Service Level Agreement (SLA) for IT Help Desk Services

Related Policies, Procedures, or Standards:
600-1 VSC Acceptable Use Policy
End-User Hardware/Endpoint Management SLA
Software Services SLA

1   General Overview

This is an SLA between IT Shared Services and the member institutions of the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) system. This agreement outlines the IT Help Desk services offered and is intended to document procedures for end-user support services and set service level expectations for these services. Service level commitments are specified. The agreement is effective as of the Effective Date set forth and will continue until revised or terminated.

For the purposes of this SLA, "customer" is defined collectively as the Community College of Vermont, Vermont State University, Workforce Development, and the Chancellor's Office, plus any other Vermont State Colleges (VSC) entity whose inclusion may be negotiated. The "end-user" is defined as faculty, staff, student, guest, or any other user of this service.

2   Service Description

2.1   Service Scope

The scope of this service is to provide end-user support services to the member institutions of the Vermont State College (VSC) system. Support is available to all VSC constituents via ServiceDesk ticketing system, phone, email, remote access, self-service online documentation, and walk-in.

IT Help Desk features include:
- Single point of contact for incidents and requests via ServiceDesk ticketing system;
- Real-time tracking of service requests;
- Service Points:
    - ServiceDesk ticketing system
    - VSC IT Knowledgebase (self-help)
    - Help Desk Email
    - Help Desk Telephone
    - Walk-in support
- Triage, troubleshoot, and resolve incidents;
- Fulfillment or escalation of requests;
- Communication of system outages and changes via email;

2.2   End-User Requirements to Use the Service

- Utilize established Service Points for incidents and service requests;
- Provide proof of identity (Full name, College ID number, or answers to security questions for password resets);
- Provide contact and all required information for the service request;
- Be prepared to engage in troubleshooting steps with the goal of resolving an incident faster;
- Read IT emails regarding system changes, maintenance, and outages;
- Comply with the [VSC Acceptable Use Policy](#).

2.3   Boundaries of Service Features and Functions

- Walk-in service may be limited by location;
- Resolution of incidents and requests may be delayed if all required information is not provided;
- If troubleshooting steps are not followed as instructed, incidents may be canceled and communication of such will be via ServiceDesk email;
- After five (5) business days of no response, requests or incidents may be canceled and communication of such will be via ServiceDesk email;
- Contact made to IT Help Desk outside of established Service Points may not receive a response;
- Escalation of service requests and incidents is based on a pre-defined set of criteria and processes;
- Approvals, authorizations, and/or contact information may be required for some service requests;
- Support of personally owned equipment or software is very limited;
- Disparity in some services exists due to disparate historical investments. These disparities will be addressed over time with the funding set aside by the Board of Trustees;
- Support staffing is by region. There is no specific FTE on each campus for help desk support.

2.4   Service Level Performance

- Service Points will utilize trained IT staff and student employees;
- Incidents and service requests will be reviewed weekly.

2.5   IT Shared Services Responsibilities in Support of the Service

- Publish hours of operation;
- Publish Service Points information;
- Provide friendly, courteous, and efficient service;
- Train staff on help desk processes, procedures, and best practices;
- Develop business processes in alignment with industry best practices;

- Continuously evaluate and improve services for all end-users;
- Use a service management tool in alignment with industry best practices;
- Meet response times associated with the priority assigned to incidents and service requests;
- Actively communicate of any situation in which resolution of a request or incident requires an expense, process modification, or end-user training;
- Adhere to established maintenance windows;
- Promptly refer any inquiries/complaints to the appropriate responsible team;

2.6 Customer Responsibilities in Support of the Service
- IT Strategic Advisory Committee to collaborate with IT Shared Services on the service framework to satisfy the Vermont State Colleges business requirements;
- Comply with the SLA and follow process for escalation if services are not being met.

3 Hours of Coverage and Escalation

3.1 Hours of Coverage
IT Help Desk hours are posted at http://support.vsc.edu.
Online self-help resources are available 24/7. Requests and incidents may be reported to the online ticket system, ServiceDesk, 24/7 except for periods of planned maintenance.

3.2 Service Exceptions to Coverage
Refer to Help Desk hours of coverage.

3.3 Escalation and Exceptions
If you are not satisfied with the performance of the service or incident/request process, please contact the Service Owner or Service Manager.
IT Shared Services Contacts:

Service Owner	Name: Jason Ryan Title: Director of Technical Support Services Phone: 802-626-6210 Email: jason.ryan@vsc.edu
Service Manager	Name: Erik Lightbody Title: Manager of User Support Services Phone: Email: erik.lightbody@vsc.edu

To request exceptions to defined service levels based on exceptional business needs, please email cio@vsc.edu. The Office of the CIO/IT Shared Services will respond to the message within 5 business days and escalate any mutually agreed upon exceptions for review, approval, and funding, if necessary.

4 Service Requests

A Service Request is defined as a request for information, advice, or for access to a service.

4.1 Service Request Submission

Service Requests can be submitted by creating a support ticket in [ServiceDesk](#).

4.2 Service Request Response

For all requests, IT Shared Services' objective is to acknowledge and assign requests within 12-24 business hours of receipt. Our goal is to fulfill requests within seven (7) days; however, this may be impacted by factors including:

- Requests requiring new purchases;
- Requests involving academic spaces;
- Requests that impact a large number of users.

Campus priorities may require exceptions during certain times of the Academic year.

5 Incidents

An incident is defined as any interruption in the normal functioning of a service or system

5.1 Incident Report

Incidents can be reported by creating a support ticket in [ServiceDesk](#) or the other Service Point options.

5.2 Incident Response

It is the goal of IT Shared Services to respond to incidents as quickly as possible.

Given that complete resolution of an incident may require equipment replacement, repair, or vendor assistance, technicians may prioritize restoring functionality to reduce the impact to end users.

Level of Incident	Response Time*	Resolution Time**	Functionality Restored	Communication
L5: No Error – Equipment is functional, user needs support	Within 60 minutes	5-10 minutes	Time of resolution	
L4: Minor Error- Equipment/soft ware needs minor service	Within 60 minutes	1-4 hours	Time of resolution	Users will be notified if needed

L3: Device/System Failure – Specific device or system is not working; reimage/repair/ replacement required	Within 60 minutes	1-3 business days	1-3 business days	Users will be notified, and alternative equipment provided (if appropriate)
L2: Equipment Failure: Multiple device/system failures	Within 60 minutes	1-4 weeks	1-4 weeks	Users will be notified, and alternative equipment provided (if appropriate)
L1: Complex Failure: Failure of a specialized or complex system or space	Within 60 minutes	1-4 weeks	1-4 weeks	Users will be notified. Alternative equipment will be provided, or a room change coordinated if necessary

* Response time is dependent on the immediate availability of technicians.
** Resolution time is dependent on severity of incident, availability of replacement equipment, need for vendor assistance, etc.

5.3   Prioritization

All reported incidents receive a priority number based on the impact and urgency of the service interruption. Impact is determined based on the number of people/departments/buildings that are affected by the interruption or outage. Life-Safety issues are taken into consideration for assessing and assigning priorities. Urgency is based on the acceptable delay to restore the service. Urgency can be critical or high and is determined based on the nature of the service outage.

IT Shared Services may prioritize incoming incident requests as L1 or L2 priority if it meets one or more of the following criteria:
- Significant number of people affected;
- The level to which work is impaired for individuals;
- Academic and Administrative Calendar deadlines;
- Significant impact on the delivery of instruction;
- Significant risk to safety, law, rule, or policy compliance.

6 Maintenance and Service Changes

The Maintenance Window for IT Help Desk services can be found on the IT Shared Services website.

IT Shared Services reserves the right to modify the maintenance window.

7 Performance and Review

7.1 System Performance and Availability

Service performance and availability reports will be provided with the release of the annual report.

7.2 SLA Reviews

IT Shared Services is responsible for facilitating reviews of this document. Contents of this document may be amended as required, provided mutual agreement is obtained from the primary stakeholders and communicated to all affected parties. This SLA contains the complete agreement between the parties and shall not be changed, amended, or altered except in writing and signed by each party.

Signatures

Revision History

Date	Revision	Revised By	Signature
12/21/2022	Original Draft	Gayle Malinowski	
1/16/2025	Revised	Gayle Malinowski	*GM*