A Guide to SLAs

Prepared by

Barclay Rae

SUMMARY
This is a high-level summary of the key features involved in setting up Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Some standard templates are also included.

DECLARATION
We believe the information in this document to be accurate, relevant and truthful based on our experience and the information provided to us to date. All information is provided in good faith, in confidence and in the best interests of our clients. Please contact Barclay Rae to discuss any questions or further requirements.

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This document details the basic concepts and processes involved in setting up **Service Level Agreements** (SLAs).

1 BACKGROUND

Any organisation about to implement SLAs must first ensure that the participants understand the key objectives, benefits and issues associated with the SLA process.

If this is not done then the whole process can be at best difficult and at worse acrimonious and divisive.

Objectives

It is common for IT departments to have evolved their services and service levels over the years – usually with little input from customers (users) or alignment with business objectives.

- SLAs aim to manage the expectation of IT services to customers (users) by setting target levels of service delivery.

- The SLA process also then provides valuable performance information to help the IT organisation to understand and deliver suitable levels of resources, skills and service.

The SLA process is in fact a quality process, using customer input to set target delivery levels, then measuring against these targets to identify if new resources or systems are needed.

People are wary of SLAs, which they either see as interfering (IT), or pointless/contracts (users).

This can be understood if SLAs are not properly understood and implemented, however, the key is to develop the relationship between service provider and customer and build trust and mutual understanding – if this is achieved then SLAs can be highly beneficial to the organisation.

SLAs are not punitive contracts that are waved around in anger every time there is a problem. Instead they should be seen as key to improving the ability of the IT department to meet the exact needs of its customers.

2 DEFINITIONS

SLAS are	SLAS are NOT
An AGREEMENT at a high level that defines services and service levels to be aimed for	A STATEMENT of services available from the IT department
Based on common understanding of user (customer) requirements and IT capabilities	Based solely on the highest possible expectations of service (customers/users), or the lowest possible guarantee-able levels of service (IT)
The result of a collaborative negotiation process	A long list of pedantic details that are not really agreed
Simple clear summary documents	Large formal lists and technical documents
Statements in non-technical language	Impenetrable technical or jargon-filled documents
Terms of reference – heads of agreement	Contracts *This can be developed as the organisation develops SLA experience, and processes mature*
Living documents that are well known, used and understood by IT and users (customers) alike	Documents filed and ignored
Used to measure performance and identify areas for improvement and resources required	Used as punitive weapons to beat each other up with

THE SLA CONCEPT

SLAs are becoming standard business practice across a broad spectrum of industry and commerce. They have developed as businesses have appreciated the need to improve service quality to compete and survive - often as service quality may be the deciding factor that wins and retains customers.

SLAs are a formal means of identifying key services and processes required to meet business needs - these are monitored and any problem areas highlighted for action. The process has grown initially within the IT industry, both as a business requirement to optimise the provision of IT resources, and as a response to the challenge of external outsourcing of IT services. IT can also focus customers' attention on the cost of providing additional services.

DEFINITION

AN SLA IS A WRITTEN AGREEMENT BETWEEN A SERVICE PROVIDER AND A CUSTOMER, DEFINING SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE TERMS.

It is thus a document that simply confirms an agreed level of service that is expected to be provided to meet the business needs of the customer.

It is important to appreciate that the roles of "provider" and "customer" as defined here can apply to internal groups and departments within an organisation - any situation where one function provides a service to another - and not simply the relationship between an external paying customer and a company.

PURPOSE

A summary of the main aims of the process:

- **To improve service** by defining and focusing on key services required to meet business requirements

- To discipline the service provider to review their ability to meet these requirements

- To discipline the customer to examine their requirements for key services

- To agree levels of expectation in all parties as to the levels of service that can be provided at an acceptable cost

- To improve understanding and working relationships

The basic reason for going through this process is simple - to improve service quality. This is done by identifying, quantifying and agreeing the levels of service required, such that the "customer" area operates efficiently.

The SLA process is a quality improvement process above all else, as it highlights gaps and problems in the process of servicing the business requirements.

The process is also a good vehicle for developing increased understanding across divisional and functional boundaries and improving expectation management. It is thus a useful tool for organisations wishing to develop greater synergy and teamwork as a means of corporate development.

NOT A CONTRACT?

The SLA process involves cultural change. As such its success depends more on people and attitudes than technical innovation or skill. It is thus important that all involved in this process understand not only the operational requirements, but also the needs and aims driving the process. For successful SLA implementation, it is almost as important to appreciate what SLAs are **NOT** as what they **ARE**.

An SLA is NOT a contract. When negotiating and drawing up an SLA, it is vital to appreciate this distinction, otherwise the process will fail. The SLA document should be regarded as a list of targets, rather than a legal straight jacket signed and sealed in blood. If the latter approach is taken, particularly if little data exists on current levels of service, this can be a recipe for acrimony and misunderstanding.

Both parties must appreciate during negotiations that the SLA itself does not guarantee that the expected service levels will always be met, with penalties if they are not. This may influence the provider to only commit to a low service level - rendering the document meaningless. Alternatively, if the level is set unrealistically high and targets are not met, expectations will not be realised and working relationships damaged.

To summarise:

- A contract is an absolute statement of quality levels with legal or financial penalties if levels are not met.

- An SLA is a working process to define and balance business requirements with available service resources.

With SLAs the process is more important than the document. It must be viewed by all involved as an ongoing process towards improved quality, rather than as an absolute and potentially punitive dictum.

One good reason for avoiding contractual status is that very often both parties don't really know the current level of service provided, and are thus in no position to commit themselves to targets that they may have no possibility of achieving with their current resources.

Once the SLA process has identified actual service levels and resource requirements, it may than be possible and realistic to develop the SLA into a contract if required.

THE SLA PROCESS

(1) Awareness & Negotiation

In general a "broker" is required to sit down with both parties and discuss business requirements and service capabilities. This may not be necessary with small services or if the service is only between two areas - i.e. does not involve other groups supporting the service.

A Systems or Business Account Manager is ideally placed to carry out this function – external Facilitators are also very useful. It is generally advisable for initial discussions to take place with each party individually. There may then be a need for subsequent follow up meetings with revised figures before actual negotiation takes place between parties face to face.

(2) Documentation

The negotiation will lead to the production of the SLA document - examples of which are shown in the Appendix. These are sample only and all SLAs are different.

(3) List of services and quality levels

This is the detail of the document, listing each service in a standard format:

- Description
- Delivery Point
- Availability
- Quality Levels
- Measurement Procedures
- Escalation Procedures

Most of these are self-explanatory, although care should be taken in distinguishing between services - i.e. a Mainframe service may need to be broken down into Application availability, and desktop availability, as it may be difficult to measure the whole service on the basis of both components.

Availability and Quality levels should clearly define how and when SLA breaches are to be measured - e.g. if a PC has a quality level of 8 hours to be repaired, this must be shown clearly to be measured within the availability hours as defined - e.g. 08.00 - 19.00. Also any obligations on the customer - e.g. problems to be reported immediately to a help desk/deadlines for input submission etc - must be clearly stated.

Variable quality levels - e.g. specific PCs with faster turnaround times - and any other details of procedures involved - e.g. escalation/out of hours procedures etc - should also be clearly stated or appended to the details for each service.

Each service should not occupy more than one page - for brevity and clarity. Legal and technical jargon should be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Classification should also define actual application names and user nicknames as appropriate.

(4) Reports

SLAs should only be drawn up where measurement of the performance against the target levels can be accurately and impartially measured. It is thus necessary to put mechanisms in place to capture data that will identify any breaches of the SLAs, such that reports can be produced and used as the basis for discussions between provider and customer.

It is important to note that the process of capturing and retrieving this data should be identified from a resource point of view in advance of the process taking effect, in order to identify if this process is itself justifiable. It may be that the overhead of producing the information outweighs, in resource terms, the process of the SLA itself, and if this is the case the SLA may not be worthwhile.

Reports will normally be the following -

*Problem management exception reports

* Systems availability stats

*User questionnaires (to identify subjective views of the service)

* System generated response times

Reports should include information, where possible, on the reasons *why* **a particular SLA was not met,** not necessarily the solution to the problem. Where possible the production of these reports should be automated.

(5) Monitoring and reviewing

Reports should normally be produced monthly and passed to all parties - providers and customers. They should provide the basis for discussion and be used to explain why a particular SLA was not met. If recurring breaches are identified then the SLA may be altered (3 or 6 monthly), or appropriate resource re-allocation considered - e.g. standby/redundant equipment purchased.

SETTING UP THE SLA PROCESS

Initial clarification of SLAs and common understanding of objectives

Customers

Facilitator

Service Provider (IT)

What IT Services are key to you?
- **Key people**
- **Key systems**
- **Key departments**
- **Key times/targets**
- **When do you need them?**
- **How quickly do you need them restored?**
- **What support & info do you need?**
- **What reviews do you need?**

What do you provide?
- **Systems and networks**
- **Applications**
- **Support/help desk**
- **Availability**
- **Fault Response times**
- **Problem fix times**
- **What are the key business systems?**
- **How do you escalate issues?**
- **How do you manage major problems**
- **What are the key policies? Security, procurement, standard desktop etc**
- **What do you report on?**

Negotiate suitable target SLAs to meet customer needs and general IT capabilities

Set up reporting mechanisms

ALL – Measure ongoing performance against SLAs
Review and increase Service Level Targets
Review and adapt resources as required

IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT INTEGRATION

ITIL Overview

ITIL* is a set of guidelines for managing IT services to optimum levels of quality, accountability and efficiency. ITIL has evolved over the last 15 years from a (UK) government initiative to a global standard for operational 'best practise', adopted by 1000s of organisations.

The ITIL philosophy is that IT needs to be managed, consistent, accountable and based on customer needs, rather than to be driven by technology. This requires a formal approach to planning, delivering and measuring the services provided in line with business needs.

Achieving this involves applying business disciplines to the delivery and support of IT, and as such requires a 'culture change' – for individuals and the organisation – to ensure success.

The key is that an integrated approach is required to the changes required to improve service. Some initiatives like SLAs, Problem Management and Helpdesk improvement will have some impact. However, these ultimately need to be co-ordinated – with support across the organisation – to really achieve benefit.

ITIL is a philosophy and methodology rather than a strictly prescribed doctrine. It is flexible and applicable to most organisations large or small. There is no 'vanilla' version of ITIL and each organisation needs to review its goals and expected benefits before embarking on implementation.

As ITIL implementation involves 'culture change', the project management, internal communications and business planning required is absolutely key to success. Usually this involves a **Service Improvement Programme**.

The project must have clear objectives and be supported at the highest level, preferably as a formal costed project. Much of the work required is selling, marketing, communications and dealing with resistance – it is vital that this is understood and that suitable people and skills are used to drive through the project.

Ultimately, ITIL will deliver cost benefits and quality improvements to organisations (and individuals) willing to embrace change and all the implications. Sometimes the hardest part of this is simply getting a shared understanding of what needs to change and why.

ITIL can cut through these debates by providing the comfort of a common language and a proven framework that is used globally in successful service operations.

Service Catalogue, OLAs & 'End-to-end' SLM

In isolation, SLAs can be useful as a means of improving communications and developing expectations for service. A wider approach is required to the overall Service Delivery operation to meet the targets and achieve the planned benefits.

The goal is to achieve 'end-to-end' Service Management – to view service as a supply chain with all the component parts in harmony. To do this you need to combine SLAs to the customer, with internal **OLAs** (Operational Level Agreements) with your internal support groups **and** external **Contracts** with your suppliers.

This is fundamentally the ITIL approach – i.e. an integrated set of processes and service targets driven by customer needs and organised to ensure quality delivery and maximum service availability.

E.g Assume you have an SLA that states you will aim to resume availability to an application within 4 hours of a downtime problem. You will need to ensure that internal and external suppliers are aware of this and that suitable agreements/contracts are in place for support and escalation within these times.

Analyst research (e.g. *Gartner*) supports the premise that quality and cost benefits can be achieved from an **integrated** Service Management approach. This generally involves Incident, Problem and Change Management, combined with a quality service desk – and other ITIL processes.

Service Catalogue

The Service Catalogue is the **control document** that allows you to maintain consistent information on:

- Your customers – departments, companies, locations, contacts etc
- The services provided to them
- SLA information
- Cost & profit information – dependent on cost/profit centre status

Compiling the information for a good Service Catalogue is never easy, although once done this becomes a valuable tool for support staff, accounts, management etc. It is essential for any sort of cost or charge-based approach – for which you need consistent information on your services, customers and costs in one place.

Generally the Service Catalogue will be an internal document that is reflected in a number of other internal and external documents and systems – e.g. ITSM tool, service brochure, SLAs, budgets etc.

Operational Level Agreements – OLAs

OLAs are basically internal SLAs, although they can be even less formal as documents. The key is that support groups outside the main service and support areas are aware of the SLA and 'sign-up' in some way to meeting it.

This can be either a further SLA document (using more stringent target times) or a Terms of Reference that relates to the SLA and confirms that the group in question will follow agreed target escalation, turnaround, response and fix times.

Or perhaps it's simply a management-level agreement to follow the processes and targets. Subsequent reporting on delivery performance will always highlight any issues!

You may also need OLAs with other (non-IT) departments to complete the Supply Chain. E.g. if you have an SLA for setting up user-ids/security accounts within certain timescales, then you will need some commitment from HR and user departments to provide timely information on staff changes, new starts etc.

It's usually helpful to use an integrated Service Management software tool to manage the delivery of the OLAs and SLAs, combined with key Incident, Problem and Change Management processes.

It's vital when implementing these tools to ensure that staff are fully aware of the processes and their responsibilities – make sure this is strongly featured in training courses.

Problem, Incident and Change Management

These are vital to the real success of SLAs, as they ensure the smooth running of the support operation – including dedicated 2nd level support. See diagrams below.
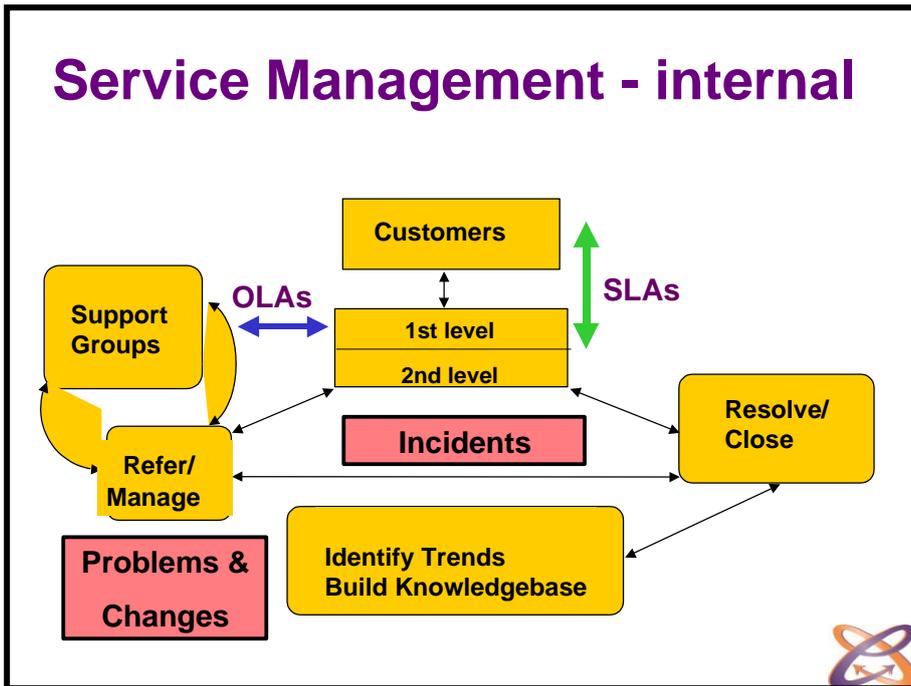
Incident Management basically ensures that any issue or interruption to service is efficiently handled and that service is resumed to the customer as quickly as possible. A key in this is applying dedicated 2nd level support to either the Service Desk or the support groups.

Problem Management takes a more strategic view and looks at underlying causes with the brief to eliminate recurrence of problems – or at least turn them into known issues that can be quickly handled by the Service Desk in future.
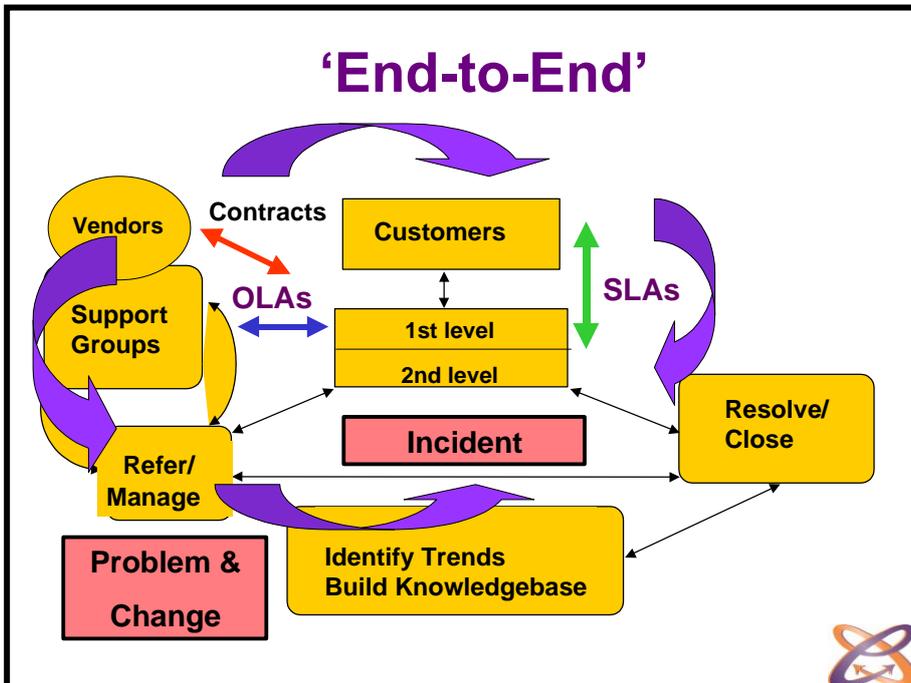
Change Management provides a safe and customer-protected approach to managing Change and e.g. applying fixes.

End-to-End Service Management

Below - A traditional view of internal Service Management with SLAs and OLAs.

Service Management - internal

Customers	
OLAs	SLAs
Support Groups	1st level
	2nd level
Refer/ Manage	Incidents
Problems & Changes	Identify Trends Build Knowledgebase
	Resolve/ Close

Below – An integrated approach where Vendors are part of the supply chain and OLAs, contracts and SLAs are required to complete the Service 'Supply Chain'.

'End-to-End'

Vendors	Contracts
Support Groups	Customers
OLAs	SLAs
Refer/ Manage	1st level
	2nd level
Problem & Change	Incident
	Identify Trends Build Knowledgebase
	Resolve/ Close

Migrating an SLA into a Contract

SLAs have become standard business practice across a broad spectrum of industry and commerce. They have developed as businesses have appreciated the need to improve service quality to compete and survive - often as service quality may be the deciding factor that wins and retains customers.

SLAs are a formal means of identifying key services and processes required to meet business needs - these are monitored and any problem areas highlighted for action. IT can focus customers' attention on the cost of providing additional services.

The SLA encourages a working process to define and balance business requirements with available service resources, whereas a contract is an absolute statement of quality levels with legal or financial penalties if levels are not met.

One reason for avoiding contractual status is that very often both parties don't really know the current level of service provided, and are thus in no position to commit themselves to targets that they may have no possibility of achieving with their current resources.

Once the SLA process has identified actual service levels and resource requirements, it may then be possible and realistic to develop the SLA into a contract:

Migrating an SLA into a contract - what needs to be considered?

From an IT provision perspective

1. Know your current costs and service levels well.

2. Have a well-defined service catalogue that scopes all known services. Include live, support and change services where required.

3. The migration of an SLA is one element. The SLA must also be adapted to suit any contractual change.

4. Review the SLA concept – SLA is a quality process. Does this fit well within a contractual model?

5. Ensure that the organisation has a well-developed quality culture and that Service Level Management is a mature working process.

6. Set the customers' expectations that changing any contractual service level would be a much slower process – as legal reviews would become necessary.

7. Re-examine the working relationship with the customer. How will it operate in the new commercial model?

8. Service reviews may become more account reviews and be less flexible and able to provide adaptations in service.

9. It is likely that service penalties would be introduced into a contract set against certain key service level metrics. If the SLA culture had introduced this prior it is more likely to succeed as a contract. If not consider the impact of penalty clauses and risk costs on the current service provision.

10. A contract is a legal binding statement of quality levels and so would require company solicitors to review the document for 'rewording' into new language.

11. Check for any/all underpinning OLAs and contracts and ensure compliance with the new contracted SLAs.

12. Always keep the rights to the service data – put into contract.

13. Select any outsourcer for their strengths and not as a catch-all.

14. Design the support model to support you. This should not simply suit an outsourcer.

15. Make contractual the support for any future change of contractor. You will need the original outsourcer's assistance through the change.

Service Level Contracts

Service Level Contracts (SLCs) can help clarify each party's goals, limit the liability of the parties and ensure that both parties get the services and payment expected.

SLAs are usually simple schedules (without penalties and legal status) that set out target Service Levels, service owners and other relationship-management information.

SLCs are full business contracts and therefore differ according to each company's legal requirements. However, these usually are developed either:

▪ As a normal business-to-business service contract, with an added schedule for the Service Levels and penalties (a development of the SLA). The main area of work is in ensuring that the SLA and penalties can be legally enforced as part of the contract.

▪ Or as a development from the SLA into a legal contract. This requires more (professional legal) work to ensure that it legal and viable.

Standard components

Services

It is important to clearly define the services to be performed and any deadlines for work product or performance. Without clarity, each party, even in good faith, may have different ideas and not discover this until the work is completed and one party is not satisfied. The more detail stated in the contract about the relationship, the less risk of misunderstanding or unfulfilled expectations later.

Service levels to be designated for technical or other performance should be set forth in the agreement and stated in detail; these some times also include financial penalties or rewards – e.g. for (availability, fix and response) SLAs missed, or consistently missed. There is no set formula for determining the penalty levels and numbers.

This area can be a minefield and it is strongly recommended that any party engaging in SLCs uses professional advice and starts the process with some experience of setting up and managing SLAs realistically (both as a provider and receiver).

Payment

The agreement should include a provision that states how much is to be paid, when it is to be paid, what is included in the payment (expenses, taxes, travel), procedures for invoicing, and penalties for late payments.

Relationship

The agreement should include a provision that clearly states that the relationship is not a partnership joint venture or employer-employee. Since some of these relationships can be implied by law, this is an important provision.

Confidential Information

The agreement should include a provision stating that the parties will exchange confidential information, how that information will be identified and handled, restrictions on disclosure and misuse, and exceptions to what is included in confidential information. Depending on whether the agreement is for provision of services or hiring of a service provider, the exceptions may be broader or narrower.

Ownership of Work Product

The service provider will want to make sure the agreement does not include a provision stating that the customer owns the work product, so that the Provider may continue to perform similar services for other customers without the risk of legal interference or restriction.

The company hiring a service provider will want to ensure that they fully own the work product and that the agreement contains the legal language as required by copyright law.

In either case, the owner of the work product may agree to give a license to the other party to address its needed uses.

Representations and Warranties

These may include the following or other warranties:
- That the service provider will re-perform defective or non-conforming services for a time period indicated
- That the services will be performed at or above industry standards – e.g. ITIL
- That the service provider will not infringe third party rights in performing services
- That the service provider is not violating any other agreement by performing services

Which warranties and the number included will depend on whether the agreement is drafted by the service provider or hiring company.

Indemnification

The hiring company should ensure that the agreement contains a provision stating that the service provider will indemnify the company for any breaches of the warranties. Indemnification means that the provider will have to pay the company for any third party litigation costs resulting from its breach of the warranties.

Liability Limit

The service provider should include a provision limiting its liability to the maximum amount it receives under the agreement and for both direct and indirect damages. This wording must be lawyer-drafted to be effective. Properly drafted, this is an extremely beneficial provision to lower risk.

Termination and Term

The agreement should include a provision that regarding how long the agreement will be in effect, and the options and results for termination.

Insurance

The hiring company should require a minimum level of insurance coverage from the service provider so that it can be sure that any negligence or liabilities are financially covered.

Force Majeure

The service provider should ensure inclusion of a force majeure clause. Loosely translated from the French, this means a superior force. A force majeure clause means that in the event of war, acts of God, strikes, weather and other uncontrollable forces, the parties are excused from performing.

Non-Solicitation

To protect both parties, the agreement should include a mutual restriction on each party soliciting employment from the employees of the other.

SLA DO'S AND DON'TS

- **DON'T - approach negotiation defensively (provider)**

- **DON'T - approach negotiation asking for too much (customer)**

- **DON'T - draw up the document using legal or technical jargon**

- **DON'T - fill the document with excessive detail**

- **DON'T - think of the document as a means of tying down the provider (customer)**

- **DON'T - think of the document as a straight jacket, or Big Brother watching you (provider)**

- **DON'T - set up an SLA if you can't measure the service**

- **DON'T - set up an SLA if the process of measurement is an excessive overhead**

- **DO - approach the process positively**

- **DO - approach the process as a quality issue**

- **DO - draw up the document in plain English - all staff involved must be able to read and understand it easily**

- **DO - use the reports as a starting point for discussion**

- **DO - use review meetings to discuss changes/resource issues/problems openly**

Appendix - Sample SLAs

READ THIS FIRST

Please note that values for service levels noted here are examples only and should NOT be regarded as standard.

Every company's requirements for and from SLAs are different – consequently every SLA is different.

Please use these examples for general guidance only – **YOUR SLA** will be driven by the individual business, operational and cultural/presentational needs of your organisation.

Whilst SLAs will be different, in general you should consider including the following:

- **Service Descriptions**

- **Delivery Point(s)** – desktop, server etc.

- **Escalation Points** – e.g. help desk or service owners

- **Hours of availability** – standard working hours, 24 x 7 etc

- **Turnaround times** – e.g. for procurement, consultancy

- **Fix and response times** – e.g. for incidents, problems

- **Priority and Severity descriptions** – clear simple definitions

- **Customer Responsibilities** – calls must go via help desk etc.

- **Special Customer requirements** – key dates, systems, users etc.

SAMPLE SLA1

Service Level Agreement Between
XX Department
Name _____ **Date __/__/__**
And

IT Division
Name _____ **Date __/__/__**

The help desk offers direct client support for the services shown overleaf.

This is available on **XTN XXXX** from 00:00 – 00:00 on working days. Outside this time you can leave a voice mail which will be answered by the next working day.

When you call the help desk your call will normally be answered within **xx seconds** – this may be longer if the lines are busy but this shouldn't exceed **xx seconds**.

If the lines are busy this usually suggests that there is a major problem – ie with e-mail or the network – we may switch to voice mail during this time and it may therefore be worth calling back later – but please call.

When you call the help desk you will be asked to give basic details of your problem, including how this affects you and your department. You will be asked for details of the system you were working on at the time and any e.g. error messages displayed – so please have these ready.

Once the problem has been described you will be given a **reference number** for any future call-back – please make a note of this.

If you need to speak directly with a technical expert please contact them by phone or email – the call should refer to a logged problem.

You will be asked to give the **Business Priority** of your problem as shown below – if the help desk cannot fix this on the phone you will then receive a call back as follows:

Priority	Description	Call Back Time
1	A serious problem needing immediate attention affecting a large number of staff – e.g. a whole department	**15 minutes**
2	A serious problem needing immediate attention affecting one or two people – e.g. needing to travel or give a presentation	**30 minutes**
3	A problem that affects you but doesn't stop you working immediately. **Plus - all calls logged via Email.**	**3 hours**
4	Requests and problems that are not urgent	**1 working day**

Key services offered by the help desk:

These are services and target Service Levels provided by during normal working hours:

Service(s)	Description	SLA Comments
Client Problem Support		**Target**
EMAIL / SERVER NETWORK / LAN FILE / PRINT SERVER DESKTOP SOFTWARE	Resolution of user problems and restoration of service	Response according to the priority as shown above **Target Fix times:** 1. Severity 1 – 1 hour 2. Severity 2 – 4 hours 3. Severity 3 – 1 working day
Patch Activation	Network Activation	Response according to the priority as shown above Fix time – Best Endeavours
Desktop Hardware	Standard Printer hardware /peripherals under warranty Standard PC hardware under warranty	Response according to the priority as shown above Target Fix time one working day
Network Password Resets	Resetting & re-issue of client access passwords	Response according to the priority as shown above Target fix time 1 Hour
Non Standard equipment	Non-standard or non warranty Hardware, shown in the maintenance table	Fixed times according to the service level shown in the maintenance table

Deployment		Target
Deployment of standard PCs	New and used equipment	2 weeks for ordinary requests. Urgent requests within 2 days
Deployment (inventory)	Notification of equipment arrival	Within 3 working days of delivery
Delivery (inventory)	Equipment delivery	Within 3 days of the request Urgent delivery within 1 day
Deployment of software	Standard/simple	Within 3 days of the request Urgent requests within 1 day
Inventory		Target
Inventory	Update Inventory records	Within 2 days of the request
Loan Management		Target
Temporary equipment	PCs, laptops etc	Within 5 days of the request Urgent requests within 1 day
General support		Target
Account Creation	Network & Email Accounts	Within 3 days of the request Urgent requests within 4 hours
File Restores		Best Endeavours

Priority Guidelines for IT Support
Key Support areas

GENERIC	
Key Clients	- Programme managers & their secretaries - Directors & Office Heads
Key Systems	- E-mail, network, servers and printing - Financial systems
Key dates and sensitive situations	- Financial planning deadlines - Anyone with a problem about to travel - Anyone with a problem about to attend a sales meeting

DEPARTMENTAL	
XX	- Local server managers for XXX - Budget clerks – printing transaction listings
XX	- Mainframe services to be on highest availability for first week of month - Till systems, XXX modems - Plotting systems and transparencies
XX	- Managers of applications - Applications developed/supported by XX
XX	Important departmental meetings
XX	- Executive list - Access to library services through internet and intranet pages - Library management system
XX	Budget clerks
XX	Financial/planning deadlines (budget, etc.)
XX	- Video and audio conference facilities - Application tracking system support - Correspondence tracking system

SAMPLE SLA 2

Service Level Agreement

Between

IT

and

IT	**Template** **(The Customer)**

Signature: _____   Signature: _____

Position: _____   Position: _____

Date: _____   Date: _____

Ref No:	
Date:	
Status:	

Introduction

This Service Level Agreement (SLA) covers provision and support of the following services:

- Service Desk;
- Maintenance and Support of dependent services;
- Development of new or enhanced services;
- Advice and consultancy;
- Procurement of standard hardware, software and upgrades.

Please refer to section 4 for a detailed breakdown of the above services. The SLA remains valid until superseded by a revised agreement, which has been endorsed by relevant signatories from both parties. The agreement will be reviewed annually.

Please note that the response and resolution times stated within this SLA are target times only and are therefore not guaranteed. IT will publish its performance against each target time via Interlink on a monthly basis.

Access to Service

The Service Desk is available from 08:00 – 18:00 on normal working days. It can be contacted in the following ways:

Telephone:	
E-mail:	
Fax:	

Outside of normal working hours a voice mail may be left, which will be answered by the next working day. On calling the Service Desk the call will normally be answered within **10 seconds**. This may be longer if the lines are busy but this shouldn't exceed **20 seconds**.

If the Service Desk lines are busy this usually suggests that there is a major incident, e.g. with E-mail or the Network. In these instances, details of the major incident will be published on Interlink and the Service Desk may switch to voice mail. During such incidents it may be worth calling back later, or if the call is not urgent use Interlink, e-mail or fax the Service Desk.

Known Service interruptions and scheduled service outages (e.g. for routine maintenance) will be listed on Interlink in the IT section and should be checked prior to contacting the Service Desk - especially when major services are unavailable.

On calling the Service Desk you will be asked to give basic details of the incident, including how this affects you and your department. You will be asked for details of the system you were working on at the time and any e.g. error messages displayed – so please have this information ready.

Once the incident has been logged you will be given a **call reference number.** This reference number will be e-mailed to you and must be quoted on any future contact. Anyone wishing to speak directly with a technical expert must contact the Service desk first.

Response and Resolution Times

Upon placing a call, you will be asked to assess the **Severity (Business Impact)** of the incident according to the levels indicated in the Business Impact table below. As a result of this the Service Desk will allocate a **Priority** to the incident or request. The priority of the incident or request will determine the target response and resolution times.

If the Service Desk cannot resolve the incident on the phone you will receive a call back from a member of the Service Desk according to the priority level. The Business Impact (Severity) and the Business Priority tables are set out below:

Severity Table

Severity Level	Description
1	An incident causing an **extremely serious** impact to the business as a result of the system(s) / service(s) affected and/or the number of people affected by the incident. e.g. A complete loss of the customers service or the impacted **business function is halted** completely and interim restoration is either not possible or not acceptable.
2	An incident causing significant impact to the business as a result of the system(s) / service(s) affected and/or the number of people affected by the incident e.g. significant loss of customer's service but the impacted **business function is not halted** although interim restoration is not possible or not acceptable.
3	An incident which affects the customer's service but has a small impact to the business e.g. single user or component affected but the trouble can be circumvented. **Plus all calls logged via Email.**
4	Incidents that have a **negligible impact to the business**, requests or enquiries for information purposes only.
Procurement	**Description**
5	Procurement requests for **standard equipment** and software only.
6	Procurement requests for **non-standard equipment** and non-standard software.

Priority Table

Priority	Response Time	Resolution Target
1	15 minutes	2 hours
2	30 minutes	4 hours
3	3 hours	10 hours
4	10 hours	30 hours
Procurement	**Quotation Form Issued**	**Order Received**
5	30 hours from receipt of Request Form	15 days from receipt of approved Quotation Form
6	Non SLA	Non SLA

Services Offered

The following table shows the current IT services offered across all Company x sites. Specific customer SLA documents will only list the services supported that are relevant to that specific customer.

Service Area	Service(s)	Description/Comments
Maintenance & Support		
	Applications	
	Infrastructure	
	Service Desk	
	Service Desk System	
	Access & Data Security	
	Internet Access	
	Microsoft Office Products	
	Desktop Hardware	
	Printing	
	Systems Housekeeping	
	LAN & WAN Network & Servers	

Service Area	Service(s)	Description/Comments
Service Requests, Changes & Projects		
	Change and Service Requests	
	Project Management	
	Business Analysis	
	Design and Build Applications	
	Design and Build Infrastructure	
	Installation	
	Training	
Advice and Consultancy		
	Auditing	
	Feasibility Studies	
	Sales Bid Support	
	Strategic Planning	
Procurement		
	Procurement services	
	Standard Hardware and Software	
	Non-Standard Hardware and Software	

Note: *Software and Hardware purchased without IT agreement is not automatically supported.*

Operating Service Hours

The normal Service Desk operating service hours are - 08:00 to 18:00

The services are available on Business working days Monday to Friday (Excluding Saturdays and Sundays, Bank/Public Holidays and published Company x Christmas to New Year closure)

These hours may be available to be extended where a business request is made, requirement defined and the cost of service cover agreed.

Customer Information
Key Users

Name	Title/Responsibility	Telephone	Email	Location	Comments

Key Systems/Equipment

Tag #	System/Equipment	Location	Used for	Key Period, Dates	Comments

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