Scotland’s Digital Future – Delivery of Public Services

ICT Assurance Framework



Central Government ICT Assurance Framework

Version 2

**Contents**

[*Introduction* 3](#_Toc415563778)

[*Purpose and scope* 3](#_Toc415563779)

[*The Assurance Framework* 3](#_Toc415563780)

[Definitions 3](#_Toc415563781)

[Assurance 4](#_Toc415563782)

[Support 4](#_Toc415563783)

[Strategic alignment 4](#_Toc415563784)

[Process Alignment 4](#_Toc415563785)

[Governance 5](#_Toc415563786)

[Contacts 5](#_Toc415563787)

[*Process* 6](#_Toc415563788)

[ICT Investment Outline Plans 6](#_Toc415563789)

[ICT Investment Plan Checklist 7](#_Toc415563790)

[Escalation Route 7](#_Toc415563791)

[Lessons learned 7](#_Toc415563792)

[Investment equal to and under £1m 8](#_Toc415563793)

[Investment over £1m but under £5m 9](#_Toc415563794)

[Investment equal to and over £5m 10](#_Toc415563795)

[ICT Assurance Framework Process Diagram 11](#_Toc415563796)

[Request, Submission and Initial Assessment Process Diagram 11](#_Toc415563797)

[Investment equal to or under £1m Process Diagram 12](#_Toc415563798)

[Investment over £1m but under £5m Process Diagram 13](#_Toc415563799)

[Investments equal to or over £5m Process Diagram 14](#_Toc415563800)

[Central Government Organisations Annex A 15](#_Toc415563801)

[ICT Investment Plans Checklist Template Annex B 17](#_Toc415563802)

[Approvals and Assurance Plan Template Annex C 22](#_Toc415563803)

[Risk Potential Assessment Form (Stage 1) Annex D 23](#_Toc415563804)

[Risk Potential Assessment Form (Stage 2) Annex E 25](#_Toc415563805)

# *Introduction*

1. This assurance framework is designed to support the assurance and effective delivery of ICT enabled programmes and projects across central government. The initial version of the framework, and its associated checklist, was developed in 2012. It incorporated many of the Scottish Government responses to recommendations in the Audit Scotland Report *Managing ICT contracts: An audit of three public sector programmes* intended to support scrutiny and challenge in relation to the management of ICT programmes.
2. This updated version of the framework reflects feedback from those organisations, programmes and projects who have made use of the framework and is intended to clarify and simplify processes.
3. There are 2 main elements to the framework:
   1. The collection and analysis of information on central government ICT investment plans, programmes and projects;
   2. The use of common processes, utilising good practice and lessons learned, to support the assurance of central government ICT programmes and projects.

# *Purpose and scope*

1. The purpose of this Framework is to:

* support Senior Responsible Owners (SROs) and Accountable Officers (AOs) in assuring the delivery of projects and programmes involving substantial investment in ICT;
* support SROs in identifying and accessing the support required to achieve successful delivery of their projects and programmes;
* assist the central government sector in ensuring that proposed investments are aligned with [Scotland’s Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/09/6272); including identifying of opportunities for collaboration and shared services; and
* provide an overview of the investment in, and management of, ICT of central government programmes and projects and any actions needed to ensure successful delivery.

1. The ICT Assurance Framework applies to all Central Government Organisations in Scotland ([Annex A](#_Central_Government_Organisations)) under the jurisdiction of Scottish Ministers or responsible to the Scottish Parliament. The framework does not extend to organisations that are covered by their own Sectoral Strategies and Governance such as eHealth.

# *The Assurance Framework*

## Definitions

1. When the Framework refers to a programme or a project, it is based on the following definitions of those entities:

* A programme is a collection of initiatives and projects that are designed to accomplish a strategic business objective.
* A project is a planned set of interrelated tasks to be executed over a fixed period and within a certain cost and other limitations. It is not a routine, business as usual operation, but a specific set of operations designed to accomplish a defined output and deliverable.

## Assurance

1. The responsibility for ensuring a project or programme is delivered successfully remains with the SRO and AO. The ICT Assurance Framework provides support by:

* Delivering an initial assessment of investment plans to determine:
  + potential risk based on cost, supply environment, timescale and capability and capacity to deliver
  + opportunities for collaboration
  + strategic alignment and opportunities to benefit from national assets and projects (e.g. myaccount, mygov.scot and SWAN)
* Requiring programmes and projects to complete a checklist (intended to highlight any issues for the attention of organisations or independent assurance processes);
* Signposting the level of independent review expected for project and programmes;
* Providing a checklist review (for those programmes and projects not utilising the Gateway Review process);
* Offering assistance in accessing additional support;
* Facilitating access to ICT technical experts to carry out assurance of technical plans and proposals; and
* Providing a governance and escalation route to assist in ensuring issues identified can be addressed.

## Support

1. Use of the Assurance Framework may identify additional support requirements that Central Government Organisations need to successfully deliver their programmes and projects. Assistance will be provided in identifying and obtaining resources. This include access to sources for:

* Project and Programme Managers and Staff to supplement organisations’ resources
* Expert resources in ICT
* Peer reviewers to carry out assurance of technical plans and proposals
* Procurement and Contract Management support
* Legal support

## Strategic alignment

1. Adherence to the Assurance Framework will:

* Provide a view of the totality of investment across Central Government.
* Assist in ensuring that options to reuse existing assets, and to share services or collaborate with other organisations have been considered
* Support progress towards delivery of Scotland’s Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services
* Increase stakeholder’s confidence that projects, programmes and portfolios can achieve their scope, time, cost and quality objectives, and realise their benefits.

## Process Alignment

1. These framework processes are aligned with the Scottish Government’s Programme and Project Management Centre of Expertise (PPM CoE) [Independent Assurance](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/ProgrammeProjectDelivery/IAOverview) processes and in particular the Gateway process.
2. The processes are also aligned with the [Major Investment Projects](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Finance/spfm/majinvest) section of the Scottish Public Finance Manual.

## Governance

1. The role of the Scottish Government’s Information Systems Investment Board (ISIB) is to oversee alignment, assurance and support in relation to the deployment of information systems, the development and implementation of digital public services; and the wider use of information technologies across the central government sector, whatever the arrangements for funding or delivery.
2. ISIB works with the central government sector to provide assurance that investment decisions are aligned and consistent with the national and central government Digital Public Services (DPS) strategies, and that appropriate governance and assurance mechanisms are in place to ensure value for money and successful delivery.
3. ISIB’s role is to support the SRO or AO, for programmes and projects with a significant ICT element, in determining whether processes and resources are in place to support successful management – and to consider whether formal independent assurance is needed. In undertaking this assurance role ISIB may recommend to an organisation, SRO, or accountable officer further action and challenge. or discuss whether additional support is required.
4. ISIB will advise the central government sectoral board, the Strategic Corporate Services Board (SCSB), which will, where necessary, provide further challenge and escalate any non-compliance or failure to address risk related recommendations to the relevant accountable officer and, as appropriate to Ministers.
5. Membership of the Strategic Corporate Services Board is drawn from Agencies and Executive NDPBs and key policy areas of the Scottish Government including finance, procurement, shared services, public service reform and digital public services. The Board is responsible for identifying and delivering a range of projects to reduce costs and protect service quality with specific responsibility for creating and expanding opportunities for sharing of corporate services within the central government sector and implementing for central government the priorities set out in Scotland’s Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services.

## Contacts

1. Please direct all enquiries to:

Digital Directorate – Office of the CIO

Email: OCIOAssurance@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

# *Process*

## ICT Investment Outline Plans

1. Requests will be made quarterly, by the Scottish Government’s Digital Directorate for outline information on planned new investments in ICT updates to previously reported investments.
2. It is the responsibility of the Accountable Officer to ensure that all proposed investments should be reported, even those at policy formulation stage.
3. The Directorate (in its role of supporting ISIB) will examine plans to :

* identify and communicate opportunities for collaboration
* identify and communicate opportunities for strategic alignment
* determine potential risk, based on full lifecycle costs, supply environment, timescale, capability and capacity to deliver.

Registering a possible investment at its embryonic idea stage will optimise the chance of identifying common themes and encouraging collaboration and alignment – local and strategic.

1. An initial assessment of the investment plans will be completed by the Digital Directorate to determine if there is a need to further engage with organisations. This assessment will look at the initial set of information provided and consider 3 key criteria:

* the overall funds required to deliver on the full lifecycle costs of the project and whether this is realistic and proportionate to the proposed investment.
* based on the size and scale of the organisation the potential capacity and capability to deliver on the proposed investment.
* based on the timescales proposed is there likely to be potential challenges or issues with the delivery of the investment.

1. If the full lifecycle costs[[1]](#footnote-1) of a project or programme are clearly defined and there is capacity and capability to deliver and the timescales appear realistic, it will be rated **GREEN** and ISIB will not anticipate further engagement. If there is doubt over one of these criteria, it will be rated **AMBER** and if there is doubt over two or more of the criteria it will be rated **RED**.
2. For Amber and Red projects or programmes, ISIB will wish to know that at a minimum, the assurance processes set out below are being pursued. These processes are intended to be proportionate to the scale of the investment and have been banded for:

* Investments under £1m
* Investments between £1m and £5m
* Investments over £5m

## ICT Investment Plan Checklist

1. All projects are expected to use the Investment Plan Checklist ([see Annex B](#_Annex_B_ICT)). This asks a number of key questions to be considered during a project or programme based on Audit Scotland and other good practice checklists. It covers a wide range of considerations including governance, business alignment, funding and change control as well as the organisations capacity and capability to deliver.
2. It is highly recommended that the checklist be used by AOs, SROs, Boards and especially Project and Programme managers to support them in effective exercise of their roles. The checklist is designed to be used at key points throughout the project lifecycle - not just once - as not all questions will be able to be answered at inception. Independent reviewers are also likely to find the information from a completed checklist useful input to their reviews.
3. In addition to the checklist, organisations may find it helpful to draw on the Approvals and Assurance Plan template ([see Annex C](#_Approvals_and_Assurance)) which aims to help SRO’s and AO’s plan assurance and keep track of the different forms of approvals that may be a factor in the lifecycle of the project. This can be particularly useful in setting out arrangements for internal and independent assurance to ensure approvals and assurance are working together to deliver a successful projects.

## Escalation Route

1. The Digital Directorate, on behalf of ISIB, will provide regular assurance reports to the Strategic Corporate Services Board (SCSB). If there are any issues that need to be escalated, SCSB will be notified along with Director Generals and Accountable Officers with a view to ensuring resolution through engagement at this level.

## Lessons learned

1. Lessons learned workshops will be held annually with Project and Programme Managers invited to provide their input and feedback to inform a lessons learned report that can support central government SRO’s in delivering their projects. The lessons learned workshops will be aligned with the Scottish Government’s Programme and Project Principles.
2. In addition, the ICT Assurance Framework and processes will be kept under review and feedback sought to ensure we can continually improve the framework and add value.

## Investment equal to and under £1m

1. For all investments under £1m that have been rated **AMBER** or **RED** in the Digital Directorate’s initial assessment, the Project or Programme Manager must complete and continue to keep under review the ICT Investment Plan Checklist.
2. The Project or Programme Manager must be in the position to submit the checklist and supporting documentation, if requested by the Digital Directorate. It is important that as much as possible of a checklist is completed early in a project lifecycle before significant resources are committed. This means supporting documentation would, at a minimum, consist of an outline Business Case. Where necessary Digital Directorate will provide support to the SRO or AO in obtaining suitable assurance of the technical solution.
3. Assurance of the proposed technical solution may be part of a gateway review or be a stand-alone review and is required for all projects rated **AMBER** and **RED**. This ensures that the technical solution is fit for purpose, meets the business need of the organisation and fits with the ambitions of Scotland’s Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services. In looking at alignment with the national and sectoral digital strategies considerations such as re-use (and not duplicating national or other solutions already available), shared services and a high emphasis on interoperability, open standards and sustainability will feature.
4. Timing of any specific technical review will be dependent on the type of project. If there is to be a procurement exercise then a technical review may take place: before procurement commences (to assure the specification to suppliers); following receipt of supplier proposals or at preferred bidder stage. All reviews would be prior to the award of contract and before any work order is placed with a supplier or delivery partner. Where a procurement exercise is not involved a technical review is still required; this is the case where a strategic partnering arrangement is in place or for an internal build / agile development.
5. Please direct all enquiries on investment under £1m to:

Digital Directorate – Office of the CIO

Email: OCIOAssurance@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

## Investment over £1m but under £5m

1. For all investments equal to and over £1m but under £5m, the Project or Programme Manager must complete and continue to keep under review the ICT Investment Plan Checklist.
2. The Project or Programme Manager should submit completed ICT Investment Plan Checklists and supporting documentation to the Digital Directorate. It is important that as much as possible of a checklist is completed early in a project lifecycle before significant resources are committed. This means supporting documentation would, at a minimum, consist of an outline Business Case.
3. The checklist and documentation will be reviewed on behalf of ISIB; with comments offered to the organisation and a report provided to ISIB. The objective is to support the SRO in determining whether processes and resources are in place for successful management and to consider whether formal independent assurance is needed. On occasion, organisations may be asked to brief ISIB more fully to enable discussion, challenge and consider if additional support is required. ISIB’s role is not to approve a business case.
4. The Office of the Chief Information Officer will liaise with the Project or Programme Manager and PPM CoE to ensure that the appropriate assurance is in place. Depending on the complexity and risks associated with the programme or project some will meet the standard criteria for the Gateway review process whilst others may require a series of Health checks or a Technical review.
5. Assurance of the proposed technical solution may be part of a gateway review or be a stand-alone review and is required for all projects rated **AMBER** and **RED**. This ensures that the technical solution is fit for purpose, meets the business need of the organisation and fits with the ambitions of Scotland’s Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services. In looking at alignment with the national and sectoral digital strategies considerations such as re-use (and not duplicating national or other solutions already available), shared services, and a high emphasis on interoperability, open standards and sustainability will feature.
6. Timing of any specific technical review will be dependent on the type of project. If there is to be a procurement exercise then a technical review may take place: before procurement commences (to assure the specification to suppliers); following receipt of supplier proposals or at preferred bidder stage. All reviews would be prior to the award of contract and before any work order is placed with a supplier or delivery partner. Where a procurement exercise is not involved a technical review is still required; this is the case where a strategic partnering arrangement is in place or for an internal build / agile development.
7. The Office of the Chief Information Officer will also liaise with the PPM CoE in relation to any relevant gateway reports where appropriate in order that ISIB may assist in projects gaining access to additional support as required.
8. Please direct all enquiries on investment over £1m but under £5m to:

Digital Directorate – Office of the CIO

Email: OCIOAssurance@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

## Investment equal to and over £5m

1. For all Investments over £5m, the ICT Assurance Framework adopts and aligns with the procedures of the Programme and Project Management Centre of Expertise. The SRO or AO should complete a [Risk Potential Assessment](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/ProgrammeProjectDelivery/Template/IATemplates/RPA) form in order to assess the Independent Assurance needs of the project. Independent reviewers are likely to find completed checklists a helpful input to their assurance and therefore a completed ICT Investment Plan Checklist will be expected by them.
2. Assurance of the proposed technical solution may be part of a gateway review or be a stand-alone review and is required for all projects rated **AMBER** and **RED**. This ensures that the technical solution is fit for purpose, meets the business need of the organisation and fits with the ambitions of Scotland’s Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services. In looking at alignment with the national and sectoral digital strategies considerations such as re-use (and not duplicating national or other solutions already available), shared services, and a high emphasis on interoperability, open standards and sustainability will feature.
3. The timing of any specific technical review should align with the Gateway process (if being used) and will be dependent on the type of project. If there is to be a procurement exercise then a technical review may take place: before procurement commences (to assure the specification to suppliers); following receipt of supplier proposals or at preferred bidder stage. All reviews would be prior to the award of contract and before any work order is placed with a supplier or delivery partner. Where a procurement exercise is not involved a technical review is still required; this is the case where a strategic partnering arrangement is in place or for an internal build / agile development.
4. The Office of the Chief Information Officer will also liaise with the PPM CoE in relation to any relevant gateway reports where appropriate in order that ISIB may assist in projects gaining access to additional support as required.
5. Please direct all enquiries on investment over £5m to:

Digital Directorate – Office of the CIO

Email: OCIOAssurance@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

## ICT Assurance Framework Process Diagram

The ICT Assurance Framework has a number of processes some of which are illustrated below

### Request, Submission and Initial Assessment Process Diagram



### Investment equal to or under £1m Process Diagram



## 

### Investment over £1m but under £5m Process Diagram



## 

### Investments equal to or over £5m Process Diagram



# Central Government Organisations Annex A

**Executive Agencies (8)**

Accountant in Bankruptcy

Disclosure Scotland

Education Scotland

Historic Scotland

Scottish Prison Service

Scottish Public Pensions Agency

Student Awards Agency for Scotland

Transport Scotland

**Non Ministerial Departments (NMDs) (7)**

Food Standards Scotland

National Records of Scotland

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator

Registers of Scotland

Revenue Scotland

Scottish Court Service

Scottish Housing Regulator

**Public Corporations (6)**

Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd

David MacBrayne Ltd

Glasgow Prestwick Airport

Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd

Scottish Canals

Scottish Water

**Executive NDPBs (34)**

Accounts Commission for Scotland

Architecture and Design Scotland

Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Cairngorms National Park Authority

Care Inspectorate

Children’s Hearings Scotland

Creative Scotland

Crofting Commission

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority

National Galleries of Scotland

National Library of Scotland

National Museums of Scotland

Police Investigations and Review Commissioner

Quality Meat Scotland

Risk Management Authority

Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

Scottish Agricultural Wages Board

Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration

Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission

Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Scottish Funding Council

Scottish Futures Trust

Scottish Legal Aid Board

Scottish Legal Complaints Commission

Scottish Natural Heritage

Scottish Qualifications Authority

Scottish Social Services Council

Skills Development Scotland

Sportscotland

VisitScotland

Water Industry Commission for Scotland

**Advisory NDPBs (6)**

Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland

Scottish Advisory Committee on Distinction Awards

Scottish Law Commission

Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee

**Tribunals (6)**

Additional Support Needs Tribunals for Scotland

Lands Tribunal for Scotland

Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland

Parole Board for Scotland

Private Rented Housing Panel/Homeowners Housing Panel

Scottish Charity Appeals Panel

**Parliamentary Commissioners and Ombudsmen (6)**

Commission for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland

Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People

Scottish Human Rights Commission

Scottish Information Commissioner

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Standards Commission for Scotland

**Other Significant Bodies (22)**

Audit Scotland

Court of Lord Lyon

\*Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

Drinking Water Quality Regulator

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons in Scotland

HM Chief Inspector of Prosecution in Scotland

James Hutton Institute

Justices of the Peace Advisory Committee (*6 bodies*)

Moredun Research Institute

Office of the Queens Printer for Scotland

Scottish Agricultural College

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

\*Scottish Government

Scottish Police Authority (with responsibility for assurance process for Police Scotland)

Scottish Roadworks Commissioner

Visiting Committees for Scottish Penal Establishments

**TOTAL: 95**

# ICT Investment Plans Checklist Template Annex B

|  | **Key Questions** | **Comments notes (Keep brief when providing supporting documentation)** | **Supporting Documentation** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outline Business Case** | Why does anything need to be done? |  |  |
| What contribution is the proposed ICT work going to make to what needs to be done? |  |  |
| Is there already a pre-existing contractual or legal obligation (including forthcoming e.g. European Directive requirements) which will require this project to go ahead |  |  |
| Is there a clear understanding of what is needed, that it is deliverable and how much it will cost? |  |  |
| What are the full lifecycle costs of this investment? (This should include the direct investment costs, any other costs associated with implementation and the work required to deliver the identified benefit(s) as well as on-going support/maintenance costs). There is guidance in the Scottish Public Finance Manual and the good practice guide to developing HMT green book business case to ensure all costs are fully covered. |  |  |
| What is the source for each of the identified costs and has agreement been reached that these funds will be deployed?  If not, can the scope be reduced or delivery extended over a longer period of time; or funding sought from other sources? |  |  |
| Is the investment part of a larger programme e.g. is this phase 1 or a pilot? |  |  |
| Has full consideration been given to participating in a shared service/collaborative approach? (This should be explicitly addressed in the options appraisal as an alternative to a standalone solution) |  |  |
| Have a wide range of options been explored, including innovation and/or collaboration with others? |  |  |
| How does the proposed work contribute to Ministerial priorities and link with the Government’s overall purpose and key outcome indicators? |  |  |
| Is the proposed work aligned with the national and central government DPS strategies and in particular the actions set out under one or more of the 4 key themes i.e.   * Citizen Focus * Effective management of data * Skilled and Empowered Workforce * Collaboration and Value for Money |  |  |
| **Full Business Case** | What is the procurement strategy for this investment? To include:   * + Go to market approach / route and timeline   + Assessment of supply risk   + Roles and responsibilities (buy-side as well as supply-side)   + Transition plan (where an existing supplier in situ)   + Contract – term, KPIs, IPR, specific remedies, pay mechanism, provision for training/documentation, exit plan |  |  |
| Have clear objectives been set for the project and are they aligned to overall (business) strategy? |  |  |
| Is the proposed work aligned with the National Technical and Design standards in the [High-Level Operating Framework](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/02/8258)? |  |  |
| Are processes in place to manage data security during migration and post migration? |  |  |
| Are appropriate stakeholders engaged with the business case and are their views taken into account? |  |  |
| Can this project be achieved with the organisation’s current capability and capacity (considering other projects with a high priority that must be delivered at the same time)? |  |  |
| Has the body implemented an effective governance structure at both strategic and operational level?   * Are roles and responsibilities clearly set out and understood? * Has an escalation process been agreed?   Is there an agreement to include independent review and challenge at appropriate points? |  |  |
| Has the body completed a skills assessment to ensure its role as an Intelligent Client and mitigated any risks arising from this assessment?  Has it considered skills across different areas, including technical, commercial and programme management? |  |  |
| Does the senior responsible officer (SRO) have the ability, responsibility and authority to ensure that business change and benefits are delivered? |  |  |
| How will the project be reviewed to ensure proper project governance e.g. Gateway / Key Stage Review/ technical review? |  |  |
| Are there effective change control procedures in place, across the project e.g. scope, technical, contractual etc.?  Is there clear accountability for changes? |  |  |
| Is there an understanding of the cultural implications of the contract and the potential need to adapt the current organisational culture depending on the contract nature (e.g. partnership)?   * Is the body realistic about its ability to manage change? * Has the public body adequately planned and phased the implementation of the project output? * Are timescales broken down across key stages and take account of deliverability considerations/risks e.g. statutory processes required / market capacity / key dependencies? |  |  |
| **Pre-contract / Technical** | Has the public body followed an established project management framework?   * Is there a detailed project plan covering the whole period? * Have critical dependencies been identified? * Have realistic timescales been set? * Have roles and responsibilities been clearly defined in the project/contract management team? |  |  |
| Are there appropriate plans in place to manage the end of the contract, i.e. further tender process/ transfer of knowledge and skills? |  |  |
| Has a formal project review been planned and are there clear processes for disseminating ‘lessons learned’? |  |  |

# Approvals and Assurance Plan Template Annex C





# Risk Potential Assessment Form (Stage 1) Annex D

**STAGE 1**

**RISK POTENTIAL ASSESSMENT**

|  |
| --- |
| **Introduction** |
| You should use this form, at the earliest opportunity, to make a simple assessment of how complex or strategically important your policy, programme or project might be, and to identify whether it should be supported by the Scottish Government’s Independent Assurance Review process. |

|  |
| --- |
| **How to complete this form** |
| Record the Policy, Programme or Project name etc in Section A. Consider each Section (B to D) and place ‘x’ in one of the five columns (very low to very high) to indicate the level of Change, Impact and Budget associated with the policy, programme or project.  In Section E record the sum of the numbers awarded in each of the columns from Sections B to D. Section F indicates the action you should take given the sum recorded in Section E.  Section G should be signed by the Senior Policy Owner (SPO) or the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) and counter-signed by the individual within the organisation to whom they report on Policy, Programme or Project progress. This provides an audit and demonstrates that the potential risk associated with a policy, programme or project has been considered. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section A – Policy, Programme or Project Details** | |
| Policy, Programme or Project Name |  |
| SPO/SRO |  |
| Organisation Responsible for Delivery |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section B – Likelihood of Change** | | | | | | |
| How likely is it that the programme or project’s ability to deliver to time, cost and quality will be compromised? | | | | | | |
|  | Very Low | Low | Med | High | Very High |  |
| The policy, programme or project is well scoped. Objectives or Outcomes are clearly defined and should not change. The necessary resourcing and finance have been approved. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | The policy, programme or project will be subject to changing demands and pressures. There are significant external pressures on the programme or project. |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section C – Scale of Impact** | | | | | | |
| If the policy, programme or project fails to deliver its outcome or objectives, how severe would be the impact? | | | | | | |
|  | Very Low | Low | Med | High | Very High |  |
| Policy, programme or project failure is unlikely to be noticed. Current arrangements could continue to serve business requirements, though some minor changes may be needed. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Policy, programme or project failure would have significant organisational or political consequences. |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section D – Policy, Programme or Project Budget** | | | | |
| How much is the projected budget for the Policy, Programme or Project? Take into account whole-life costs (as defined by HM Treasury Green Book and referenced in Scottish Government guidance contained in e.g. The Scottish Public Finance Manual, The Scottish Government’s Procurement Policy Handbook, The Scottish Government’s Construction Procurement Manual and the Scottish Government’s Health Capital Investment Manual. Other guidance may be applicable in other areas of the Scottish public Sector). | | | | |
| Up to £5M | £5M to £20M | £20M to £50M | £50M to £100M | £100M and above |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section E – Calculating the Policy, Programme or Project’s - RPA** | |
| Insert, in the box to the right, the sum of the numbers in each of the columns from Sections B to D in which you placed your ‘x’. | sum |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section F – What to do next** | | |
| Total Score (Sum) | Risk Potential | **ACTION** |
| 3 to 6 | **Low** | The policy, programme or project does not appear to merit Scottish Government Independent Assurance Review support. The SPO/SRO should ensure that the policy, programme or project conduct regular self-assessments to ensure that it is on track to successfully deliver its outcomes or objectives. |
| 7 to 15 | **Medium**  **or**  **High** | A Stage 2 - Risk Potential Assessment form (RPA-2) should be completed to determine whether the policy, programme or project must be supported by the Scottish Government’s Independent Assurance Review process. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section G – Assessment** | |
| I am satisfied that the initial Risk Potential Assessment provides an accurate reflection of the policy, programme or project at this stage of development. I will re-asses the policy, programme or project if there is a significant change to the programme or project scope or budget or if significant changes emerge that may threaten successful delivery. | |
| Signed…………………………………………………………………….  (Senior Policy Owner/ Senior Responsible Owner) | Date………………………. |
| I am satisfied that the SPO/SRO’s assessment of the policy, programme or project, as recorded above, is an accurate reflection of the risk potential at this stage of development. | |
| Signed…………………………………………………………………….  (Policy/ Programme/ Project Countersigning Manager) | Date………………………. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Filing / Recording Arrangements** |
| * Retain a copy of this completed and signed form with the official record for the programme or project. |

# Risk Potential Assessment Form (Stage 2) Annex E

**STAGE 2**

**RISK POTENTIAL ASSESSMENT**

|  |
| --- |
| **Introduction** |
| This form helps determine whether a policy/programme/project should have Scottish Government Independent Assurance Review support. ***(You must complete this form if you completed a Stage 1 form and it indicated the policy, programme/project is potentially Medium or High Risk*).** Section E explains how to complete this form and gives a guide on any acronyms used. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section A – Policy/Programme/Project Details** | |
| 1. Is this a Policy, Programme or a Project? |  |
| 2. Policy/Programme/Project Name | *(Also note previous name if it has changed since last review)* |
| 3. Policy/Programme/Project type | *(see section E.5 for guidance on programme and project descriptors)* |
| 4. The name of the Scottish Public Sector organisation responsible for the Policy /Programme/Project’s delivery. |  |
| 5. Lead SG Directorate, or Sponsor Division if the delivery organisation (at 4 above) is an SG NDPB or other sponsored body. |  |
| 6. Contact details  SPO – for policy  SRO – programme or project | Name:  Tel No:  Email (if not on SCOTS): |
| 7. Policy /Programme/Project Manager details  *(If appointed)* | Name:  Tel No:  Email (if not on SCOTS): |
| 9. If a Policy:- name of overarching programme and/ or list of key projects  If a programme: - list the key projects within the programme.  If a project:- name of the overarching programme |  |
| 10. Estimated delivery cost and whole-life operational cost of the Policy Initiative (if known at this stage) or Programme/Project. | Delivery Cost £  Whole Life Operational Cost £ |
| 11. Overall RPA-2 assessment *(Derived from Section D)* | Low / Medium / High\*  *(\* delete as appropriate)* |
| 12. If a programme/project was a Starting Gate Review conducted on the policy development stage? (Yes / No) |  |
| 13. RPA-2 Completed By | Name Date: |
| 14. RPA-2 Approved By (SPO/SRO). | Name: Date: |
| 15. **Background and information on the policy/initiative/programme or project to support the Overall Complexity Assessment** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section B – Consequential Impact Assessment**  If we fail to deliver this policy, programme or project: | | | | | | | |
| **Strategic Area** |  | VL | L | M | H | VH |  |
| B1  **Political** | There will be no political impact. |  |  |  |  |  | A major policy initiative or manifesto commitment will be affected. Audit Scotland and the Parliament’s Public Audit Committee have a strong interest in this change initiative. |
| B2  **Public** | Public services will not be impacted. It will not stimulate interest from public pressure groups. |  |  |  |  |  | Public services will be affected and there will be significant interest from the media and key stakeholder interests. |
| B3  **Financial** | There will be little or no exposure of public funds or additional financial burden. |  |  |  |  |  | There will be very significant financial exposure of public funds, or an additional financial burden. |
| B4  **Security** | There will be no security or public data handling implications. |  |  |  |  |  | Significant national security or public data handling issues or requirements will have to be addressed. |
| B5  **Business / Operational / Commercial** | There will be limited impact on the organisation’s administration, operations or staff and no changes to regulatory requirements. |  |  |  |  |  | High profile business problem will remain unaddressed. There will be significant impact on the organisation or commercial markets placing additional regulatory burdens on them. Essential legislative requirements would not be met. |
| B6  **Dependencies** | There will be no impact on the successful delivery of any other policy, programme or project. |  |  |  |  |  | It will have a significant impact on other policy, programmes or projects, some of which are totally dependent on this policy, programme or project for their successful delivery. (Ensure you list these, as appropriate, at A9). |
|  |  | **VL** | **L** | **M** | **H** | **VH** |  |
| **B7**  **Summary assessment** | **Failure to deliver this policy, programme or project will have little or no impact on the delivery of public services or infrastructure. It will not undermine the Government’s ambition for Scotland. It will not impede the delivery of other policy, programmes and projects. Failure to deliver will not leave public finances over-exposed.** |  |  |  |  |  | **Failure to deliver this policy, programme or project will have a significant impact on the delivery of public services or infrastructure. It will undermine confidence in the Government’s ability to deliver on key commitments. It will have a high and detrimental impact on Scotland. It will have consequential impacts on the delivery of other key policy initiatives, programmes and projects and will leave public finances exposed or over-committed.** |

**[Note: Record summary assessment mark at B.7 at Section D below]**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section C1 – Delivery Complexity Assessment**  The policy, programme or project is delivering in an environment where | | | | | | | |
|  |  | VL | L | M | H | VH |  |
| C1.1  **Policy / Legislation** | Policy and legal implications are fully understood. There are accepted precedents for any changes that need to be made. |  |  |  |  |  | Policy and legal implications are complex or involve cross-border jurisdictions. Legislative or cross-organisational policy is unclear or subject to change and legal challenge to its implementation is likely. |
| C1.2  **Business.** | The business environment is stable, no significant changes are envisaged. Objectives are easily defined and measured. |  |  |  |  |  | There is a complex and changing business environment that is dependent on broader change initiatives. There are extensive changes to business operations. |
| C1.3  **Innovation** | The technologies and techniques are proven for the environment and require little if any adaptation. |  |  |  |  |  | Leading edge, novel or innovative technology or techniques will be introduced involving a high degree of design, build or implementation complexity. |
| C1.4  **Commercial** | Established contracts will be used. There will be a single supplier or short supply chain. |  |  |  |  |  | There will be complex or innovative commercial arrangements. The supplier market is limited and/or very specialist. There will be multiple suppliers or complex/volatile supply chain. |
| C1.5  **Governance** | A simple and stable governance structure and appropriately scaled PPM will support delivery. The key post holders are easily identified and will remain in post. |  |  |  |  |  | A complex or multi-faceted governance or management structure will be required. Delivery partners may deploy their own methodologies. The governance and management structures will need to change during the life of the policy; programme or project and key post-holders are likely to change. |
| C1.6  **Dependencies** | There are few dependencies on other policy, programmes or projects. |  |  |  |  |  | There are complex dependency relationships with other policy programmes, projects or organisations. The planning consent process will be complex and may, for example, require careful management of architectural, historical or environmental issues. |
| C1.8  **Delivery Approach and Co-ordination** | There is a co-located policy, programme or project and supplier team operating. The transition from the existing to future state will be simple. |  |  |  |  |  | There is a complex national or international delivery environment involving the co-ordination of multiple sites across different time zones and addressing differing cultural approaches. There will be complex testing and transition issues. |
|  |  | **VL** | **L** | **M** | **H** | **VH** |  |
| **C1.9**  **Summary assessment** | **The challenges to successful delivery are very low and the change is unlikely to threaten objectives.** |  |  |  |  |  | **There will be a very high degree of challenge and changes are highly likely to threaten achievement of objectives. The delivery environment is very complex and there are multiple dependencies.** |

**[Note: Record summary assessment mark at C1.9 at Section C4 below]**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section C2 – Capacity & Capability Complexity Assessment**  The policy, programme or project is delivering in an environment where | | | | | | | |
|  |  | VL | L | M | H | VH |  |
| C2.1  **Programme / Project team** | The delivery team is fully resourced with the appropriate skills and experience. |  |  |  |  |  | Resources are not readily available and there will be disruption to key posts within the delivery team. Team members have no previous experience of the type of change or technology they are to implement. Delivery will require access to people with well-developed skills and experience in a range of technical and professional disciplines. |
| C2.2  **Stakeholders / organisation** | The stakeholder community is small and well resourced, informed and knowledgeable. Stakeholders support the delivery of the intended outcomes, their requirements and relative priorities documented, agreed, and unlikely to change. |  |  |  |  |  | There is a complex stakeholder community that lacks the maturity, resources and skills to engage effectively with the programme or project. The stakeholder environment is continuously evolving and the changes delivered by this programme or project are low on their agenda. There are significantly differing priorities between stakeholder groups. |
| C2.3  **Suppliers (internal / external)** | There are experienced suppliers operating in a stable market. Supplier resources are skilled and available, with ongoing support and commitment. |  |  |  |  |  | There is a weak or overstretched market, suppliers will have difficulty sustaining an acceptable level of support for this programme or project and may either withdraw from the process or offer limited solutions to the requirements. |
| C2.4  **Delivery Organisation’s Strategic leadership / business culture** | There is strong leadership driving this change. Those in leadership positions are experienced and knowledgeable. There are no unforeseen organisational pressures that would put successful delivery at risk. |  |  |  |  |  | The delivery organisation’s strategic leadership is / will be subject to change and have little or no previous experience or responsibility for a implementing change of a similar magnitude or complexity. The policy, programme or project will have to deliver in a challenging cultural, staff or workload environment. |
|  |  | VL | L | M | H | VH |  |
| **C2.5**  **Summary assessment** | **The organisational and stakeholder capacity and capability to deliver this change is in place and unlikely to change in a way that would threaten the policy, programme or project’s outcome and objectives.** |  |  |  |  |  | **There are significant capacity or capability issues to be addressed. Changes across the organisational and stakeholder environment are highly likely to threaten achievement of objectives.** |

**[Note: Record summary assessment mark at C2.5 at Section C4 below]**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section C3 – Capacity & Capability Complexity Assessment**  The policy, programme or project is delivering in an environment where | | | | | | | |
|  |  | VL | L | M | H | VH |  |
| C3.1  **Time** | The delivery timescale is not challenging and is not expected to change. There are no external drivers that impact it. Business continuity and contingency plans have been successfully tested. |  |  |  |  |  | There are immovable and / or imposed deadlines. Major changes to timescales are likely to occur and there are limited or no contingency options available. |
| C3.2  **Budget** | Funding is secured. It is within the delivery organisation’s budget and delegated limits. The budget is not expected to change and an appropriate and established financial management system is in place.  In comparison to the delivery organisation’s overall portfolio the costs of this particular policy, programme or project are relatively small. |  |  |  |  |  | Funding is outside the delivery organisation’s spend delegations and will involve complex cross-organisational arrangements. Financial estimates are likely to be subject to significant pressures from ongoing or expected change. External economic conditions will have an affect on funding options or availability. An innovative financing model may be needed to secure policy, programme or project funds. The costs of this particular policy, programme or project are significant, relative to the organisation’s overall programme or project spend. An appropriate financial management system is not in place, or the existing system has not been recently audited. |
| C3.3  **Benefits** | The benefits to be delivered are relatively small, easy to define and measure. Ownership of the benefits is clear. |  |  |  |  |  | The magnitude of benefits is significant and there will be a complex and changing environment in which they have to be realised. The benefits will be delivered over time, they will be difficulty to identify, communicate and measure. |
| C3.4  **Quality** | Quality requirements are clear, easily achievable and stable. |  |  |  |  |  | Quality requirements are extremely challenging, likely to change significantly or will be hard to achieve. |
|  |  | **VL** | **L** | **M** | **H** | **VH** |  |
| **C3.5**  **Summary assessment** | **The policy, programme or project environment is stable; any changes are likely to be relatively small, easily managed and should not affect the delivery outcomes.** |  |  |  |  |  | **It is highly likely the policy, programme or project will have to deal with significant and large scale change during its lifecycle. The management of change will need to be very sophisticated and is likely to draw resource and leadership capacity to maximise the likelihood of a successful outcome.** |

**[Note: Record summary assessment mark at C3.5 at Section C4 below**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section C4 – Complexity Assessment Summary**  (Insert the marks allocated for each of the four summary assessments from Sections C1-C3 above) | | | | | |
| **Complexity Areas Summary Assessments** | **VL** | **L** | **M** | **H** | **VH** |
| **Delivery challenge** (C1.9) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Capacity and capability** (C2.5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Scale** (C3.5) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **C4.1 - Overall Complexity Assessment** |  |  |  |  |  |

**[Note: Overall summary assessment mark at C4.1 above to be used in Section D]**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section D - Risk Potential Assessment**  (Plot overall summary assessments from B7 and C4.1 and mark with a X in grid below to give an overall assessment – the area your X falls within is indicated as Low, Medium or High) | | | | | | |
| **(From Section B7)**  **Overall Consequential Impact**  **Assessment** | *Very High* | **SG Independent Assurance** |  |  |  | **HIGH** |
| *High*  **Organisational Assurance Review Process** |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Medium* |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Low* |  |  |  |  | **MEDIUM** |
| *Very Low* | **Self-Assessment Review – Referencing Common Indicators for Success** |  |  |  | **LOW** |
|  | *Very Low* | *Low* | *Medium* | *High* | *Very High* |
| **(From Section C4.1)**  **Overall Complexity Assessment** | | | | | | |
| **Transfer the overall Risk Potential Assessment above (LOW / MEDIUM / HIGH) to box A.11 on the page 1 of the RPA-2.** | | | | | | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section E- About this form and what to do next** | |
| 1. Who should complete the RPA-2 assessment? | |
| Policy, programmes/projects assessed as potentially Medium or High Risk in their Complexity or Strategic Importance through Stage 1 (RPA-1 form). The SPO/SRO should complete the RPA-2 as early in the life of the policy /programme/project as possible. | |
| 2. What is the RPA-2 for? | |
| The form helps assess whether a policy/programme/project must be supported with the SG’s Independent Assurance process. The assessment is an indicator of risk potential, it is not a risk analysis model but can be an input to one. The assessment may enable discussion about the risks to and responsibilities for delivery of the policy, programme or project. It may also help identify areas where specific skills, commensurate with the level of complexity, may be required. | |
| 3. Who will use the information provided in this RPA-2? | |
| **In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 -** It is intended that the data collected in this form will be used by the SG for its own purposes and also to inform other areas of Government business. The data may also be used to make you aware of services, advice and guidance. Please direct any issues related to the use of data within this form to the PPM Centre of Expertise (0131-244-7468 / e-mail [PPM-CoE@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PPM-CoE@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)) | |
| 4. Is the information contained in the RPA-2 releasable under FOI? | |
| The SPO/SRO is responsible for considering any FoI Request in relation to the RPA-2. Please advise the PPM-CoE of any such request. | |
| 5. How to complete the RPA-2 Form | |
| **Section A** - captures basic information about the policy, programme or project. Most boxes are self-explanatory. At question 2 please use one of the following descriptors for the policy/programme/project type:   * Policy development/ delivery * Infrastructure enabled business change; * Construction enabled business change * ICT enabled business change * Business change * Other   **Section B & Section C are completed in the same way.** Section B comprises 6 Strategic Areas (B1-B6). Section C comprises 3 sub-sections (C1-C3). In each strategic area / sub-section there are 5 columns covering assessments from Very Low (VL) to Very High (VH). Alongside each strategic area / sub-section are statements that correspond with the extremes of VL and VH. Using your knowledge and judgement consider each strategic area / sub-section and mark an **X** in the column that best indicates the level of Impact (strategic area) or Complexity (sub-sections) associated with that particular topic.  At the end of each Section (or sub-sections in Section C) is a summary assessment. You should use this summary to record the overall assessment for that particular section (or sub-section). There is no ‘formula’ for calculating this summary – you should take a holistic view when determining the overall assessment.  **Section C4** - ‘Complexity Assessment Summary’ takes the summary outputs from Section C1 to C3 and allows you to determine an overall summary for Section C. Again, there is no ‘formula’ for calculating this summary – you should  take a holistic view of the summary results from Section C1-C3 in arriving at an overall assessment. Record it at C4.1. At C4.2 provide a narrative that explains the background to the policy/programme/project, the main outcome/objectives, the intended benefits, a high-level time-line and summaries significant impacts facing successful delivery.  **Section D** - records the summary results from Section B and C and gives an overall RPA for your policy, programme or project. Plot the overall results from Sections B and C on the respective axis in the table in Section D by marking an **X** in the appropriate cell where the respective assessments intersect. This now gives an overall indication of the associated RPA for the policy, programme or project. Your **X** will lie in an area of the table that is either High (Dark Shaded), Medium (Light Shaded) or Low (no-shading). This overall RPA should be recorded at Box A.11 on page 1 of the RPA-2.  You must now agree your overall assessment with your CO for the policy initiative, programme or project. Both you and your CO must record your agreement in boxes A.13 and A.14 on the front page of the RPA-2. | |
| 6. What do I do with the completed form? | |
| **If Box A-11 is Medium or High Risk** – send the completed form to the SG’s [PPM-CoE@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PPM-CoE@scotland.gsi.gov.uk). The PPM-CoE will arrange an SG Independent Assurance Assessment Meeting for the policy, programme or project.  The completed form will be reviewed as part of the Assessment Meeting. The outcome of the meeting may mean that a policy, programme or project assessed as Medium Risk in the RPA-2 is re-categorised as High Risk (or vice-versa). The SG’s policy is that all High Risk policy, programmes and projects must be supported by with SG Independent Assurance Review  Where, as the result of the Assessment Meeting your policy, programme or project remains (or is re-assessed as) Medium Risk you should consider what other forms of internal assurance process should be used to help you track and ensure the successful delivery of its outcomes or objectives.  **If Box A-11 is Low Risk** - you should ensure that your policy, programme or project conducts regular self-assessments to ensure it is on track to successfully deliver its outcomes or objectives. | |
| 7. Who can I contact about completion of this form? | |
| If you wish to discuss this form please contact the SG’s PPM-CoE (0131-244-7480). | |
| 8. Acronyms used in the form | |
| PPM-CoE | Programme and Project Management Centre of Expertise |
| CO | Countersigning Officer |
| EU | European Union |
| NDPB | Non Departmental Public Body |
| PAC | Public Audit Committee |
| PPM | Programme and Project Management |
| RPA | Risk Potential Assessment |
| SG | Scottish Government |
| SPO | Senior Policy Owner |
| SRO | Senior Responsible Owner |

1. The full lifecycle costs of the project or programme is the investment appraisal which assesses the total cost of an asset over its whole life. It takes account of the initial capital cost, as well as delivery/implementation, operational, maintenance, repair, upgrade and eventual disposal costs. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)