

Capability and Maturity Level Targets

Appraising Against Both Using the CMMI Appraisal System

The CMMI appraisal method allows organizations the flexibility to select Benchmark Model Views that can be tailored to the organization's processes, business objectives, and appraisal objectives. Benchmark Model Views may target a predefined maturity level or a predefined selection of Practice Areas or Capability Areas and their levels, referred to as capability levels. Organizational Units (OUs) may be appraised at both capability and maturity level ratings for an appraisal, previously referred to as "equivalent staging" in CMMI Version 1.3. With the introduction of the Randomly Generated Sample (RGS) in the current appraisal method and the requirements for accurately submitting an organizational scope to CMMI Institute through the CMMI Appraisal System (CAS), it is imperative that appraisals targeting both maturity and capability levels be scoped correctly following the guidelines of this Quality Tip.

RGS Submission Guidelines

Both CAS and the Random Sample Generation Policy ([PA005](#)) require that the OU scoping be submitted to CMMI Institute for review a maximum of 60 calendar days and a minimum of 35 calendar days prior to the Conduct Appraisal Phase (Phase 2). Additionally, CAS requires that the RGS be generated and accepted at least 30 days prior to the Conduct Appraisal Phase. Accordingly, in situations where the organizational scope is more complex, such as an appraisal targeting both capability and maturity levels, CMMI Institute recommends that the scope be submitted sooner rather than later during the RGS request period to ensure the scope is captured accurately and the Appraisal Team Leader (ATL) allows sufficient time for quality review discussion that may ensue.

Appraisal Setup Requirements

When targeting both capability levels and maturity levels in CAS, **the ATL must input both the maturity level and capability level targets separately in the Target Level tab in CAS**. The presence of multiple targets will lead CAS to require that separate OU scopes be submitted, and separate samples be generated and accepted for the maturity and capability level targets. However, only the capability level sample should be utilized and appraised against during the appraisal; the maturity level target does not need to be appraised against and is not required to be used by CMMI Institute or CAS. CAS requires organization-level ratings to be entered following an appraisal, but it does not require the ATL to enter project-level characterizations (the ATL, however, must provide the project-level characterizations that the team has generated as one of the uploaded artifacts, but these should be based on the RGS created for the capability target in the system). The maturity level sample in CAS for an appraisal targeting both capability and maturity levels does not serve as a functional sample and is used only by the system to enable the ATL to assign a maturity level rating for the appraisal result; the capability level sample is the functional sample that should be used and appraised against during the appraisal.

If an appraisal is not set up following the process detailed above and only a capability level target is selected, a maturity level cannot be assigned to the appraisal result in CAS. If this is the case, the Quality Performance team must work with the ATL to create a new appraisal record and rebuild the appraisal sample with both capability and maturity level targets to allow the ATL to assign a maturity level. However, this process can be time consuming and creates rework for both the ATL and the Quality Performance team. Accordingly, it is imperative that the appraisal be set up correctly during Phase 1: Plan and Prepare to ensure timely completion of the appraisal review and accurate reporting of the appraisal result.

Questions regarding this Quality Tip may be directed to quality@cmmiinstitute.com.