

Collaboration Relationship Standard

ISO 44001:2017 is the international standard on collaborative business relationship management systems which specifies requirements for the effective identification, development and management of collaborative business relationships within or between organisations.

The ISO standard goes into a large amount of detail on how collaborative business relationships can be successful, using an eight-stage process, summarised below.



Collaborative Relationship Development Maturity Matrix

The maturity matrix allows for self-assessment of the maturity of collaborative relationships in an organisation or group of organisations. Individuals can determine their current place in their maturity matrix by identifying the most applicable key attributes for each stage of the collaborative process.

This maturity profile can then be used to identify areas of variation between individuals or stakeholder groups, to reveal weaknesses or potential development areas, and can be updated as collaborations progress to ensure management and leadership attention is focussed on the correct areas for success.

Maturity Level					
D	C	B	A		
Limited	Low Level	Medium	High		
Collaborative working has not been used but is being considered for the future	Collaborative working is understood but operated only in isolated cases	Collaborative working is understood but not fully integrated	Advanced collaborative working is fully integrated into policy and operational practices		
Collaborative Context:					
Context of the Organisations	A recognition of the potential value of collaborative working, but this is not yet established it within management systems	The organisations have started to implement collaborative working in isolated operations, but it is not embedded in their existing management systems	The organisations have incorporated collaborative working as part of selected operations and is in the process of embedding this in management systems	The organisations have recognised the potential value of collaborative working and have a fully defined business strategy embedded in their management systems	
	D	C	B	A	

Leadership	Top management has no clear strategy for collaboration and is in the process of evaluation benefits and requirements	Top management has identified a clear strategy and commitment to collaborate, and is in the process of defining policies and processes for isolated opportunities	The organisations have appointed a senior lead to oversee collaborative working for specific opportunities but these requirements are not integrated within management systems	Top management has a clear strategy and commitment to collaborative working, and has well defined policies, roles, responsibilities, authorities and governance structures in place through an agreed lead.
	D	C	B	A
Planning	No defined processes for implementing collaborative working	A reactive approach to implementing collaborative working but no top level authority or structured processes	Collaborative working opportunities are managed in isolation and organisations are developing the integration of processes and management systems	Fully defined processes for implementing collaborative working opportunities are in place, including objectives, risks, and prioritisation of relationships
	D	C	B	A

Support	No defined processes to identify or develop resources with the appropriate competence and behaviour to support collaborative working, including communications	No defined processes to identify or develop resources with the appropriate competence and behaviour to support collaborative working including communications	Partially developed processes to identify resources with the appropriate competence and behaviour to support isolated collaborative working opportunities but these are as yet not fully embedded.	Fully defined and documented processes to identify and develop resources with the appropriate competence and behaviour to support collaborative working including communications
	D	C	B	A
Operating in Collaboration:				
Operational Awareness	Collaborative working is recognized but not effectively deployed as yet	Collaborative working has been adopted on an exception basis, often driven by opportunities	Collaborative working has been extensively adopted but not fully integrated across all organisations	Collaborative working is fully endorsed at the executive level and integrated across all the organisations
	D	C	B	A
Operational Knowledge	Standard operating practices used but these vary across organisations	Standard operating practices modified as required for collaborative delivery	Processes for implementing collaborative working programmes developed on an individual basis	Fully established processes for developing and implementing collaborative working programmes
	D	C	B	A

Capability	Limited collaborative capability	Teams are established to react to collaborative opportunities and then disbanded	Collaborative teams established and developed as required	Fully integrated processes for maintaining focus on internal collaborative capability
	D	C	B	A
Working together	No established collaborative operating and contracting models	Formal contract or SLA based operating models only	Operating and contracting models for individual collaborative programmes	Established operating and contracting models covering all collaborative activities
	D	C	B	A
Value creation	No focus on value creation other than internal local continual improvement programmes	Limited specific approaches to promote value creation and innovation at a collaborative level	Programme-specific approaches to promote value creation and innovation	Fully integrated collaborative processes to promote value creation and innovation
	D	C	B	A
Staying together	Responsibility for delivery, risk management, and value creation sits entirely with individual partner organisations, who also set objectives and manage and resolve issues according to local priorities	Responsibility for delivery, risk management, and value creation sits mainly with individual partner organisations, who also set objectives and manage and resolve issues according to local priorities	Programme specific joint management responsible for delivery, risk management, and value creation, working to joint objectives with clear methods for managing and resolving issues.	Joint management across all collaborative working, responsible for delivery, risk management, and value creation, working to joint objectives with clear methods for managing and resolving issues.
	D	C	B	A

Exit Strategy	Each organisation has an understanding of how they may leave the collaboration	Each organisation has an understanding of how they may leave the collaboration and will take account of the impact on other partners	An established and jointly agreed exit strategy is in place that takes account of local and partner impacts	A fully established, tested and jointly agreed exit strategy is in place that takes account of local and partner impacts
	D	C	B	A

Collaborative improvement in partner organisations:

Performance evaluation	No performance monitoring and measurement and evaluation of collaborative working in local internal audit processes and management reviews	Partner organisations have recognized the need to consider aspects of collaborative working performance monitoring and measurement in local internal audit processes and management reviews	Some limited performance monitoring and measurement and evaluation of collaborative working is integrated into local internal audit processes and management reviews	Performance monitoring and measurement and evaluation of collaborative working is fully integrated into local internal audit processes and management reviews
	D	C	B	A

Improvement	Partner organisations have an identified approach to continuous improvement but this does not include aspects of collaborative working	Partner organisations have an ad hoc and reactive approach to collaborative working which does not capture continual improvement practices	Partner organisations have established clear focus on continual improvement but this is not integrated into their management systems	Partner organisations have a fully established approach to continuous improvement including its approach to collaborative working
	D	C	B	A