

ITIL® (Version 5) Certification FAQ

Navigate the 2026 updates to the ITIL® Certification Journey

ITIL® (Version 5) represents a thoughtful evolution of the trusted ITIL® framework, bringing AI-native guidance, enhanced digital experience focus, and integrated product and service management to help professionals thrive in today's fast-changing environment.

Whether you're new to ITIL® or transitioning from ITIL® 4 or v3, this FAQ addresses the most common questions about the certification scheme, transition pathways, exam formats, and what makes Version 5 essential for modern service management. Your existing certifications retain value, and there are clear paths forward for every stage of your ITIL journey.

Q: WHAT IS NEW IN ITIL® (VERSION 5)?

A: ITIL® (Version 5) introduces major evolutions that make the framework more practical, flexible, and relevant for everyone working with digital products and services, across roles, teams, and organizations of all sizes.

Key innovations include:

- **Modern, Integrated and Comprehensive Approach:** ITIL® (Version 5) provides guidance that works across the entire organization - from leadership and strategy through to day-to-day operations - helping teams collaborate, align priorities, and consistently create value in both stable and fastchanging environments.
- **AI-Native and Complexity-Ready:** ITIL® (Version 5) helps professionals work effectively in complex, AI-enabled environments by providing practical guidance on how to adapt, make informed decisions, and manage change as technology, business needs, and customer expectations evolve.
- **Integration of Products and Services:** ITIL® provides end-to-end lifecycle guidance for digital products and services, integrating both for holistic management and value.
- **Emphasis on Digital Experience:** Digital experience is a core focus in ITIL® (Version 5), helping professionals design, deliver, and improve digital products and services with greater visibility, collaboration, and understanding of how different stakeholders experience value.
- **Continuity with Previous Versions:** ITIL® (Version 5) incorporates proven concepts and models from ITIL® 4 and earlier, including the value system and guiding principles.

Q: WHY DID ITIL® EVOLVE? WHY NOW?

A: A new version is needed because the digital landscape has changed dramatically. Organizations today must operate faster, smarter, and more flexibly, especially with AI transforming how work gets done.

ITIL® (Version 5) arrives now to address these realities:

- **Digital-first, product-centric enterprises require updated guidance:** Previous versions focused mainly on services; modern organizations manage integrated products and services.

- **AI and automation are reshaping operations:** ITIL® (Version 5) provides an AI-native approach that helps organizations adapt and innovate confidently.
- **Businesses need models that support agility and rapid change:** ITIL® (Version 5) evolves to ensure adaptive, outcome-focused practices aligned with real-world needs.
- **Organizations must continually demonstrate measurable value:** The new framework strengthens the link between people, practices, and technology to drive sustainable business results.

In short: ITIL® (Version 5) evolves to match today's AI-driven, fast-changing environment, providing practical guidance that supports people across all roles and organizations in delivering and improving digital products and services.

Q: WHAT IS THE RATIONALE FOR GOING BACK TO “VERSION” PRIOR TO THE NUMBER? ITIL® V3 > ITIL® 4 > ITIL® (VERSION 5)?

A: We use ITIL® (Version 5) to clearly signal the evolution of the ITIL® framework. Each new version represents a meaningful step forward, building on proven guidance while adapting to how digital products, services, and organizations operate today. This helps candidates understand that ITIL® evolves with the profession, rather than being replaced or reset.

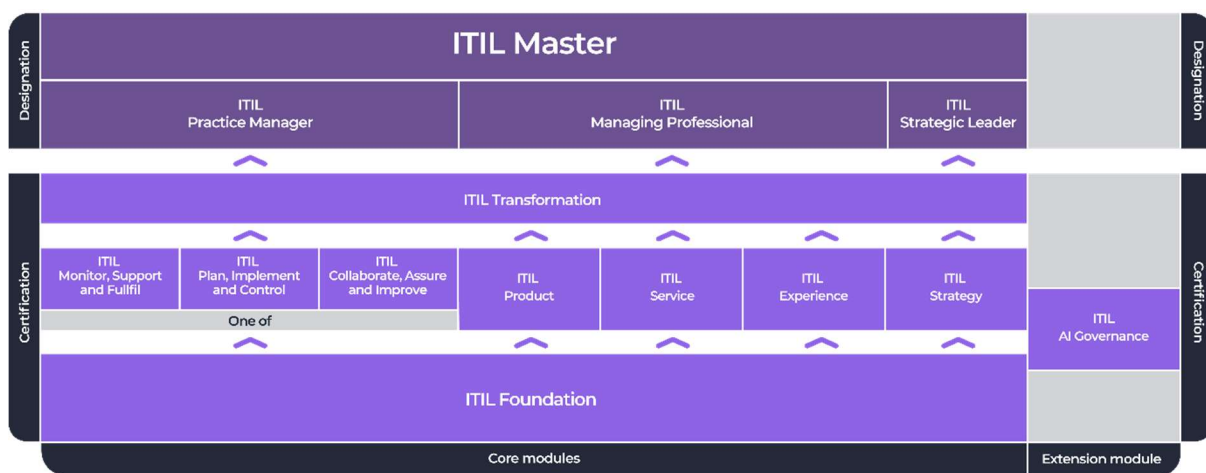
Q: HOW ARE THE ITIL® (VERSION 5) PRACTICES ACCESSED AND WHERE ARE THEY PUBLISHED?

A: All 34 ITIL® (Version 5) practices are available exclusively via PeopleCert Plus membership. In addition, the 15 practices that are part of the Practice Manager modules are available as accompanying training materials together with the corresponding training courses.

Q: WHAT CERTIFICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN ITIL® (VERSION 5)?

A: In ITIL® (Version 5), the qualification scheme begins with the ITIL® Foundation and continues with eight advanced modules and one extension module.

The ITIL® (Version 5) qualification scheme diagram below provides a visual overview of how the certifications and designations fit together and how candidates can progress through the framework.



The advanced modules are organized into three distinct streams:

1. **ITIL® Practice Manager (ITIL® PM)**
2. **ITIL® Managing Professional (ITIL® MP)**
3. **ITIL® Strategic Leader (ITIL® SL)**

Successfully completing the defined modules within a stream grants the respective designation.

Achieving all three designations leads to the highest recognition: the **ITIL® Master**. In total, ITIL® (Version 5) offers **four designations**, each building toward holistic mastery of Product and Service Management.

To become an **ITIL® Practice Manager (ITIL® PM)**, candidates complete ITIL® Foundation and then choose one of the following specialization modules, each including a set of practices:

- **Monitor, Support & Fulfil (MSF):** Service Desk, Incident Management, Problem Management, Service Request Management, Monitoring & Event Management
- **Plan, Implement & Control (PIC):** Change Enablement, Deployment Management, Release Management, Service Configuration Management, IT Asset Management
- **Collaborate, Assure & Improve (CAI):** Relationship Management, Supplier Management, Service Level Management, Continual Improvement, Information Security Management

To obtain the ITIL® Practice Manager (Version 5) designation, candidates must also complete the **ITIL® Transformation** course and pass the corresponding exam.

The **ITIL® Managing Professional (ITIL® MP)** designation requires ITIL® Foundation plus the modules: Product, Service, Experience, and Transformation.

The **ITIL® Strategic Leader (ITIL® SL)** designation requires ITIL® Foundation plus the modules: Strategy and Transformation.

ITIL® Transformation is a core component of every designation within ITIL® (Version 5). It only needs to be completed once, and the achievement counts across all designations.

AI Governance is introduced as an extension module, reflecting the importance of managing AI responsibly within service management.

The **ITIL® Master** designation recognizes deep expertise and the proven ability to adopt ITIL® in complex, real-world contexts.

Q: ARE THERE ANY EXTENSION MODULES IN ITIL® (VERSION 5)?

A: AI Governance is the only extension module in the ITIL® (Version 5) qualification scheme. It focuses on establishing frameworks, policies, and controls to ensure AI is used responsibly, ethically, and in alignment with organizational and regulatory standards.

The ITIL® 4 extension modules are no longer part of the ITIL® (Version 5) qualification scheme, as their content has been absorbed into the broader ITIL® guidance and future learning offerings, reflecting how the framework has evolved.

Q: IS ITIL® (VERSION 5) TRAINING MANDATORY FOR CANDIDATES OR CAN THEY SELF-STUDY?

A: PeopleCert has not mandated training for ITIL® Foundation (Version 5), so you are able to self-study. However, candidates are encouraged to attend an accredited training course to fully understand the new material.

For all other modules, in line with ITIL® 4 requirements, accredited training or official eLearning is required.

Q: WHAT DO THE EXAMINATIONS LOOK LIKE WITHIN THE ITIL® (VERSION 5) QUALIFICATION SCHEME?

A: ITIL® Foundation (Version 5) certification and ITIL® Practice certifications will remain as closed book MCQ examinations. ITIL® AI Governance will also be a closed book MCQ examination.

For the ITIL® Product, ITIL® Service, ITIL® Experience, ITIL® Strategy, and ITIL® Transformation certifications, open book examinations are planned, allowing candidates to focus on understanding, applying concepts, and making informed decisions rather than memorization.

Q: DO I HAVE TO PASS ALL PRACTICE MANAGER MODULES AND THE TRANSFORMATION MODULES TO RECEIVE THE ITIL® (VERSION 5) PRACTICE MANAGER DESIGNATION?

A: No, you only have to pass one of the Practice Manager modules (free choice of one) and the Transformation module to automatically receive the ITIL® (Version 5) Practice Manager designation.

Q: I HAVE ITIL® 4 FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION. HOW SHOULD I GO ABOUT TRANSITIONING TO ITIL® (VERSION 5)?

A: ITIL® 4 Foundation holders do not need to retake their Foundation certification. ITIL® (Version 5) represents an evolution rather than a revolution, and ITIL® 4 Foundation is fully recognized as a prerequisite for all advanced ITIL® (Version 5) qualifications.

Q: I HAVE ITIL® V3 FOUNDATION CERTIFICATION. HOW SHOULD I GO ABOUT TRANSITIONING TO ITIL® (VERSION 5)?

A: For candidates who have successfully completed the ITIL® v3 Foundation, we recommend the ITIL® (Version 5) Foundation training and successfully pass the examination to transition into the new certification scheme. Compared to ITIL® v3, the ITIL® (Version 5) Foundation introduces a significant amount of new content and updated practices, making refreshed training and certification essential. This ensures that professionals gain a solid understanding of the latest concepts and are fully prepared to apply ITIL® (Version 5) in modern, dynamic business environments.

Q: I HAVE A SINGLE ITIL® 4 CERTIFICATE, BUT NO ITIL® 4 DESIGNATION. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO CONTINUE MY ITIL® JOURNEY?

A: If you hold a single ITIL® 4 certificate, you already have a valuable start in ITIL® (Version 5) as ITIL® certificates are recognized as pre-requisites for all ITIL® (Version 5) advanced level certificates. The best way to continue your journey is to choose an ITIL® (Version 5) path that aligns with your goals. Your ITIL® 4 experience is not lost, it provides context and understanding that will make learning ITIL® (Version 5) easier and help you connect proven best practices with the latest guidance in digital product and service management.

Q: ITIL® TRANSFORMATION (VERSION 5) IS A UNIVERSAL MODULE. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN, AND WILL I HAVE TO TAKE IT TWICE?

A: ITIL® Transformation (Version 5) is a core module forming part of the ITIL® Practice Manager, ITIL® Managing Professional, and ITIL® Strategic Leader designations. It only needs to be taken once.

Q: WILL ITIL® (VERSION 5) CERTIFICATES REQUIRE RENEWAL?

A: Yes, ITIL® Version 5 certificates will be issued with a 3 year renew by date.

The renewal routes will remain consistent with ITIL® 4, as well as our PRINCE2® and DEVOPS INSTITUTE portfolio routes.

The renewal routes are as follows:

2. Become a PeopleCert Plus member and gain access to our Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme, which allows you to keep your certifications current by logging 20 CPD points per year, for 3 consecutive years, for everyday professional activities.
3. Take another certification from the same Product Suite. For ITIL® (Version 5) the Product suite contains ALL ITIL® certificates.
4. Take the same certification again.

Q: ARE THE SINGLE DAY PRACTICE COURSES INCLUDED IN THE ITIL® (VERSION 5) QUALIFICATION SCHEME?

A: No, only the three bundled Practice modules are available in the ITIL® (Version 5) qualification scheme.

Q: HOW LONG WILL ITIL® 4 AND ITIL® (VERSION 5) COEXIST, AND WHEN WILL ITIL® 4 BE RETIRED?

A: No final retirement date for ITIL® 4 has been announced.

ITIL® 4 and ITIL® (Version 5) are expected to run in parallel for a minimum of 12 months to allow candidates and organizations to complete in-flight learning journeys.

A detailed coexistence and retirement plan will be shared ahead of any change.

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