DRAFT - IT Project Guidance

Persona Development

Version:

0.1

## Purpose

This document provides a common reference point to support consistent understanding, analysis, and system design across programmes and workstreams. It aims to clarify key concepts and structures, reduce ambiguity, and enable alignment across technical and non-technical stakeholders. The content may be reused or referenced in other documents to support coherent planning, delivery, and review.

## Synopsis

Personas represent archetypes of individuals who interact with a system, policy, or service. They are fictional but grounded in research or stakeholder engagement, and they help structure understanding of who consumes, contributes to, or is affected by a service. This guidance outlines their purpose, development, common pitfalls, and how they underpin role definitions and usability considerations in IT projects.

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# Introduction

In the context of enterprise system development, particularly in public sector environments, establishing a shared understanding of who the service is for remains one of the most foundational yet under-practised disciplines. While organisations frequently speak in terms of users, roles, and customers, these terms are often used inconsistently and without clear definition. Persona modelling addresses this gap by formally articulating representative human presences—both direct and indirect—whose perspectives must be considered in the design and operation of services.

# Document Background

This document forms part of the organisation’s IT Book of Knowledge (ITBOK), structured to support consistent terminology, aligned analysis, and capability-focused delivery. It draws from the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge (BABOK), specifically within the domain of stakeholder analysis and requirements elicitation.

# Background

Successful system delivery depends on a structured understanding of the context into which it will operate. This includes identifying all relevant people—individuals or groups—who may interact with, be impacted by, or require representation in the design. Analysis that fails to account for the full spectrum of Personas leads to downstream rework, poor alignment with real-world need, and the entrenchment of misallocated Roles and permissions.

Personas are distinct from Stakeholders. Stakeholders are broadly defined as individuals or groups with an interest in, influence over, or impact from the project or its outcomes. Not all stakeholders are represented as Personas, and not all Personas are stakeholders in the traditional governance or funding sense. Personas are concerned with characterising how particular human presences interact with a service, not simply that they have an interest in it. Stakeholders are typically identified early in strategic framing or governance planning, while Personas emerge from service-specific analysis and inform operational design.

Personas must be defined before Role design can occur. While Roles describe system-level authorisations or responsibilities, Personas provide the basis for understanding why and how those Roles arise. Additionally, Persona modelling often precedes user journey development, as each journey must be grounded in a specific human perspective. In practice, Roles typically follow Personas to operationalise what Personas require, and User Journeys follow Roles to map how those users engage with the system to achieve specific outcomes.

Appendices

Appendix A - Document Information

Authors & Collaborators

* Sky Sigal, Solution Architect

### Versions

* 1. Initial Draft

### Images

[Figure 1: TODO Image 2](#_Toc144995112)

### Tables

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### References

**There are no sources in the current document.**

### Review Distribution

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### Audience

The document is technical in nature, but parts are expected to be read and/or validated by a non-technical audience.

### Structure

Where possible, the document structure is guided by either ISO-\* standards or best practice.

### Diagrams

Diagrams are developed for a wide audience. Unless specifically for a technical audience, where the use of industry standard diagram types (ArchiMate, UML, C4), is appropriate, diagrams are developed as simple “box & line” monochrome diagrams.

### Acronyms

API

: [Application Programming Interface](#Term_ApplicationProgrammingInterface).

DDD

: Domain Driven Design

GUI

: [Graphical User Interface](#Term_ApplicationProgrammingInterface). A form of [UI](#Acronym_UI).

ICT

: acronym for Information & Communication Technology, the domain of defining Information elements and using technology to automate their communication between entities. [IT](#Acronym_IT) is a subset of ICT.

IT

: acronym for Information, using Technology to automate and facilitate its management.

UI

: User Interface. Contrast with [API](#Acronym_API).

### Terms

Refer to the project’s Glossary.

Application Programming Interface

: an Interface provided for other systems to invoke (as opposed to User Interfaces).

Capability

: a capability is what an organisation or system must be able to achieve to meet its goals. Each capability belongs to a domain and is realised through one or more functions that, together, deliver the intended outcome within that area of concern.

Domain

: a domain is a defined area of knowledge, responsibility, or activity within an organisation or system. It groups related capabilities, entities, and functions that collectively serve a common purpose. Each capability belongs to a domain, and each function operates within one.

Entity

: an entity is a core object of interest within a domain, usually representing a person, place, thing, or event that holds information and can change over time, such as a Student, School, or Enrolment.

Function

: a function is a specific task or operation performed by a system, process, or person. Functions work together to enable a capability to be carried out. Each function operates within a domain and supports the delivery of one or more capabilities.

Person

: a physical person, who has one or more Personas. Not necessarily a system User.

Persona

: a facet that a Person presents to a Group of some kind.

Quality

: a quality is a measurable or observable attribute of a system or outcome that indicates how well it meets expectations. Examples include reliability, usability, and performance. Refer to the ISO-25000 SQuaRE series of standards.

User

: a human user of a system via its UIs.

User Interface

: a system interface intended for use by system users. Most computer system UIs are Graphics User Interfaces ([GUI](#Acronym_GUI)) or Text/Console User Interfaces (TUI).