



IHTSDO Content Committee

Terms of Reference



IHTSDO CONTENT COMMITTEE

Approved: February 2008

Terms of Reference

From the Articles of Association June 2007, Section 9.5.2:

The Content Committee will be responsible for and shall advise the Management Board on priorities and issues pertaining to the definition and maintenance of the clinical content and structure of SNOMED CT and its related standards and the Association's other Terminology Products.

Purpose

The Content Committee supports the mission of the IHTSDO by advising on all issues related to the content of SNOMED CT and its related standards, with a specific focus on users and implementation of the terminology.

Scope

The Content Committee supports the work plan of the IHTSDO, with a focus on the work plan items led by the Chief Terminologist. Therefore its activities will reflect the current priorities and objectives identified in that plan.

Scope of work of the committee includes:

- Editorial policies.
- Request process and content inclusion/exclusion criteria and algorithms.
- Educational curricula related to content, modeling and the concept model.
- Changes to the concept model and assessment of consequences of proposed changes.
- Implementation guidance related to the concept model.
- Requirements framework for distributed development.

Future work plans may change the specific scope of the committee's work, based on the priorities and objectives of the Management Board.

Responsibilities

- Assure the fitness for purpose and usability of the editorial policies, educational standards and all other IHTSDO Standards related to Content, ensuring they conform to process and quality criteria identified in the IHTSDO Standards – Guidelines for Development (yet to be produced – see work plan item 4.1).
- Provide advice to the Management Board to inform its decisions, specifically those related to the IHTSDO work plan and priorities.
- Advise other Committees, Project Groups and Special Interest Groups on Content issues
 - Advise the Quality Committee regarding fitness for purpose of the terminology itself
- Establish and maintain effective communications with internal (IHTSDO) and external stakeholders relevant to the Content Committee scope



- Identify and manage potential overlaps with work of other Committees, contributing to other aspects of the IHTSDO's mission and work plan as appropriate, e.g. reviewing quality plans, commissioning research.
- Contribute to other aspects of the IHTSDO's mission and work plan as appropriate.

Principles

From the Articles of Association June 2007, Section 1.3.1:

The Association will seek to govern itself and conduct all of its activities in accordance with principles of openness, fairness, transparency and accountability to its Members.

The IHTSDO is based on openness. Openness implies transparency, communication and accountability. Transparency cannot exist with a purely one-way communication – and it requires dialogue and participation to be involved in a democratic process.

The intention should basically be to be open in both the planning process and the execution of the meetings. The experts around the world are only few, and all the persons with knowledge are needed and should feel invited to flow into the committees and working groups.

Participation in Meetings

According to the principles mentioned above, the standing committees should operate as follows:

1. Committees should be open to non-members who should be known as observers.
2. Approval to attend or invitation of observers should be brought through the Chair of Committee, so that suitable logistical arrangements can be made – if at all possible.
3. Observer contributions are at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee.
4. Observers cannot vote and should respect the need for the Committee to reach conclusion in the discussions.
5. Seating arrangements at physical meetings are at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee. The Chair will ensure that all the Committee members will have full access to facilities to undertake their duties.
6. Attendance policies will be established by the Management Board.¹

Membership

From the Articles of Association June 2007, Section 9.5.3

The Content Committee will comprise the following members selected as follows:

¹ The General Assembly has agreed as follows "Beginning in 2009, if a member has been absent from at least 50 % of meetings held during the year, the Content Committee Chair would typically contact the member to discuss the situation. Except in extenuating circumstances, he/she would then recommend to the Management Board that the member in question be deemed to have resigned and would notify the member of this recommendation." In such cases of persistent non-attendance, the General Assembly has the option at the next Committee elections to elect an individual to fill the vacancy caused by this resignation.



- (a) the Management Board shall appoint one Director to be member of the Content Committee as its Chair, and if reasonably possible such Director will possess an appropriate and relevant background to the functions of the Content Committee;*
- (b) the Chief Terminologist and Chief Technical Architect;*
- (c) a representative of Affiliates in accordance with clause 9.11;*
- (d) at least one and no more than three members for and on behalf of, but not necessarily resident in, each of the Geographical Constituencies. These members will be nominated and elected in the same manner that Directors are elected to the Management Board pursuant to clause 9.1.5, subject to the exception that Members shall be free to nominate up to three candidates and vacant seats will be filled from these candidates according to the votes each received.*

NOTE: Members do not represent Geographical Constituencies; they bring their individual expertise to the work of the Committee.

A full list of current members of the Content Committee can be found on the IHTSDO Website <http://www.ihtsdo.org/about-us/standing-committees/>

Ways of working

Face to face meetings will be held at least two times a year. Monthly conference calls will be scheduled so that business may be addressed more rapidly if required.

Members will respond in a timely manner to requests from the Chair for input to decisions that are required between meetings.

The IHTSDO principles of openness and collaboration will underpin the Committee's working methods, with the support of technical/communications infrastructure for the sharing and management of documents and for consultation with others.

In keeping with IHTSDO policy, members will declare potential or actual conflicts of interests with Committee agenda items and these will be managed by the Chair.

The Committee will uphold the Articles of Association and conform to the IHTSDO Regulations, Policies and Procedures where they apply to the Committee activities.

The Meeting Minutes from each Committee will be published on the IHTSDO web site and notified to and/or posted on the Collaborative Space.

The Committee will periodically review these Terms of Reference and will revise them as necessary and appropriate. This will ensure that Committee responsibilities accurately reflect the IHTSDO work plan, and the activities, interests and contributions from Members and the community of interest.

The Chair will take responsibility for taking the Committee's recommendations to the Management Board and providing members with feedback on the outcomes of their contribution.

The Chair will work with Chairs of the other Committees to ensure co-ordination across Committees, Project and Interest Groups and effective joint working when appropriate.



During face to face meetings, parallel sessions cannot be avoided. The Committee is keen to promote joint meetings with other Committees, particularly on areas of joint interest.

Skills Matrix

A desirable skills matrix has been developed for each of the IHTSDO Committees. Each skills matrix indicates the approximate minimum percentage of Committee members who will have a certain skill set. These are intended to provide guidelines to the General Assembly and Affiliate Forum when nominating or voting, but are not strict requirements. The General Assembly has approved the following skills matrix for the Content Committee:

SNOMED CT Editor	83%	Command of two or more languages (e.g. Chinese, French, German, etc)	25%
SNOMED CT Design		National and International Standards Development and/or Approval	25%
SNOMED CT Implementation		Registered Clinical Professional (current or past)	50%
SNOMED CT Tooling		Software design and development	25%
Other Terminology Design, Development & Release	83%	Software production for market	
Other Terminology Implementation		Data Standards Management including Policy	25%
Classification & Grouping		Chief Information Officer and/or Chief Technical Architect Management	
Engineering of natural language processing (NLP) systems	25%	Active in the IHTSDO community (member of SIG and/or PG)	50%
Engineering of semantic systems (ontologies, decision support, knowledge engineering)			