

FREE RESOURCE — SLA TEMPLATE

Helpdesk SLA Template

Customisable Service Level Agreement for IT support contracts. Define response time tiers, escalation paths, KPIs and service credits so your provider delivers against measurable commitments — not vague promises.

4

PRIORITY TIERS
DEFINED

99.9%

TARGET UPTIME
COMMITMENT

15min

P1 RESPONSE
TARGET

Free

CUSTOMISABLE
TEMPLATE

PRIORITY TIERS

KPIs

ESCALATION

SERVICE CREDITS

PREPARED FOR

Cloudswitched Knowledge
Library

PREPARED BY

Cloudswitched Ltd.

VERSION

2026 Edition

FORMAT

Interactive PDF

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How to use this template

This template gives you a ready-made structure for a Helpdesk Service Level Agreement between your business and an IT support provider — whether you are commissioning a new MSP, refreshing an existing contract, or formalising an internal helpdesk against your business units. Work through it section by section, replacing each placeholder with the agreed terms.

Both parties should sign the final document and review it at least annually — or sooner if your business requirements, headcount or systems change materially. An SLA that is not measured is just a wish list; the KPIs and credits sections turn this into a contract you can actually enforce.

WHAT THIS TEMPLATE IS

A pragmatic baseline SLA covering the six areas every IT support contract should pin down: scope of services, priority definitions and response targets, escalation procedures, key performance indicators, service credits and penalties, and change/termination terms. It is not a legal contract on its own — have your solicitor review the final document before signing.

HOW TO USE IT

Fill in every form field, tickbox and table directly in any modern PDF viewer (Adobe Reader, Preview, Firefox, Edge). The numbers in the priority, escalation, KPI and service-credit tables are sensible starting recommendations for a UK SME — adjust them to match what you are actually buying. Anything you do not need, strike through with a single line on the printed copy and both parties initial.

The six sections

- **01 Agreement Overview** — parties, dates, primary contacts and scope of services covered.
- **02 Priority Definitions & Response Targets** — P1 to P4 tiers with response and resolution times.
- **03 Escalation Procedures** — the documented path for unresolved or overdue tickets.
- **04 Key Performance Indicators** — measurable KPIs reported monthly to track quality.
- **05 Service Credits & Penalties** — financial remedies when SLA targets are consistently missed.
- **06 Change Management & Review** — how the SLA itself is amended, reviewed and terminated.

01

Agreement Overview

Establish the parties to this Service Level Agreement, the dates over which it applies, and the named contacts on both sides. Fill in every field — an SLA with the customer-side primary contact left blank is an SLA you cannot route a complaint through.

Service Provider _____

Client Organisation _____

Agreement Start Date _____

Agreement End Date _____

Review Frequency _____

Primary Contact (Provider) _____

Primary Contact (Client) _____

Escalation Contact _____

Services Included — tick what the provider is contracted to deliver

- ☐ **Desktop & user support** — PC, laptop, peripherals, account issues, password resets.
- ☐ **Server & infrastructure management** — on-prem servers, hypervisors, storage, patching.
- ☐ **Network & firewall monitoring** — routers, switches, Wi-Fi, ISP liaison, perimeter security.
- ☐ **Cloud platform administration** — Microsoft 365 / Google Workspace / Azure / AWS tenants.
- ☐ **Security & patching** — endpoint protection, vulnerability patching, MFA, leaver process.
- ☐ **Backup & disaster recovery** — backup monitoring, periodic restore tests, DR plan upkeep.
- ☐ **Onboarding & offboarding** — new starter provisioning, leaver disable, device return.
- ☐ **Other (specify):** _____

DEFINING SCOPE TIGHTLY MATTERS

Be explicit about what is **excluded** as well as included — e.g., bespoke application support, in-house development, third-party SaaS that the client owns directly. Ambiguity in scope is the #1 source of SLA disputes.

02

Priority Definitions & Response Targets

Define each priority level with clear criteria for classification, response times and resolution targets. Response = time to first qualified human engagement; resolution = time to restore service or deliver a documented workaround. These are sensible defaults for a UK SME — tighten or relax to match what you are buying.

PRIORITY	DEFINITION	RESPONSE	RESOLUTION
P1 — Critical	Complete service outage affecting all users or a critical business function.	15 minutes	4 hours
P2 — High	Major degradation affecting multiple users or a key business process.	30 minutes	8 hours
P3 — Medium	Single user or non-critical system affected with workaround available.	4 hours	24 hours
P4 — Low	Minor issue, cosmetic defect or general enquiry.	8 hours	5 business days

Business Hours Definition — tick which applies

- ☐ Business hours (Mon–Fri 08:00–18:00 UK)
 ☐ Extended hours (Mon–Sat 07:00–20:00 UK)
- ☐ 24/7 calendar hours
- ☐ UK bank holidays excluded
 ☐ UK bank holidays included
- ☐ P1 only out-of-hours; P2–P4 in-hours

Custom hours / exceptions

IMPORTANT: DEFINE BUSINESS HOURS PRECISELY

State explicitly whether response and resolution times are measured in **business hours** or **calendar hours**. P1 incidents typically require 24/7 coverage regardless of the contract default. List the specific bank holidays excluded each year — an SLA that says "excluding bank holidays" without listing them invites disputes.

03

Escalation Procedures

Document the escalation path for unresolved or overdue tickets at each priority level. Every escalation must name a real contact — not "the on-call team" — and a method that does not depend on the original ticket queue being read.

ESCALATION LEVEL	TRIGGER	CONTACT	METHOD
Level 1	Response target breached	Service Desk Manager	Email + phone call
Level 2	Resolution target at 75% elapsed	Operations Director	Phone call + incident report
Level 3	Resolution target breached	Account Director / MD	Immediate conference call
Level 4	3+ SLA failures in 30 days	Senior Management (both sides)	Formal review meeting

Out-of-Hours Escalation

Phone

Emergency Email

Distribution

Named Escalation

Owner

Out-of-Hours Coverage Method — tick what is contracted

- ☐ Documented on-call rota
 ☐ Single emergency number
 ☐ Automated paging (PagerDuty etc.)
- ☐ Third-party 24/7 NOC

ESCALATION HYGIENE

Test the escalation path at least quarterly with a tabletop drill — ring the out-of-hours number on a Sunday morning and time how long it takes a named human to answer. Most SLAs fail in practice not because the response target was wrong, but because the escalation path was never exercised.

04

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Define the measurable KPIs that will be reported on monthly to track service quality. Every KPI must have a target, a measurement source, and a reporting cadence — otherwise it is decorative. These defaults work for most UK SMEs; tune to your business.

KPI	TARGET	MEASUREMENT	REPORTING
First Response Time	95% within target	Ticket system timestamps	Monthly
Resolution Time	90% within target	Ticket open-to-close duration	Monthly
First Contact Resolution	≥ 70%	Tickets resolved without escalation	Monthly
Customer Satisfaction	≥ 4.2 / 5	Post-ticket survey rating	Monthly
System Uptime	99.9%	Monitoring tool data	Monthly
Ticket Backlog	< 15 open P3/P4	Snapshot at month end	Monthly
Repeat Incidents	< 5% of total tickets	Root cause analysis log	Quarterly

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The provider shall deliver a written monthly service report within **5 business days** of month end. The report must include all KPI metrics, trend analysis vs prior periods, major incident summaries, and a forward-looking improvement plan. Quarterly service review meetings should be scheduled to discuss performance, capacity and roadmap.

Review Cadence — tick what is contracted

☐ Monthly service review meeting ☐ Quarterly business review ☐ Annual contract review

Monthly report due by _____

05

Service Credits & Penalties

Define financial remedies when SLA targets are consistently missed. Credits incentivise the provider to meet agreed targets — they should be meaningful enough to drive behaviour change without being so punitive that they damage the working relationship.

CONDITION	CREDIT	CAP
Uptime below 99.9% in any calendar month	2% of monthly fee per 0.1% below target	10% of monthly fee
P1 resolution target missed	5% of monthly fee per incident	15% of monthly fee
3+ consecutive months below KPI targets	10% of monthly fee	20% of monthly fee
Failure to deliver monthly report on time	1% of monthly fee	5% of monthly fee

Credit Application Method — tick one

☐ Credit auto-applied to next invoice ☐ Issued as a standalone refund

☐ Carried forward to renewal

Credit claim window _____
(days)

CREDITS ARE A SIGNAL, NOT A STRATEGY

If you are routinely earning service credits, the contract is broken — not just the SLA. Credits should be a leading indicator that triggers a remediation plan and, if unresolved within one review cycle, the right to terminate without penalty. Section 06 captures those terms.

06

Change Management & Review

Define how changes to this SLA are proposed, agreed and documented — including the conditions under which either party can terminate. Either party may propose changes by providing the agreed written notice; all changes must be mutually agreed in writing before taking effect.

The SLA shall be formally reviewed at least annually, or sooner following any significant change in business requirements, headcount, technology footprint or service scope.

Annual Review Date

Change Request Process

Minimum Notice Period

Contract Term

Termination Notice Period

Termination for Cause
Conditions

Notice Format — tick what is acceptable

☐ Written notice (signed letter) ☐ Email to named contacts ☐ Both required

EARLY TERMINATION

Include provisions for early termination in cases of persistent SLA failure (e.g. 3 consecutive months below target), material breach, or insolvency of either party. Define the exit process including data handover, knowledge transfer, transition support, and the return or destruction of the client's data — with a documented sign-off.

07

Agreement Signatures

By signing below, both parties confirm they have read and accept the terms of this Service Level Agreement as completed in the sections above. Each party should retain a signed copy and file it with their contract register.

FOR THE SERVICE PROVIDER

Name	_____	Title	_____
Signature	_____	Date	_____

FOR THE CLIENT

Name	_____	Title	_____
Signature	_____	Date	_____

Notes

Need a tailored SLA for your business?

Cloudswitched drafts bespoke SLAs aligned with your specific compliance needs, service mix and risk profile — from single-site offices to multi-region UK SMEs.

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