

Change Management Process

1. Purpose

The Change Management process ensures that IT changes within the Open College of the Arts (OCA) are controlled, documented, and implemented with minimal disruption to business operations. Zendesk will be utilised as the IT Service Management (ITSM) tool to perform change tracking, approvals, and reporting. This process will maintain compliance with the Change Management Policy.

2. Scope

This process applies to all IT-related changes, including but not limited to:

- Infrastructure changes (servers, networks, databases)
- Software updates, patches, and releases
- Security updates and configuration changes
- Cloud services and platform changes
- IT service modifications affecting end-users

This process does not cover minor service requests (handled via Zendesk Service Requests) unless they impact system performance or security.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

3.1 Key Stakeholders in Change Management

Role	Responsibilities
Change Requester	Submits a change request in Zendesk, providing all required details.
Change Manager (IT Manager)	Reviews, classifies, assesses risk, schedules, and coordinates changes. Provides final approval for emergency or major high-risk changes.
Change Advisory Board (CAB)	Assesses high-risk changes, approves or rejects changes, and advises on risk mitigation.
Change Implementer	Executes the change according to the approved plan and updates Zendesk with implementation details.

4. Types of Changes

Change Type	Definition	Approval Requirement	Risk Level
Standard Change	Low-risk, repeatable changes with pre-approved workflows (e.g., software patching, routine server maintenance).	Pre-approved	Low
Normal Change	Non-routine changes that require review and approval before execution.	CAB Approval	Medium
Emergency Change	Critical changes that must be implemented immediately to fix an incident or prevent a major outage (e.g., security vulnerabilities, critical system failures).	Emergency CAB or Change Manager	High

5. Change Management Process Workflow

Step 1: Change Request Submission

- The Change Requester submits a Change Request (CR) in Zendesk using the “Change Request” ticket type.
- The request must include:
 - Summary description
 - Business requirements (functional and non-functional), including, where applicable:
 - Information security requirements
 - Requirements for updating documentation
 - Urgency, Impact & Risk assessment (low, medium, high)
 - Implementation plan consisting of:
 - Benefits and reasons for the change
 - Planned implementation window (date and time)
 - Technical specification & testing requirements
 - Communication requirements
 - Rollback plan (steps to revert if the change fails)

Step 2: Initial Review & Classification

- The Change Manager reviews the change request in Zendesk and classifies it based on the following:
 - Prioritisation of the change requests:
 - Criteria: Urgency, impact, and relation to other change requests.
 - Special Circumstances: Disasters, regulatory compliance, etc.
 - Conflict Resolution: Higher priority change takes precedence.
 - Urgency:
 - Levels: Critical (1), High (2), Medium (3), Low (4).
 - Critical: Business-critical changes (e.g., system down, major operation impacted).

- Impact:
 - Levels: High (1), Medium (2), Low (3).
 - Factors: Number of users, network estate percentage, system criticality, financial impact, customer impact, risk.
- If the request is missing information, the Change Manager will request updates before proceeding.
- Zendesk assigns the change to the correct approval path:
 - Standard Change → Auto-approved
 - Normal Change → CAB approval required
 - Emergency Change → Change Manager or Emergency CAB approval required

Step 3: Risk & Impact Assessment

For Normal and Emergency Changes, the Change Manager performs a risk and impact assessment with consideration of:

- Business impact: Will the change disrupt business operations?
- Technical risks: Are there dependencies or potential failure points?
- Security concerns: Could the change introduce vulnerabilities?
- User impact: Will users need downtime or additional training?

If the risk is medium or high, the Change Manager escalates the request to the CAB for further review.

Step 4: Approval Process

Zendesk will facilitate approval workflows based on change type:

Change Type	Approval Process
Standard Change	Auto Approved based on pre-approved templates and criteria
Normal Change	Requires CAB approval via Zendesk's approval workflow
Emergency Change	Requires immediate approval from the Change Manager (IT Manager) or Emergency CAB.

CAB members receive notifications via Zendesk, and they can approve or reject changes within the ticket.

Step 5: Implementation

Once approved, the Implementer performs the change:

- The change is scheduled in Zendesk's calendar to avoid conflicts.
- The change implementer executes the change following the approved implementation plan.
- Real-time updates are logged in Zendesk, including:
 - Change start and end time
 - Issues encountered
 - Any deviations from the plan

If issues occur, the rollback plan is executed, and the Change Manager is notified immediately.

Step 6: Post-Implementation Review

After execution, the Change Manager:

- Reviews Zendesk logs to confirm the change was successful.
- Conducts a Post-Implementation Review (PIR) for Normal and Emergency changes.
- Documents lessons learned, including:
 - Did the change achieve its objective?
 - Were there any unexpected issues?
 - Recommendations for future changes.

If major issues were encountered, a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) may be conducted.

Step 7: Closure & Documentation

- The Change Manager updates the Zendesk Change Request with final status:
- Completed: Successful implementation
- Failed & Rolled Back: Change was unsuccessful and reverted
- Cancelled: Change was not implemented
- Zendesk generates reports on key metrics to track change performance.

6. Change Communication

Relevant stakeholders should be notified at each stage:

- Before the Change:
 - End-users receive notifications for scheduled downtime.
 - The IT Team are alerted about upcoming changes that may affect their services.
- After the Change:
 - The IT Team are informed if an issue arises that requires an incident response.
 - Management receives a summary of critical changes.

7. Reporting & Metrics

Zendesk dashboards should be utilised for tracking:

Metric	Purpose
% of successful changes	Ensures efficiency and effectiveness of change management.
% of changes resulting in incidents	Helps identify trends and areas for improvement.
Average time to approve a change	Measures efficiency of the approval process.
Emergency vs. Normal change ratio	Ensures proper planning of changes to reduce emergencies.
% of successful changes	Ensures efficiency and effectiveness of change management.

Regular reports, metrics and PIRs should be reviewed in CAB meetings to improve change processes.

Document Control

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0.1			Initial draft