**What are the main processes in project quality management?**

The three main processes of project quality management are planning, managing, and controlling.

Planning is the first step in project quality management. Effective planning ensures the right measures will be in place for driving quality driven results. Knowing which parts of a project are likely to have the greatest influence on a project is very important. One useful approach is Design of Experiments (DoE), a branch of applied statistics that finds which variables most affect the outcome of a system. Some key scope aspects of an IT project that must have their quality assured are the project’s functionality, features, system outputs, performance, reliability, and maintainability. While all project stakeholders should strive for quality, managers are ultimately responsible for overseeing quality management and ensuring results.

Managing quality has to do with effectively carrying out plans and taking actions to uphold established standards. Some key terms in quality management include:

* Quality assurance is a term used to describe the pursuit and satisfaction of quality standards.
* KAI-ZEN is a Japanese word of Chinese roots (change + good), meaning improvement, or change for the better. This term has been popularized in some business circles and refers to a philosophy of always striving to reach a high level of quality and performance.
* Lean, another popular term, is a reference to minimizing waste without affecting performance and quality metrics.
* Benchmarking compares internal processes or projects to those outside to look for differences.
* A quality audit is a thorough review of quality management processes.

Controlling quality (quality control) involves acceptance decisions, rework, and workflow adjustments. Acceptance decisions determine whether a piece of work is of sufficient quality. If it is not, it must be reworked. Rework is doing something over again to bring it up to the proper quality expectations. Workflow adjustments are meant to control quality results at a higher level over a sustained period of time.

A lot of these things are just common sense –sometimes there is a bit of overcomplexifying going on- but it is definitely good to stop and think about it. The bottom line is that there has to be someone watching over quality, who knows what quality should like look like, and can find out what can be done to get to that level of quality, as well as how to communicate that to others and achieve results in practice. Quality is what makes a project stand out, and progress can get stilted or even go backwards without proper quality assurance practices.