

 ifip	International Federation for Information Processing
	TC-11 Security and Privacy Protection in Information Processing Systems

Factsheet

WG 11.5

Working Group on IT Assurance and Audit

Version: May 2023

Introduction

The current attention for digitalization and regulatory compliance has extremely changed the way in which IT has been organized, managed and consumed. Given their strict corresponding control objectives, organizations must transparently prove that they act in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations and manage digital risk in a proper fashion. Hence, reasonable assurance with respect to IT is crucial in this case to build confidence whether IT solutions and underlying infrastructures preserve resources, maintain data integrity as well as availability, meet the service levels, satisfy the regulatory requirements and accordingly assist in attaining their goals. For this essential purpose, a number of IT assurance and audit engagements are normally conducted. In practice, it is noticed that executives have mostly difficulties to describe their assurance needs particularly due to the lack of subject matter knowledge, and are therefore led and guided by assurance providers. They are particularly advised to implement internal control frameworks (e.g. COSO) and to adopt models and guidelines for IT related tasks (e.g. COBIT) to prove to the stakeholders and outside world that they govern this powerful technology in accordance with the industry standards. Executives are often recommended to deploy means including Third Party Audits (TPAs) to provide reasonable assurance with respect to internal or outsourced IT processes and operations. The rationale is to prove to any interested party an adequate control on those activities in a transparent manner. It is generally known that the assurance reports for this idea provide information whether the tested controls have operated effectively during the audit period which is logically in the past. This product is usually delivered in the context of a financial statement audit and compliance as a result of which they are increasingly perceived by executives as a standard service offered by suppliers. Executives hence consider the current approach of auditing as a supply-driven way of acting by which they can appreciatively exhibit “good citizenship”. Mainly because of the fast-moving digitalization, it has become clear that they should proactively participate in determining the assurance needs from a wider perspective than those only two drivers indicated above (i.e. financial statement audit and compliance) to promote

and effectuate a demand-driven way of viewing and handling IT assurance and audit related activities.

Aims and scope

The aim of the Working group (hereinafter referred to as WG) as part of TC-11 is to study and develop detailed knowledge on IT assurance and audit models, standards, processes and techniques to meet the needs of organizations from a wider business perspective. The WG provides professionals operating in the field thorough insight into the IT audit function in financial reporting and compliance, and offers pragmatic ideas, approaches, instruments, guidelines and tooling that contribute to responsibly utilizing a demand driven way of IT assurance in addition to the existing and common practices.

Although the application and benefits of IT assurance and audit services are definitely in no doubt, it is essential to advance these necessary products to the next and more actual and mature level with a broad organizational focus that also possesses a risk and future based characteristics.

The following topics are initially part of the WG:

- IT audit in financial statement review.
- IT assurance reporting standards.
- Integrated Risk Management (IRM).
- Continuous assurance and audit.
- Information assurance.
- Software assurance.
- Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC).
- Digital auditing.
- Digital security governance.
- Digital risk management.
- Digital Audit Technologies.
- Cyber Security automation.
- Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)

The WG seeks collaboration with other working groups inside and outside IFIP. Examples include, but are not limited to, Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA).

Products, services and activities

The WG pay particular attention to the following items:

Market movement

As illustrated in figure 1, the WG monitors the market movements in the field of IT audit and assurance, and develops a research program that includes several related and pertinent topics. These are studied and published by the usage of the membership as a basis for creating a live chain of active scholars and practitioners. Publications resulting from these activities are presented in the IFIP and other conferences and workshops. In addition, the WG aims to link with

foreign research institutes. The rationale is to gain and develop new (joint) research ideas, and apply lessons learned and comments gathered during the research activities, conferences and workshops as a consequence of which the WG program can be adjusted with the purpose of contributing to the IT assurance and audit profession.

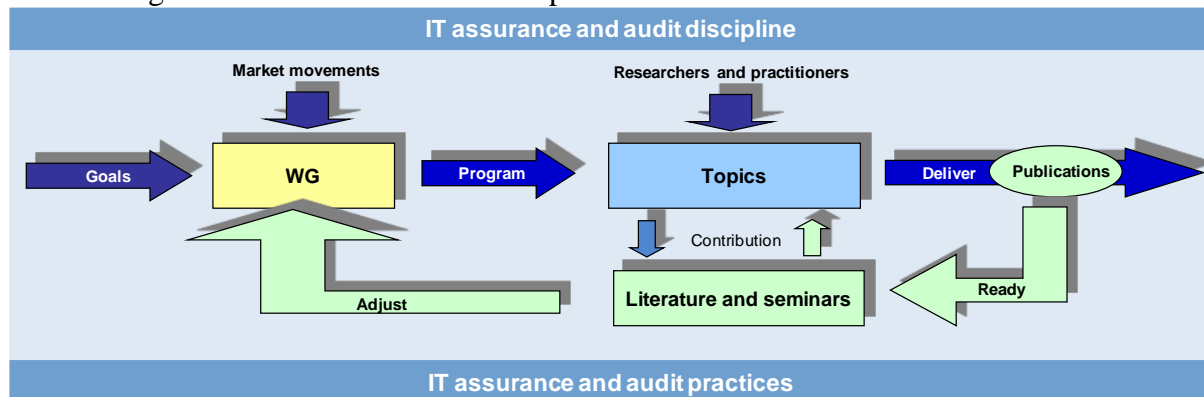


Figure 1. The activity flow of the WG

Conferences, workshops and presentations

Every year, the WG aims to organize a conference on a subject pertinent to the IT assurance and audit discipline. Workshops are setup and presentations are delivered for the related fields of study including financial audit, digital security governance and digital risk & compliance management.

Membership rules

- Members are required to be a registered, qualified via certification or educated through the completion of a university program. They could either be scholars, practitioners or a combination of both.
- These academics and professionals can freely sign up. They are interviewed and approved by the Chair.
- Members are expected to participate actively in Working Group activities. This includes joining the (online) meetings and presenting in the seminars and workshops.

Contact details

For information about the IFIP WG 11.5 on IT Assurance and Audit, please contact the WG Chair:

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Annex a. Membership

- **Officers, current**

Chair: Stef Schinagl
 First term, since september 2020

Vice-chair: Abbas Shahim
 First term, since July 2013

Secretary: see chair