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Schools & Trusts: The areas your ICT Audit & Strategy should cover

- Decide if you want a full ICT Audit & Strategy or an approach that will focus on a particular area

- There are three focus areas that a complete ICT Audit should cover

- There are other areas, such as Data Audits and Reviews, that you may need to consider

- An objective, expert ICT consultant might be better placed to do some of these Reviews for you.

An ICT Audit and Strategy can be undertaken on specific, ICT 'focus' areas or across the whole ICT operation for your MAT or School. Before any ICT Audit and Strategy is undertaken, it's useful to you determine the scope of your requirements.

This Novatia Note covers what a full ICT Audit & Strategy comprises of and also breaks down three focus areas.

> 1. Technical - reviewing the quality of your organisation's technical solutions.

> 2. Educational - evaluating the impact ICT is making on your educational outcomes.

> 3. Operational - assessing your operational capabilities in the management and support of ICT.

Let's look at each area in turn.

Area 1. Technical Capabilities

This review answers the question: what is the condition of our technology, the quality of our systems and what do I need to do to improve this?

You need to undertake a core infrastructure audit where every school is visited to:

- gather information
- understand your system design
- determine how ICT systems are used on a day-to-day basis.

This includes reviewing:

- the physical condition of your network infrastructure

- the environmental conditions of ICT server and hub rooms

- the quality of your network architecture in terms of scalability, reliability, flexibility, and resilience

- the state of your server infrastructure, operating systems, implemented policies and security

- the quality, age and suitability of user devices and software to support the schools' education ambitions.

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All the findings need to be clearly logged and analysed so that a clear picture of your core technical infrastructure emerges.

Area 2. Educational Impact of your ICT

You need to determine whether ICT is helping or hindering the people in your school.

This includes:

- in the classroom
- beyond the classroom into the home
- in support offices
- at a management level.

This review provides you with a snapshot of the impact of technology on the experiences and achievements of all ICT users.

Furthermore, you will ascertain staff and pupil confidence in the ICT and what aspirations there are to improve the use of ICT.

The different techniques you can use to gather these testimonials and anecdotes, include interviews, questionnaires, observations, and IT help desk issue logs.

We recommend a range of these so that you build up a thorough picture, which isn't skewed by one or two ideas.

Area 3. Operational - ICT Support, governance and decision making

Once you know what technology you have, you need to know if you have the right set up and people to run, manage, and maintain your ICT.

This Review determines the strengths and weaknesses of the structure, experience, and qualifications of:

- the internal ICT Team
- any external ICT Support Services
- the processes and Service Level Agreements (SLAs) that are in place to manage both operational issues and on-going system development.

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Areas that you need to cover are:

- How well does your current ICT Team (internal and external) deliver day-to-day operational requirements?

- How well does your current internal ICT Team understand the ICT Strategy and work to deliver it?

- Does your current internal ICT Team have the right skills and capacity to deliver what is needed?

- How effective are your external ICT Support Services at providing what you need?

The outcome from this focused review is a report that recommends the structure and skills required to deliver the ICT service over the next one to three years.

You can also use the findings from this Review to determine your organisation's adherence to ITIL standards (the framework used to ensure a high-quality support service).

ICT Strategic Governance Review
During this Operational review, you need to determine what structures you have in place for strategic ICT decision making and how effective they are.

You need to know:

- what structure is in place to influence and govern all important decisions relating to ICT across your entire organisation

- the effectiveness of this structure

- who is involved in ICT Strategic Governance, do they have the right skills and timely knowledge?

- what the stated Terms of Reference are for ICT Strategic Governance

- Are the Terms of Reference are understood and being operated within?

This identifies gaps in ICT Strategic Governance and the recommendations to fill them.

Other Audits
We've covered the areas that are needed to determine and set up an effective ICT Strategy which supports educational outcomes. However, there are other areas that you might need to audit, such as Data, and Digital Security.

A Data Audit helps you understand the size of the gap between how you want data to be organised and used and what the current situation is. It's one of the first steps in organising, storing, and using all of your school or MAT's data effectively.

A Digital Security Audit determines how effective you are at protecting your ICT infrastructure and systems and how quickly you can mend and recover from any breaches.

FIND OUT MORE
Our expert team of ICT Consultants can undertake all or any of the elements of the ICT Audit.

We're independent, objective, and knowledgeable about what ICT in MATs and schools should look like, and experts in creating and delivering ICT infrastructures that work for your MAT or School.

If you feel your ICT Audit and development of a robust ICT Strategy would be benefit from being carried out by an external team, do get in touch.

Visit www.novatia.com call 01962 832 632 or email info@novatia.com