

# Assignment Brief and Front Sheet PGT

This front sheet for assignments is designed to contain the brief, the submission instructions, and the actual student submission for any WMG assignment. As a result the sheet is completed by several people over time, and is therefore split up into sections explaining who completes what information and when. Yellow highlighted text indicates examples or further explanation of what is requested, and the highlight and instructions should be removed as you populate 'your' section.

This sheet is only to be used for components of assessment worth more than 3 CATS (e.g. for a 15 credit module, weighted more than 20%; or for a 10 credit module, weighted more than 30%).

## To be **completed** by the **student(s)** prior to final submission:

Your actual submission should be written at the end of this cover sheet file, or attached with the cover sheet at the front if drafted in a separate file, program or application.

Student ID or IDs for group work	5597768
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To be **completed** (highlighted parts only) by the **programme administration** after approval and prior to issuing of the assessment; to be **consulted** by the **student(s)** so that you know how and when to submit:

Date set	14/10/2024
Submission date (excluding extensions)	12pm UK time on 11/11/2024
Submission guidance	Submit electronically via Tabula
Late submission policy	<p>If work is submitted late, penalties will be applied at the rate of <b>5 marks per University working day</b> after the due date, up to a <b>maximum of 10 working days</b> late. After this period the mark for the work will be reduced to 0 (which is the maximum penalty). "Late" means <b>after the submission deadline time as well as the date</b> – work submitted after the given time even on the same day is counted as 1 day late.</p> <p>For <b>Postgraduate</b> students only, who started their <b>current course before 1 August 2019</b>, the daily penalty is <b>3 marks</b> rather than 5.</p>
Resit policy	<p>If you fail this module and/or component, the University allows students to remedy failure (within certain limits). Decisions to authorise resits are made by Exam Boards. These will be issued at specific times of the year, depending on your programme of study. More information can be found from your programme office if you are concerned.</p> <p>If this is <b>already a resit</b> attempt, this means you will not be eligible for an additional attempt. The University allows as standard a maximum of two attempts on any assessment (i.e. only one resit). Students can only have a third attempt under exceptional circumstances via a Mitigating Circumstances Panel decision.</p>

To be completed by the module leader/tutor prior to approval and issuing of the assessment; to be consulted by the student(s) so that you understand the assignment brief, its context within the module, and any specific criteria and advice from the tutor:

<b>Module title &amp; code</b>	ES968-15 Project Planning Management & Control
<b>Module leader</b>	Kevin Fielding
<b>Module tutor</b>	Kevin Fielding/David Pontin/Tilimbe Jiya/Dennis Chapman
<b>Assessment type</b>	Essay Assignment Part A
<b>Weighting of mark</b>	50%

<b>Assignment brief</b>
<p><b>Q1.</b> “Systematic identification, analysis and assessment of risk and dealing with the results contributes significantly to the success of projects”. (Cooper et al 2005)</p> <p>By using an example of a generic project lifecycle (not project or industry specific), consider each stage and critically evaluate why during every stage it is always necessary to be thinking about risk and how this contributes to better project performance.</p>

<b>Word count</b>	Recommended Length 2000 words (excluding references, tables etc). No penalties are applied directly for word count if the discussion is all relevant to answering the question, is written as succinctly as possible and provides sufficient depth to the discussion.
<b>Module learning outcomes (numbered)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interpret the requirements for the effective management of projects of different types, scale, complexity, and risk within the organisational environment.</li> <li>2. In a group setting select, apply and critically evaluate appropriate project planning, management and control approaches and techniques used in different circumstances.</li> <li>3. Critically evaluate team performance in a group work setting and contribute to the formulation and management of project teams throughout the project life-cycle.</li> <li>4. Deliver small projects effectively and contribute to the delivery of larger projects.</li> </ol>
<b>Learning outcomes assessed in this assessment (numbered)</b>	1 and 4

Marking guidelines		Criteria	Exceptional (91-100%)	Excellent (81-90%)	Very Good (71-80%)	Good (61-70%)	Satisfactory (51-60%)	Pass (41-50%)	Marginal Fail (31-40%)	Fail (0-30%)
	<b>Critical Comprehension &amp; Analysis</b>		Demonstrates exceptional comprehension and critical analysis with highly original insights and thorough evaluation of evidence.	Shows excellent comprehension and critical analysis with original insights. Evaluates evidence thoroughly.	Demonstrates very good comprehension and critical analysis with some original insights.	Shows good comprehension and critical analysis with minor gaps. Evaluates evidence competently.	Demonstrates adequate comprehension and analysis. Evaluates evidence with some limitations.	Shows basic comprehension with minimal analysis. Limited evaluation of evidence.	Lacks comprehension and critical analysis. Poor evaluation of evidence.	Fails to demonstrate comprehension or critical analysis. No evaluation of evidence.
	<b>Research and Evidence</b>		Utilizes an extensive range of high-quality academic sources. Demonstrates outstanding research skills and integrates evidence seamlessly.	Uses a wide range of relevant academic sources. Demonstrates excellent research skills and integrates evidence well.	Uses a good range of relevant academic sources. Demonstrates very good research skills and integrates evidence effectively.	Uses a satisfactory range of sources. Demonstrates good research skills and integrates evidence adequately.	Relies on a basic range of sources. Shows adequate research skills and some integration of evidence.	Uses limited or less relevant sources. Basic research skills and minimal integration of evidence.	Inadequate use of sources. Poor research skills and little to no integration of evidence.	Fails to use academic sources appropriately. Lacks research skills and evidence integration.
	<b>Cohesion, Structure, and Grammar</b>		Exceptionally well-organized, cohesive, and structured. Clear, logical flow with excellent grammar and style. Core themes and discussion points are clearly evident.	Well-organized and structured. Clear flow with minor errors in grammar or style. Core themes and discussion points are mostly evident.	Adequately organized with some logical structure. May have minor inconsistencies and errors in grammar or style. Core themes are somewhat evident.	Basic organization and structure. Some sections may lack clarity or logical flow. Noticeable errors in grammar or style. Core themes are minimally evident.	Poorly organized and structured. Lacks clarity and logical flow. Significant errors in grammar or style. Core themes are not evident.	Disorganized and lacks coherence. Major errors in grammar and style. Core themes are unclear.	Severely disorganized and incoherent. Numerous errors in grammar and style. Core themes are absent.	
	<b>Effort and Presentation</b>		Demonstrates exceptional effort and a high level of professionalism in presentation. Clear, visually appealing, and engaging.	Shows excellent effort and presentation with minor areas for improvement. Clear and mostly engaging.	Demonstrates very good effort and presentation with some areas for improvement. Generally clear and engaging.	Shows good effort and presentation with minor areas for improvement. Clear and mostly engaging.	Adequate effort and presentation with some areas for improvement. Generally clear but may lack engagement.	Basic effort and presentation with noticeable areas for improvement. Some parts may lack clarity or engagement.	Poor effort and presentation. Lacks clarity, visual appeal, and engagement.	Very poor effort and presentation. No clarity, visual appeal, or engagement.
	<b>Adherence to Guidelines</b>		Fully adheres to all assignment guidelines and exceeds expectations.	Adheres to guidelines with minor deviations.	Mostly adheres to guidelines with some deviations.	Partially adheres to guidelines with noticeable deviations.	Fails to adhere to assignment guidelines.	Fails to adhere to assignment guidelines.	Fails to adhere to assignment guidelines.	Fails to adhere to assignment guidelines.
<b>Academic guidance resources</b>		Further help may be received through links to a reading list, face-to-face sessions, feed-forward, workshops, seminars, Q&A sessions during the module etc.								

### Where to get help:

1. Talk to your module tutor if you don't understand the question or are unsure as to exactly what is required.
2. Study, Professional and Analytical Skills (SPA) Moodle site – we have a lot of resources on this website with workbooks, links and other helpful tools. <https://moodle.warwick.ac.uk/>
3. There are also numerous online courses provided by the University library to help in academic referencing, writing, avoiding plagiarism and a number of other useful resources. <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/students/your-library-online/>

4. If you have a problem with your wellbeing, it is important that you contact your personal tutor or wellbeing support services <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/wss>

# PROJECT PLANNING MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Every project has to proceed through the initiation phase before progressing on to the next stage. (PMBOK Guide, 2021). Similarly, the risk management approach is incomplete without the phase of risk awareness - thinking about the potential risks. It is the initial phase or process in risk management and is often inferred as the informal way of brainstorming or discussing the potential areas of concern in the projects. (Tom Kendrick, 2015). Although the term “thinking about the risk” may sound straightforward, it is quite complex to talk about it in detail. Thinking about the risks in advance simplifies the areas of risk management. The failure to proactive risk thinking can lead to a subsequent failure in managing the risks.

According to Cooper et al. (2005), systematic identification, analysis and assessment of risk and dealing with the results contributes significantly to the success of projects. Analysing the quote shows the hidden emphasis on risk awareness and how it eventually contributes to the success of the project by utilizing the systematic approach in the risk identification and assessment. Taking this quotation as a baseline, this essay will discuss thinking of risks in each phase of the project lifecycle and how it contributes to the later phases of the risk management and ultimately to the success of the project.

## 2. Project Lifecycle Overview

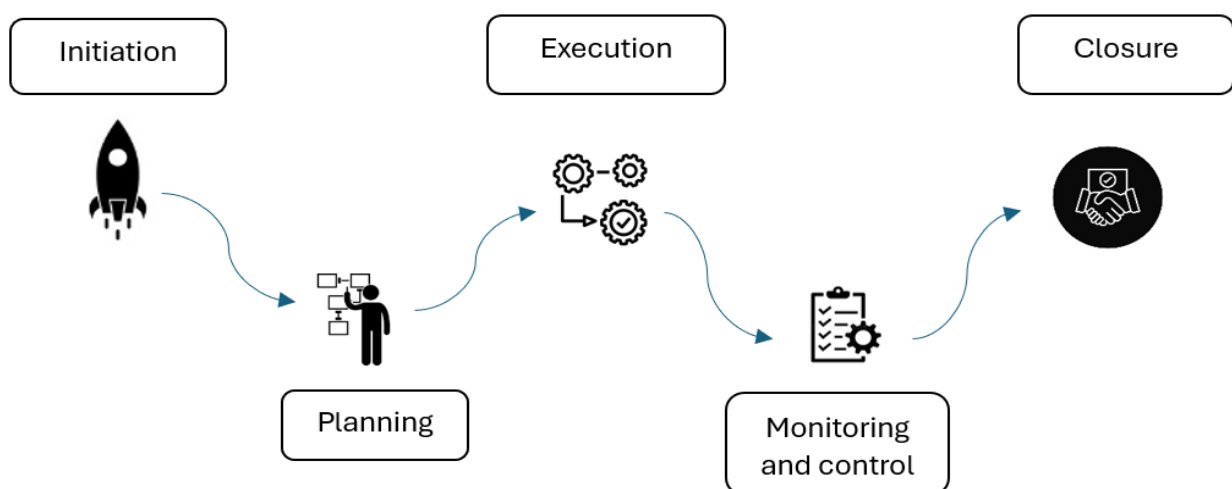


Figure 1: Project Life Cycle



Figure 1.1, Concept Adapted from PMBOK Guide, 6th ed., (2017), represents the predictive or waterfall lifecycle, that are universal to most of the projects across various fields and sectors. The predictive lifecycle kicks off with the initiation phase and goes all the way to the closure in an orderly sequence. The goals, scope and objectives are well defined and have a comparatively less room for change (Kerzner, 2017; PMBOK Guide, 2017). This still gives the possibility of risk occurrence and the need for anticipating the risks early as there is limited time for adaptation. Each phase has its own start and end point, this gives an opportunity to think about risks earlier for each phase of the project.

The essay will follow the predictive lifecycle sequence stating the need of risk awareness at each stage and the potential consequences of overlooking the risks. This essay will discuss how proactive thinking of risks enhances the outcome of the project.

### **3. Risk Awareness Across the Project Lifecycle Phases**

#### **3.1 Initiation Phase**

A project is an idea, which we define, analyze, critically think about it and later categorize as an entity, if it produces a value, else discarded if seen as unviable. The initiation phase is set as the beginning of an idea, which is formally grown into a project. David Hillson (2009), compares the project stages with the birth of a child, beginning from the project's conception (the start) to going all the way to a project's grave (the end). The combination of conception, viability and initiation is together called as initiation phase in this essay.

Conception and viability phase – Hillson states that the idea of a project comes to light, undergoes various tests and risk assessments, to prove its worth, marking the beginning of the proactive ability and the necessity to think more about the idea like - the benefits an organization can gain via the idea. If the idea can practically be converted into a service or product that benefits the customers and endures in the market, then it is considered viable. These stages in the initiation phase marks the start of the risks thinking even before the project is officially signed. This attitude of risk thinking not only assess the risks in the idea, but also provides an opportunity for the organizations in either moving forward with idea possessing the right knowledge to tackle risks or drop it.

Moving on to the next stage is initiations of the project, where the project officially begins establishing project foundations by defining goals, objectives, deliverables, and scope. These give a brief description of what the final products will be like and an introductory way of achieving the goal. Even a small mishap in the initiation stage leads to greater issues in the later phases of the project. Common risks in this phase include setting unrealistic objectives, improperly defined goals, unsuitable project management methodologies, stakeholder misalignment, and underestimating time, budget, and resource needs (Kerzner, 2017). Stakeholders play a major role in defining and deciding the fate of the project. Key stakeholders and their interests and influence on the project are discovered. A misalignment in managing the stakeholders can lead to scope creep and unmanaged change requests (Kerzner, 2017; PMI, 2017).

Tom Kendrick (2015, p. 31) states that “A project is impossible when its objective lies beyond the technical capabilities currently available”. The word impossible denotes a possible project failure. Overly ambitious analysis of objectives and scope, leads to disasters like scope creep, increased costs and delays in completing the project. Though optimism is good, it often leads to accidents in terms of project management. A pessimistic approach and a preemptive thinking of risks can be wise ways to deal or avoid risks. Risk awareness in the initial stage of a project, addressing potential challenges and uncertainties at the very start, will be a significant factor that could affect the project performance, enabling improved decision making, setting realistic objectives, goals, etc.,

### **3.2 Project Planning phase**

Planning phase marks the official beginning of the project, where the project is legally approved and launched (David Hillson, 2009). Planning phase is the place of defining key elements like scope, schedule, cost, stakeholder engagement, setting the quality metrics to measure the deliverables, and planning for risks, as well as procurement and communication (PMI, 2017; Kerzner, 2015). Laying the baseline of the project, it delves in depth to each section of the planning processes, defining and breaking down into chunks, and ultimately producing the project plan which serves as the roadmap for the entire project lifecycle. Project plan consists of extensive documents which has detailed information on milestones, communication, schedule, risk registers and reports on risks.

According to Michael (2016), any flaws or inaccuracies in the produced plan may lead to inefficiency in meeting the objectives, causing delays or difficulties in completing the project and potentially leading to project failures. One common reason for poor planning is due to a lack of stakeholder engagement during the decision-making process, leading to unclear and evolving requirements, which subsequently results in scope creep, ineffective resource allocation, and cost over runs. Hence, proactively thinking of this risk helps in active engagement with stakeholders by having regular meetings, or other ways active communication will help in clearly assessing their needs, requirements and gaining clarity.

### **3.3 Execution phase**

The execution phase marks the point where the project's detailed plan is put into action. This phase begins implementation of tasks according to the predefined plan. Teams and individuals take *accountability and responsibility* for completing the tasks and milestones within allocated timelines to achieve objectives that align with the project goals (PMBOK Guide, 2017). Teams with this quality denote professionalism, and commitment, key qualities for the team in working towards the project success. This phase is responsible for task executions, managing resources, watch over quality, identifying and mitigating risks, and ensuring team collaboration and morale (Harold Kerzner, 2017). Though the tasks performed on this phase vary according to different projects, the above mentioned are some of the common tasks performed in the execution phase.

The execution phase is exposed to challenges and changes, throughout the phase, which can lead to scope creep, task delays, communication breakdown, resource unavailability and budget over run. These risks are addressed using adaptable responses and real time risk management strategies. For example, scope creep, that occurs due to unclear and evolving requirements is addressed with redefining the scopes and setting clear boundaries. Although extensive risk planning at the planning phase lays a base for the project to progress smoothly, it does not provide a solution or plan for tackling risks that occur without notice. This facilitates the need for risk awareness – possibly thinking about risks that can lead to disruption of the project.

Risk awareness can also play an impactful role in promoting resilience among project teams. Visualization of risks in the execution phase helps project teams to avoid disruptions, enhance decision-making, and focus on maintaining product quality. This prevents the teams from getting startled over unknown risks. For example, if the contracted supplier fails to supply the product or drops the task order, the team can possibly go with an alternative supplier, if they have identified potential backups in advance and continuously monitor supplier performance. A proactive approach toward risk management during execution not only facilitates smoother task progression but also cultivates a culture of adaptability, enabling teams to manage challenges more effectively and maintain alignment with project objectives.

### **3.4 Monitoring and controlling phase**

Monitor and control phase is closely related to the execution phase. The tasks that begun in the execution phase, is closely tracked and reviewed in this phase (PMBOK Guide, 2017). This is done by closely tracking and evaluating the actual project progress and comparing it with the planned project performance. This evaluation is done based on the scope, schedule, and cost data – defined in the planning phase. Tools like control chart and earned value management tool are used in performing the evaluation (James Taylor, 2007).

According to Chris Chapman and Stephen Ward (2004), monitor and control phase has the greatest impact of the risks when compared with other phases of the project life cycle. The most common risks in this phase include inaccurate data collection – leading to misinterpretations of project performance, delays in assessing the performance of the services – hindering the decision making, insufficient resource – leads schedule delays, failure to meet quality standards – causing rework and additional budget for redoing. These risks all together can lead to a project failure if left unaddressed.

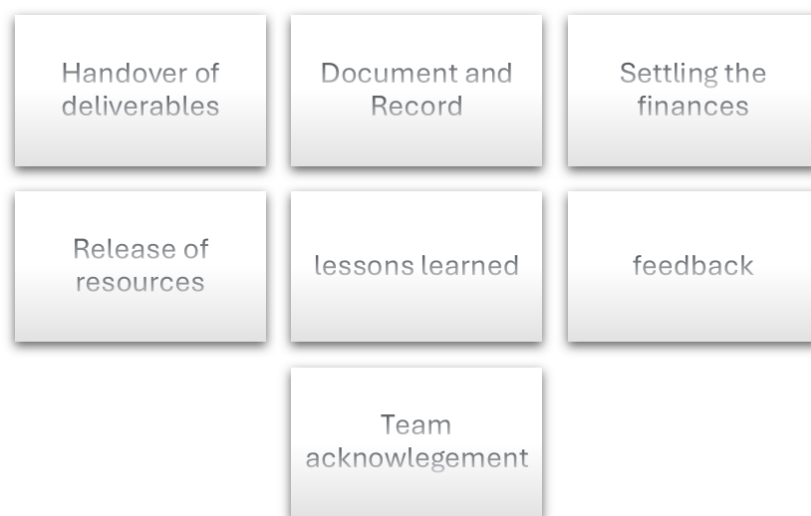
Inherent risks are inevitable, however predictable risks are simpler to manage, if found early. In fact, they can be mitigated if the project team foresights the threats and opportunities in a risk. For instance, establishing standardized data collection plan before entering the monitor and control phase can reduce the risk of inaccuracies. The need/idea

to produce a standardized data collection plan arises from proactive thinking. The rest of the mentioned risks and other potential risks of this phase can be prevented by thinking and planning for the risks in advance.

Though most risks surface after the planning phase, it is also important to proactively think risks throughout the lifecycle (Tom Kendrick, 2017). Risks can be interconnected with the phases of the project. The earlier missteps or risks that are left unaddressed can lead to a new and complex risks. For instance, the reason for inaccurate data collection can be linked with the risks that was left unaddressed in the planning phase. Anticipating and preemptive thinking of risks throughout the project will benefit in the long run.

### 3.5 Project Closure

Projects have defined timelines, which is meant to come to an end on a certain date or time (PMBOK Guide, 2017). Reaching the goal and having delivered the deliverables does not mean a project has closed, it just that it is nearing the end, but is not officially closed. A project is considered closed if the tasks in diagram 2.1 are completed. The concept of the tasks listed in diagram 2.1 are adapted from PMBOK Guide, 6th ed., (2017), which displays some essential tasks that need to be completed for the project to be officially closed. For example, the necessity in handing over the deliverables that met the quality standards and the acceptance from the client, and documenting the risks, uncertainties, opportunities, contractor history and others related to the project.



**Figure 2: Tasks in the project closure.**

Some projects reach the closure phase even before reaching the goals due to project failures and this type of closure is more problematic than normal closure (Havila, Medlin, and Salmi, 2013). Whatever the cause of a closure is, it must be handled with patience and care to completely wrap up the things and to leave no loose ends. The common risks that arise in this phase and that are associated with the above-mentioned tasks are - the deliverables that are handed over before it has met the quality standards, documentation that are incomplete, financial and legal issues, risks in resource release – affecting the team morale, and failing to reflect on the lessons learned in the project (PMBOK Guide, 2017).

Addressing these risks is quite challenging. However, if these risks are preidentified, the tasks become simpler to handle, avoid predefined challenges, and concentrate in enhancing the project performance. Pre-emptive thinking of risks in the closure, contributes to projects successful completion, ensures stakeholders and customers trust in the deliverables and ensures smooth transition in an organization to the next project. David Hillson (2009), states that continuous risk management throughout the project, guarantees improvement in the project performance. Continuous risk management includes consistent thinking of risks, identifying, planning and mitigating the risks until the very end of the project leads a project to success.

## **4. Conclusion**

All phases of the projects are exposed to risks, facilitating the necessity to think, preplan, and mitigate risks. The ability to Foresee these risks throughout the project lifecycle becomes a crucial and an effective element in project management, which enhances the project success and overall organizational resilience in risk management. The anticipation of potential risks not only prepares the team and organization to face the risks, but also supports in informed decision making. The informed decision-making process in return benefits the completion of project in time, within the estimated budget, and pre-defined standard quality. As Cooper et al. (2005) emphasize, systematically identifying and addressing risks not only reduces failures but also strengthens project performance. Through this continuous focus on risk, project managers enable both strategic foresight and practical readiness, promoting a resilient and adaptable project environment and ultimately can result in project success.

## 5. References

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