

Glossary for “Ten Simple Steps to Better Requirements”

Acceptance Criteria	Set of conditions (the singular is ‘criterion’) under which a Requirement is to be accepted as met when tested or otherwise Verified.
Actor	UML term for Operational Role. UML does not cover non-Operational Stakeholder Roles.
Assumption	Condition (of something outside the Product or System) that must be true but cannot be controlled. Contrast with Requirement.
Attribute	Component of a Requirement, usually when stored in a database, used to record any aspect such as its Priority, status, Rationale. A field on a data entry form often corresponds to a database attribute.
Beneficiary	Stakeholder Role involving direct or indirect benefit of any kind from the Product or System. For example a financial beneficiary expects to gain money from the system’s operations.
Business Objective	(brief, high-level) statement of a project’s overall purpose. May be analysed into detailed and more readily realisable Goals.
Constraint	A Requirement that places a specific limitation on how a Product may be constructed, eg on its allowable weight or power consumption.
Definition	A statement of the meaning of a Dictionary term (normally an item of Data or a Role) by reference to other dictionary terms.
Design	The process of stating how a Product is to be constructed, as opposed to Requirements (which state why). Note however that the Design of a containing system imposes Requirements on a contained system.
Designation	A description of the meaning of a Glossary term in the Project Dictionary by reference to things in the outside world rather than by Definition in terms of other dictionary entries.
Dictionary	See Project Dictionary
Domain	A realm of business discourse, eg air traffic control, railway, television, banking, telecommunications, retail.
Exception	1) (= Exception Event) an Event that interferes with a Scenario (ie progress towards a Functional Goal) 2) (= Exception Scenario) a Scenario describing how to handle such an Event.
Event	Something that happens (in the world – a Business Event; detected by the Product – a “System” Event) of significance to the Product or System.
Function, -al	(of a Requirement) calling for a specific capability, ie a defined piece of behaviour in response to a specific stimulus, from the Product or System.
Global	(of an NFR) applying to the whole System or Product. Opposite of

	Local
Glossary	The informal part of a Project Dictionary, designating terms used in the world outside the Product.
Goal	(Functional or Non-Functional) statement of a Stakeholder's desired target for a project. Unlike a Requirement, may not be completely realisable or Verifiable. Non-Functional Goals can often be decomposed into Functional Goals.
"-ilities"	Colloquial engineering term for Product Qualities eg Reliability
Information Model	Coarse-grained model of the information structure of a Product development project, suitable for designing a requirements database in a tool such as Telelogic DOORS
Interface	(Requirement for) a System or Product's ability to interchange data or anything else with any other System, or to have a connector of a specific design so as to enable such interchange. Interface Requirements are thus properly defined in complete design detail (down to bits and bytes). Interfaces are often standardised and can thus be specified simply by calling out a specific part of a standard.
Issue	A matter arising from the Requirements that needs to be understood and resolved before the requirements can be released.
Justification	Anything used as evidence that a Requirement is correct and necessary, eg text, references to standards and legislation, argumentation using graphical Assumption models etc.
Key Requirement	Approach to setting Priorities in which only a small number of Requirements (eg 7) may be designated as 'Key', ie essential.
Local	(of an NFR) applying only within a limited scope, eg to a single Function or Use Case. Opposite of Global
Mission	A short (usually single English sentence) statement of the purpose and Scope of a Product development project.
Non-Functional Requirement (NFR)	Any Requirement that is not a Function. Includes Qualities, Constraints, Interface Requirements.
Operator, operational	Human Role for Stakeholders actively involved in making the System work, often but not exclusively by direct use of the Product. Operators can be subdivided into normal, maintenance, etc.
Priority	Attribute recording the relative importance of a Requirement; used to identify what to omit or defer when resources (time, money, skill, test facilities etc) are not sufficient to implement all the Requirements.
Product	The thing under development, whether software, hardware (computational or otherwise), or a combination; and whether for sale as a commercial item or part of one, or developed in-house. Forms part of a System (excluding the System's human components, etc).
Project Dictionary	Set of interlocking definitions of terms used within the project. At least 3 kinds of term may be included: Glossary Designations,

	Role definitions, and (hierarchical) data definitions. Acronyms may be included, but should be defined as well as expanded into full names of terms. Data items may be further subtyped into Messages etc.
Programme	(of a Requirement) concerning issues of team management, organisation, cost, timescale, etc
Qualities	(Requirements) constraining the nature of the Product or the development process
Rationale	(Statement of) the reason or purpose of a Requirement or set of Requirements.
Regulator	Stakeholder Role responsible for controlling some aspect of the System, often with legal authority.
Requirement	Condition of the Product or System, initially false, that must be made to become true by the development project. Contrast with Assumption.
Risk	Anything that might interfere with a project's ability to create a successful Product or System.
Role	Class of (Operational) Stakeholders. Called "Actors" in UML.
Scenario	Time-sequence of Steps to achieve a Functional Goal. Synonyms are Course, Path, Sequence or informally "story".
Scope	The envelope or boundary of a System or Product, defined ultimately by the complete set of Requirements, but initially by an informal statement of Objectives and then by a context diagram or its equivalent.
Stakeholder	Human or other legal entity (Company, etc) playing a System Role and thereby having a valid interest in the development of the System or Product.
Step	Single Functional activity undertaken either by an Operator or by a Product, and forming a component in time of a Scenario.
System	1) The network of Operational Roles, Procedures, Product(s) and Interfaces that together can deliver the wanted results to Functional Beneficiaries. 2) [in common usage] (of a Requirement) applying to the whole Product. Note: Requirements that apply to whole Systems are usually (and confusingly) called "Business" or "User" Requirements.
Test Case	Information structure combining Functional Goals and Scenarios, used to demonstrate by test that a Scenario or Requirement has been met by a Product or System.
Threat	Goal desired by a hostile Stakeholder, and which endangers a Goal of the project.
Triage	Process of prioritisation which splits Requirements into three groups: obviously needed, obviously not needed, and to be prioritised in more detail.
Use Case	Information structure combining Functional Goals, Roles, (Functional Requirements represented as) Scenarios, Exceptions

	and associated Requirements including pre- and post-conditions and Local NFRs.
User	Hybrid Role combining Functional Beneficiary, normal Operator and possibly mass-market consumer as well.
Validate, Validation	Checking that a Requirement correctly reflects the intentions of the Stakeholders, and is realistic given the resources of the development project. See also Verification. Note that the terms are sometimes interchanged, but the activities remain distinct.
Verify, Verification	Checking that a Product or System meets the Requirements placed upon it, whether by test, analysis, or other means. See also Validation. Note that the terms are sometimes interchanged, but the activities remain distinct.