Does our company communicate to employees the process for reporting and containing compromise?			C	C		R/A

On the right hand side of your spreadsheet there is a tab called RACI Matrix. This is where the tool automatically pre-populated the RACI matrix with the top 3 questions that need attention. You can use this empty matrix to identify who in your team should be accountable, responsible, consulted or informed for each of the activities.

But remember the rules of the RACI diagram:

Only ONE accountable party for each of the process tasks - avoid multiple chefs in the kitchen for improved efficiency.

You can have multiple parties responsible for performing the process task.

You can combine roles: it's quite normal in small teams to have a person being accountable and responsible for a task.

You need to identify who should be consulted to provide input into the process task to be able to achieve the best outcomes. This is the C for consulted.

You also need to identify who needs to be informed about the outcomes, progress or results from the process task.

Unsure about how to use the Self Assessment in your specific situation? Feel free to [contact us](#) for additional support and to answer any of your questions.

For more information on the Self Assessments and a full overview of the available topics, go to store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/

Is there an online version of the Standard Requirements Self Assessment?

Going through a Self Assessment process is a deeply personal experience, and commercial in confidence for many organisations.

You need to be honest, open and truthful when you answer the questions and in order to do that you need to know that your answers stay within the organisation.

That's why we decided that the best medium for the Self Assessment would be a physical book, accompanied by spreadsheets and implementation resources. You can use the products within your organisation - save them on the local server or corporate cloud storage. Whichever way works best in your scenario.

We decided not to offer an online version of the Self Assessment to alleviate concerns about data leaks and confidential information being read by external parties.

The benefit of having the self assessment online would be to ensure that you always have the most current version of the assessment. It's also a lot easier for us to update the tools and keep everybody on the same versions.

To tackle this issue we have decided to give all our clients access to free upgrades to their Self Assessment Guides. Every 6 months you will receive an email with the invitation to download the latest version of the Self Assessment you purchased for your company or organisation.

How to plan a Self Assessment workshop

The Standard Requirements Self Assessment can be used by a single person as a stand alone assessment. Many people do this to have a quick overview of their current situation before proposing a project idea to the stakeholders or project board.

A different way to approach the self assessments is to use them as an awareness and education tool by inviting a group of team members to the Self Assessment workshop.



This workshop will take a minimum of 4 hours. During the workshop you present the past-present and future as you view it for the Self Assessment subject (for example: DevOps, Agile Project Management or Cyber Security Risk Management).

Try to engage the participants in discussions and share their experience and educated opinions in relation to the subject. Make sure you keep a list of the topics discussed and a Who-What-When list in case there are tasks, activities or goals mentioned in passing. It's important you create a practical and action driven workshop that starts the momentum for process improvement and implementation.

You get the best results when you split the group up on smaller groups with 5+ participants in each group. I usually just do a split based on participant numbers, but you can choose to have the groups based on the team where they work, or the location where they work. Each group will give you different outcomes and the results will give you wonderful insights into the knowledge and awareness across the organisation.

After some guided instruction on how to fill in the spreadsheets the groups work independently on their laptops. After that you discuss the results and how this will flow into your improvement and implementation project.

It's a fun and very educational day for all participants.

Unsure about how to use the Self Assessment in your specific situation?

Need help to organise a workshop in your organisation? Fill in the [contact us](#) form for additional support and to answer any of your questions.

For more information on the Self Assessments and a full overview of the available topics, go to store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/

Can I use the Self Assessments for my clients?

You'd be surprised to know how many independent consultants use The Art of Service's products as part of their consulting services. Ever since we started selling our consultancy products in 2002 we have had a global loyal consultant client base.

We have even jokingly been named ***“the secret sauce behind many successful consultant”*** by a number of our customers.

That's a roundabout way of answering your question with: Yes, you are allowed to utilise these consultancy resources for your clients.

While we appreciate and prefer you mention the source of your information, all our products are unbranded and white-labeled so you can easily use them as part of your service delivery. This is the major value of our products – we have done the leg work so you can reap the benefits! No need to reinvent the wheel, just get some of our consultancy resources or toolkits and you'll hit the ground running.

The only thing we don't allow you to do is to sell the products “as is” to your clients or online as if it was your own product; it needs to be part of your unique service delivery. (look at it as the raw material that goes into making something amazing!)

If you have a need for a number of our Self Assessments, or would like to use the books as part of a workshop you deliver to your clients, make sure you contact us for volume discounts and affiliate options. We are always open to ways in which we can create a win-win scenario with our customers.

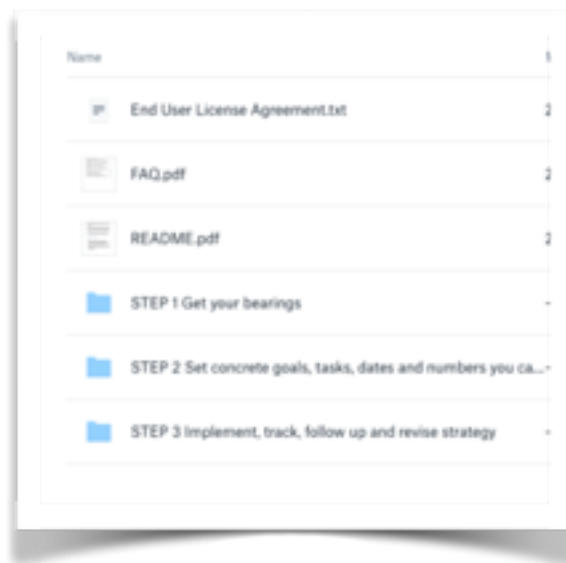
And as always – [contact us for more information](#) or to discuss any of your queries and opportunities.

I live in the US – where can I get the Self Assessment Guides?

While The Art of Service is based in Australia, most of our clients are in the USA, Canada and the UK.

To make sure you can purchase the Standard Requirements Self Assessments we made sure they are all available at book stores as well as digital downloads when you get them from our online store.

Included in the download are the following documents:



Step 1 has examples of the Self Assessment Spreadsheet and an overview of the deliverables to get an idea of what is going to happen when you start working with the Self Assessment

Step 2 has the working documents. These documents are for you and your team to use when you complete the Self Assessment questionnaires. It also includes a PDF version of the Self Assessment book.

Step 3 is a true treasure chest with project management implementation documents, templates and blueprints. These resources will really help you and your team to “hit the ground running” with the implementation of the improvement opportunities that are the result of the Self Assessment Activity.

Where can I purchase the Self Assessment?

As the Standard Requirements Self Assessment are presented to you as a book it means that you can purchase the Self Assessment at any book store. If they don't stock it normally they can order it in for you.

The large online bookstores stock our Self Assessment Guides so that makes it super easy for you. (When you purchase a physical book, don't forget to request access to the digital resources that come with the book).

Rather have instant access? You can purchase the Self Assessment as a digital [download from our online store here](#).

How quickly do I get the Self Assessment Delivered after I purchase?

Once you've made the decision that you want to do a Self Assessment for your client or your company you want to get started as soon as possible. That's only logical...

So how quickly can you start once you've purchased the Self Assessment?

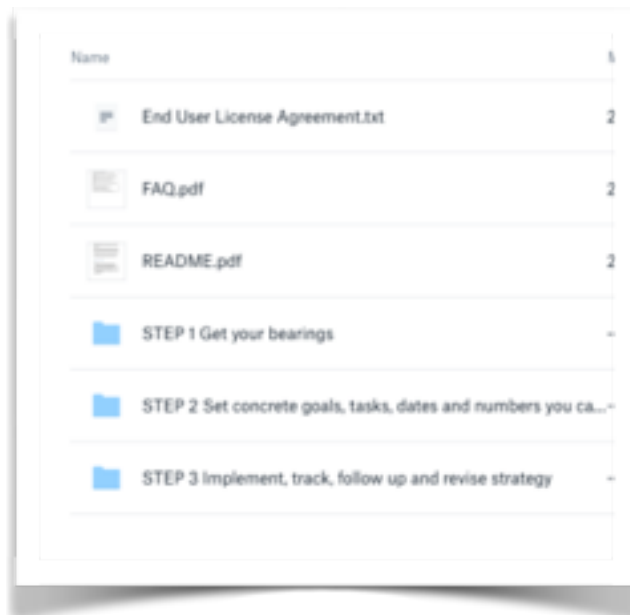
Like with many of the other questions, it depends on how you purchase the Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guides. These guides are available as physical books but also as instant digital downloads.

As the Standard Requirements Self Assessment are presented to you as a book it means that you can purchase the Self Assessment at any book store. If they don't stock it normally they can order it in for you. Depending on the store's ordering processes this can take a few days or a few weeks. Best to ask your bookstore owner on how long it will take.

The large online bookstores stock our Self Assessment Guides so that makes it super easy for you. (When you purchase a physical book, don't forget to request access to the digital resources that come with the book). When you order from an online bookstore you can choose if you want next day delivery or 2-3 days delivery.

As soon as you receive the book, send us an email with your proof of purchase so we can send you the digital resources that belong to your Self Assessment Guide. Due to timezone differences this may take up to 12-24 hours.

Example of what to expect to be included in your digital download of the Self Assessment Guide



Rather have instant access? You can purchase the Self Assessment as a <https://store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/>

How do I know the Standard Requirements Self Assessments are right for me?

The Standard Requirements Self Assessments are used to support the implementation of improved processes in government and private organisations. Both commercial and not-for-profit companies benefit from these Self Assessments.

Looking through our client list, the type of industries that utilise the Self Assessments range from Banking & Finance, Travel & Transport to Churches and Charitable organisations. And geography isn't a barrier either – our clients are from many different countries (including, but not limited to, USA, Canada, UK, Ireland, Colombia, United Arab Emirates, Australia) as long as the clients can work with the English language Self Assessments. That's the benefit of being able to purchase the Self Assessments as digital downloads from our online store, or from your favourite local or online bookstore.

Will the Self Assessment Guides work for me?

The reason why these Self Assessments are so versatile is because it doesn't really matter what type of business you are, every company needs to be serious about understanding where they are making progress in their improvement projects.

Each Self Assessment includes a questionnaire with generic process management related questions, as well as topic specific questions to fully comprehend the level of maturity you currently operate at for that specific topic / method / product / standard.

The Self Assessments are used as a benchmark exercise at the start of an implementation project to be able to measure implementation successes.

You can also use the Self Assessments as part of an awareness building exercise as part of your due diligence and feasibility study prior to engaging in a project.

The value you're getting from using the Self Assessment Guides is that you get a clear understanding of the gaps in the processes, but also the gaps in knowledge, understanding and communication between teams or departments.

So check them out in our store, I'm sure you can find a topic that is high on your priority list at the moment: store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/

Questions? Want to have a more in depth conversation about the Self Assessments and how they fit in your specific scenario? Don't hesitate and [contact us](#) now to book a phone call or appointment to discuss this further.

Who should be included in the Self Assessment workshop?

The Standard Requirements Self Assessment delivers the most value to your company when you get the opinion on a number of people in the organisation. That's why we include the spreadsheet that is prepared for a maximum of 10 participants.

It's up to you whether you organise a workshop in your company, or you send out the questionnaires out to the individuals. The results need to be collated in a single spreadsheet to ensure all inputs are taken into account for the graphs and follow up recommendations.

When we organise Self Assessment workshops we always try to have a cross section of staff participate in the exercise. Of course it depends on the topic at hand, but say for example we want to do the Self Assessment for Cyber Security Risk Management. To complete the questionnaires you need input from all parts of the business: IT, HR, Governance, Finance and operations. This is important because Cyber Security Risk Management impacts all areas of the business.

The benefit of this type of people selection is that the awareness that is created during the workshops spreads throughout the organisation. You also have a group of people present who can start implementing the recommendations straight away which is really powerful for the momentum of the improvement projects.

When you are considering who to invite to the Self Assessment, take into account who will most likely be accountable for the overall result of the improvement project, as well as the departments or teams who will be responsible for the actual leg work of performing the implementation tasks. You will most likely need budget allocation so inviting a budget holder or financial executive is recommended as well. Especially when the topic at hand (like in the example of Cyber Security Risk Management) has an impact on the entire company.

A different option is to do multiple Assessments, one for each team or department. By approaching the Self Assessment in this way you can identify the clear gaps in knowledge, communication and understanding between the various teams.

I want to buy multiple Self Assessment Guides - is there a discount?

Can't choose which Self Assessment Guide you want to utilise in your business? Not sure which subject would suit your business best? Why not get a couple? Each Standard Requirement Self Assessment Guide is unique and offers different questions to test against.

Or perhaps you want to combine some of the questions for multiple Self Assessment Guides as that suits your organisation at the moment? Just purchase a couple of related Self Assessment Guides and use the combined questions in the phases.

Each questionnaire has a few hundred questions. Some are standard process related questions that are appropriate for the topic, other questions are specifically written for the topic at hand.

Every Self Assessment Questionnaire follows the same structure – the 7 phases:

Phase 1: Recognize the value

Phase 2: Define what this topic means within the context of our business

Phase 3: Measure how we currently manage this topic

Phase 4: Analyze our findings

Phase 5: Improve the processes and implementation

Phase 6: Control the deliverables and results

Phase 7: Sustain the practices into the future

And remember: When a question doesn't make sense in your business context – you can skip it. This doesn't impact the overall rating and results of the assessment. What is important that by going through the list of questions, you have to think about them and make conscious and educated decisions on if and how you answer this specific question... that's where the true value lies.

Want to have a look at the different Self Assessment options we currently have on offer? [Make the journey to our online store, you'll be amazed!](#)

For clients who have needs for multiple Self Assessments, or for Enterprise requirements we offer volume discounts and enterprise purchasing options. [Contact us for more information or to request a bespoke price list.](#)

Are the Self Assessment current and up to date?

When you're ready to perform a Standard Requirements Self Assessment, you want to make sure that the questions you use are current and up to date. Nothing worse than looking at outdated information for benchmarking purposes.

To be honest this wouldn't be a major issue for the process driven and methodology based Standard Requirements, but when you're talking about specific projects or products it is very important that you're working with the most current information.

For example, the Cyber Security Risk Management will have a number of questions that will stand the test of time, but the more specific questions need to be updated on a regular basis to make sure you're testing for the latest Cyber Security Standard Requirements. There will be new requirements popping up all the time and we don't want you to miss out on this opportunity to benchmark your company against the latest requirements.

That's why we've created a 6-monthly automatic updating service. Every client who purchases a Self Assessment Guide automatically receives an email every 6 months with a new download link for the updated questionnaire. That way you're never working with outdated information. This service completely free of charge as a service to our customers.

One word of caution though... if you use the Self Assessments to gauge a measure of improvement over a period of time, we recommend you use the same questionnaire for each assessment. When you change the questionnaires each time you won't be able to do an honest comparison.

Want to know more about the automatic updates? Email us or [fill out the contact us form](#) on the website.

How to score the questions in the Standard Requirements Self Assessments?

We often receive questions from clients in relation to the way the ranking works in the Self Assessment.

For example this question we received yesterday:

I have got few questions as i tend not to understand the correlation between the questions and the ratings ?!

e.g.

in Recognise

1. To what extent do your HR professionals demonstrate competence in strategic contribution, HR delivery, business knowledge, personal credibility, and HR technology?<— Score
how a question starts with to what extent will be answered with a rating from 1-5
may be i am missing something please advice.

The answer to each of the questions is meant to be a subjective one; ***in your opinion***.

Here's how it works (taken from the description on page 6 of the book): Read the question and rate it with the following in front of mind:

'In my belief, the answer to this question is clearly defined'.

There are two ways in which you can choose to interpret this statement;

1. how aware are you that the answer to the question is clearly defined
2. for more in-depth analysis you can choose to gather evidence and confirm the answer to the question. This obviously will take more time, most Self-Assessment users opt for the first way to interpret the question and dig deeper later on based on the outcome of the overall Self-Assessment.

A score of '1' would mean that the answer is not clear at all, where a '5' would mean the answer is crystal clear and defined. Leave empty when the question is not applicable or you don't want to answer it, you can skip it without affecting your score. Write your score in the space provided.

But what does that mean? How should you answer these questions? Think of a body builder... you want to see their muscles. Everything has to be clearly defined: there is no misunderstanding where the muscle starts and other tissues finish. You can clearly see the muscle fibres without being distracted by other things.

That's how you answer these questions. Is it black and white? Do you have a solid answer to these questions?

So with this example (To what extent do your HR professionals demonstrate competence in strategic contribution, HR delivery, business knowledge, personal credibility, and HR technology?) How clear is it that your HR professionals demonstrate that competence? Is it obvious? If you have to search for the answer, or you're not 100% sure what it would look like when an HR professional demonstrates that competence you can't answer the question with a 5. It would be a 3 or 4 at most.

Unsure about how to use the Self Assessment in your specific situation?

Need help to organise a workshop in your organisation? Fill in the [contact us](#) form for additional support and to answer any of your questions.
For more information on the Self Assessments and a full overview of the available topics, go to store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/

How to use the Standard Requirements Self Assessments successfully

You're reading the customer reviews – you do your research because you want to make sure you are purchasing the best product for your situation. Eventually you realise that you want to perform a benchmark exercise for the business and to do that you need to have the Standard Requirements Self Assessment Guide.

And just when that thought leaves your mind, the next thought enters: When you think about a Self Assessment Guide, you wonder how to use the Self Assessment Guide successfully. You want to make sure you look like you know what you're talking about. And above all, you want to come out of this exercise with tangible results that can be implemented and measured.

After all – the reason why you want this is to achieve some results for the business... Either through a better understanding of the company's needs, or through more clarity around the tasks and activities that need to be done to ensure a more mature approach to the topic. To achieve this, it's important to understand the philosophy and strategy behind the Standard Requirements Self Assessments...

Unless you are talking a one-time, single-use project within a business, there should be a process. Whether that process is managed and implemented by humans, AI, or a combination of the two, it needs to be designed by someone with a complex enough perspective to ask the right questions. Someone capable of asking the right questions and step back and say, 'What are we really trying to accomplish here? And is there a different way to look at it?'

Not everybody has the time or skill set to come up with these questions, which is why we have done the work for you. The Self Assessment Guides give you a set of questions that will give you a head-start with your assessment work. They help you to gain clarity of the specific items you need to work on.

Are these questions the perfect set for every situation? Probably not – for some businesses, absolutely but for some companies there may be questions in the Self Assessment that don't make sense. And that's fine too. (You can just skip the questions that don't make sense in your specific situation).

You can be successful with the implementation of improvement activities by starting the Self Assessment process with answering just those questions that make sense to you and your business. That's going to give you focus, structure, and a much better understanding of where you are positioned right now.

The second important thing to understand about the Self Assessments is that the result is not an average of what everybody is thinking. It is not about reaching a consensus. It's about uncovering the knowledge that is hidden within the individuals in the company. The participants answer the questions with "In my opinion/belief the answer to this question is clearly defined". It's black & white, it's hot or cold but it can't be both.

Want us to help you out with getting the most from your Standard Requirement Self Assessments? Reach out to discuss your needs and requirements. We would love to help you achieve the clarity and results that you want to see.

The full catalog of Self Assessments is available from our online: [store: https://store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/](https://store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/)

How do I present the Self Assessment results to my management team?

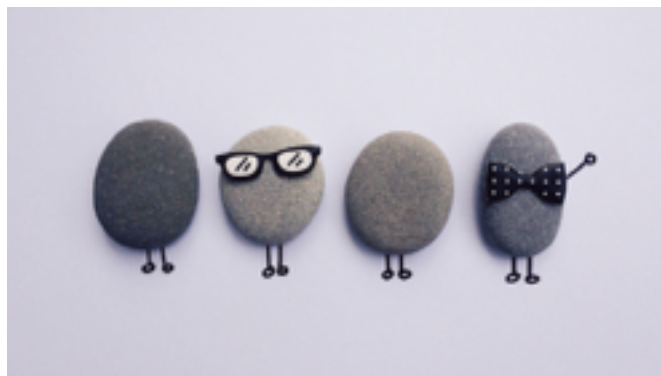
Standard Requirements Self Assessments are a powerful tool to use in your business. They will help create understanding and awareness around the maturity levels of the organisation for the chosen topic. You can also use the process as a team building and communication program to make sure everybody on the team is on the same page.

From our experience running the Self Assessment workshops, this is a powerful way to create conversation and dialog between teams and departments that are stakeholders in the topic.

With this in mind, it is important to choose the correct people to participate in a Self Assessment workshop. When you have the right people in the room it will be a lot easier to disseminate the results and communicate the required follow up steps for improvement throughout the organisation.

However, we also understand that sometimes it is very difficult (dare I say: impossible?) to get everybody in the room that should be there... if you can't have the preferred team members you can always go with the 2nd tier of employees for the assessment workshop. However, if you choose to do this, you will need to present the findings, results and recommendations to the management team for buy in and ongoing commitment. (For more information on how to plan a Self Assessment workshop, [read this article](#))

If this is where you're stuck, check the tabs in the Self Assessment Spreadsheet. You will find that the Self Assessment helps you by providing you with the data, but also graphs and RACI diagrams to share with your Management Team. (For more information on how to read the charts - [check this article](#))



The RACI diagram becomes the skeleton of your presentation: this is the meat you want to present to your Management Team. They will need to know what the top 3 activities are that came out of the collective intelligence in the room. Each item on the RACI chart has been identified as being able to bring the most benefits once implemented.

And of course - reach out to us when you need a hand with the interpretation of the results. We can also help you with the workshop facilitation and briefing your management team on the results and our recommendations.

Feel free to contact us for additional support and to answer any of your questions.

For more information on the Self Assessments and a full overview of the available topics, go to store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/

Why do you use a spreadsheet for the Information Security Self Assessment Guide?

At first it doesn't seem right... that's why we get this question often.. in this day and age we expect most tools to be online or available as an app. However, we also found that most people feel quite strongly about the need to keep their Self Assessment information offline so that it can't easily be shared with other people (and if it is shared, there will be evidence).

For example, earlier this month we received this question by email:

I have noticed that if you don't have a proper software, you are left with excel.
The reason why might surprise you: security - the information clients enter in the self assessments is very sensitive. Offline use enables users be in control of their data more than they feel they would be able to do online.

In the same email this client asked what templates are available that can help and Information Security Professional:

Do you know if there is by any chance a book or a CD with all, or most of the templates that an information Security Professional is supposed to deal with?

Information security is a very, very broad and deep terrain - we have self assessments on a whole range of security related topics:

- Application Security: Standard Requirements
- Chief information security officer: Standard Requirements
- Cloud access security broker: Standard Requirements
- Cloud computing security: Standard Requirements
- Cloud Security: Standard Requirements
- Container Security Initiative: Standard Requirements
- Cyber Security Resilience: Standard Requirements
- Data Center Security: Standard Requirements
- Data security: Standard Requirements
- Database security: Standard Requirements
- Endpoint security: Standard Requirements
- Enterprise information security architecture: Standard Requirements
- Information security awareness: Standard Requirements
- IT Security Management: Standard Requirements
- IT Security: Standard Requirements
- Managed Security Service Provider: Standard Requirements
- Microsoft Security Development Lifecycle: Standard Requirements
- Network Security: Standard Requirements
- Security Outsourcing: Standard Requirements

For more information on the Self Assessments and a full overview of the available topics, go to store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/

Are the Self Assessment Guides suitable to prepare for my exam?

The Art of Service is known for our learning materials and eLearning certification products. Which is why people ask questions about The Standard Requirement Self Assessment Guides as it may sound as if these guides are part of our training products.

For example, this question about our Salesforce Marketing Cloud Complete Self Assessment Guide:

I am about to buy your book "Salesforce Marketing Cloud Complete Self-Assessment Guide" and I had a question for you. I have 3 Salesforce Certifications (Admin, Advanced Admin and Sales Cloud). I have worked for a year as a Marketing Cloud product owner in an international project and would like to obtain now the Marketing Cloud Consultant Certification. Is your book suitable for preparing the exam? How are the 611 questions sent? What sort of questions are? Does the book explain all the modules in Mk cloud (email studio, sms, journeys...)? Looking forward to hearing to your news. Thanks in advance.

Answer:

Great question; It's not an examination preparation guide, the Salesforce Marketing Cloud self assessment is designed for professionals and their organisations to start the rollout and/or get maximum value for their organization out of it.

So basically the standard requirements questions in the Self Assessment Guides are specific for the topic (in this case Salesforce Marketing Cloud) to guide and help organisations to assess their process maturity. The outcome of the assessment is a solid understanding and awareness of how well thought out the processes are and where there are gaps in understanding and knowledge.

These guides are not meant as study guides to get further in depth theory knowledge of a subject, nor are they meant as study guides. (It's not that kind of assessment...)

Feel free to contact us for additional support and to answer any of your questions.

For more information on the Self Assessments and a full overview of the available topics, go to store.theartofservice.com/self-assessments/