



IS Audit and Assurance Guideline 2005 Due Professional Care

The specialised nature of information systems (IS) audit and assurance and the skills necessary to perform such engagements require standards that apply specifically to IS audit and assurance. The development and dissemination of the IS audit and assurance standards are a cornerstone of the ISACA® professional contribution to the audit community.

IS audit and assurance standards define mandatory requirements for IS auditing and reporting and inform:

- IS audit and assurance professionals of the minimum level of acceptable performance required to meet the professional responsibilities set out in the ISACA Code of Professional Ethics
- Management and other interested parties of the profession's expectations concerning the work of practitioners
- Holders of the Certified Information Systems Auditor® (CISA®) designation of requirements. Failure to comply with these standards may result in an investigation into the CISA holder's conduct by the ISACA Board of Directors or appropriate committee and, ultimately, in disciplinary action.

IS audit and assurance professionals should include a statement in their work, where appropriate, acknowledging that the engagement has been conducted in accordance with ISACA IS audit and assurance standards or other applicable professional standards.

ITAF™, a professional practices framework for IS audit and assurance, provides multiple levels of guidance:

- **Standards**, divided into three categories:
 - General standards (1000 series)—Are the guiding principles under which the IS audit and assurance profession operates. They apply to the conduct of all assignments, and deal with the IS audit and assurance professional's ethics, independence, objectivity and due care as well as knowledge, competency and skill. The standards statements (in **bold**) are mandatory.
 - Performance standards (1200 series)—Deal with the conduct of the assignment, such as planning and supervision, scoping, risk and materiality, resource mobilisation, supervision and assignment management, audit and assurance evidence, and the exercising of professional judgement and due care
 - Reporting standards (1400 series)—Address the types of reports, means of communication and the information communicated
- **Guidelines**, supporting the standards and also divided into three categories:
 - General guidelines (2000 series)
 - Performance guidelines (2200 series)
 - Reporting guidelines (2400 series)
- **Tools and techniques**, providing additional guidance for IS audit and assurance professionals, e.g., white papers, IS audit/assurance programmes, the COBIT® 5 family of products

An online glossary of terms used in ITAF is provided at www.isaca.org/glossary.

Disclaimer: ISACA has designed this guidance as the minimum level of acceptable performance required to meet the professional responsibilities set out in the ISACA Code of Professional Ethics. ISACA makes no claim that use of this product will assure a successful outcome. The publication should not be considered inclusive of any proper procedures and tests or exclusive of other procedures and tests that are reasonably directed to obtaining the same results. In determining the propriety of any specific procedure or test, controls professionals should apply their own professional judgement to the specific control circumstances presented by the particular systems or IS environment.

The ISACA Professional Standards and Career Management Committee (PSCMC) is committed to wide consultation in the preparation of standards and guidance. Prior to issuing any document, an exposure draft is issued internationally for general public comment. Comments may also be submitted to the attention of the director of professional standards development via email (standards@isaca.org), fax (+1.847. 253.1443) or postal mail (ISACA International Headquarters, 3701 Algonquin Road, Suite 1010, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008-3105, USA).

ISACA 2013-2014 Professional Standards and Career Management Committee

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IS Audit and Assurance Guideline 2005 Due Professional Care

The guideline is presented in the following sections:

1. Guideline purpose and linkage to standards
 2. Guideline content
 3. Linkage to standards and COBIT 5 processes
 4. Terminology
 5. Effective date
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1. Guideline Purpose and Linkage to Standards

- 1.0 Introduction** This section clarifies the:
- 1.1 Purpose of the guideline
 - 1.2 Linkage to standards
 - 1.3 Term usage of 'audit function' and 'professionals'
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- 1.1 Purpose**
- 1.1.1** The purpose of this guideline is to clarify the term 'due professional care' as it applies to performing an audit engagement with integrity and care in compliance with the ISACA Code of Professional Ethics.
 - 1.1.2** This guideline explains how IS audit and assurance professionals should apply due professional care in planning, performing and reporting on an audit engagement.
 - 1.1.3** IS audit and assurance professionals should consider this guideline when determining how to implement the standard, use [professional judgement](#) in its application, be prepared to justify any departure and seek additional guidance if considered necessary.
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- 1.2 Linkage to Standards**
- 1.2.1** Standard 1002 Organisational Independence
 - 1.2.2** Standard 1003 Professional Independence
 - 1.2.3** Standard 1005 Due Professional Care
 - 1.2.4** Standard 1006 Proficiency
 - 1.2.5** Standard 1205 Evidence
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- 1.3 Term Usage**
- 1.3.1** Hereafter:
 - 'IS audit and assurance function' is referred to as 'audit function'
 - 'IS audit and assurance professionals' are referred to as 'professionals'
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2. Guideline Content

- 2.0 Introduction** The guideline content section is structured to provide information on the following key audit and assurance engagement topics:
- 2.1 Professional scepticism and competency
 - 2.2 Application
 - 2.3 Life cycle of the engagement
 - 2.4 Communication
 - 2.5 Managing information

IS Audit and Assurance Guideline 2005 Due Professional Care

2.1 Professional Scepticism and Competency

- 2.1.1** Due professional care applies to the exercise of professional judgement in the conduct of work performed. Due professional care implies that professionals should approach matters requiring professional judgement with [professional scepticism](#), diligence, integrity and care. They should maintain this attitude throughout the whole engagement.
- 2.1.2** Professionals should maintain competence, independence and an objective state of mind in all matters related to the conduct of the audit engagement. They should be honest, impartial and unbiased in addressing issues and reaching conclusions.
- 2.1.3** Exercising due professional care should make professionals consider the possible existence of inefficiencies, misuses, errors and exclusions, incompetence, conflicts of interest, or fraud. It should also make professionals attentive for specific conditions or activities where these issues can occur.
- 2.1.4** By keeping informed of and complying with developments in professional standards, professionals demonstrate sufficient understanding and [professional competence](#) to achieve the IS audit and assurance objectives. Detailed guidance can be found in Standard 1006 Proficiency.
- 2.1.5** Professionals should conduct the audit engagement with diligence while adhering to professional standards and statutory and regulatory requirements.
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2.2 Application

- 2.2.1** Due professional care should extend to every aspect of the audit, including, but not restricted to, evaluating audit risk, accepting audit assignments, establishing audit scope, formulating audit objectives, planning the audit, conducting the audit, allocating resources to the audit, selecting audit tests, evaluating test results, documenting the audit, arriving at audit conclusions, reporting and delivering audit results. In doing this, professionals should determine or evaluate the:
- Type, level, skill and competence of resources required to meet the IS audit and assurance objectives
 - Significance of identified risk and the potential effect of such risk on the subject of the audit
 - Sufficiency, validity and relevance of audit evidence gathered
 - Competence, integrity and conclusions of others upon whose work professionals place reliance
- 2.2.2** Due professional care also requires professionals to conduct all engagements with the concept of reasonable assurance in mind.
- 2.2.3** Professionals should serve in the interest of stakeholders in a lawful and honest manner, while maintaining high standards of conduct and character, and should not engage in acts discreditable to the profession.
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2.3 Life Cycle of the Engagement

- 2.3.1** Professionals should plan the audit engagement completely and in a timely manner by exercising due professional care to ensure the availability of the appropriate resources and a timely completion of the audit engagement.

IS Audit and Assurance Guideline 2005 Due Professional Care

2.3 Life Cycle of the Engagement cont. Professionals assigned to the project should collectively possess the needed skills, knowledge and relevant competencies to perform the audit engagement.

2.3.2 Professionals should conduct the audit engagement by applying due professional care, i.e., by following the appropriate professional standards to ensure a quality and complete audit conclusion or opinion.

2.4 Communication

2.4.1 The defined roles and responsibilities should be communicated to the team members before the start of the project to ensure the team's adherence to the appropriate professional standards during the audit engagement.

2.4.2 During the audit engagement professionals should appropriately communicate with auditees and relevant stakeholders to ensure their cooperation.

2.4.3 Professionals should address their findings to auditees of the audit engagement.

2.4.4 Professionals should document and communicate concerns regarding the application of professional standards to appropriate parties to resolve concerns.

2.4.5 Professionals should exercise due professional care while informing appropriate parties of the results of work performed.

2.5 Obtaining and Managing Information

2.5.1 The professionals should have reasonable expectation that management understands its obligations and responsibilities in providing appropriate, relevant and timely information required for the performance of the audit engagement.

2.5.2 Professionals should take reasonable measures to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of information obtained in the course of their duties unless disclosure is required by legal authority. Such information must not be used for personal benefit or released to inappropriate parties.

2.5.3 Information should be retained and properly disposed of in accordance with organisational policies and relevant laws, rules and regulations.

3. Linkage to Standards and COBIT 5 Processes

3.0 Introduction This section provides an overview of relevant:

- 3.1 Linkage to standards
- 3.2 Linkage to COBIT 5 processes
- 3.3 Other guidance

3.1 Linkage to Standards The table provides an overview of:

- The most relevant ISACA Standards that are directly supported by this guideline
- Those standard statements that are most relevant to this guideline

Note: Only those standard statements relevant to this guideline are listed.

IS Audit and Assurance Guideline 2005 Due Professional Care

Standard Title	Relevant Standard Statements
1002 Organisational Independence	The IS audit and assurance function shall be independent of the area or activity being reviewed to permit objective completion of the audit and assurance engagement.
1003 Professional Independence	IS audit and assurance professionals shall be independent and objective in both attitude and appearance in all matters related to audit and assurance engagements.
1005 Due Professional Care	IS audit and assurance professionals shall exercise due professional care, including observance of applicable professional audit standards, in planning, performing and reporting on the results of engagements.
1006 Proficiency	<p>IS audit and assurance professionals, collectively with others assisting with the assignment, shall possess adequate skills and proficiency in conducting IS audit and assurance engagements and be professionally competent to perform the work required.</p> <p>IS audit and assurance professionals, collectively with others assisting with the assignment, shall possess adequate knowledge of the subject matter.</p> <p>IS audit and assurance professionals shall maintain professional competence through appropriate continuing professional education and training.</p>
1205 Audit Evidence	<p>IS audit and assurance professionals shall obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to draw reasonable conclusions on which to base the engagement results.</p> <p>IS audit and assurance professionals shall evaluate the sufficiency of evidence obtained to support conclusions and achieve engagement objectives.</p>

3.2 Linkage to COBIT 5 Processes

The table provides an overview of the most relevant:

- COBIT 5 processes
- COBIT 5 process purpose

Specific activities performed as part of executing these processes are contained in *COBIT 5: Enabling Processes*.

COBIT 5 Process	Process Purpose
EDM01 Ensure governance framework setting and maintenance.	Provide a consistent approach integrated and aligned with the enterprise governance approach. To ensure that IT-related decisions are made in line with the enterprise's strategies and objectives, ensure that IT-related processes are overseen effectively and transparently, compliance with legal and regulatory requirements is confirmed, and the governance requirements for board members are met.

IS Audit and Assurance Guideline 2005 Due Professional Care

COBIT 5 Process	Process Purpose
APO07 Manage human resources.	Optimise human resources capabilities to meet enterprise objectives.
MEA02 Monitor, evaluate and assess the system of internal control.	Obtain transparency for key stakeholders on the adequacy of the system of internal controls and thus provide trust in operations, confidence in the achievement of enterprise objectives and an adequate understanding of residual risk.
MEA03 Monitor, evaluate and assess compliance with external requirements.	Ensure that the enterprise is compliant with all applicable external requirements.

3.3 Other Guidance

When implementing standards and guidelines, professionals are encouraged to seek other guidance, when considered necessary. This could be from IS audit and assurance:

- Colleagues from within the organisation and/or outside the enterprise, e.g., through professional associations or professional social media groups
- Management
- Governance bodies within the organisation, e.g., audit committee
- Other guidance (e.g., books, papers, other guidelines)

4. Terminology

Term	Definition
Professional competence	Proven level of ability, together with professional experience, often linked to qualifications issued by relevant professional bodies and compliance with their codes of practice and standards
Professional judgement	The application of relevant knowledge and experience in making informed decisions about the courses of action that are appropriate in the circumstances of the IS audit and assurance engagement
Professional scepticism	An attitude that includes a questioning mind and a critical assessment of audit evidence. Source: American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) AU 230.07

5. Effective Date

5.1 Effective Date This revised guideline is effective for all IS audit and assurance engagements beginning on or after 1 September 2014.