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Guidance

Technology Code of Practice

Updated 27 March 2019

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technology-code-of-practice/technology-code-of-practice>

The Technology Code of Practice is a set of criteria to help government design, build and buy technology. It's used as a cross-government agreed standard in the spend controls process (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/agile-delivery/apply-for-approval-to-spend-money-on-a-service>).

The Technology Code of Practice is part of the Transformation Strategy 2017-2020 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-transformation-strategy-2017-to-2020/government-transformation-strategy>) and the Local Digital Declaration (<https://localdigital.gov.uk/declaration/>).

Using the Technology Code of Practice

You should use the Technology Code of Practice for all of your technology projects or programmes. Consider each point, align your project or programme with the mandatory points, and follow as many of the remaining points as is practical. You'll get the most benefit by aligning your organisation's technology and business strategies to the Technology Code of Practice.

Following the Technology Code of Practice will help you introduce or update technology so that it:

- meets user needs (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/user-research/start-by-learning-user-needs>), based on research with your users
- is easier to share across government
- is easy to maintain
- scales for future use
- is less dependent on single third-party suppliers
- provides better value for money

The Technology Code of Practice contains guidance and case studies to help you migrate from legacy infrastructure and manage the full lifecycle of your technology.

The list of Government technology standards and guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technology-code-of-practice/technology-code-of-practice-related-guidance>) collates relevant information from across government.

Spend controls and the Technology Code of Practice

You must consider all points of the Technology Code of Practice as part of the Cabinet Office spend control process (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/cabinet-office-controls>). If your project or programme needs spend control approval (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/agile-delivery/apply-for-approval-to-spend-money-on-a-service>) you should contact the Government Digital Service (GDS) Standards Assurance team at gdsapprovals@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk as soon as possible. They'll guide you through the approvals process which can provide you with greater confidence that your spend request (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/agile-delivery/apply-for-approval-to-spend-money-on-a-service#how-to-apply>) will be approved.

Following the Technology Code of Practice will help you gain approval to spend from your departmental spend control process, or from the GDS Standards Assurance team, avoiding activities that'll result in your application being rejected (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/agile-delivery/spend-controls-check-if-you-need-approval-to-spend-money-on-a-service#projects-that-usually-wont-be-approved>).

Where legacy technology limits your ability to adhere to the standard, you must explain this to the GDS Standards Assurance team.

1. Define user needs

Understand your users and their needs. Develop knowledge of your users and what that means for your technology project or programme.

Read more about point 1. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/define-user-needs>)

2. Make things accessible and inclusive

Make sure your technology, infrastructure and systems are accessible and inclusive for all users.

Read more about point 2. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-things-accessible>)

3. Be open and use open source

Publish your code and use open source software to improve transparency, flexibility and accountability.

Read more about point 3. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/be-open-and-use-open-source>)

4. Make use of open standards

Build technology that uses open standards to ensure your technology works and communicates with other technology, and can easily be upgraded and expanded.

Read more about point 4. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-use-of-open-standards>)

5. Use cloud first

Consider using public cloud solutions first as stated in the Cloud First policy.

Read more about point 5. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-cloud-first>)

6. Make things secure

Keep systems and data safe with the appropriate level of security.

Read more about point 6. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-things-secure>)

7. Make privacy integral

Make sure users rights are protected by integrating privacy as an essential part of your system.

Read more about point 7. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-privacy-integral>)

8. Share, reuse and collaborate

Avoid duplicating effort and unnecessary costs by collaborating across government and sharing and reusing technology, data, and services.

Read more about point 8. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/share-and-reuse-technology>)

9. Integrate and adapt technology

Your technology should work with existing technologies, processes and infrastructure in your organisation, and adapt to future demands.

Read more about point 9. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/integrate-and-adapt-technology>)

10. Make better use of data

Use data more effectively by improving your technology, infrastructure and processes. Read more about point 10. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-better-use-of-data>)

11. Define your purchasing strategy

Your purchasing strategy must show you've considered commercial and technology aspects, and contractual limitations.

Read more about point 11. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/define-your-purchasing-strategy>)

12. Meet the Service Standard

If you're building a service as part of your technology project or programme you will also need to meet the Service Standard (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/service-standard>).

Who to contact for help

GDS Standards Assurance team

gdsapprovals@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk

You can email for help with:

- implementing the Technology Code of Practice
- designing an appropriate strategy for breaking up large systems and services
- evaluating the maturity of the technology market you want to buy from
- identifying opportunities to use common government platforms and components

Crown Commercial Service

info@crowncommercial.gov.uk

You can email for help with buying commodity services through procurement frameworks.

Technology Policy Team

You can give feedback to the Technology Policy team or ask questions about the Technology Code of Practice at technology-policy@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk

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