



TickIT^{plus} Implementation Note

Title	TickIT ^{plus} and Requirements Standards		
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The question has been asked if TickIT^{plus} detracts, changes or in any way discourages the adoption of the requirements standards linked to the scheme. The simple answer is absolutely not, and in fact, TickIT^{plus} actually encourages the adoption and use of these requirements standards.

The design philosophy behind the TickIT^{plus} scheme was to make use of existing standards wherever possible. For example, the capability approach used is taken from ISO/IEC 15504 part 2, the processes in the Base Process Library were adapted from ISO/IEC 12207 and ISO/IEC 15288, and the underlying practices were linked to solid and well established requirement standards, initially ISO 9001, ISO/IEC 20000-1 and ISO/IEC 27001.

The Base Process Library consists of 40 processes that cover the typical activities seen necessary for good business management; such as human resource management, improvement, risk management, and for the IT sector specifically, project management, service level agreement, architectural design, security management, operations, etc. ISO/IEC 15504 states that a process should, as a minimum, include a purpose and an outcome. It goes on to state that for a process to be at level 1 (performed) it should cause a change of state, generate an artefact and work within identified constraints; this being process attribute PA 1.1. Therefore to support this, well defined processes should also identify the activities necessary to cause the change of state and the outputs or work products that should result from the process. Starting from the traditional process model consisting of inputs, outputs, resources and controls, a process in the TickIT^{plus} Base Process Library consists of 5 elements; the process purpose, one or more outcomes, a number of base practices, and input and output work products. There are also mappings to the requirements standards, but this is discussed in more detail next.

In ISO/IEC 15504, for a process to be classed as managed (level 2), it must exhibit additional attributes such as having; a clear process objective, been planned, monitored and adjusted when necessary, resources identified and made available along with defined roles and responsibilities, and interfaces being established, all of these comprising process attribute PA 2.1. It also discusses that the work products are managed in terms of their requirements, controls and disposition and this forms process attribute PA 2.2.

There was always a requirement for the TickIT^{plus} scheme to satisfy at least ISO 9001, ISO/IEC 20000-1 and ISO/IEC 27001 and therefore there would always need to be links to these standards. However, ISO 9001 the core standard is not particularly process orientated but is mainly a set of requirements. For example, taking any one requirement, say clause 7.3.5 Design and development verification, it addresses the necessary activity for verification but, according to ISO/IEC 15504 as discussed above, other attributes are needed to make it work effectively. These other attributes don't just happen by chance but are the result of undertaking other requirements in the standard. For this particular case in TickIT^{plus} the verification process objective should be established and this could come from clause 5.4.1. The verification process needs to be planned, monitored and adjusted, when necessary, and this could involve clause 7.3.1 for planning, clause 7.5.1 for monitoring and clause 8.5.2 for making adjustments or corrections when necessary. The need for verification resources could come from clause 6.1 and the need for controlled work products could come from clauses 4.2.3 and 4.2.4. Most models (such as ISO 9001) are highly integrated, although this is sometimes overlooked when implementing managements systems and processes against these models, especially if they are simply treated as checklists of things



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to do.

In order to define the BPL processes it was felt necessary to identify the key steps that would be necessary to make the processes work effectively in practice, and this was where the majority of the work was required. The BPL development team could have simply identified the relevant clauses from the requirements standards and then repeated the words but, this was not felt to be appropriate for a couple of reasons. Firstly, and irrespective of copyright issues, there would be little point in repeating the words that already existed in the standards, and secondly, the words in the standards are fairly generic and one of TickIT^{plus} scheme's aims was to provide organisations with defined processes that were meaningful to the activities they might operate. The approach taken therefore was to look at the process purpose, identify key practices that would help achieve the purpose (these being called base practices) and then show how these key practices can be implemented and hence satisfy the references made to the requirement standards.

It was thus a design decision that the BPL processes would not repeat the words of the requirement standards and that organisations would need to obtain and make reference to these requirement standards in order to fully understand how, and why, the practices have been written in the way they have. The Core Scheme Requirement also enforces this decision by requiring assessors to fully check that the underlying requirements of adopted standards are fully implemented, [see rule CSR290, REF001350](#).