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Glossary

Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors

This page refers to the 2017 IPPF/Standards

Click [here](#) for the 2024 IPPF/Global Internal Audit Standards

This glossary explains the specific meanings of some terms that are used in the The International Standards.

Add value

The internal audit activity adds value to the organisation (and its stakeholders) when it provides objective and relevant assurance, and contributes to the effectiveness and efficiency of governance, risk management and control processes.

Adequate control

Present if management has planned and organised (designed) in a manner that provides reasonable assurance that the organisation's risks have been managed effectively and that the organisation's goals and objectives will be achieved efficiently and economically.

Assurance services

An objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment on governance, risk management and control processes for the organisation. Examples may include financial, performance, compliance, system security and due diligence engagements.

Board

The highest level governing body (e.g., a board of directors, a supervisory board, or a board of governors or trustees) charged with the responsibility to direct and/or oversee the organisation's activities and hold senior management accountable. Although governance arrangements vary among jurisdictions and sectors, typically the board includes members who are not part of management. If a board does not exist, the word "board" in the Standards refers to a group or person charged with governance of the organisation. Furthermore, "board" in the Standards may refer to a committee or another body to which the governing body has delegated certain functions (e.g., an audit committee).

Charter

The internal audit charter is a formal document that defines the internal audit activity's purpose, authority and responsibility. The internal audit charter establishes the internal audit activity's position within the organisation; authorises access to records, personnel and physical properties relevant to the performance of engagements; and defines the scope of internal audit activities.

Chief audit executive

Chief audit executive describes the role of a person in a senior position responsible for effectively managing the internal audit activity in accordance with the internal audit charter and the mandatory elements of the International Professional Practices Framework. The chief audit executive or others reporting to the chief audit executive will have appropriate professional certifications and qualifications. The specific job title and/or of the chief audit executive may vary across organisations.

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics of The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) are Principles relevant to the profession and practice of internal auditing and Rules of Conduct that describe behaviour expected of internal auditors. The Code of Ethics applies to both parties and entities that provide internal audit services. The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to promote an ethical culture in the global profession of internal auditing.

Compliance

Adherence to policies, plans, procedures, laws, regulations, contracts, or other requirements.

Conflict of interest

Any relationship that is, or appears to be, not in the best interest of the organisation. A conflict of interest would prejudice an individual's ability to perform his or her duties and responsibilities objectively.

Consulting services

Advisory and related client service activities, the nature and scope of which are agreed with the client, are intended to add value and improve an organisation's governance, risk management and control processes without the internal auditor assuming management responsibility. Examples include counsel, advice, facilitation and training.

Control

Any action taken by management, the board and other parties to manage risk and increase the likelihood that established objectives and goals will be achieved. Management plans, organises and directs the performance of sufficient actions to provide reasonable assurance that objectives and goals will be achieved.

Control environment

The attitude and actions of the board and management regarding the importance of control within the organisation. The control environment provides the discipline and structure for the achievement of the primary objectives of the system of internal control. The control environment includes the following elements:

- Integrity and ethical values.
- Management's philosophy and operating style.
- Organisational structure.
- Assignment of authority and responsibility.
- Human resource policies and practices.
- Competence of personnel.

Control processes

The policies, procedures (both manual and automated) and activities that are part of a control framework, designed and operated to ensure that risks are contained within the level that an organisation is prepared to accept.

Core principles for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing

The Core principles for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing are the foundation for the International Professional Practices Framework and support internal audit effectiveness.

Engagement

A specific internal audit assignment, task, or review activity, such as an internal audit, control self assessment review, fraud examination, or consultancy. An engagement may include multiple tasks or activities designed to accomplish a specific set of related objectives.

Engagement objectives

Broad statements developed by internal auditors that define intended engagement accomplishments.

Engagement Opinion

The rating, conclusion, and/or other description of results of an individual internal audit engagement, relating to those aspects within the objectives and scope of the engagement.

Engagement work programme

A document that lists the procedures to be followed during an engagement, designed to achieve the engagement plan.

External service provider

A person or firm outside of the organisation that has special knowledge, skill and experience in a particular discipline.

Fraud

Any illegal act characterised by deceit, concealment, or violation of trust. These acts are not dependent upon the threat of violence or physical force. Frauds are perpetrated by parties and organisations to obtain money, property, or services; to avoid payment or loss of services; or to secure personal or business advantage.

Governance

The combination of processes and structures implemented by the board to inform, direct, manage and monitor the activities of the organisation toward the achievement of its objectives.

Impairment

Impairment to organisational independence and individual objectivity may include personal conflict of interest, scope limitations, restrictions on access to records, personnel and properties and resource limitations (funding).

Independence

The freedom from conditions that threaten the ability of the internal audit activity to carry out internal audit responsibilities in an unbiased manner.

Information technology controls

Controls that support business management and governance as well as provide general and technical controls over information technology infrastructures such as applications, information, infrastructure and people.

Information technology governance

Consists of the leadership, organisational structures and processes that ensure that the enterprise's information technology supports the organisation's strategies and objectives.

Internal audit activity

A department, division, team of consultants, or other practitioner(s) that provides independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. The internal audit activity helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes.

International Professional Practices Framework

The conceptual framework that organises the authoritative guidance promulgated by The IIA. Authoritative guidance is composed of two categories (1) mandatory and (2) recommended.

Must

The Standards use the word must to specify an unconditional requirement.

Objectivity

An unbiased mental attitude that allows internal auditors to perform engagements in such a manner that they believe in their work product and that no quality compromises are made. Objectivity requires that internal auditors do not subordinate their judgment on audit matters to others.

Overall opinion

The rating, conclusion, and/or other description of results provided by the chief audit executive addressing, at a broad level, governance, risk management, and/or control processes of the organisation. An overall opinion is the professional judgment of the chief audit executive based on the results of a number of individual engagements and other activities for a specific time interval.

Risk

The possibility of an event occurring that will have an impact on the achievement of objectives. Risk is measured in terms of impact and likelihood.

Risk appetite

The level of risk that an organisation is willing to accept.

Risk management

A process to identify, assess, manage and control potential events or situations to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of the organisation's objectives.

Should

The Standards use the word should where conformance is expected unless, when applying professional judgment, circumstances justify deviation.

Significance

The relative importance of a matter within the context in which it is being considered, including quantitative and qualitative factors, such as magnitude, nature, effect, relevance and impact. Professional judgment assists internal auditors when evaluating the significance of matters within the context of the relevant objectives.

Standard

A professional pronouncement promulgated by the Internal Audit Standards Board that delineates the requirements for performing a broad range of internal audit activities and for evaluating internal audit performance.

Technology-based audit techniques

Any automated audit tool, such as generalised audit software, test data generators, computerised audit programmes, specialised audit utilities and computer-assisted audit techniques (CAATs).