**Estates projects - process checklist**

Projects on your estate will vary in size, complexity and cost. You should read the full guidance in good estate management for schools (GEMS) on estate projects to understand the principles and process of identifying, planning and delivering projects on the estate.

The purpose of this process checklist is to help you ensure you are aware of and consider key issues throughout the project process. You should use a consistent approach for all projects.

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) [Plan of Work 2020](https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/riba-plan-of-work) defines the lifecycle of a project through 8 stages. This checklist does not replicate these 8 stages, but is focused on helping you understand the practical issues and how to get the early stages right.

**The role of the client**

Every project must have a client to commission the works. Anyone having maintenance, small-scale building work or other construction work carried out is a client. Even if you are not an expert in construction work, as a client in a school project you have legal duties under the [Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg411.pdf). You must make sure you understand these responsibilities before commissioning any works.

For larger or more complex projects you may need to create a client team and use specialist advice to help your strategic thinking.

Step 1

**Be clear about the purpose and priority of the project**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Consider | Yes | No |
| Are you clear what the purpose of the project is? |  |  |
| Have you prepared a business case and strategic brief? |  |  |
| Does this align with the project budget? |  |  |
| Has the project been prioritised using a transparent process? |  |  |
| Do you have the necessary approvals to start the project? |  |  |
| Have you considered the skills and resources required for the project? |  |  |

Step 2

**Prepare the project brief and consider options**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Consider | Yes | No |
| Do you have the right skills and time to develop the brief and take on client responsibilities? |  |  |
| Do you need specialist advice to develop the brief? |  |  |
| Do you have sufficient information to inform the project such as site information, surveys, what the budget is and any time constraints? |  |  |
| Have you considered spatial requirements using [space standards guidance](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/area-guidelines-and-net-capacity)? |  |  |
| Have different options been identified to meet the requirements, such as internal redesign, refurbishment, extension or new build? |  |  |
| Have you considered whole life issues as part of the option appraisal process? |  |  |

Step 3

**Understand the roles and responsibilities**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Consider | Yes | No |
| Do you understand your legal responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015? |  |  |
| Do you understand the legal, safety and procedural responsibilities associated with the project? |  |  |
| Do you understand the risks associated with the project - have you considered potential risks associated with asbestos, fire safety and the safety of children, staff and contractors during construction? |  |  |
| Do you have the right skills and resources to meet your responsibilities within the project? |  |  |

Step 4

**Have the right skills to develop the design**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Consider | Yes | No |
| Have you taken procurement advice and are you clear on the best procurement route to deliver the project? |  |  |
| Have you appointed the right specialists to form the project team? |  |  |
| Are all members of the project team clear of their roles and responsibilities? |  |  |
| Have you established formal project management processes with clear project stages requiring sign off? |  |  |

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| Step 5  **Prepare for project delivery and manage the contract** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Consider | Yes | No |
| Do you have a clear project plan, including understanding and planning for implications to school operation? |  |  |
| Do you have robust contract management and financial management systems? |  |  |
| Do you have the right skills in place and necessary resources to undertake the project and contract management role? |  |  |

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| Step 6  **Prepared for project handover and project review** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Consider | Yes | No |
| Do you have a handover strategy that is agreed with the contractor and includes documentation such as a certificate of practical completion and an operations and maintenance manual (O&M)? |  |  |
| Do you understand the handover process and do you need to provide training for staff? |  |  |
| Do you need to update your fire safety plan or other statutory testing/inspection schedules? |  |  |
| Have you updated your maintenance plan? |  |  |
| Have you scheduled a formal post project review and a process to share the learning for future projects? |  |  |
| Have you considered the impact on the school operation of the handover – have you allowed enough time for fitting out the space ready to use? |  |  |