

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT - TECHNOLOGY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK  
MAJOR DIGITAL PROJECTS – GATE CHECKLISTS**

**Business Justification Gate**

**The project is soundly based at the outset and has a robust Strategic Business Case. It is adequately scoped and has considered and addressed resourcing and skills.**

**PLANNING**

- Have the recommendations of Audit Scotland's ['Principles for a Digital Future'](#) been considered as part of the planning process?
- Is the Strategic Business Case sound?
- Have alternative options considered been analysed and documented?
- Where appropriate, is it clear how this technology project contributes to the wider programme?
- Where appropriate, does the project align to the Scottish Government's [Cloud First](#) policy?
- Is the project clear about the business outcomes which it is intended to deliver?
- Is the organisation clear what is driving the project (e.g. IT led or Business led)?
- Have benefits been identified and quantified where appropriate?
- Are the relevant skills and resources in place now for this stage of the project?
- Have the relevant skills and resources been identified for delivery of the project and is there a strategy for sourcing these?
- Have the organisation's corporate functions been consulted and their support secured where there are relevant project dependencies (e.g. for future support arrangements)?

**GOVERNANCE**

- For major investment projects as defined in the [Scottish Public Finance Manual](#), has the project SRO received a formal letter of appointment from the Accountable Officer?
- Are appropriate governance arrangements in place with clear lines of accountability?
- Are risk, issue and dependency management strategies in place?
- Have the key risk and issues (including cyber security) been identified and documented?

- Is there a high level project plan, identifying the critical path and any interdependencies?
- Where appropriate, does this identify delivery of a Minimum Viable Product and is this signed off with stakeholders?
- Is a Benefits Realisation Strategy in place, defined and agreed with stakeholders and are mechanisms in place to track benefits?

## **PROCUREMENT/COMMERCIAL**

- Have contract management issues been considered (e.g. for intelligent customer/client side support)?
- If procurement will be required, have procurement options been considered?
- Has there been appropriate engagement with the procurement function and will there be sufficient support from procurement expertise when needed?
- Have procurement timelines been factored into planning and are the timelines credible?
- Have minimum cyber security and/or data requirements with potential suppliers been established?
- Are the market and risks understood (e.g. for leading edge technology, is terminology understood, has there been any pre-tender market engagement)?

## **STAKEHOLDERS/USERS**

- Have stakeholders been identified?
- Has user research been conducted?
- Is there a communication and engagement strategy in place?
- Are best practice and lessons learned across professional communities for example Digital, Data and Technology Community of Practices and the Once for Scotland collaboration group being shared by the project team with the wider organisation?

## **STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT AND ASSURANCE**

- Is the project plan sufficiently developed?
- Where appropriate, is there a clear understanding of the requirements of the different assurance processes which are being applied to the project (e.g. Technology Assurance Framework and Gateway Reviews)?
- Is there an Integrated Assurance and Approval plan in place?
- For new or transformed services, has the project passed [a Digital Scotland Service Standard](#) assessment following exploratory (Discovery) work?

## STANDARDS

- Does the Project align to the [Digital Strategy for Scotland](#)?
- Where appropriate, has compliance with the [Digital Scotland Service Standard](#) and other national standards been considered?
- Is there a plan for meeting accessibility, equalities and data protection regulations?
- If any deviation from standards is proposed, is there a credible explanation and has the deviation been agreed and signed off?

## DELIVERY METHOD

- Has the delivery strategy and structure been articulated?
- Is there a clear approach to business change, including clear ownership of business change and plans co-ordinated with project delivery?
- Is appropriate documentation being maintained and configured?

## TESTING

n/a

## SUPPORT

n/a

## Pre-Procurement Gate

**The procurement strategy is sound and the commercial risks are understood.**

## PLANNING

- Is the Outline Business Case sound?
- Is the project still viable?
- Is project scope clearly defined?
- Has the project plan been refined and has contingency been built in for timescales, quality and cost?
- Where appropriate, does the project plan align to the programme plan?
- Are procurement activities appropriately reflected in the plan?
- Are the expectations of delivery timescales realistic?
- Is there a contingency plan in place?
- Are business change plans sufficiently developed for this stage of the project?
- Are the relevant skills and resources in place now and planned for the next stage of the project?
- Is there a resource plan in place identifying how further skills and resources will be secured for the project?
- Does the project team have the sufficient capacity and the appropriate capability to manage the delivery in partnership with the supplier?
- Has consideration been given to any necessary, further procurement activity which may be required beyond the project and has a roadmap been considered for this?

## GOVERNANCE

- For major investment projects as defined in the [Scottish Public Finance Manual](#), has the project SRO received a formal letter of appointment from the Accountable Officer?
- Is the governance model active, dynamic and appropriate, with sufficient independent expertise available?
- Is Audit Scotland's '[Principles for a Digital Future](#)' being actively referenced as a resource to support robust ICT project management?
- Are all costs within budget and are appropriate mechanisms in place to manage and control budgets?
- Are key risks being actively managed and mitigated?
- Have key issues been addressed?
- Are key decisions being appropriately documented?
- Does the business understand what will happen with existing data and the data model?
- Is a benefits realisation strategy and plan in place which sets out benefits owners, the process for measuring benefits and is clear about those benefits which will be delivered in-project and post-project?
- Have appropriate quality controls been applied to the sign off of business requirements?

- Is the business content with recovery time and recovery point objectives?
- Are change control processes sufficiently robust to manage potential scope creep?
- Have all design decisions received sign off at the appropriate governance level (e.g. Technical Design Authority) and are these documented appropriately?
- What steps are included within the plan to ensure the MVP does not become the full and final product (e.g. Continuous Improvement is actually applied and achieved)?

## **PROCUREMENT/COMMERCIAL**

- Is the sourcing strategy appropriate and robust?
- Has the sourcing strategy been signed off by the programme board/procurement and are the implications understood?
- Is the Statement of Requirements comprehensive and does it convey a clear articulation of all identified requirements?
- Are all requirements identified in the Statement of Requirements consistent with the requirements identified and documented through requirements gathering/user research?
- Where appropriate is there a clear definition of which requirements are mandatory and which desirable?
- Is there a clear articulation of assumptions and constraints?
- Does the Statement of Requirements clearly set out Service Level Agreements in relation to Defect Management?
- Have key stakeholders such as multi-agency partners had the opportunity to review and endorse the Statement of Requirements prior to sign off?
- Do business expectations match the maturity of the envisaged technical solution and has market testing been explored?
- Has procurement policy been observed?
- Are the evaluation criteria robust?
- Is there a robust and understood evaluation process, with evaluation panel identified and plans for training where appropriate?
- Will the proposed approach achieve whole life value for money?
- Has the treatment/ownership of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), indemnities and liabilities been adequately addressed?
- Is the form of contract appropriate to the requirement?
- Is there a mechanism in place to manage any change to scope/requirements?
- Is there a clear plan for on-boarding the supplier?
- Is a supplier/contract management plan in place and resource identified and committed for this?
- How will the exit strategy be agreed and factored into the contract?

## STAKEHOLDERS/USERS

- Have the business requirements been informed by user research?
- Have the business requirements been signed off?
- Has a robust stakeholder identification exercise been undertaken and a stakeholder power/influence matrix been produced to inform the engagement/communication strategy?
- Is there a communication and engagement plan in place?
- Are best practice and lessons learned across professional communities for example Digital, Data and Technology Community of Practices and the Once for Scotland collaboration group being shared by the project team with the wider organisation?
- Does the organisation have a clear and common understanding of what is being procured?

## STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT AND ASSURANCE

- Has compliance with the Technology Assurance Framework been stipulated in the Invitation to Tender?
- Are assurance mechanisms being used effectively?
- Does an Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan exist and is it being actively used?

## STANDARDS

- Has compliance with legislation and standards (e.g. [Digital Scotland Service Standard](#), General Data Protection Regulation; technical standards; ISO standards) been built into the Invitation to Tender?
- Have security, resilience and safety been considered and budgeted for?

## DELIVERY METHOD

- Is the proposed delivery method appropriate?
- Are plans in place to ensure the required environments are built and supported?
- Where relevant, has integration with legacy systems been considered/analysed and are the risks/challenges known?

- Have hosting arrangements been considered, ensuring where appropriate alignment with the [Cloud First](#) strategy?
- Have non-functional requirements been defined?
- Is there a Quality Management Strategy in place?
- Is appropriate documentation being maintained and configured?

## TESTING

- Is the Test Approach and/or Strategy understood and accepted by the project team and all associated business teams?
- Are sufficient testing staff available for testing requirements?
- For user testing, are sufficient user involvement plans in place and arrangements for ensuring users are available agreed?

## SUPPORT

- Is the strategy for supporting and maintaining the solution in place?
- Have lifetime costs for support and maintenance been considered?

## Delivery Gate

**The delivery strategy remains appropriate and there is a valid Full Business Case. Delivery is on track and standards are met.**

### PLANNING

- Does the business case remain viable?
- Are the relevant skills and resources in place now and planned for the next stage of the project?
- Has the resource plan been reviewed and signed off?
- Are dependencies being managed effectively?
- Is the scope of a Minimum Viable Product understood and agreed by all stakeholders and is it stable?
- Are contingency plans sufficiently developed?
- Is there a Production transition plan in place?
- Have Disaster Recovery plans been developed?
- Is there a Capacity Plan in place for all environments?
- Are business readiness plans sufficiently developed for this stage of the project?
- Are business continuity plans being developed for post-launch?

### GOVERNANCE

- Is Audit Scotland's ['Principles for a Digital Future'](#) being actively referenced as a resource to support robust ICT project management?
- Is the project governance providing appropriate control and oversight?
- Does the project/programme board have sufficient independent expert advice available if needed?
- Are key risks being actively managed and mitigated?
- Are key issues being addressed?
- Has action been taken to mitigate any past or future deviations to time, quality or cost?
- Are there effective change management processes in place?
- Has the benefits plan been updated and do the descriptions and quantification of benefits remain current?



- Are benefits being actively managed and are these consistent with those identified in the Benefits Realisation Strategy?
- Is there ownership and accountability for the realisation of benefits?

## **PROCUREMENT/COMMERCIAL**

- Is commercial management in place?
- Are supplier performance levels agreed?
- Is supplier performance being measured and within tolerance?
- Are there any changes since award of contract that will affect business change plans or impact on the viability of the contract (e.g. pose risk of market challenge)?
- Is there an ongoing understanding of the market and the supplier's commercial model?

## **STAKEHOLDERS/USERS**

- Is the communication plan being actively managed and feedback sought?
- Are stakeholders being actively engaged in the project?
- Is there evidence of sustained user engagement?
- Are best practice and lessons learned across professional communities for example Digital, Data and Technology Community of Practices and the Once for Scotland collaboration group being shared by the project with the wider organisation?
- Have/are users been involved in testing?
- If internal staff require training/knowledge transfer are there active plans for managing this?
- Is ownership of this new service clearly defined and understood?

## **STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT AND ASSURANCE**

- Are assurance mechanisms being used effectively?
- Does an Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan exist and is it being actively used?

## **STANDARDS**

- Are IT standards being met in relation to:
  - Application Architecture
  - Application Design
  - Architecture Design
  - Security Design
  - Data provisioning/migration
- Are the right plans in place to ensure that the solution meets security standards? (e.g. penetration testing; Cyber Essentials).
- Where appropriate, is the service compliant with the [Digital Scotland Service Standard](#)?
- Have accessibility, equalities and data protection been built into the solution?
- If personal data is being collected, is there a Data Protection Impact Assessment, privacy notice and information asset record in place?
- Can the solution respond to a subject access request? (e.g. can the user download their own records rather than manual interrogation of the system being required to fulfil subject access request requirements).

## DELIVERY METHOD

- Is the delivery approach sound?
- Where appropriate, are the principles of the [Cloud First](#) strategy reflected in the solution?
- Is there evidence that the delivery method is being executed well?
- Is there a deliverables log in place?
- Is appropriate documentation being maintained and configured?
- Are configuration and asset management procedures in place?
- Is there a working prototype?
- Is technical debt being managed efficiently?
- Are incident management processes in place?
- Are defect management processes in place?
- Are data management practices in place?
- Is there an appropriate Roll Back plan if needed?

## TESTING

- Are there appropriate test strategies and plans (e.g. system testing; user acceptance testing; performance testing; operational acceptance testing)?
- Are the testing strategies credible and appropriate to the service?
- Have the test strategies been signed off by the Project Team and, where appropriate, with users?
- Is there evidence of compliance with the test strategies?
- Have the Test Plan(s) been signed off across the test levels (e.g. functional, non-functional and acceptance) by the Project Team?
- Are exit and entry criteria for tests being achieved, or likely to be achieved?
- Are defects being managed appropriately?
- Do testing metrics indicate that the delivery model is effective?

## **SUPPORT**

- Has the support strategy been reviewed and is it appropriate to the solution?
- Are the conditions for entry into business as usual being developed to enable monitoring of progress towards go-live?
- Where appropriate, are staff being trained to support the system or are other arrangements in place/being planned (e.g. supplier/3rd party supplier support)?
- Where appropriate, are knowledge transfer arrangements in place (e.g. from the supplier to the business)?

## Go-Live Gate

The solution is ready to be launched into production use and the organisation is ready to accept the business change.

### PLANNING

- Does the business case remain viable?
- Is there an approved and resourced go-live plan in place?
- Is there an approved business change plan in place?
- Is the organisation ready for the business change?
- Are benefits realisation plans still viable?
- Are business continuity plans in place and tested?
- Are performance management plans in place?
- Are the relevant skills and resources in place to support the solution once it is in Production?
- Are dependencies being managed effectively?
- Has the IT deployment plan been approved and tested?
- Does the IT deployment plan have checkpoints and rollback points and are these credible?
- Is there a tested Disaster Recovery plan in place?
- Is there a Capacity Plan in place for all environments?
- Where appropriate, are data sharing arrangements in place?

### GOVERNANCE

- Is the project governance providing appropriate control and oversight?
- Is the governance for approving the launch into live use understood and documented?
- Are governance arrangements in place post-launch, including accountability for and monitoring of benefits realisation?
- Has ownership of the new service once launched been formally recognised across the organisation?
- Is system and user documentation approved and subject to configuration management?
- Are key risks being actively managed and mitigated?
- Have key issues been addressed?

- If there are unresolved issues, can go-live be deferred or, alternatively, are the risks of launching with unresolved issues fully understood, documented and is the risk acceptable?
- Are there effective change management processes in place?
- Have all changes to the solution been authorised?
- Are incident and problem management processes in place for post-launch?

## **PROCUREMENT/COMMERCIAL**

- Is commercial management in place?
- Have the necessary sign-offs taken place to demonstrate completion of contract?
- Is supplier performance measured and acceptable?
- Are there any changes since award of contract that will affect project delivery and are these appropriately documented and understood?
- Is there an ongoing understanding of the market and the supplier's commercial model?
- Are arrangements in place to manage ongoing supplier relationships?

## **STAKEHOLDERS/USERS**

- Is the communication plan in place to support the launch and live operations?
- Have stakeholders been actively engaged in the project?
- Do stakeholders have confidence in the solution?
- Are best practice and lessons learned across professional communities for example Digital, Data and Technology Community of Practices and the Once for Scotland collaboration group being shared by the project team with the wider organisation?
- Is there a plan for ensuring lessons learnt are embedded in future projects across the organisation?
- Have users been involved in testing and signed off the solution?
- If appropriate, have internal staff been trained/gained knowledge transfer to enable operational use of the solution?
- Are plans in place to support users in the immediate period following launch (e.g. helpdesk, floorwalkers)?

## **STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT AND ASSURANCE**

- Have assurance mechanisms being used effectively?
- Is there evidence that quality standards are being met?
- Has the assurance applied to the project been appropriate?
- Does an Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan exist and is it being actively used?

## STANDARDS

- Have IT standards been met in relation to:
  - Application Architecture
  - Application Design
  - Architecture Design
  - Security Design
  - Data provisioning/migration
- Does the solution meet security standards (e.g. penetration testing; Cyber Essentials)?
- Where appropriate, is the service compliant with the [Digital Scotland Service Standard](#)?

## DELIVERY METHOD

- Is there evidence that the delivery approach has been executed well?
- Have all deliverables been produced?
- Has appropriate documentation been produced and maintained?
- Are configuration and asset management procedures in place?
- Is there a working prototype?
- Is technical debt being managed efficiently?
- Is there a strategy in place for managing and creating value from data assets?
- Where appropriate, is there a roadmap for the future of the system?

## TESTING

- Have all test plans been completed and evidenced via Test Completion Reports and are these accepted by the Project Team? ( e.g. non-functional (i.e. performance, security) testing against exit criteria and acceptance testing against exit criteria)
- Has there been sufficient end to end testing?
- Has the roll back plan been tested?
- Have interfaces with other systems been tested?
- Has any data migration/conversion been tested and signed off by users?
- Are any residual (usually) low defects accepted and workarounds recorded alongside formal acknowledgement on the project risk register for Go-Live?
- Where appropriate, has the formal Automated Regression Pack been accepted by the Operational Team and is it suitable for execution on any future release?

## **SUPPORT**

- Is there an approved support strategy in place and have pre-determined criteria been established for entry into business as usual?
- Where appropriate, have staff being trained to support the system?
- Where appropriate, are Service Level Agreements in place?
- Where appropriate, has knowledge transfer taken place (e.g. from the supplier to the business)?