


Project Assessment Framework

**Establish service
capability**

August 2024

Component of the Project Assessment Framework (PAF)

This document forms part of the Project Assessment Framework, as outlined below.

Overarching policy document	
	<i>Policy overview</i>
Guidance material	
	<i>Strategic assessment of service requirement</i>
	<i>Preliminary evaluation</i>
	<i>Business case development</i>
	<i>Supply strategy development</i>
	<i>Source supplier/s</i>
	<i>Establish service capability</i>
	<i>Deliver service</i>
	<i>Benefits realisation</i>
Supplementary guidance material	
	<i>Cost-benefit analysis</i>
	<i>Alliance establishment and management</i>
	<i>Value creation and capture</i>
Related policy documents	
	<i>Queensland public private partnership supporting guidelines</i>

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Contents

1. Purpose	4
2. Process.....	4
2.1 Sign (award) the contract.....	4
2.2 Establish contract management processes	4
2.2.1 Establish roles and processes to manage the contractual relationship	5
2.2.2 Establish roles and processes to manage service delivery.....	5
2.2.3 Establish roles and processes to manage and administer the contract	6
2.3 Develop change management mechanisms	6
2.3.1 Assign change management roles and responsibilities	7
2.3.2 Consider change management stakeholders	7
2.3.3 Manage planned and unplanned change	7
2.3.4 Document change control and budget management procedures	8
2.4 Create the good, service or output (product) required.....	9
2.4.1 Plan for, and test, the products.....	9
2.4.2 Finalise commissioning and implementation planning.....	10
2.5 Check organisational readiness.....	10
2.6 Refresh the business case	11
2.6.1 Refresh the project implementation plan	11
2.6.2 Update the change management plan.....	11
2.6.3 Update the issue and risk register	11
2.6.4 Update the benefits management plan.....	11
2.6.5 Update the project learnings register.....	11
2.6.6 Update the communication plan	11
2.7 Seek approval to proceed	11
3. Products.....	12
4. Checklist	12
4.1 Products	13
4.2 Process.....	13



1. Purpose

This document provides guidance regarding the range of issues to consider when developing the good, service or output (product) to be delivered by the project.

The purpose of the establish service capability stage is to ensure the robustness of a solution before its delivery, and the readiness of the organisation/s involved in implementing any associated business changes. It may involve delivering training or implementing other change management processes.

2. Process

For those projects which include procurement activities, the establish service capability stage follows offer (or tender) evaluation, the selection of the preferred supplier/s and the completion of contract negotiations as held during the source supplier/s stage.

For those projects which do not include procurement activities, the establish service capability stage follows the business case development stage.

The key activities undertaken in the establish service capability project stage include:

- enter into (award) a contract
- establish contract management processes
- develop change management mechanisms
- create the good, service or output (product) required
- check organisational readiness
- refresh the business case
- seek approval to proceed.

2.1 Sign (award) the contract

For projects including procurement activities, subsequent to the successful completion of contract negotiations in the source supplier/s stage, appropriate approvals to confirm the supplier/s as the successful offeror/s should be obtained from the appropriate authority, such as Cabinet or other project-specific governing body. Approval for expenditure may also be required from Executive Council. All required approvals must be obtained before a supplier is advised that they have been successful.

Once the approvals have been obtained, an officer with the appropriate delegated authority may sign the contract on behalf of the State of Queensland. Signing may occur at a 'ceremony' during which the supplier's representative (with legally binding authority) and the State of Queensland's authorised representative give formal life to the agreement and relationship. For smaller contracts, or where the supplier is based interstate, the parties may sign separately. Each signatory retains a copy of the contract documents, signed by all of the contracting parties.

After the contract is signed, unsuccessful offerors should be advised in writing of the outcome of the offer (or tender) process. If unsuccessful offerors request feedback, it should be provided only in terms of their capacity to meet the specified requirements subsequent to the evaluation of their offer against set criteria. Confidentiality should be maintained at all times, avoiding comparisons with any other offeror.

What you need to do:

- obtain any relevant expenditure and other approvals
- enter into (award) a contract
- advise unsuccessful offerors in writing of the outcome
- provide feedback to unsuccessful offerors (if requested).

2.2 Establish contract management processes

For projects with an established contract in place, effective contract management processes become important. Contract management involves managing the risks and issues that arise during the life of a project in order to optimise value for money. Contract management can be divided into three main areas that require active involvement:

- relationship management
- service delivery management
- contract administration.

In this stage, attention is focused on planning and establishing effective contract management roles and processes, whereas contract management in action is primarily a concern within the deliver service stage. For more information on contract management, refer to the deliver service guidance material.

What you need to do:

- establish suitable contract management roles, considering the principles of relationship management, service delivery management and contract administration.

2.2.1 Establish roles and processes to manage the contractual relationship

Relationship management seeks to achieve openness in communications, shared goals and a mutual trust and understanding between customer and supplier (or delivery partners). Relationship management involves establishing and maintaining effective reporting and management arrangements (governance and other formal mechanisms) and nurturing attitudes and behaviours that encourage mutual success (informal communication and cultural approaches).

2.2.1.1 Relationship managers

One of the ways to focus on relationship management involves identifying and empowering customer and supplier representatives as 'relationship managers'. The main functional responsibilities of relationship managers include:

- encouraging an atmosphere of trust, openness and communication and an attitude based on working together and shared objectives
- looking for ways to improve the relationship
- ensuring that all stakeholders in the arrangement feel that they are involved, that their views are important and are acted upon
- establishing an effective communication framework
- managing the dispute resolution process
- managing upwards to ensure that senior management are informed about issues before they escalate
- promoting understanding of partner business practices and techniques by organising forums, working groups, seminars, roadshows, training sessions and other information sharing activities.

Ideally, relationship managers have the authority to make or suggest changes to the arrangement (e.g. working practices, communication flows, and the contract itself) to ensure that the relationship is managed effectively.

What you need to do:

- identify and empower relationship managers.

2.2.2 Establish roles and processes to manage service delivery

Managing service delivery means ensuring established service levels are maintained. This may mean striking a balance between quality and cost to ensure value for money or it may include benchmarking to establish a 'should-cost' estimate. Effective service management involves customer and supplier performing their obligations and duties, on time and in accordance with the contract.

2.2.2.1 Service managers

Managing service delivery involves identifying and empowering customer and supplier representatives as 'service managers'. The main responsibilities of service managers are ensuring the goods, services or outputs (products) delivered continue to be the right products, delivered to the right people at the right time.

These responsibilities may lead to the service manager reviewing performance; conducting customer surveys; acting as a single point of query in connection with the products delivered; and/or taking day-to-day responsibility for owning and resolving product-related issues.

2.2.2.2 Business continuity

Business (or service) continuity is the means by which organisations plan to maintain their business in the event of an adverse impact to critical elements of that business. Often associated with disaster recovery, business continuity also addresses anything that could affect continuity over the long term, such as staff shortages in specialist areas.

It is often the supplier's responsibility to manage business continuity as stipulated in the contract; however, these responsibilities need to be taken into account in the wider business continuity plan/s of the agency or agencies managing the project.

Business continuity plans devised by the agency or agencies managing the project should include:

- an assessment of which business functions are required to ensure the function or organisation survives the failure
- protracted situation management (i.e. ensuring maintenance of supplies to the

organisation and resolving any concerns with cash flow)

- suppliers' roles in continuity management and mitigation activities
- local, state-wide and international considerations based on the contribution the project and the organisation make to the community, economy and essential services.

What you need to do:

- identify and empower service managers
- consider business continuity.

2.2.3 Establish roles and processes to manage and administer the contract

- Contract management and administration is concerned with the mechanics of the relationship between the contractual parties, and the implementation of procedures defining the interface between them.
- Overall, administrative procedures should be developed to ensure that all parties to the contract understand who does what, when, and how. Administrative procedures may relate to charges and cost monitoring, ordering, payment, budget and resource management and planning.
- These procedures need to be designed to reflect the specific circumstances of the contract and the agency or agencies managing the project.

2.2.3.1 Contract managers

One way to focus on contract administration involves identifying and empowering customer and supplier representatives as 'contract managers'. The size of the contract management team may change over the life of the contract as the early stages in contract administration are often more demanding.

The main responsibilities of contract managers within the agency or agencies managing the project relate to ensuring all parties have a comprehensive understanding of their contractual responsibilities and overseeing operation and performance of the contract/s.

Contract managers also take the lead in developing and applying a contract management plan, and facilitating change control administration, management reporting, asset management and contract maintenance.

2.2.3.2 Contract management plan

A contract management plan contains key information about how a contract is to be managed over the long term, detailing administration; performance measurement and monitoring; optimisation of project costs; risks and issues; and exit strategies.

Effort to develop a contract management plan, which typically would have commenced in the later part of the source supplier/s project stage, should reflect the size and complexity of the contract that is to be managed.

A contract management plan typically includes:

- a brief summary of the procurement process that led to the contract
- details of the contracting parties including who is authorised to issue and respond to notices and proposed contract variations
- details of major stakeholders including reasons for their interest in the contract
- a summary of the key details of the contract
- a contract management strategy describing objectives, methods or procedures for contract management
- a current listing of all key documents including their purpose, a synopsis, and/or their amendment status and location.

What you need to do:

- identify and empower contract managers
- complete a contract management plan.

Sources for further information

The *Contract Management Framework*, produced by the Department of Energy and Climate provides more detailed information on contract management, including a contract management plan template.

The extensive series of Procurement Guidance, produced by the Department of Energy and Climate, covers topics such as:

- Engaging and managing contractors and consultants
- Managing and monitoring suppliers' performance.

Both available at www.forgov.qld.gov.au

2.3 Develop change management mechanisms

Change in a project environment may arise in one of two ways. Firstly, the existence of the project and bringing it to a conclusion in its own right bring

about change to, or for, various stakeholders. Secondly, variances in planned and agreed project activities, resources, timeframes or deliverables may also generate change.

Developing change management mechanisms is important, as some changes may have considerable cost impacts and/ or contractual or relationship implications.

What you need to do:

- assign change management roles
- consider change management (focusing on stakeholders).

2.3.1 Assign change management roles and responsibilities

Project and business managers and suppliers are responsible for identifying the need for change in response to internal or external factors. For this reason, there is a strong need for formal communication channels to ensure that any identified change is communicated and taken into consideration in any adjustments to timeframes, costs and risk allocation.

The responsibility for this critical activity is often allocated to the business change manager or relationship manager, and frequently involves the senior project manager/s.

Where a change has a material impact on the terms and conditions of a contractual agreement, the contract manager should also be directly involved.

2.3.1.1 Business change manager

The individual/s appointed as business change manager require detailed knowledge of the business environment, and direct business experience. Change managers need an understanding of the management structures, politics and culture of the organisation/s likely to be affected by the delivery of the good, service or output (product) required.

Change managers also require marketing and communication skills (to promote the strategic and operational vision to those affected) and some knowledge of relevant management and change techniques, including business process redesign, benefits management and realisation, and modelling techniques.

Typical responsibilities of the change manager include:

- identifying, tracking, monitoring, embedding, reporting and realising the benefits and outcomes required of the project

- taking the lead on ensuring that 'business as usual' is maintained during the transition and the changes are effectively integrated into the business
- preparing the affected business areas for the transition to new ways of working
- optimising the timing of the release of project deliverables into the business operations.

2.3.2 Consider change management stakeholders

A change management process should address the whole business change, rather than individual components. Business change can be complex because of the interdependencies between the business environment, the organisation, its people and supporting technologies.

Cultural change is also an important consideration. For example, approximately 80 per cent of the effort and resources required for successful information communication and technology (ICT) related change are often deployed on the cultural aspects of business change, including changing behaviours and providing training at the right time. Approximately 20 per cent is required for the technology component itself.

Factors which are important for successful change include:

- analysing and diagnosing the change required
- achieving a shared vision amongst stakeholders
- separating from past activities
- imparting a sense of urgency
- appointing leaders and sponsors
- creating a road map of intended change
- removing obstacles
- achieving short term wins
- communicating consistent messages
- reinforcing and institutionalising the 'new way'.

These factors are based on generating a strategic direction and understanding, planning, implementing a controlled change program and ensuring contingency plans are in place.

2.3.3 Manage planned and unplanned change

The need to manage and negotiate planned and unplanned change is an ongoing component of change management.

For all types of change, any impacts should be reflected in the benefits management plan and business case and communicated to key stakeholders. The involvement of the change manager in these interactions is recommended.

2.3.3.1 Planned change

Planned change management and communication planning involve the project manager, change manager and project communication manager, together with key stakeholders, working cooperatively to prepare for the transition from the 'as is' to the 'should be' environment. This includes:

- agreeing plans for business change preparation
- agreeing cultural change management arrangements
- developing transition and operational management arrangements (particularly where new technologies or innovations are to be introduced or where there is to be a pronounced discontinuity between the old and new ways of doing business)
- providing stakeholders with frequent, regular, relevant and varied forms of communication
- undertaking personal skill development planning.

It is also useful to prepare as early as practicable for any post-implementation changes and incremental improvement mechanisms. These changes could include implementing modular and incremental improvements; implementation value capture mechanisms; planning for changes to user requirements; refurbishing workspace; maintaining or enhancing existing systems; or planning technology refreshes.

2.3.3.2 Unplanned change

Unplanned change can occur any time after award of the contract. It is externally driven and represents the most difficult type of change to manage as it can arise without warning, requiring immediate action by the agency or agencies managing the project and the supplier/s.

The response to an unplanned change should be structured, documented and made available to those who will be affected. When managing an unplanned change, those affected should, at a minimum, collaboratively:

- understand and assess the impact of the change on processes
- escalate and address the issue, as early as the reason for the change becomes evident.

If applicable, affected parties should also:

- review the basis and viability of the deal in the contract
- assess the extent of change required
- negotiate any required contractual amendments.

What you need to do:

- consider change management (focusing on project variances)
- use structured processes to manage planned and unplanned change
- document change control and budget management procedures.

2.3.4 Document change control and budget management procedures

A single change control procedure should apply to all changes, although there may be certain delegated or shortened procedures available in defined circumstances.

A change control procedure should provide a set of steps and allocated responsibilities covering:

- requesting changes
- assessing impact
- prioritising and authorising change
- agreeing changes with the supplier/s and other stakeholders
- controlling implementation
- documenting change assessments and orders.

Responsibility for authorising different types of change will often rest with different people, and documented internal procedures need to reflect this. Appropriate structures should be established, with representatives of customer and supplier management, for reviewing and authorising change requests. These structures ideally should align with existing management committees.

For example, changes to the overall contract, such as changes to prices outside the scope of agreed price variation mechanisms, should have senior management approval. For minor changes affecting particular goods, services or outputs (products), it may be possible to delegate limited powers.

It is important that any change resulting in additional demands on the supplier should be carefully controlled. Formal authorisation procedures should be instituted to ensure that only those new requirements that can be justified in

business case terms are added into any service arrangements.

For projects including procurement activities, all change management arrangements and processes should be determined and agreed with the supplier before the award of the contract.

2.3.4.1 Budget management

The nature of budget monitoring and management depends on the nature of the project and normal patterns of expenditure for that type of project. For projects with a signed contract, budget monitoring and management will also depend upon the nature of that contract (e.g. it is based on a fixed price or time and materials arrangement).

Procedures and systems for monitoring expenses and expenditure, the status of budgets and the projected expenditure against milestones and timeframes should provide timely and responsive information about deviations from the plan.

Both over and under expenditure can be indicators of a range of issues. For example, over expenditure may occur as a result of poor delivery management, underestimation or detrimental external influences on the project. Under expenditure could indicate under delivery on quantities or quality, or efficient application of new processes.

Early awareness of the budget position and projected expenditure will better place the agency or agencies managing the project to take corrective action or to address expected surpluses (where contractual or other provisions permit).

Budget management processes should be agreed with the supplier/s, applied rigorously, and any material variations explained.

2.4 Create the good, service or output (product) required

The specifications for the goods, services or outputs (products) to be delivered by the project should have been agreed with the supplier/s earlier in the project lifecycle. This product development should also outline timeframes, location, resources, standards, and quality levels.

Development of the product to these specifications should be progressively monitored against the project plan, its schedules and against the contract. Monitoring progress and performance, as well as inspection and testing at appropriate milestones, are important.

Where corrective action is required, it should be taken promptly to avoid cost escalation. Corrective

action should be taken in accordance with defined issue resolution procedures and, if necessary, in terms of the corrective or dispute resolution provisions of the contract.

What you need to do:

- plan for product testing
- undertake product testing
- finalise commissioning and implementation planning.

2.4.1 Plan for, and test, the products

Quality assurance is fundamental to the provision of individual deliverables and the way they integrate successfully with the broader project outcome sought. Assurance of fitness for purpose can be increased through applying a rigorous testing management strategy.

Testing ensures that new or modified project products meet the requirements for which they have been developed. Overall, testing should be efficient, effective and economic.

2.4.1.1 Test planning

Realistic timeframes, dependent upon the nature of the project, should be dedicated to testing. Testing is often constricted by available time and resources, particularly towards project completion. For complex projects, greater control of this process and associated risks may be achieved through the use of testing specialists.

A testing strategy should define the objectives of all test stages and the techniques to be applied, identifying:

- the items to be tested
- the testing to be performed, including any test scripts
- test schedules
- resource and facility requirements
- reporting requirements and rectification processes
- evaluation criteria
- risks requiring contingency measures.

The testing strategy also forms the basis for creating a standardised documentation set (e.g. tests, scripts, expected results, actual test results and retest actions), and facilitates communication regarding the test process.

Testing processes and practices should be reviewed regularly.

2.4.1.2 Testing

When conducting testing, the required outcome of each test must be known before the test is undertaken. The test environment should be controlled, and test data and results stored for possible future evaluation.

The status of test items should be reviewed on an ongoing basis, against the test plans and test progress reports, providing some assurance of the verification and validation of testing processes or activities.

2.4.1.3 In cases of limited testing opportunities

Testing is one way to assess readiness for implementation. However, in some cases, there may be limited scope for a robust testing program. For example, when a project involves commencement of an outsourced service to replace an existing in-house service, the service may need to go 'live' before users are allowed access, even for testing purposes. Here, scenario planning or theoretical 'what if' testing may be useful. It may also be desirable to allow a set time period for the 'live' product to settle, during which reviews on a regular basis are used to test effectiveness in a 'live' setting.

2.4.2 Finalise commissioning and implementation planning

The commencement of planning for the commissioning and implementation of the project's product/s should have started during the supply strategy development stage.

Any commissioning plans should have been refined progressively through contract negotiations and product construction/development and testing stages as greater confidence about the detailed specifics of the final delivery were consolidated.

Plans for an affordable and robust product commissioning phase usually include:

- a business strategy for the commissioning period
- mechanisms to ensure fitness for purpose
- mechanisms to ensure workplace health and safety
- a business integration strategy
- a change management strategy
- a business continuity strategy
- a contingency and/or reversion plan
- provision to seek assurance/accreditation as required.

The commissioning, implementation or rollout of the project product/s will impact a range of stakeholders. Because of the impacts of change on the way in which new or changed goods, services or outputs (products) are provided, the stakeholders who use the products will require comprehensive transitioning preparation.

Therefore, to better ensure a smoother transition to new ways of working, it is important to involve stakeholders to the greatest extent practicable.

2.5 Check organisational readiness

Commissioning, implementation or rollout requires preparation, a transition and then commencement of operations, with effort dedicated to managing a range of organisational, people-related and technical issues.

A successful implementation relies on the readiness of the organisation (and other stakeholders) to adapt to the new ways of working. Checking organisational readiness can be informed by the commissioning plan, and usually involves an assessment of the management and organisational controls in place to guide the implementation effort.

Successful implementation requires, where applicable:

- the organisation is ready – capable, with capacity
- staff are ready – informed, trained and available
- the public are ready
- the suppliers are ready
- the goods, services or outputs (products) are ready
- product support, training and maintenance are ready
- contract management is in place
- service management is in place
- benefits management is in place
- performance measurement is in place
- communications have proven effective
- further changes in the future have been considered.

Based on the commissioning plan and the findings from the readiness check, the final decision path for implementation can be documented and timetabled for the consideration of the project governing body.

What you need to do:

- check appropriate management and organisational controls are in place to guide commissioning, implementation or rollout
- document and timetable the implementation decision path.

2.6 Refresh the business case

The establish service capability stage may have more clearly defined the operational requirements for the outcomes of the project or influenced numerous areas of the business case including the scope, value assessment, risk assessment or the project implementation plan.

Given the outcomes of the establish service capability stage, the business case should be reviewed and updated to reflect current financial and non-financial adjustments where required.

Any material amendments to the business case should be agreed with the project's governing body.

What you need to do:

- refresh the business case
- update the:
 - project implementation plan
 - change management plan
 - issue and risk registers
 - benefits management plan
 - project learnings register
 - communication plan.

2.6.1 Refresh the project implementation plan

The project implementation plan should take into consideration all pertinent matters which arose during the establish service capability stage such as outcomes from product development. The plan should also reflect the activities, budget, timeframes, key skills and capabilities required in the next project stage, deliver service. The refreshed project plan should receive the agreement of stakeholders.

2.6.2 Update the change management plan

The change management plan for the business and processes takes on increasing importance as

products are developed. Decisions to this stage of the project, particularly in light of results from product testing, may necessitate amendments to the change management plan to ensure its viability for implementing or commissioning products in the deliver service stage of the project.

2.6.3 Update the issue and risk register

The logging of risks and issues, their allocation to the most appropriate person to manage, their analysis and determination of impact on the business case and on the project plan occur across the duration of each stage of the project.

Issue and risk logs should be reviewed to ensure that all matters requiring attention are resolved, or if necessary, escalated, before they negatively impact the project.

2.6.4 Update the benefits management plan

Updates to, and execution of, the benefits management plan and supporting benefit profiles occur across the duration of each stage of the project lifecycle. This may involve change management activities with business managers who 'own' identified benefits and are responsible for ensuring and reporting on their realisation.

2.6.5 Update the project learnings register

The learnings, both positive and negative from the course of the project should be compiled and made available as resource material to the next stage of this project and to other projects as appropriate.

2.6.6 Update the communication plan

Activities during the establish service capability stage set parameters for the remainder of the project. The pertinent outcomes of the stage require inclusion in an updated communication plan which can now provide greater specificity with regard to strategies and communication activities to be undertaken.

2.7 Seek approval to proceed

At the end of the establish service capability stage, a submission should be presented to Cabinet Budget Review Committee (CBRC) or

other project-specific governing body seeking approval to proceed to the deliver service stage.

The submission should describe readiness for implementation, change management mechanisms, supplier related arrangements such as provisions for managing performance or contracts, and details of the good, service or output (product) to be delivered.

What you need to do:

- develop a submission to the appropriate decision maker seeking approval to proceed to the deliver service stage.

3. Products

The products to be produced in this establish service capability stage include:

- a signed contract for the good, service or output (product) to be delivered
- plans and procedures to manage relationships, service delivery and, if applicable, the contract itself via a contract management plan
- change management plans and procedures

- a testing strategy and other testing documentation
- a commissioning, implementation or rollout plan
- refreshed business case
- updated:
 - project implementation plan
 - change management plan
 - issue and risk register
 - benefits management plan and supporting benefit profiles
 - project learnings registers
 - communication plan.

4. Checklist

As each project is unique, the following checklist should be used as a guide to a range of appropriate project assurance questions, not as a full checklist of mandatory items. Where a 'no' or 'not applicable' response is recorded in the checklist, it is good practice to provide justification in some form, such as in the stage products listed in 4.1.

4.1 Products

Have the following products been completed in accordance with quality standards as agreed via relevant project governing bodies?	Ref	Yes	No	N/A
A signed contract for the good, service or output (product) to be delivered	2.1			
Plans and procedures to manage relationships, service delivery and, if applicable, the contract itself via a contract management plan	2.2			
Change management plans and procedures	2.3			
A testing strategy and other testing documentation	2.4			
A commissioning, implementation or rollout plan	2.4			
Refreshed business case	2.6			
Updated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> project implementation plan change management plan issue and risk registers benefits management plan and supporting benefit profiles project learnings register communication plan. 	2.6			

4.2 Process

Have the following processes been completed in accordance with quality standards as agreed via relevant project governing bodies?	Ref	Yes	No	N/A
Can project decision makers be assured that the offer (or tender) process has been completed?				
Has the offer (or tender) process culminated in the authorised signing of a contract?	2.1			
Have feedback mechanisms for unsuccessful offerors been implemented?	2.1			
Can project decision makers be assured that roles, processes and plans are in place to effectively manage the contract?				
Does contract management take into account relationship management, service level management and administrative elements?	2.2			
Can project decision makers be assured that change management mechanisms are in place?				
Have change management roles, responsibilities and procedures been documented and assigned to deal with planned and unplanned changes?	2.3			

Have the following processes been completed in accordance with quality standards as agreed via relevant project governing bodies?	Ref	Yes	No	N/A
Can project decision makers be assured that the goods, services or outputs (products) are being developed according to specification?				
Are products regularly tested in accordance with a defined test strategy?	2.4			
Has product development informed commissioning and/or implementation planning efforts?	2.4			
Can project decision makers be assured that the organisation and other stakeholders, as appropriate, are ready for implementation?				
Has an assessment of readiness been undertaken, considering the range of management and organisational controls in place to guide implementation?	2.5			
Has the decision path for implementation been documented and timetabled?	2.5			
Can project decision makers be assured that the business case and project implementation plan have been refreshed?				
Have the following been considered in the context of the business case and/or project implementation plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change management planning • risk and issues management • benefits management and realisation • project learnings • communication planning? 	2.6			
Can decision makers be assured that a sufficiently detailed submission seeking approval to proceed to the deliver service stage has been prepared?				
Does the submission include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documented decision path for implementation • change management mechanisms • supplier related arrangements • details of the good, service or output (product) to be delivered? 	2.7			

