

IT Leadership and Effectiveness Assessment for Higher Education Leaders

This tool helps you evaluate whether your IT function is positioned to drive **strategy, governance, data-informed decision-making, and institutional performance.**



Take this quick quiz to find out!

This Technology Assessment is built with your role in mind: **no IT knowledge, auditing or interaction necessary.**

INSTRUCTIONS

- 01** For each question, circle or select a score from 1 to 5.
- 02** Add up your total.
- 03** Use the **Scoring Guide** to interpret your results.

AREA OF ASSESSMENT

Leadership, Strategy & Governance

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

1. Strategic Presence at the Leadership Table

To what extent is your top IT leader (CIO or VP of IT) embedded in your strategic decision-making team (e.g., Cabinet)?

- 1 Not involved or rarely consulted
- 2 Only brought in for technical updates or emergencies
- 3 Occasionally consulted, not part of core strategic discussions
- 4 Regular participant, but without clear decision authority
- 5 Fully seated as a strategic partner on the leadership team

2. Strategic Engagement with Leadership

How frequently do you and your senior leadership team engage with IT leadership to shape institutional priorities and strategy?

- 1 Not involved or rarely consulted
- 2 Only brought in for technical updates or emergencies
- 3 Occasionally consulted, not part of core strategic discussions
- 4 Regular participant, but without clear decision authority
- 5 Fully seated as a strategic partner on the leadership team



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AREA OF ASSESSMENT

IT Performance & Delivery

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

3. Ability to Deliver Strategic Value

How often does your IT team deliver projects that directly enable institutional goals — on time, on budget, and meeting leadership's expectations?

- 1 Rarely or never
- 2 Occasionally, but most projects underdeliver
- 3 About half the time
- 4 Usually, with minor gaps
- 5 Consistently and predictably

4. Existence of Core IT Governance Documents

How many of the following guiding documents are actively maintained and used to drive decisions?

- IT STRATEGIC PLAN: 1-3 YEARS

• IT PROJECT ROADMAP: 12 MONTHS

• IT SECURITY PLAN
- DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

• BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN
- 1 None or only one exists
- 2 Two are maintained
- 3 Three are maintained
- 4 Four are maintained
- 5 All five are current and used

5. Effectiveness of IT Ecosystem

How effective do you feel your current IT investments are in enabling your leaders, staff and faculty to maximize their full potential?

- 1 Not effective at all
- 2 Slightly effective
- 3 Moderately effective
- 4 Very effective
- 5 Extremely effective

6. IT Budget Allocation vs Benchmarks

How confident are you that your current IT budget aligns with industry benchmarks for institutions of your size and complexity?

- 1 Not confident at all
- 2 Slightly confident
- 3 Moderately confident
- 4 Very confident
- 5 Extremely confident

Data-Driven Decision Making

5

To what extent do your core IT systems and platforms directly enable revenue generation, growth, or cost recovery for the institution (e.g., enrollment growth, fundraising, auxiliary services, operational efficiencies that free resources)?

- To what degree are IT outcomes measured and managed in terms of your institution's strategic objectives (not just IT metrics)?

- How often does fragmented or siloed data from different departments limit your ability to make confident, data-driven decisions?

- 1 Constantly; decisions are mostly based on incomplete or conflicting data
- 2 Frequently; data from departments rarely aligns or integrates
- 3 Occasionally; some data gaps create uncertainty
- 4 Rarely; most data is connected and reliable
- 5 Never; data is unified, consistent, and trusted for decision-making

AREA OF ASSESSMENT

Risk & Escalation

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

10. Frequency of Escalated IT Problems

How often do unresolved or poorly governed IT issues escalate to your level due to their impact or scope?

- 110+ times per year
- 26 to 10 times per year
- 31 to 5 times per year
- 4Rarely
- 5Almost never

Scoring Guide

TOTAL SCORE

- STEP 1: Add your total score (maximum = 50)
- STEP 2: Use this guide to interpret your results:

SCORE	MATURITY LEVEL	WHAT THIS MEANS
40-50	High-Functioning IT	IT is fully strategic, data-driven, well-governed, and enabling institutional success. Your IT function is a trusted partner at the leadership table. Your IT team responds to issues promptly and effectively, freeing up most of their time to work closely with your stakeholders to determine their needs and develop solutions and support to address them. Your technology investments are paying off and delivering strong returns and pushing your institution ahead.
30-39	Developing IT Function	Some strategic alignment exists, but gaps in governance, data quality, and project delivery are reducing IT's value to the institution. Your technology investments have not been optimized, leaving plenty of opportunities to grow, but they aren't holding you back or driving you ahead of your competitors.
10-29	Underperforming IT	IT is primarily reactive, siloed, and not contributing effectively to strategy or informed decision-making. Your institution is allocating most/all of its available IT resources to putting out fires, patching broken platforms and trying to maintain the existing technology investments you've already made. As a result, projects are delivered late, over budget, or not at all. Your stakeholders are unsatisfied, and you're getting involved far more than you should. In this state, it will be very difficult for your team to provide the IT support your institution needs to succeed and remain viable in the current higher education environment. You need outside help, now.