Gateway review guidebook
for project owners and review teams

Acknowledgement

Gateway reviews

In 2001, the United Kingdom's Office of Government Commerce (OGC) developed and implemented the OGC Gateway™ Process (Gateway) for application across major government programs and projects.

A Gateway review is a short, independent review of a program or project undertaken at key decision points in the program or project's lifecycle. Reviews are undertaken to identify opportunities that improve program or project delivery to ensure the best possible outcome. The benefits lie in the review team bringing a fresh perspective to identify risks and issues facing the program or project, thereby avoiding unnecessary costs.

The review is undertaken on behalf of the project owner—the person accountable for the success of the program or project. The review team comprises a mix of government and private sector individuals who have expertise in the relevant professional fields and issues facing the program or project. The review is conducted in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration between the review team and the project team.

The Queensland Government has endorsed the use of Gateway for major infrastructure programs and projects.

This document provides project owners and review teams with guidance on the Gateway process and their roles. It forms part of a suite of documents and should be read in conjunction with other relevant Gateway documents.

The Gateway process consists of six reviews (or gates) which are undertaken at the following stages of a program or project.

Gate 0: Strategic assessment (program level)

Gate 0 involves a review of an entire program together with its constituent projects. It investigates the direction and planned outcomes of the program, together with the progress of its constituent projects. It can be repeated at key decision points throughout the life of the program.

Gate 1: Preliminary evaluation

Gate 1 focuses on the preliminary business case including details on the strategic importance of the project and its links to government and organisational policy and programs.

Gate 2: Readiness for market

Gate 2 investigates the final business case and procurement strategy before any formal approaches are made to prospective suppliers or partners.

Gate 3: Investment decision

Gate 3 focuses on the updated final business case and confirms that project is still required, affordable and achievable.

Gate 4: Readiness for service

Gate 4 focuses on the readiness of the agency to transition from project delivery to the live environment.

Gate 5: Benefits realisation

Gate 5 confirms the desired benefits of the project are being achieved and business changes are operating smoothly. This review can be repeated at regular intervals during the lifetime of the new service or facility.

Benefits of the Gateway process

Gateway reviews provide independent guidance to project owners, their teams and commissioning agencies by identifying risks and issues that may impact delivery.

Gateway reviews take advantage of the experience and expertise of government and private sector individuals who are independent of the agency, program or project. They provide a valuable and alternative perspective on the risks and issues confronting the project team while challenging the robustness of existing plans and processes.

For project owners, Gateway reviews provide a valuable perspective on the issues facing the program or project and achieving business aims by helping ensure:

• programs or projects are ready to progress to the next stage of development or implementation

• all stakeholders fully understand both the current status and issues involved

• appropriate skills and experience are deployed on the program or project

• procurement is well managed in order to provide value for money

• realistic time and cost targets are developed and achieved.

For the Queensland Government, these benefits translate into the following key outcomes:

• reduced project cost and time overruns

• improved alignment of programs or projects with government strategic objectives

• increased investment confidence in government projects

• improved knowledge and skills across government staff through participation in reviews.

Gateway reviews as part of the overall delivery framework

Every agency will have its own structures and resources for carrying out internal reviews, health checks and audits of its activities, including programs or projects.

A Gateway review is not a substitute for a rigorous governance framework that manages an agency's key processes including:

• business planning

• investment appraisal and business case management (including benefits management)

• program and project management

• risk management

• procurement and acquisition

• service and contract management.

Gateway reviews provide a snapshot view of the progress of a program or project at a point in time and, therefore, should complement internal processes, not replace them.

Program or project

A program is about managing change, with a strategic vision and a map of how to get there. It should deal with uncertainty about achieving the desired outcomes.

A program approach should be flexible and capable of accommodating changing circumstances such as opportunities or risks materialising. It coordinates delivery of the range of work—including projects—needed to achieve outcomes and benefits throughout the life of the program.

Program reviews are carried out under Gate 0: Strategic assessment. A program will generally undergo three or more Gate 0 reviews: an early review, one or more reviews at key decision points during the course of the program, and a final review at the conclusion of the program.

A project has a definite start and finish date, a clearly defined output, a well defined development path, and a defined set of financial and other resources allocated to it. Benefits are achieved after the project has finished, and the project plans should include activities to plan, measure and assess the benefits achieved by the project.

Project reviews are carried out under Gates 1–5. Typically a project will undergo all five of these reviews during its lifecycle—three before commitment to invest and two looking at service implementation and confirmation of the operational benefits. Project reviews can be repeated as necessary depending on the size, scope and complexity of the project.

Each of these reviews is described in the appropriate Gateway review workbook.

Criteria for Gateway reviews

Programs or projects may be nominated for a Gateway review by:

- project owners completing a risk profile model and forwarding it to the Gateway unit, Queensland Treasury and Trade
- agency Directors-General or Ministers
- as part of the program or project approval process.

The Gateway unit, Queensland Treasury and Trade may also approach project owners to discuss the benefits of undertaking a review.

The risk profile model can be downloaded at
www.treasury.qld.gov.au/clients/government/gateway-review-process.shtml

The wider context of the Gateway process

| Policy design | Policy implementation | Policy maintenance | Policy review |

Lesson learned

Program

Project

GATE 0 — First program review

GATE 0 — Mid-stage program review/s

GATE 0 — Final program review

Define program

Execute program

Close program

Develop preliminary business case

Develop final business case and procurement strategy

Conduct competitive procurement

Award and implement contract

Manage facility/contract

Closure

GATE 1 — Preliminary evaluation

GATE 2 — Readiness for market

GATE 3 — Investment decision

GATE 4 — Readiness for service

GATE 5 — Benefits realisation

Lesson learned

Who is involved in a Gateway review

The success of a Gateway review relies on the cooperation, mutual trust and understanding between the project owner (and project team), Gateway unit and review team.

The roles and responsibilities of participants in the Gateway process are:

Project owner

The project owner is responsible for the overall business change that is being supported by the program or project. The project owner is accountable for the success of the program or project and is responsible for ensuring it meets its objectives and delivers the benefits. The project owner may also be called the senior responsible owner.

The Gateway review is undertaken on a confidential basis for the project owner. During the review process the project owner is responsible for:

- initiating the review process by contacting the Gateway unit and subsequently completing and forwarding the risk profile model
- ensuring the project team and all other stakeholders fully support and work cooperatively and collaboratively with the review team during the review
- working with the review team leader and the Gateway unit to ensure the review logistics, including the interview schedule and project documentation are arranged
- attending the assessment and planning meetings
- ensuring adequate facilities are made available to the review team during the review.

The review team interviews the project owner early in the review process and will also update them at the end of each day of the review. On the final day of the review, the review team presents the draft review report to the project owner.

The project owner has approximately one week to advise the review team leader of any errors of fact in the report. The project owner is then accountable for the implementation of any of the recommended actions and any dissemination of the review report.

Note: The Gateway unit will usually request the project owner nominate a person from the project team to liaise with the unit to organise the review's interview schedule and project documentation—the Gateway coordinator.

Gateway unit

The Gateway unit's primary responsibilities include development and management of the Gateway process.

The Gateway unit oversees the management of Gateway by:

- maintaining and continually improving Gateway processes, guidance material and resources to meet the requirements of Queensland program or project delivery

- managing and coordinating Gateway reviews

- assessing, accrediting and maintaining a Gateway reviewer database including a training program

- communicating the requirements of Gateway to agencies and assisting in participation in Gateway reviews

- maintaining a lessons learned framework to analyse and consolidate review recommendations and disseminate across government to improve whole-of-government program or project delivery.

In respect to facilitating Gateway reviews, the Gateway unit:

- liaises with the project owner and project team regarding the project status, timing of the review and skills required of the Gateway review team

- assembles the Gateway review team

- assists the project team with the logistical and administrative arrangements for the review

- ensures that the administrative and procedural requirements of Gateway reviews are met, such as organising the planning meeting

- compiles generic lessons learned from the review report

- collates feedback on the review and the Gateway process from project owners and the review team.

Review team

The Gateway review team is made up of individuals from outside the agency, program or project and are selected for their relevant experience and expertise for that stage of the program or project.

The review team leader and members are contracted through the Gateway unit. Review team members are expected to be available for the entire review, as well as the planning meeting, and will be required to confirm this at the time of their selection.

The review team leader has primary responsibility for coordinating the activities of the review team and is the key point of contact for the Gateway unit and the project owner in planning the review. The review team leader chairs the planning meeting and conducts any subsequent discussions around review planning.

During the review, the responsibilities of the review team leader and review team members are to:

- complete the review in the specified time

- inform the project owner on a daily basis of the status of the review and any emerging findings

- work cooperatively and collaboratively with all review stakeholders

- provide advice and/or guidance to the project owner on possible options to address issues identified

- on the final day of the review, present the draft report to the project owner on the overall findings and recommendations.

Within one week after the review, the review team leader will liaise with the project owner to finalise the report.

The review team is bound by confidentiality agreements signed ahead of the review and is required to destroy all notes, project documentation and electronic copies of the report once it is finalised.

Becoming a review team member

The selection of an appropriately skilled and experienced Gateway review team is critical to the success and effectiveness of Gateway reviews. Reviewers need to demonstrate a high level of skills and experience in one or more of the following areas:

- project management
- business analysis
- procurement
- operations
- specialists with professional backgrounds such as financial analysis and law
- managing business change.

If you are interested in becoming an accredited Gateway reviewer, you will need to complete:

- a one day review team member training course
- complete a nomination form and forward with your curriculum vitae to the Gateway unit.

The nomination form can be downloaded at www.treasury.qld.gov.au/clients/government/gateway-review-process.shtml

How a Gateway review works

A Gateway review can de defined by three distinct phases of activity—initiation, planning and review.

Initiation	Planning	Review
Risk profile model	Review team selection	Review
	Review logistics	Report
Assessment meeting	Planning meeting	360° feedback
Timing		
8 weeks		0 weeks

In order for a review to provide a project owner with timely and relevant advice, a review should be held prior to a decision point being reached. For example a Gate 2: Readiness for Market review should occur prior to finalising the business case and before it is submitted for approval. This enables recommendations from the review to be addressed before the business case is finalised.

The project owner (or project director or manager) should contact the Gateway unit approximately eight weeks prior to the program or project requiring a review so that dates for the planning meeting and review can be agreed.

Initiation

A Gateway review is initiated by the project owner completing a risk profile model which provides information on the program or project including its inherent level of risk.

The risk profile model can be downloaded at www.treasury.qld.gov.au/clients/government/gateway-review-process.shtml. Upon completion, it is forwarded to the Gateway unit, Queensland Treasury and Trade.

The Gateway unit will assess the risk profile model and contact the project owner to arrange the assessment meeting which will confirm the need and timing for the review.

The assessment meeting is attended by the project owner, project manager and Gateway unit.

The meeting enables the Gateway unit to gather information for the review including:

• dates for the planning meeting and review, based on project timelines

• skills and experience required for the review team

• identification of key stakeholders for interviews

• project documentation that will be available for review.

Experience shows organising interviews and documentation is the biggest challenge of any review. To assist with this, the project owner nominates a Gateway coordinator (who should attend the assessment meeting) to work with the project manager and liaise with the Gateway unit to organise the review.

The assessment meeting is held eight weeks prior to the review.

Planning

After the assessment meeting, the Gateway unit selects the review team in consultation with the project owner. During the planning phase the Gateway unit liaises with the project manager and Gateway coordinator to discuss the review needs including:

• finalising logistics for the planning meeting and review, including meeting rooms and support

• collating the project documentation available for the review team ahead of the planning meeting

• developing the interview schedule.

The review team leader may contact the project owner and other review team members to discuss the review. As organising interviews is often the biggest challenge of a review, it is recommended dates are confirmed with key interviewees as early as possible.

The planning meeting is held two weeks ahead of the review to finalise review arrangements and to brief the review team. It normally takes around half a day and is attended by the project owner, project manager, Gateway coordinator, Gateway unit and review team members.

The objectives of the planning meeting are to:

• establish a common understanding of review approach

• establish a code of conduct to be observed during the review

• establish a common understanding of the current status of the program or project

• identify core issues on which the review team will focus

• confirm stakeholders to be interviewed and the interview schedule

• finalise the review logistics (such as review venue and site visits)

• identify remaining project documentation to be provided to the review team prior to the review.

The review team normally meets for the first time on the morning of the planning meeting to discuss their initial views of the program or project. All review team members attend the planning meeting and prepare for it in advance by perusing documentation forwarded by the program or project. The full list of documents to be reviewed will be finalised at the planning meeting.

The review team uses the time between the planning meeting and the review as reading time to gain a better understanding of the program or project prior to the Gateway review.

Review

The Gateway review normally takes three to four days. During this time the review team undertakes the stakeholder interviews in accordance with the interview schedule.

The project owner is interviewed on the first morning of the review and at the end of each day the review team updates the project owner on the progress of the review.

On the final day, the review team presents the project owner with a draft review report. This report includes the findings of the review and provides recommendations on how to improve delivery of the program or project.

The project owner has one week to advise the review team leader of any errors of fact in the report before it is finalised.

The review report is given an overall status of red, amber or green (RAG status) for the program or project. Each recommendation also has a RAG status to indicate its relative urgency.

Red	To achieve success the program or project should take action immediately. It means fix the key problems fast, not stop the project.
Amber	The program or project should go forward with actions on recommendations to be carried out before the next Gateway review.
Green	The program or project is on target to succeed but may benefit from the uptake of the recommendations.

In instances where a program or project receives two consecutive reports with an overall red status, the Gateway process provides that a letter from the Gateway unit's agency to the Director-General of the program or project's agency is automatically triggered.

After the review

The review report is finalised within one week of the review. The only output from the review is the review report. Two copies of the report are produced, one for the project owner and one for the Gateway unit. The project owner is responsible for disseminating the report. The Gateway unit's copy is used to compile generic lessons learned across all reviews.

The review team is bound by confidentiality agreements signed ahead of the review and is required to destroy all notes, project documentation and electronic copies of the report once it is finalised.

Subsequent to the review, the project owner, review team leader and review team members will be requested to provide feedback to the Gateway unit to help it coordinate future review teams and Gateway reviews.

What effect does a Gateway review have on the project?

The Gateway unit meets all direct costs of a review, including the cost of procuring private sector reviewers. The program or project contributes the time of team members to the review. This is likely to include interviews with the project owner, project manager, and perhaps key project personnel. If advisors or contractors have been appointed, their key personnel involved in the program or project may also be interviewed.

The program or project arranges the interview schedules, collates and provides documentation and arranges the appropriate facilities (such as meeting rooms and catering) for the review team during the review. The program or project may also need to facilitate a site visit.

Tailoring the Gateway review

Workbooks have been prepared for each Gateway review. The workbooks provide further guidance on:

- the structure of each review

- the areas of investigation and topics to be explored

- examples of the types of evidence the review team will be seeking.

The following provides a summary of the purpose of each type of Gateway review.

Gate 0
Strategic Assessment

Gate 0 involves a review of an entire program together with its constituent projects. It investigates the direction and planned outcomes of the program, together with the progress of its constituent projects. It can be repeated at key decision points throughout the life of the program. This involves:

- reviewing the outcomes and objectives for the program (and the way they fit together) and confirming that they make the necessary contribution to the overall strategy of the agency and its senior management

- ensuring that the program is supported by key stakeholders

- confirming that the program's potential to succeed has been considered in the wider context of Queensland Government policy and procurement objectives, the agency's delivery plans and change programs, and any interdependencies with other programs or projects in the agency's portfolio and, where relevant, those of other agencies

- reviewing the arrangements for leading, managing and monitoring the program as a whole and the links to individual parts (such as to any existing projects in the program's portfolio)

- reviewing the arrangements for identifying and managing the main program risks (and the individual project risks), including external risks such as changing business priorities

- checking that provisions for financial and other resources have been made for the program (initially identified at program initiation and committed later) and that plans for the work to be done through to the next stage are realistic, properly resourced with sufficient people of appropriate experience, and authorised

- after the initial review, checking progress against plans and the expected achievement of outcomes

- checking that there is engagement with the market as appropriate on the feasibility of achieving the required outcome

- where relevant, checking that the program takes account of joining up with other programs, internal and external

- evaluating actions taken to implement recommendations made in any earlier assessment of deliverability.

Gate 1
Preliminary evaluation

Gate 1 focuses on the preliminary business case including details on the strategic importance of the project and its links to government and organisational policy and programs. This involves:

- confirming that the preliminary business case (or similar document) is robust—that is, in principle it meets business need, is affordable, achievable, with appropriate options explored and likely to achieve value for money

- confirming that appropriate expert advice has been obtained as necessary to identify and analyse potential options

- establishing that a feasibility study has been completed satisfactorily, where necessary, and that there is a preferred way forward, developed in dialogue with the market, where appropriate

- confirming that the market's likely interest has been considered

- ensuring that there is internal and external authority, if required, and support for the project

- ensuring that the major risks have been identified and outline risk management plans have been developed

- establishing that the project is likely to deliver its business goals and that it supports wider business change, where applicable

- confirming that the scope and requirements specifications are realistic, clear and unambiguous

- ensuring that the full scale, intended outcomes, timescales and impact of relevant external issues have been considered

- ensuring that the desired benefits have been clearly identified at a high level, together with measures of success and a measurement approach

- ensuring that there are plans for the next stage

- confirming planning assumptions and that the project team can deliver the next stage

- confirming that overarching and internal business and technical strategies have been taken into account

- establishing that quality plans for the project and its deliverables are in place

- confirming that the project is aligned with the objectives and deliverables of the program and/or the organisational business strategy to which it contributes, if appropriate

- evaluating actions taken to implement recommendations made in any earlier assessment of deliverability.

Gate 2
Readiness for market

Gate 2 investigates the final business case and procurement strategy before any formal approaches are made to prospective suppliers or partners. This involves:

- confirming the business case (or similar document) now that the project is fully defined

- confirming that the objectives and desired outputs of the project are still aligned with the program to which it contributes

- ensuring that the delivery strategy is robust and appropriate

- ensuring that the project's plan through to completion is appropriately detailed and realistic, including any contract management strategy

- ensuring that the project controls and organisation are defined, financial controls are in place and the resources are available

- confirming funding availability for the whole project

- confirming that the development and delivery approach and mechanisms are still appropriate and manageable

- if appropriate, checking that the supplier market capability and track record are fully understood (or existing supplier's capability and performance) and that there will be an adequate competitive response for the market to the requirement

- confirming that the project will facilitate good client/supplier relationships in accordance with any relevant Queensland Government initiatives

- confirming that appropriate project performance measures and tools are being used

- confirming there are plans for risk management, issue management (business and technical) and that these plans will be shared with suppliers and/or delivery partners

- confirming that quality procedures have been applied consistently since the previous review

- for construction projects, confirming compliance with health, safety and sustainability requirements

- for ICT-enabled projects, confirming compliance with ICT information security requirements and ICT standards

- confirming that internal organisational resources and capabilities will be available as required for the future phase of the project

- confirming that the stakeholders support the project and are committed to its success

- evaluating actions taken to implement recommendations made in any earlier assessment of deliverability.

Gate 3
Investment decision

Gate 3 focuses on the updated final business case and confirms the project is still required, affordable and achievable. This involves:

- confirming the final business case and benefits plan now that the relevant information has been verified from potential suppliers and/or delivery partners

- confirming that the objectives and desired outputs of the project are still aligned with the program to which it contributes and/or the wider organisational business strategy

- checking that all the necessary statutory and procedural requirements were followed throughout the procurement/evaluation process

- confirming that the recommended contract decision, if properly executed within a standard lawful agreement (where appropriate), is likely to deliver the specified outputs/outcomes on time, within budget and provide value for money

- ensuring that management controls are in place to manage the project through to completion, including contract management aspects

- ensuring there is continuing support for the project

- confirming that the approved delivery strategy has been followed

- confirming that the development and implementation plans of both the client and the supplier or partner are sound and achievable

- checking that the business has prepared for the development (where there are new processes), implementation, transition and operation of new services or facilities and that all relevant staff are being (or will be) prepared for the business change involved

- confirming that there are plans for risk management, issues management and change management (technical and business) and that these plans are shared with suppliers and delivery partners

- confirming that the technical implications (such as buildability for construction projects, information assurance, security and the impact of e-government frameworks for ICT-enabled projects), have been addressed

- evaluating actions taken to implement recommendations made in any earlier assessment of deliverability.

Gate 4
Readiness for service

Gate 4 focuses on the readiness of the agency to transition from project delivery to the live environment. This involves:

- checking that the current phase of the contract is properly completed

- ensuring that the contractual arrangements are up to date

- checking that the final business case is still valid and unaffected by internal and external events or changes

- checking that the original projected business benefit is likely to be achieved

- ensuring that there are processes and procedures to ensure long-term success of the project

- confirming that all necessary testing is done (such as commissioning of buildings, business integration and user acceptance testing) to the client's satisfaction and that the client is ready to approve implementation

- checking there are feasible and tested business contingency, continuity and reversion arrangements

- ensuring all ongoing risks and issues are being managed effectively and do not threaten implementation

- evaluating the risk of proceeding with the implementation where there are any unresolved issues

- confirming the business has the necessary resources and that it is ready to implement the services and the business change

- confirming that the client and supplier implementation plans are still achievable

- confirming that there are management and organisational controls to manage the project through implementation and operation

- confirming that contract management arrangements are in place to manage the operational phase of the contract

- confirming that arrangements are in place for handover of the project from the project owner to the operational business owner

- confirming that all parties have agreed plans for training, communication, roll-out, production, release and support, as required

- confirming that all parties have agreed plans for managing risk

- confirming plans are in place for managing working relationships with clients, with reporting arrangements at appropriate levels in the organisation, reciprocated on the supplier side

- confirming information assurance accreditation or certification

- confirming that defects or incomplete works are identified and recorded

- checking that lessons for future projects are identified and recorded

- evaluating actions taken to implement recommendations made in any earlier assessment of deliverability.

Gate 5
Benefits realisation

Gate 5 confirms the desired benefits of the project are being achieved and business changes are operating smoothly. This review can be repeated at regular intervals during the lifetime of the new service or facility. This involves:

- assessing whether the business case justification for the project is still realistic

- confirming that there is still a business need for the investment

- assessing whether the benefits anticipated at this stage are actually being delivered

- assessing the effectiveness of the ongoing contract management processes

- confirming that the client continues to have the necessary resources to manage the contract successfully

- confirming continuity of key personnel involved in contract management or informed purchaser roles

- where changes have been agreed, checking that they do not compromise the original delivery strategy

- assessing the ongoing requirement for the contract to meet business need. Ensuring that if circumstances have changed, the service delivery and contract are adapting to the new situation. Changing circumstances could affect partner management, relationship management, service management, change management, contract management, benefits management and performance management

- checking that there is ongoing contract development to improve value for money

- confirming that there are plans to manage the contract to its conclusion

- where applicable, confirming the validity of exit strategy and arrangements for re-tendering

- evaluating actions taken to implement recommendations made in any earlier assessment of deliverability

- assessing lessons learned and methodology for sharing with peers and across government.

Further information

The following documents have been developed to provide further information on the Gateway review process:

- Gateway review process overview
- Gateway review process guidebook for project owners and review teams
- Gate 0: Strategic assessment
- Gate 1: Preliminary evaluation
- Gate 2: Readiness for market
- Gate 3: Investment decision
- Gate 4: Readiness for service
- Gate 5: Benefits realisation

Further information is available on the Queensland Treasury and Trade website
www.treasury.qld.gov.au/clients/government/gateway-review-process.shtml

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