



Security Industry Authority

High level summary of changes to the ACS Standard and Self-Assessment Workbook

September 2018

Introduction

The ACS Review concluded that the following changes to the ACS standard and self-assessment workbook are required:

- Clarifying language
- Providing further detail to clarify requirements
- Streamlining the content to remove overlap
- Removing negative statements
- Simplifying the format and presentation of the self-assessment workbook

The changes have an impact on scoring. Changes to scoring are summarised towards the end of this document.

A fundamental consideration when making changes was to make the ACS standard and self-assessment workbook more accessible to new applicant organisations, without lowering the achievement level.

Further changes to the standard and the self-assessment workbook **are summarised on the following pages.**

Changes to the Standard criteria

To reflect a focus on service delivery, the second criterion of the ACS standard has been re-worded and re-focused to emphasise the delivery of service, and place less emphasis on process.

The content previously contained in the criterion 'Corporate Social Responsibility' has been embedded within 'Strategy'.

The content of the 'Results' criterion has been embedded within each of the other criteria. New indicators have been developed and added to the self-assessment workbook where there are currently some gaps to create a more cohesive document.

These changes have an impact on scoring as a consequence of there being fewer criteria in the new standard than the current.

(Current) April 2017

1. Strategy
2. Processes
3. Commercial Relationship Management
4. Financial Management
5. Resources
6. People
7. Leadership
8. Corporate Social Responsibility
9. Results

New (April 2019)

1. Strategy
2. Service Delivery
3. Commercial Relationship Management
4. Financial Management
5. Resource Management
6. People
7. Leadership

Changes to the self-assessment workbook

We have removed negative indicators (e.g. “no customer or consumer performance indicators have been established”) and made the difference between indicators more defined.

This has resulted in a more streamlined self-assessment workbook, which simply presents the ‘required achievement level’ and additional indicators. For most indicators the required achievement level remains unchanged; feedback suggested that the level of demand of the ACS is challenging, but appropriate.

Changes to presenting the required achievement level:

1.1.1

The organisation has a clear approach to business that is acted on and communicated to all staff

| REQUIRED ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL | IMPROVEMENT LEVEL I |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The organisation can describe its overall approach to business including its role, purpose or mission and values. 2. The approach to business supports delivery. 3. The approach to business and its importance, including clearly defining what is expected of staff is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explained to staff when they join the organisation • Communicated in the appropriate format to staff on an ongoing basis. 4. The approach to business focuses on meeting the needs of customers, consumers and the wider public. 5. Plans to maintain and develop the business are in line with the approach to business. <p>* Please see the Glossary for a definition of the terms, ‘mission’ and ‘values’.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The approach to business clearly address the needs of other key stakeholders. 2. Staff understanding of the approach to business is monitored through checks during service delivery. |

We have also brought in the glossary from the self-assessment workbook guide, so that the self-assessment workbook is more self-contained.

Where some indicators were identified as benefiting from additional detail, this has been brought in from the self-assessment workbook guide.

In the example below, additional detail added from the self-assessment workbook guide is highlighted in yellow; additional detail obtained from the market testing is highlighted in blue.

1.1.2

Key stakeholders are aware of the organisation's overall approach to business

| REQUIRED ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL | IMPROVEMENT LEVEL 1 |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Suppliers, sub-contractors, existing and potential customers are always made aware of the role, purpose or mission and values of the organisation during the negotiation and acquisitions of new business.</p> <p>2. Customers are asked to comment on how well the organisation's approach to business is applied (e.g. as part of a customer satisfaction survey).</p> | <p>Other stakeholders such as consumers, police and other authorities are made aware of the organisation's overall approach to business.</p> |
| | <p>IMPROVEMENT LEVEL 2</p> <p>There is ongoing communication of the approach to business to all stakeholders such as consumers, police, other authorities and the wider public.</p> <p>Other stakeholders are asked to comment on how well the approach to business is applied by the organisation and by its staff.</p> |

Merged indicators

A number of indicators have been combined where they are saying very similar things.

These are listed below. The numbering refers to the numbering in the current (April 2017) version of the self-assessment workbook, for ease of reference.

1.4.1 'The management of internal and external communications is handled effectively' and 5.1.1 'Information key to the business is delivered in an effective manner to staff and other stakeholders'.

New indicator number: 1.3.1 'The management of internal and external communications is handled effectively' (title unchanged from 1.4.1).

8.1.1 'There is a policy relating to corporate social responsibility which is communicate' and 8.2.1 'The organisation considers its impact on the environment in service delivery and running the business'.

New indicator number and title: 1.4.1 'There is a policy relating to corporate social responsibility and the environment which is communicated'.

5.1.3 'Adherence to the Data Protection Act 1998 is apparent' and 5.1.4 'Personnel records and other key information are maintained effectively'.

New indicator number and title: 5.1.2 'The organisation complies with legislation on the handling of and protection of data'.

7.1.2 'Leaders are involved in the development and implementation of relevant policies and procedures' 7.1.3 'Managers and directors responsible for processes and key personnel can demonstrate an understanding of procedures' and 7.1.4 'Leaders review key results and ensure that improvements are planned and implemented'.

New title: 7.1.2 Managers and directors responsible for processes and key personnel are involved in developing and can demonstrate an understanding of procedures'.

6.2.3 'Staff are trained to the required standard', and 6.2.4 'The organisation ensures that minimum competence of staff is maintained' and 6.2.7 'All supervisors are trained to the required standard for their role'.








New title: 'Staff are trained to the required standard' (indicator number unchanged from 6.2.3).

6.1.3 'A grievance procedure is in place which is implemented and communicated' and 6.1.5 'A disciplinary and grievance procedure is in place which is implemented and communicated'.

New indicator number and title: 6.1.4 'A disciplinary and grievance produce is in place which is implemented and communicated'.

Results

All of the indicators in the former 'Results' criterion have been embedded within the other criteria and three new indicators developed. As follows:

| Criterion | Results indicator/s |
|---|---|
|  1. Strategy | 1.5.1 The organisation regularly reviews performance against success factors and performance indicators (also includes merged former 9.5.1 'The review of performance against internal and external environmental/societal/health and safety performance indicators' and 9.5.2 'Key measures are used to indicate reputation within the local community') |
|  2. Service Delivery | 2.6.1 The organisation regularly reviews performance against service level agreements and/or key customer performance indicators |
|  3. Commercial Relationship Management | 3.5.1 The organisation regularly reviews performance against responses from customer opinion gathering |
|  4. Financial Management | 4.4.1 The organisation regularly reviews performance against key financial indicators critical to the business (new indicator) |
|  5. Resource Management | 5.3.1 The organisation regularly reviews the management of resources (new indicator) |
|  6. People | 6.5.1 The organisation regularly reviews performance against key staff performance indicators 6.5.2 The organisation regularly reviews performance against responses from staff opinion gathering |
|  7. Leadership | 7.5.1 Leaders with overall responsibility for the success of the organisation review results/performance against critical areas of the business and drive continuous improvement (new indicator) |

Impact on scoring

As all of the incremental steps in the current self-assessment workbook have been combined into one 'required achievement level' per indicator, this automatically negates the need for 'minus' points up to a pass mark of zero (as is currently the situation).

Instead, where an organisation achieves an indicator, they will achieve a 'pass'. All indicators must be achieved in order to achieve an overall 'pass' for ACS approval. As is currently the case, if an indicator is not appropriate to an organisation, the organisation may mark this as 'not applicable' and they will therefore be excused from requiring a pass for that particular indicator.

2.2.1

There is a current and effective plan to ensure continuity of service delivery

| REQUIRED ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL | IMPROVEMENT LEVEL 1 |
|--|--|
| 1. Plans for business continuity cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periods of labour shortages • Incident and crisis management in all aspects of service delivery • IT systems and technology 2. The plans are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant to the business • Reviewed periodically to ensure continued effectiveness • Tested against some of the highest risk scenarios | The plans also contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of actions to be taken • Named responsible people The plans cover the full scope of the organisation. |
| | IMPROVEMENT LEVEL 2 |
| | The plans for business continuity are tested regularly for effectiveness. Actions resulting from tests of the plans for business continuity are created with deadlines for their implementation. |
| | IMPROVEMENT LEVEL 3 |
| | The organisation is externally accredited to a business continuity best practice system, such as BS EN ISO 22301. The organisation can demonstrate that it effectively contributes to business continuity best practice and/or standards development. |

1 'plus'
point

As is currently the case, where a contractor achieves over and above the 'required achievement level', they will be awarded points for each 'improvement level' reached.

The self-assessment workbook is now made up of 78 indicators. The maximum score achievable is 149.

Security Industry Authority Approved Contractor Scheme

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Please quote 'ACS' in your correspondence.

www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk/acs

ACS17-18/0918