

Major Project Governance Assessment Toolkit

Contents

Introduction	2
Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
Definition of a Major Project	4
Guidance for Using the Toolkit	5
Governance Elements	5
When to Carry Out a Governance Assessment.....	6
The Assessment Process	6
Appendix 1 - Role Descriptions	8
Appendix 2 - Assessment Tool for Identifying Major Projects	14
Appendix 3 - Requirements for Effective Management	16
Appendix 4 - Governance Assessment and Visualisation Tool	23
Appendix 5 - Case Study: Shared Academic Timetabling	36
Appendix 6 - Case Study: Research Management	38
Acknowledgements.....	41
References.....	42

Introduction

Universities and Colleges are constantly undertaking significant change activities. These activities will typically be managed using existing institutional project and change management processes. Often however there is a lack of consistency and rigour in the governance approach. This can lead to significant cost overruns and project failure when confronted with the challenges of a major change project. Major projects require a more rigorous approach to governance and project management to deliver success.

This toolkit has been developed to assist staff who are managing or participating in major change projects. The toolkit provides:

- a) guidance on assessing which projects should be classed as major projects
- b) the key governance elements that must be managed for major projects
- c) an assessment tool for project governance to help ensure that the required governance actions are established and work effectively throughout the life of the project
- d) a visualisation tool for project governance which gives a view of the project as it currently stands and the changes since the last review
- e) case studies on the use of the toolkit at the University of Edinburgh

The toolkit was originally developed by the University of Edinburgh with support from the project and change management consultants Valuta. The toolkit is based on best practice guidance provided by PRINCE2¹ and experience of successfully delivering major University change projects. The toolkit can be used for projects being managed and delivered using any methodology. The toolkit can be used, with minor adjustments, where the term project is used more loosely to identify a programme of related projects as defined by MSP². Increasingly major projects will be delivered as change programmes and a future version of the toolkit will address the needs of programmes more directly.

The toolkit has been designed to be complementary to existing project and change management processes. The toolkit fills an important gap by providing a repeatable assessment process which covers all aspects of governance for major projects. The toolkit can be used as a reference point and checklist for any project. The toolkit has been used successfully by the University of Edinburgh on major software projects including Shared Academic Timetabling, Research Administration and Virtual Learning Environments. A version of the toolkit is used by the University of Edinburgh for large capital projects.

We believe that using the toolkit will enhance the governance and delivery of major University and College change projects.

¹ PRINCE2 - a standard project management method, widely used in the public and private sectors, both in the UK and internationally. PRINCE2 aims to embody established and proven best practice in project management. See: <http://www.prince-officialsite.com/>

² MSP – a standard programme management method used in the public and private sectors, both in the UK and internationally. Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) comprises a set of best practice principles and processes for use when managing a programme See: <http://www.msp-officialsite.com/>

Roles and Responsibilities

It is critically important for effective project governance that each member of the senior team understands and accepts his/her responsibilities and accountabilities. These governance roles can be time consuming, politically difficult and may often appear thankless. However, they are absolutely crucial to the success of the project. The key roles in the governance of major projects are:

Project Executive	The Project Executive represents the business interests of the institution and is accountable for the success or failure of the project. The Project Executive must ensure that effective governance is established and maintained for the duration of their project. The Project Executive oversees the regular governance assessments described in this toolkit and ensures that any required actions are followed up.
Senior User	The Senior User represents the interests of the users who will eventually make use of what is delivered by the project. It may be appropriate to have multiple Senior Users representing different areas of the institution or different user roles. A User Group can also be set up to represent wider user interests. In such cases a Senior User will chair the User Group. The Senior Users must participate fully in the regular project assessments described in this toolkit.
Senior Supplier	The Senior Supplier is accountable for the quality, performance, technical integrity and timeliness of the supplier deliverables. It may be appropriate to have multiple Senior Suppliers for example where there are both internal and external suppliers. A Supplier Group can be set up to represent wider supplier interests. In such cases a Senior Supplier will chair the Supplier Group. The Senior Suppliers must participate fully in the regular project assessments described in this toolkit.
Project Board	The Project Board provides governance for a project. The key members of the Project Board are the Project Executive, the Senior User(s) and the Senior Supplier(s). Project Board members must participate fully in the regular project assessments described in this toolkit.
User Group	The User Group, chaired by a Senior User, represents the diverse range of user stakeholders for the project. The User Group's prime responsibility is to ensure that the solution delivered by the project will meet the needs of users. User Group members should participate fully in the regular project assessments described in this toolkit.
Project Manager	The Project Manager has day-to-day responsibility to run the project and is accountable to the Project Board. The Project Manager co-ordinates the regular project assessments described in this toolkit reporting the findings, and any recommendations for action, to the Project Executive and Project Board.

Each role and its involvement in the project is described in more detail in **Appendix 1 Role Descriptions**

Definition of a Major Project

Project:	<i>A set of activities that are managed and coordinated to deliver a specific outcome in a defined timescale</i>
Major Project:	<i>A project that has a significant financial, operational, or reputational impact on a University or College (or an organisational unit such as a Faculty, School or Support Group)</i>

This definition of a major project covers many different types of project. For example:

- Capital and refurbishment projects
- Projects with significant information technology components
- Projects to change the way the institution conducts its business, processes and operations
- Organisational change projects

In assessing whether a project is major there are a number of factors that must be considered including:

- total cost of the project i.e. the total cost of ownership including recurring costs over 48 months
- impact of the project on students and staff
- complexity of the project
- reputational impact on the institution if the project runs into difficulties

Different projects will have a different profile across these factors. For example a large capital project in Estates has a significant financial cost, but the impact on staff and students may be relatively straightforward. A significant change to the curriculum could have a large impact on staff and students, but the cost of delivering it may be modest. A project involving a number of external partners, and which involves organisational change, could be complex and challenging without necessarily having a high financial cost.

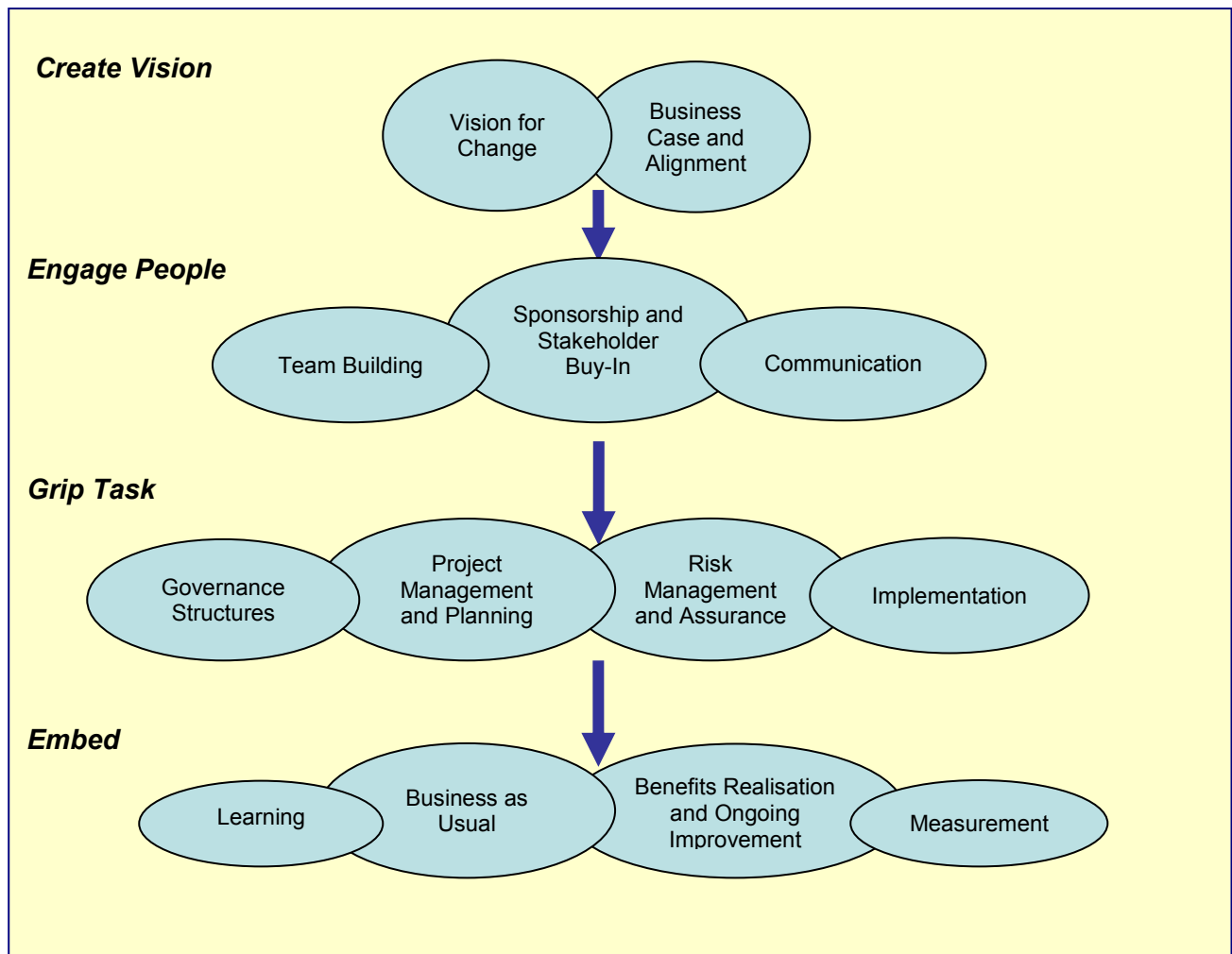
Major projects will primarily be those that impact on the whole institution and where a greater degree of coordination is required to deliver success.

A simple assessment tool to help determine whether a project should be classified as major is provided in **Appendix 2 Assessment Tool for Identifying Major Projects**. The tool may be used as is or adjusted to meet the needs of the individual institution.

Guidance for Using the Toolkit

Governance Elements

For major projects there are a number of important elements that need to be effectively managed for the project to achieve success. Each element will be present for all projects but the relative importance of each element may vary for different types of project. The following is a generic model of these project governance elements:



In the model the governance elements are shown as sequential, and in practice they must be sequential at the start of the project. As the project moves forward however there will be significant iteration. There will be an ongoing need to reinforce project sponsorship and stakeholder buy-in, communicate effectively, maintain team cohesion, manage risk etc.

The requirements for the effective management of each governance element are described in **Appendix 3 Requirements for Effective Management**.

When to Carry Out a Governance Assessment

Major projects often naturally break into a number of phases. For an information technology project requiring procurement of hardware, software and services the phases may be:

Develop Business Case – Procure Solution – Implement Solution and Close – Business as Usual

Governance assessments using the toolkit can take place at any time and can be particularly valuable during the start-up of a project phase or as part of the phase close down process.

The first governance assessment using the toolkit should take place early in the project lifecycle with further reviews at least once per project phase. For major projects with phases lasting longer than six months a governance assessment should take place approximately every six months.

Governance assessments should not be a one off event and should be repeated with an appropriate frequency during the life of the project to ensure that all of the required activities remain in place and working effectively.

The Assessment Process

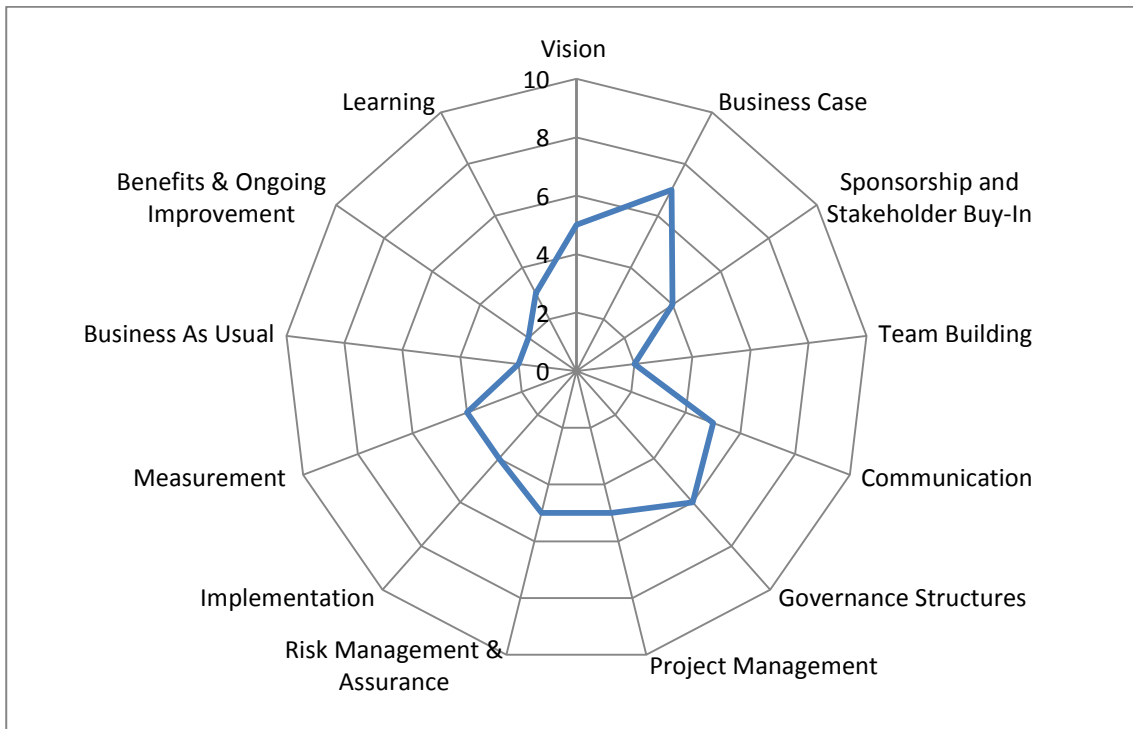
An assessment of the project status against each governance element is carried out by members of the Project Board, User Group, project team and other key stakeholders. It is important that as many as possible of these key stakeholders complete the assessment. The target is to achieve around 70% returns from the Project Team and Project Board and 50% from the User Group and other key stakeholders.

Each assessor records a score for each governance element in the range 0–10 based on the following:

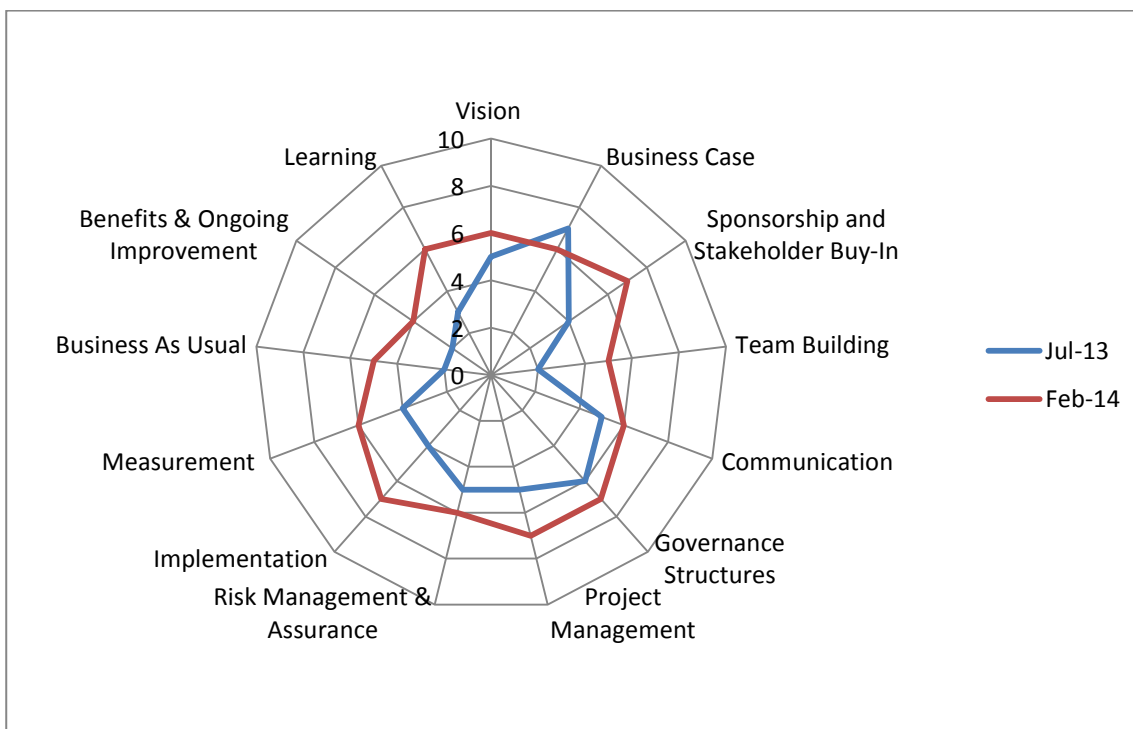
Score	Interpretation
0	Not Started. Typically only justifiable in the early stages of a major project for later “Embed” governance elements. Action is required to address omission.
1 – 3	Emerging, immature and/or incomplete. Typically only justifiable in the early stages of a major project for later “Embed” governance elements. Action is required to improve overall management.
4 – 6	Progressing towards best practice with evidence of positive impact. Action is required to further improve position.
7 – 10	Mature. Good practices in place and working effectively. Clear evidence of positive impact. Action may be required to maintain position.

Each assessor is also asked to record a reason for their score and any suggestions for improvement. This information is valuable in highlighting concerns and possible remedial actions.

All the assessment responses are analysed, collated and plotted on a Radar Chart in Microsoft Excel to show where the project is going well and where action may be needed. Radar Charts can be produced to show individual or group perception of the project status. The analysis can be repeated at different stages through project delivery and the shape of the Radar Chart will change over time.



Project Status Radar Chart – Single Assessment



Project Status Radar Chart – Multiple Assessments

The tool for assessment and visualisation of project status is described in **Appendix 4 Governance Assessment and Visualisation Tool**. The tool may be used as is or adjusted to meet the needs of the individual institution.

Appendix 1 - Role Descriptions

The following tables provide high level description of the key project roles referred to in this toolkit.

Project Role : Project Executive - (often also referred to as the Project Sponsor)	
Role Description	The Project Executive owns the business case and is ultimately accountable to senior management for the success or failure of the project. The Project Executive role must be vested in one individual who is appointed at a very early stage in the lifetime of the project. There must never be more than one Project Executive at any point during the lifetime of the project.
Project Involvement	<p>The Project Executive appoints Project Board members and typically chairs Project Board meetings. The Project Executive has to ensure that the Project Board meets and delivers its full responsibilities. This role cannot be delegated.</p> <p>The Project Executive must be prepared to make a significant commitment to the project as, without their involvement, important decisions cannot be taken and the project will not progress. This is not a passive role. Commitment may be 0.5 days per week or more.</p>

Project Role: Senior User(s)	
Role Description	<p>The Senior User is responsible for ensuring that the services delivered by the project will meet the needs of user stakeholders. The Senior User is appointed by the Project Executive during the early stages of the project.</p> <p>Due to the devolved nature of many Universities and Colleges there are often diverse groups of user stakeholders. The Senior User role may be shared between multiple individuals representing different areas or user roles. A User Group, chaired by a Senior User, can also be set up to represent wider user interests. Whatever options are chosen it is vital to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wider user community are appropriately represented on the User Group and Project Board • Each Senior User is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the user community they represent • The Project Board is not overloaded with Senior Users who have a very narrow interest in the project deliverables. This will inevitably reduce the decision making capabilities of the Project Board <p>The Senior User plays a key role in managing the process, organisational and cultural changes affecting users that arise as a result of the project. The Senior User role should not be combined with the Project Executive or Senior Supplier roles.</p>

Project Role: Senior User(s)	
Project Involvement	<p>The Senior User is responsible for identifying the stakeholders from user communities to be involved in the project and will be involved in securing or releasing user resources to work on the project. The Senior User may organise and chair a separate User Group to fully represent user interests.</p> <p>At the start of the project the Senior User will play a key role in specifying and quantifying the benefits to be delivered by the project. Post project the Senior User may be responsible for demonstrating that the anticipated benefits have been realised.</p>

Project Role: Senior Supplier(s)	
Role Description	<p>The Senior Supplier is accountable for the quality, performance, technical integrity and timeliness of the supplier deliverables. The Senior Supplier role is appointed by the Project Executive during the early stages of the project. The Senior Supplier must be empowered to make decisions on behalf of the supplier community.</p> <p>It may be appropriate to have multiple Senior Suppliers for example where there are both internal and external suppliers. This can be managed in different ways depending on the needs of the project. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each supplier can be given Senior Supplier representation on the Project Board. This is a relatively common approach and works best when there are few interactions or dependencies between the suppliers. It can, however, result in a lack of clarity for the Project Board on supplier risks, issues and accountabilities • A Supplier Group can be set up to represent wider supplier interests with the Senior Supplier chairing this group. For example the Project Executive may appoint a senior manager from the leading internal supplier to chair the Supplier Group and represent supplier interests on the Project Board. This is a significant responsibility for the internal Senior Supplier but can result in greater clarity over supplier concerns for the Project Board <p>Multiple suppliers add complexity to project delivery. If there are multiple suppliers it is recommended that an additional risk is added to the project risk log. A possible action to mitigate this risk is to ensure that suppliers meet regularly to discuss and agree supplier progress, risks, issues and concerns. The meetings will improve communication between suppliers and result in better management of interactions and dependencies. The outcomes of each meeting can then be reflected in the reports to the Project Board.</p> <p>With this mitigation in place the Project Board can be confident that the reporting of supplier progress, risks and issues will be more complete and accurate regardless of how the individual suppliers are represented on the Project Board itself.</p>

Project Role: Senior Supplier(s)	
Project Involvement	<p>The Senior Supplier must assess and confirm the viability of the project approach and ensure that proposals for designing and developing the deliverables are realistic.</p> <p>The Senior Supplier must advise the Project Executive on any supplier risks, deal effectively with supplier issues and resolve any supplier requirements or priority conflicts.</p> <p>The Senior Supplier must ensure the supplier resources required for the project are available, including staff with the appropriate skills and expertise.</p> <p>The Senior Supplier must regularly brief non-technical management on supplier aspects of the project.</p>

Project Role: Project Board	
Role Description	<p>The Project Board provides overall governance for a project. The key members of the Project Board are the Project Executive, the Senior User(s) and the Senior Supplier(s). The Project Board can comprise multiple Senior Users and Senior Suppliers, which can vary during project's lifetime.</p> <p>The Project Board must provide clear direction and support for the project and needs to be an appropriate size. In a highly devolved University or College it will often be necessary to have a larger Project Board than would be appropriate in other business environments. The Project Executive needs to strike a balance between having sufficient representation on the Project Board and having a manageable Project Board to enable timely and effective decision making.</p>
Project Involvement	<p>The Project Board is a decision-making body not a discussion group. Regular Project Board meetings, at least every six to eight weeks, help to keep the project on track and ensure that decisions are made in a timely manner. To ensure board members are available the schedule of Project Board meetings should be agreed at the outset of the project.</p> <p>Project Board members are collectively responsible for committing the resources required for successful delivery of the project. The Project Board directs communication with project stakeholders across the University and members act as champions for the project.</p> <p>The Project Board must provide visible and sustained support for the Project Manager and should be available for consultation, advice and guidance at all times.</p> <p>The Project Executive must regularly review the participation of individual members in Project Board activities. Failure to attend or participate may indicate that a board member has a concern about the project or is unable to commit the time required to the role.</p>

Project Role: User Group	
Role Description	<p>The User Group represents the diverse range of user stakeholders for the project. The User Group's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project deliverables will meet the needs of users and must advise the Senior User of any risks or issues which may affect their timing, cost or suitability. The User Group should be established during the early stages to promote user understanding of the vision for change and increase engagement with the project.</p> <p>The User Group should always include expert users who understand the end to end business process and are aware of any business constraints on the solution. These experts add value by providing a different perspective to user representatives who have a detailed but more limited view of the business. Including sceptics as well as supporters on the User Group will enhance decision making and improve the overall governance and outcomes for the project.</p> <p>The User Group provides the link between the project and the user community. User Group membership should be widely communicated so that users know who to contact if they have any questions, concerns or feedback about the project.</p> <p>The Project Executive and Senior User must regularly review the membership of the User Group to ensure that all user areas are properly represented on the group.</p>
Project Involvement	<p>The membership of the User Group may vary through the lifetime of the project depending on the deliverables in each phase. The Senior User(s) will chair the group and represent the interests of the User Group on the Project Board, co-opting key stakeholders from time to time as needs arise.</p> <p>Members of the User Group are expected to be active on behalf of the project within their communities. The time needed will vary depending on the nature of the project and the degree to which the project results will transform business processes.</p> <p>The Project Executive and Senior User must ensure that there are effective links between the Project Board and User Group with sharing of papers between each group and regular agenda items which encourage updates, issues and concerns to be highlighted.</p> <p>The Project Executive and Project Manager must also ensure that there are effective links between the core project team and User Group which encourage mutual engagement and understanding of the challenges faced in delivering the project.</p> <p>The Senior User should regularly review the participation of individual members in User Group activities. Non-participation may indicate that the member has a concern about the project or is unable to commit the time required to the role.</p>

Project Role: Project Manager	
Role Description	<p>The Project Manager has day-to-day responsibility to run the project and is accountable to the Project Board. The Project Manager role is appointed by the Project Executive at an early stage of the project.</p> <p>The Project Manager is responsible for ensuring that the project produces the required deliverables within the specified time, cost, scope, quality, risk and benefit tolerances agreed with the Project Board.</p>
Project Involvement	<p>The Project Manager will have a substantial time commitment to the project, perhaps multiple days per week in the case of a major change project. The responsibilities of the Project Manager include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing and maintaining the business case - Maintaining the high level project plan and detailed stage plans - Monitoring progress against the plan and making adjustments (within tolerances) as necessary - Advising the Project Executive and Project Board of significant deviations from agreed plans. Escalating items of concern in a timely manner - Preparing reports for Project Board meetings - Leading, directing and motivating the project team - Ensuring that the project conforms to all relevant institutional standards and procedures - Actively managing and communicating risks, issues and changes - Ensuring the project maintains timely and effective communication with stakeholders - Maintaining project records and deliverables

Project Role: Project Assurance	
Role Description	<p>Project Assurance is an audit function used to ensure that the project runs correctly and that complete and accurate information reaches the Project Board. There are three types of project assurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Project Executive is accountable for project assurance from the business viewpoint - The Senior User is accountable for project assurance from the user viewpoint - The Senior Supplier is accountable for project assurance from the supplier viewpoint <p>For a small project the Project Board members may carry out the Project Assurance role themselves. For a major project they may prefer to delegate the role to a trusted and sufficiently independent third party. This role cannot be delegated to the Project Manager.</p>

Project Role: Project Assurance	
Project Involvement	<p>Project Assurance will continue during the lifetime of the project. The time required commitment will vary depending on the size and complexity of the project, the stage and the viewpoints being reviewed.</p> <p>The responsibilities of Project Assurance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Regularly reviewing project information to ensure that the project is being managed effectively- Making recommendations to the Project Manager and/or the Project Board on improvements to the way the project is being run- Highlighting areas of concern to the Project Manager and/or the Project Board and ensuring that they are adequately responded to

Appendix 2 - Assessment Tool for Identifying Major Projects

This tool is used to identify major projects and is based on the following characteristics:

- Total cost of the project i.e. the total cost of ownership including recurring costs over 48 months
- Impact of the project on students and staff
- Complexity of the project
- Reputational impact on the University or College if the project runs into difficulties

The tool may be used as is or adjusted to meet the particular needs of the individual institution.

Characteristic		Mark	Project Score
Cost of Project Costs must include all time/resource spent on the project and not just the dedicated project team. A total cost of ownership approach is used which includes all project costs over 48 months including recurring costs.	£25m or over	15	
	£10m or over	7	
	£1m or over	4	
	£0.5m or over	2	
	Under £0.5m	1	
Impact on Staff and Students	Direct impact on students and/or staff across the institution	4	
	Direct impact on students and/or staff across a College, Faculty or Support Group	3	
	Direct impact on another significant group of students or staff	2	
	Impacts only on some students/staff within a local organisation	1	
Complexity High - Four or more external stakeholders or partner organisations including external suppliers and/or - Affects a large number of diverse stakeholders with significant changes to roles, business processes, IT systems and ways of working Medium - One to three external stakeholders or partner organisations including external suppliers and/or - Affects a large group of people having similar roles or expertise with some significant changes to business processes, IT systems and ways of working	High	4	
	Medium	2	
	Low	1	

Low - No external stakeholders or partner organisations and/or - Affects few people with little or no change in business processes, IT systems and ways of working			
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Reputational Impact If project gets into difficulties or is not delivered	Potential for impact on UK or international profile	4	
	Potential for impact on national profile	2	
	Potential for local impact	1	

Project Score	
Major Project - Yes / No	

If Score is 10 or over then project is “Major”

Appendix 3 - Requirements for Effective Management

For major projects there are a number of important governance elements that need to be effectively managed for the project to achieve success. Each governance element will be present for all projects but the relative importance of each element may vary for different types of project. The requirements for the effective management of each governance element are described below.

Create Vision

Governance Element	Requirement
Vision for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide clear, easily understandable statements of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ current problems and the need for change i.e. what is wrong with the current situation - ideally backed up by evidence from sources such as user feedback, performance measures and/or Help Desk statistics ○ business drivers for the project ○ benefits that are expected to be delivered by the project ○ how things will be from a business, user and technology perspective when the project is complete ○ project scope, objectives, success criteria and roadmap for delivery – Maintain and develop the vision as the project progresses – Regularly communicate and reinforce the project vision for all stakeholders
Business Case and Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish business case for project including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Options appraisal demonstrating that the project represents the best value for the institution ○ Non-recurrent project costs and recurrent costs including both the project team and effort right across the institution ○ Credible and realistic assessment of the benefits to be delivered by the project and a plan for reviewing that the anticipated benefits have been delivered - benefits should be measurable and clearly aligned with overall business objectives ○ Alignment with institutional strategic plans ○ Review of solutions in place at comparable organisations ○ Analysis of possible solutions available in the market and procurement strategy for any significant external spending ○ Identification and analysis of the most significant risks ○ High level delivery plan and schedule ○ Requirements for post-project business as usual service delivery – Obtain authority to proceed with project and secure required funding – Ensure the procurement strategy is agreed with institutional procurement specialists – Regularly review and update the business case as the project progresses to ensure that the impact of changes is fully understood

Engage People

Governance Element	Requirement
Sponsorship and Stakeholder Buy-In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identify an individual to be the Project Executive who will be ultimately accountable for the project. Ensure that the chosen Project Executive has the time, skills and commitment to provide effective leadership for the project – Identify appropriate individual(s) to be Senior User(s) who will represent the groups who will use or gain benefit from the solution delivered by the project – Identify appropriate individual(s) to be the Senior Supplier(s) representing the groups who will deliver the project – Establish a User Group, with the Senior User as chair, to represent wider user interests – Identify all other key institutional stakeholders who will be affected by the project and obtain their buy-in to the project vision, scope and objectives – Ensure lessons learned from previous similar projects at the institution, or elsewhere, are clearly understood from the outset and that these will be used positively to improve project governance and outcomes – Confirm progress/status reporting requirements for the institutional groups and committees who will have an interest in the project as it progresses – Establish champions for the project across the stakeholder community – Establish ongoing activities to maintain stakeholder engagement with appropriate success measures
Team Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identify the project stakeholders whose operational input as part of the project team will be essential for successful project delivery – Identify the skills needed on project team and wider teams who will help deliver the project and recruit or develop staff accordingly – Ensure that the project team is adequately resourced, supported and given enough time from their day jobs to successfully deliver the project – Establish team cohesion and a shared belief in the project vision and achievability of the project goals and objectives – Develop and maintain effective links between the project team and User Group to validate and support the work of the project team and ensure that the user perspective is kept in focus as the project progresses – Leverage the skills and experience available from your external suppliers and bring relevant supplier staff on to the project team – Establish ongoing activities to maintain effective team working with appropriate success measures

Governance Element	Requirement
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure that stakeholder identification is inclusive and diverse taking into account expertise, level of empowerment, influence and willingness to engage – Establish a communications plan detailing regular project communication with all stakeholder groups – Ensure adequate resources are devoted to ensuring effective communication – Ensure the communications plan is a key element of the project delivery strategy and establish processes to ensure that it is regularly reviewed and updated – Establish appropriate success measures for project communications – Identify changes of culture and/or behaviour needed for the project to be successful and use communication to positively promote the required changes – Ensure communications are always clear and relevant to the target audience. Always answer the question “what is the impact on me?” for each stakeholder – Ensure communications are consistent, timely and managed to build trust – Include feedback loops and ensure that the Project Board and project team are ready to act on feedback received i.e. engagement is being used to drive project decision making and not simply as a public relations exercise – Maintain a log detailing all formal communications sent by or on behalf of the project

Grip Task

Governance Element	Requirement
Governance Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish and maintain effective governance structures for the project with Project Board, User Group, Project Manager and appropriate administrative support – Ensure staff involved in project governance understand their responsibilities and are appropriately skilled and supported to discharge these e.g. by experts with relevant specialist business or technical knowledge – Ensure Project Board and User Groups meet regularly, at least every 6-8 weeks, for the duration of the project – Establish and maintain effective links between the Project Board and User Group with sharing of papers between each group and agenda items which encourage updates, issues and concerns to be highlighted and shared – Ensure that the regular progress reports and information prepared for the Project Board and User Groups are clear, consistent, timely and relevant – Monitor attendance and participation at Project Board and User Group meetings and take action if there are any problems. Failure to regularly attend or participate in meetings may indicate that an individual member has a concern about the project or is unable to commit the time required to the role
Project Management and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identify an individual to be Project Manager with day to day responsibility for running the project on behalf of the Project Executive. – Ensure that the Project Manager has skills, experience, capacity and motivation required to successfully deliver the project – Ensure that the Project Board provides full and effective support for the Project Manager – Translate the project vision and business needs into an unambiguous project brief with clear and agreed success criteria – Set appropriate budgets, timescales, tolerances and contingency for the project – Establish and maintain appropriately detailed project plans identifying tasks, responsibilities, resources, deliverables, deadlines and milestones – Ensure that the project plan includes change management tasks (people and processes) as well as technical activities – Establish and maintain effective risk, issue and change management processes – Establish and maintain effective resource management processes – Agree reporting formats and frequency of updates ensuring contents reflects the needs of the Project Board, User Group and other key stakeholders – Establish and maintain effective processes for learning and adapting the project approach based on experience during the project – Agree criteria for closure of the project and re-deployment of the project team

Governance Element	Requirement
Risk Management and Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish reporting processes and performance measures to ensure that the Project Board can monitor progress and deal effectively with risks and issues – Establish financial control and reporting processes – Ensure adequate resources are allocated to project assurance – Use external reviews to provide additional assurance on project progress e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use local experts not otherwise involved in the project delivery ○ Add suitably qualified external person to the project team or Project Board ○ Hire a specialist commercial services provider to audit the project – Be ready to act, including delaying or abandoning the project, if issues arise and the project is failing to make acceptable progress – Project Board members, risk owners and other key stakeholders are engaged with risk management and accept the time and resource implications of required mitigation and contingency actions – Effective risk management is embedded in project management processes – Identify and record key project risks defining risk impacts in business terms that are readily understandable to stakeholders – Establish and maintain proactive and effective risk management processes – Establish clearly defined criteria for the escalation of risks and issues to the Project Board – Review the most significant project risks, and recommended actions, at each Project Board meeting – Use risk management to inform effective decision making for the project
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish an appropriately detailed implementation plan that is agreed and understood by all parties. Ensure that the implementation plan includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Change management tasks as well as technical activities ○ Phased implementation options where these are available ○ Clear business and technical success criteria for the implementation ○ Provision of appropriate training, help and support for users before, during and after the implementation ○ Completion of required technical and user documentation required for business as usual service ○ Contingency to enable the implementation to be rolled back if the new solution is not working or has had serious unforeseen impacts ○ Tasks and resources for the resolution of issues that become apparent in the period immediately post go live – Ensure that all business and technical acceptance criteria are tested and the outcomes signed off as part of final pre-implementation testing – Ensure that there are contingency arrangements in place so that the implementation can be deferred or abandoned if the solution is not ready on time – Ensure that there is a process for documenting and communicating any features that will not be delivered by the implementation

Embed

Element	Requirement
Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establish and publish baseline measures of what took place before the project started – Establish and regularly report on appropriate measurements to show improvements made against the baseline and to act as a starting point for further improvements – Identify an appropriate set of performance measures for the solution to be delivered by the project – Include an updated set of measurements, with comparison with the baseline measures, as part of the project closure report
Business As Usual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure that the impacts on the business as usual service are always considered part of project decision making – Define the business as usual service as service requirements become known. The service definition should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Normal service and support hours ○ Service availability (and how it will be measured and reported) ○ Service capacity and performance measures ○ How planned downtime will be agreed and communicated ○ Organisational structures, resources and skill requirements ○ Support mechanisms and escalation routes ○ Funding requirements – Establish a clear and agreed plan for transition to the live service – Ensure that backup and recovery arrangements are defined and in place, including maximum permissible data loss, recovery times and backup retention periods – Ensure that business continuity arrangements are defined and in place to enable the business to cope effectively during a recovery period and/or in the event that recovery arrangements hit problems in practice – Ensure dependencies on other services are known and documented – Ensure that responsibilities for maintaining technical and end user documentation and resources are clear – Ensure that business as usual service requirements are reflected in contractual arrangements with third parties involved in delivering the service – Ensure that there is an agreed change control process for future service enhancements – Define service management and review processes that will be used to deliver long term satisfaction to users

Element	Requirement
Benefits Realisation and Ongoing Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure that a credible assessment of the benefits to be delivered by the project, and a plan for reviewing that the benefits have been realised, is included in the business case – Ensure that benefits are measurable and clearly aligned with overall business objectives – Ensure that benefits are regularly reviewed and updated as the project progresses to ensure that they remain realistic - during the project it may become apparent that the anticipated benefits cannot be fully achieved, or decisions may be taken which affect the anticipated benefits. Unexpected opportunities to increase benefits may also arise – Identify and include activities in the project plan which enable benefits to be fully realised e.g. training and education for users, definition of new roles and responsibilities, collection of performance data and decommissioning of legacy systems – Allocate clear responsibilities and ownership for post-project benefits realisation, e.g. by establishing reviews to track and report on benefits realisation for a defined time period following project delivery – Identify processes and responsibilities for ongoing improvement of the solution delivered by the project post implementation
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure lessons learned from previous similar projects, at the institution or elsewhere, are understood and are used positively to improve project governance and outcomes – Establish effective processes for learning and adapting the project approach based on experience during the project – Conduct post project reviews to identify the learning from the project and how any outstanding issues emerging from the project will be handled

Appendix 4 - Governance Assessment and Visualisation Tool

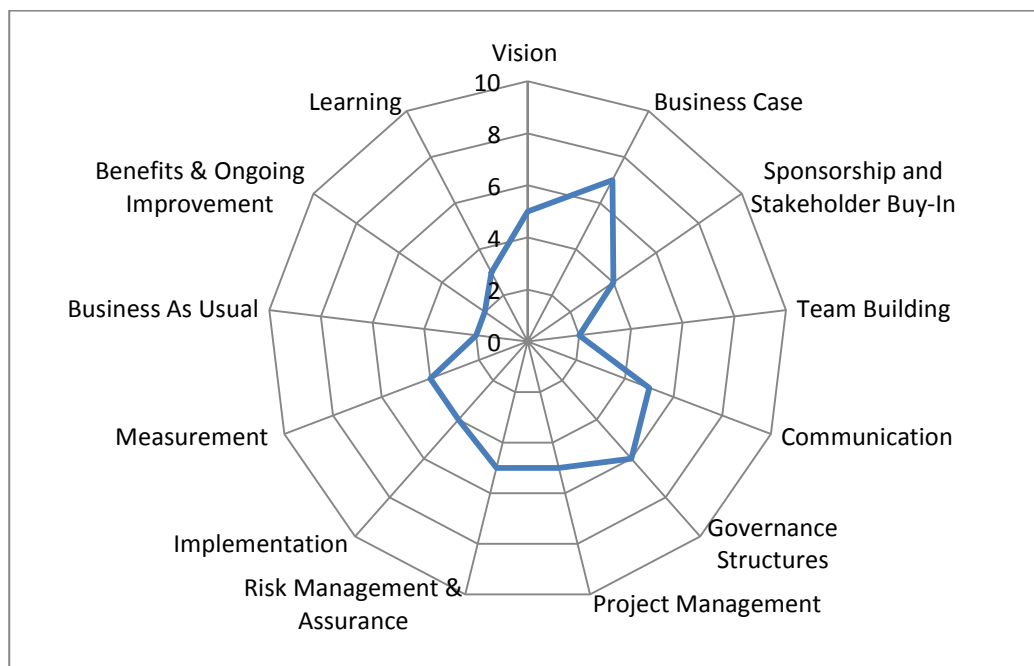
The Governance Assessment and Visualisation tool is based on evaluation of the project against each of the governance elements described in **Appendix 3 Requirements for Effective Management**. The tool may be used as is or adjusted to meet the particular needs of the individual institution.

The assessment tool should be completed by members of the Project Board, User Group, project team and other key stakeholders. Each assessor records a score for each governance element in the range 0–10 based on the following guidance:

Score	Interpretation
0	Not Started. Typically only justifiable in the early stages of a major project for later “Embed” governance elements. Action is required to address omission.
1 – 3	Emerging, immature and/or incomplete. Typically only justifiable in the early stages of a major project for later “Embed” governance elements. Action is required to improve overall management.
4 – 6	Progressing towards best practice with evidence of positive impact. Action is required to further improve position.
7 – 10	Mature. Good practices in place and working effectively. Clear evidence of positive impact. Action may be required to maintain position.

All the assessment responses will be analysed, collated and plotted on a Radar Chart in Microsoft Excel to show where the project is going well and where action may be needed. Radar Charts can be produced to show individual or group perception of project status.

The analysis can be repeated at different stages through project delivery and the shape of the Radar Chart will change over time. Multiple assessments can be included on a single diagram to produce a view of both current status and the outcomes of previous reviews.



Project Status Radar Chart

Major Project Status Assessment Scorecard

Guidance: This assessment tool should be completed by members of the Project Board, User Group and other key project stakeholders. Please complete the questionnaire providing your views on the current status of the project. Enter your score for each Governance Element in the range 0 – 10 where 0 is not started, 1-3 is emerging and/or incomplete, 4-6 is progressing towards best practice and 7-10 is mature with clear evidence of positive impact. Please briefly state the reasons for your scoring and any suggestions for improvement.

Project:	
Assessor Name and Organisation/Unit:	
Project Role:	
Date of Assessment:	

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
CREATE VISION Vision for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are there clear and easily understandable statements of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current problems and the need for change? Are these statements backed up by evidence from sources such as user feedback, performance measures and/or Help Desk statistics? ○ Business drivers for the project? ○ Benefits that are expected to be delivered by the project ○ How things will be from a business, user and technology perspective when the project is complete? ○ Project scope, objectives, success criteria and roadmap for delivery? – Is the vision being maintained and developed as the project progresses? – Is the vision regularly communicated and reinforced for all project stakeholders? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
CREATE VISION Business Case and Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is there a credible business case for the project including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Options appraisal confirming the recommended option as best value? ○ Non-recurrent project costs and recurrent costs which include effort from all areas? ○ Realistic assessment of benefits to be delivered by the project? An agreed plan for reviewing that the anticipated benefits have been delivered? ○ Alignment with institutional strategic plans? ○ Market analysis and procurement strategy? ○ Identification and analysis of the most significant risks? ○ High level delivery plan and schedule? ○ Requirements for business as usual service delivery? – Are benefits measurable and clearly aligned with overall business objectives? – Has project funding and authority to proceed been secured? – Has the procurement strategy been agreed with institutional procurement specialists and is it being followed? – Is the business case regularly reviewed and updated as the project progresses? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
ENGAGE PEOPLE Sponsorship and Stakeholder Buy-In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Has a senior individual been identified as the Project Executive? Does the Project Executive have the time, skills and commitment to provide effective leadership for the project? – Have appropriate individuals been identified to act as Senior Users and are they effectively representing the interests of the wider user community? Has a User Group been established? – Have appropriate individuals been identified to act as Senior Suppliers and are they effectively representing the interests of the groups who are delivering the project? – Has the project identified all key institutional stakeholders who will be affected by the project and obtained their buy-in to the vision, scope and objectives? – Are lessons learned from previous similar projects at the institution being used positively to improve project governance and outcomes? – Have reporting requirements been confirmed for the groups and committees who will have an interest in the project as it progresses? – Is there open and transparent sharing of project information with stakeholders? – Are there champions for the project across the stakeholder community? – Are there on-going activities to maintain the engagement of key stakeholders with appropriate success measures? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
ENGAGE PEOPLE Team Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is the project team fully representative of the stakeholders whose operational input will be essential for success? – Are the members of the project team and other supporting teams appropriately skilled to deliver the project? – Is appropriate staff development and recruitment being undertaken to strengthen the project team? – Is the team adequately resourced/supported and have team members been given enough time from their day jobs to successfully deliver the project? – Is the project leveraging the skills and experience available from external suppliers – are supplier staff appropriately engaged with the project team? – Do the project team demonstrate cohesion and a shared belief in the project vision and achievability of the project goals and objectives? – Do individual project team members demonstrate a high degree of personal motivation to successfully deliver the project? – Are there effective links between the project team and User Group to validate/support the work of the team and ensure that the user perspective informs project decision making? – Are the project team working well together and with other stakeholders? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
ENGAGE PEOPLE Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Does the communications plan include all stakeholder groups impacted by the project? – Have adequate resources been devoted to ensuring effective communication? – Is the communications plan a key element of the project delivery strategy and is it regularly reviewed and updated? – Does the communications plan include appropriate success measures? – Have cultural and behavioural impacts been assessed and appropriate communications actions identified? – Are project communications clear and relevant to their target audience? – Are communications consistent, timely and likely to build trust and deliver results? – Do communications include effective feedback loops? Are there clear ways for a concerned stakeholder to ring an “alarm bell” if the project appears to be going off track? – Is effective communication being used to drive project decision making and not simply as a public relations exercise? – Is there a communications log detailing all formal communications sent by or on behalf of the project? – Are project communications being used effectively and achieving desirable outcomes? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
GRIP TASK Governance Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Has the project established effective governance structures with a competent and representative Project Board and User Group? – Do the individuals involved in project governance understand their responsibilities and are they appropriately skilled and supported to discharge these? – Have appropriate individuals been identified to act as Senior Users and are they effectively representing the interests of the wider user community? Has a User Group been established? – Have appropriate individuals been identified to act as Senior Suppliers and are they effectively representing the interests of the groups who are delivering the project? – Does the Project Board meet regularly, at least every 6-8 weeks, to review project progress? – Are the regular progress reports and information prepared for the Project Board and User Groups clear, consistent, timely and relevant? Are there often surprises at Project Board or User Group meetings? – Are there effective links between the Project Board and User Group with sharing of papers and reporting of updates, issues and concerns? – Is participation and attendance at Project Boards and User Groups being monitored and action taken when required to maintain effective governance? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
GRIP TASK Project Management and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is there a Project Manager with day to day responsibility for running the project? Does the Project Manager have the skills, experience, capacity and motivation required to successfully deliver the project? – Is the Project Board providing effective support for the Project Manager? – Has the project vision and business case been translated into an unambiguous project brief with clear and agreed success criteria? – Have appropriate budgets, timescales, tolerances and contingency been agreed? – Has the Project Manager established and maintained an appropriately detailed and credible project plan identifying tasks, responsibilities, resources, deliverables, deadlines and milestones? – Does the project plan include change management tasks (people and processes) as well as technical activities? – Has the Project Manager established and maintained effective risk, issue and change management processes? – Is there effective management of financial and people resources? – Do reporting formats, contents and frequency of progress updates reflect the needs of the Project Board, User Group and other key stakeholders? Are there often surprises at Project Board or User Group meetings? – Are there agreed criteria for closure of the project and re-deployment of the project team? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
GRIP TASK Risk Management and Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Do reporting processes and performance measures enable the Project Board to monitor progress and deal effectively with risks and issues? Are appropriate actions taken when issues or risks arise? – Are there effective financial control and reporting processes with appropriate estimation and control of project contingencies? – Have adequate resources been devoted to project assurance and are these assurance processes effective? – Does the project use external reviews to provide additional assurance on risk management and project progress? – Are Project Board members, risk owners and other key stakeholders engaged with risk management and do they accept the time and resource implications of required mitigation and contingency actions? – Is effective risk management fully embedded in the project management process? – Are the key project risks identified and are risk impacts clearly defined in business terms that are understandable to stakeholders? – Is the risk log being proactively maintained and regularly reviewed by the Project Manager and risk owners? – Are there clearly defined criteria for the escalation of risks and issues to the Project Board? – Are the most significant risks, and recommended actions, regularly reviewed at Project Board meetings? – Is effective risk management being used to inform project decision making? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
GRIP TASK Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is there an appropriately detailed implementation plan that has been agreed by all parties? – Does the implementation plan include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Change management tasks as well as technical activities? ○ Training for users whose ways of working are being changed? ○ Completion of required user and technical documentation? ○ Appropriate user support activities? ○ Adequate resources for the resolution of issues that become apparent post go live? – Are there clear technical and business acceptance criteria for the implementation? Will these be tested and the outcomes signed off as part of final pre-implementation testing? – Have options to implement large scale changes using a phased approach been properly assessed? – Are there appropriate contingency arrangements so that the implementation can be delayed or abandoned if the solution is not ready on time? – Can the implementation be rolled back if the new solution is not working or there are serious unforeseen impacts post go live? – Is there a process for documenting and communicating any features that will not be delivered by the implementation? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
EMBED Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Has the project established and published baseline measures of what took place before the project started? – Does the project regularly report on appropriate measurements to identify improvements made against the baseline and to act as a starting point for further improvements? – Have appropriate performance measures been defined for the solution delivered by the project? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
EMBED Business As Usual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Has the business as usual service been defined including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Normal service and support hours? ○ Service availability (and how measured)? ○ Service capacity and performance measures? ○ How planned downtime will be agreed and communicated? ○ Organisational structures, resources and skill requirements? ○ Support mechanisms and escalation routes? ○ Funding requirements? – Are impacts on the business as usual service actively considered as part of project decision making? – Is there a clear plan for transition to the live service? – Is it clear who users will contact in the event of incidents or queries and how support performance will be measured? – Are backup and recovery arrangements defined and in place, including maximum permissible data loss, recovery times and backup retention periods? – Are business continuity arrangements defined and in place to enable the business to cope effectively during a recovery period and/or in the event that recovery arrangements hit problems in practice? – Are business as usual service requirements reflected in contractual arrangements with third parties involved in delivering the service? – Is there an agreed change control process for future service enhancements? 		

Governance Element	Evaluation Questions	Score (0-10)	Reasons for Scoring / Suggestions for Improvement
EMBED Benefits Realisation and Ongoing Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is there a credible assessment of the benefits to be delivered by the project and a plan for reviewing that the benefits have been realised included in the business case? – Are benefits measurable and clearly aligned with overall business objectives? – Are benefits being regularly reviewed and updated as the project progresses? – Does the project plan include activities which enable benefits to be fully realised e.g. training and education for users, definition of new roles and responsibilities, collection of performance data and decommissioning of legacy systems? – Have responsibilities and ownership for post-project benefit realisation been assigned to appropriate project stakeholders? – Have reviews to track and report on benefits realisation been scheduled for a defined time period following project delivery? – Are there clear processes and responsibilities defined for ongoing improvement of the solution delivered by the project? 		
EMBED Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are lessons learned from previous similar projects at the institution or elsewhere being used positively to improve project governance and outcomes? – Are there effective processes for learning and adapting the project approach based on experience as the project progresses? – Is there a plan to conduct post project reviews to identify learning from the project and how any outstanding issues emerging from the project will be handled? 		

Appendix 5 - Case Study: Shared Academic Timetabling

The Shared Academic Timetabling project was initiated by the University of Edinburgh in December 2009. This was a complex multi-year project requiring business process and cultural change underpinned by implementation of an effective software solution.

The project was delivered over four phases:

- Phase 1 – Options Appraisal/Business Case (December 2009 – October 2010)
- Phase 2 – Detailed Requirements and Procurement (December 2010 – October 2011)
- Phase 3 – Minimum Change Implementation (November 2011 – July 2012)
- Phase 4 – Extended Implementation (August 2012 – July 2014)

The Project Executive for Phase 1, 2 and 3 was the Vice Principal for Resources. The Project Executive for Phase 4 is the Vice Principal for Learning and Teaching. Project Management was provided by Information Services through Mark Ritchie and Jamie Thin.

The project used the Major Projects Governance Assessment Toolkit during Phase 2 to establish a baseline measure of the project status and identify any actions required. Further reviews were carried out during Phase 3 and Phase 4. The project was the subject of an independent Project Review in June 2011 and an Internal Audit Review in February 2012.

Conclusions

From these reviews and experience using the Major Projects Governance Assessment Toolkit the Project Board offered the following findings and recommendations:

- Use of the toolkit adds significant value to the governance process. The approach gives assurance for Project Boards and stakeholders of what is going well and where action may be required. The comparison of results between different project phases provides a clear indication of the direction of travel in terms of overall project governance. This addresses a long term concern that Project Boards have often found it difficult to judge over time whether there are issues or not
- Best practice project management techniques as advocated by the toolkit, in particular the establishing of an effective and representative Project Board backed up by wider stakeholder engagement, should be mandatory for all major information technology projects. It is further recommended that the Major Projects Governance Assessment Toolkit should be used for all major projects and not just those involving significant use of information technology
- Independent external review and assurance, either via external representation on the Project Board and/or formal review by external experts, is highly desirable for major change projects
- To ensure greatest value is obtained from the toolkit it is essential that:
 - Project Board and User Group members are given appropriate training and support in the use of the toolkit
 - Governance assessment reviews are scheduled in advance as part of project planning
 - Outcomes of governance assessment reviews are published and shared widely with key project stakeholders
 - Outcomes of governance assessment reviews are used to direct and prioritise governance actions

- The Major Projects Governance Assessment Toolkit should be adopted and maintained by Information Services in line with experience using the toolkit and related governance techniques on major University projects. All significant changes to the toolkit must be formally approved by the Knowledge Strategy Committee

The success of project governance for the Shared Academic Timetabling project is illustrated by the following composite radar diagram showing how perceptions of project governance changed between Jan 2011 and Feb 2012. In comparison with many projects which quickly fall into a “trough of disillusionment” due to poor governance the project rose in every key measure identified by the Major Project Governance Assessment Toolkit.



Project Governance Assessment - Shared Academic Timetabling

The Major Projects Governance Assessment Toolkit was approved by the Knowledge Strategy Committee for use on all major information technology projects from August 2012.

A version of the Major Projects Status Assessment Scorecard has also been made available as an online survey using Bristol Online Survey. A demonstrator version of the online survey is available at:
<https://www.survey.ed.ac.uk/majorprojgov>

Appendix 6 - Case Study: Research Management

Background

At the Project Board Meeting in January 2013 it was agreed that the Research Management and Administration System (RMAS) would use the Major Project Governance Assessment Toolkit. Due to the scheduling of activities around the RMAS procurement it was agreed that the first governance assessment would take place during the tender evaluation phase in July 2013. It was also agreed that the first governance assessment would be completed before the award of contract to the successful supplier.

All members of the RMAS Project Board, User Group and Core Team were invited to complete the governance assessment in July 2013. The participants were provided with a set of resources to assist with the assessment of each governance element. The assessments were completed and returned between July and September 2013. This case study summarises the findings of this assessment.

Participation

Unfortunately the value of the governance assessment was reduced by the relatively low number of completed assessments from User Group and Project Board members. There were thirteen returns in total and the response rates were: Project Team 69%, Project Board 47% and User Group 30%.

Whilst accepting that this was a new process which required significant engagement from each participant the Project Executive requested that action be taken to identify any issues that may have affected the response rates from the Project Board and User Group. This resulted in a further round of communication with Project Board and User Group members and an agreement to use the online survey version of the assessment tool for future reviews.

Scores by Element



Project Governance Assessment – Research Assessment

Unscored elements

The majority of respondents believed that work had not yet started on Learning, Measurement and Ongoing Improvement. This indicated a need for action particularly on establishing baseline measures and wider understanding of project benefits.

Vision for Change

This element received an average score of 6.4, with scores ranging between 5 and 8, the mode being 7. The overall view was that the Vision for Change was understood and accepted by key stakeholders. Responses did however indicate that there was a requirement to provide an updated narrative on the project vision which can be shared with the wider university community.

Business Case and Alignment

This element received an average score of 7.5, with scores ranging between 6 and 10, the mode being 7. This was the highest scoring element. The business case was considered to be of good quality but needed to be kept under review as the project moved forward.

Sponsorship and Stakeholder Buy-In

This element received an average score of 5.7, with scores ranging between 4 and 8, the mode being 5. Respondents indicated that, although the appropriate stakeholders had been identified, the visibility of senior stakeholder engagement needed to be increased. Responses also indicated that more work was needed to engage Research Principal Investigators in the project.

Team Building

This element received an average score of 6.5, with scores ranging between 5 and 10, the mode being 6. The team was generally judged as working well together with respondents noting good input from the delivery partners in Finance, Research and Information Services. The requirement to extend the reach of the team into the wider community was noted.

Several responses related concerns about the overall resourcing of the team, particularly during the period where many staff would also be working on the Research Excellence Framework (REF) return. It was recommended that the delivery timescales and resourcing be reviewed to ensure that the project can continue to progress effectively.

Communications

This element received an average score of 5.5, with scores ranging between 4 and 8, the mode being 6. This was the lowest scoring element. Assessors believed there was good communication within the project team and the Project Board. Communication with the User Group was considered inferior to that between the Project Board and Project Team. The project wiki was noted as an effective resource.

Almost every respondent identified that there had to be an improved communications strategy for the implementation phase of the project. It was also suggested that a sub-team with the responsibility for communications should be established to coordinate effective communications with the wider community of stakeholders.

Governance Structures

This element received an average score of 6.8, with scores ranging between 5 and 10, the mode being 7. It was felt that the correct governance structures had been established but that these did not necessarily have the right people involved. There were concerns that the Schools and Colleges were not adequately represented and that there was a lack of academic leadership on the Project Board. It was felt that the membership of both the Project Board and User Group must be reviewed before starting the implementation project.

Risk Management and Assurance

This element received an average score of 7, with scores ranging between 5 and 8. Assessors felt that appropriate risk management processes were in place but that they were not being used consistently to inform project decision making. It was felt that risk owners may not fully understand their responsibilities and that, as a result, important risk mitigation actions may be neglected. It was agreed that the end to end risk management processes must be reviewed to ensure better engagement from risk owners and to increase visibility of risks to the Project Board.

Project Management and Planning

This element received an average score of 7.2, with scores ranging between 5 and 9. The overall quality of the project management was valued but some concerns were noted that the project manager and business staff may not be resourced to the level needed due to their other competing workloads. Senior Supplier support for the project team was valued.

The Procurement phase was considered to have been well-structured but guidance on what was required had often been provided at too short notice. It was stressed that this needed to be addressed for implementation phase.

Implementation (including Business as Usual)

Scores against the Implementation element were low with some assessors believing that this work also had not yet started. This was considered to be a crucial omission and the Project Manager was requested to further develop the implementation plan before completing the procurement phase of the project.

Conclusions

Using the Major Project Governance Assessment Toolkit delivered significant value to the project and highlighted a number of high priority actions. The number of responses received as well as their content provided valuable information and feedback covering perceptions, immediate priorities and longer term objectives. This structured engagement with key stakeholders undoubtedly identified concerns that may not have been revealed until much later in the project when the remedial costs would be much higher.

The Project Executive recognised the value of the assessment and identified a number of priority actions for the project team, Project Board and User Group. These are now being progressed. The next governance assessment has been scheduled for the beginning of the implementation project in March 2014.

Acknowledgements

Mark Ritchie, the Deputy Director of IS Applications and Head of Project Services at the University of Edinburgh, is the lead author for this document. The governance assessment toolkit was originally developed by Nigel Paul and Jeff Haywood, from the University of Edinburgh, with specialist input from William Harrod of Valuta. The toolkit has been extended and enhanced by Information Services through its use on major information technology projects at the University of Edinburgh over the last five years.

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Susan McKeown	Programme and Project Manager, University of Edinburgh
Nigel Paul	Vice Principal and Director of Corporate Services, University of Edinburgh
Bob Ruxton	Internal Audit, University of Edinburgh
Jamie Thin	Team and Portfolio Manager, University of Edinburgh
Pauline Woods-Wilson	Head of Project Management and Planning, Lancaster University

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