THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Steering Committee guidance

Project Governance Office

Steering Committee Background

- What is a Steering Committee?

- When do I need one?

- What are the responsibilities for members?

The Role of a Steering Committee involves:

• Senior stakeholders who provide <u>direction and support</u> to the project team and make <u>decisions</u> outside of the project team's authority.

The common make up of a Steering Committee is:

• Project Sponsor – accountable for overall project success and stewardship
• Project Owner – responsible that project deliverables enable full benefits realisation
• Key Stakeholder representation(s) e.g., relevant Division/School/Faculty/Institute - advisory from an 'end-user' and key stakeholder perspective
• Subject Matter Expert(s) e.g., central division representatives – expert advisory and enterprise level perspective

Attending Steering Committee meetings (not a member):

Project Manager – responsible for adequate project planning and delivery

When to have a Steering Committee

Sponsors of projects and programs that meet the following criteria should consider having steering committees as a key element of their governance structure:

1. Large (in terms of investment amount and/or scope of work)
2. Complex (involving multiple variables/factors such as UQ areas, internal/external stakeholders, technical complexities)
3. Of long duration
4. Is being executed in a complex and/or uncertain environment
5. Execution risk is assessed as high

Once a decision is made that a steering committee is needed, it should be established as early as possible in the project lifecycle.
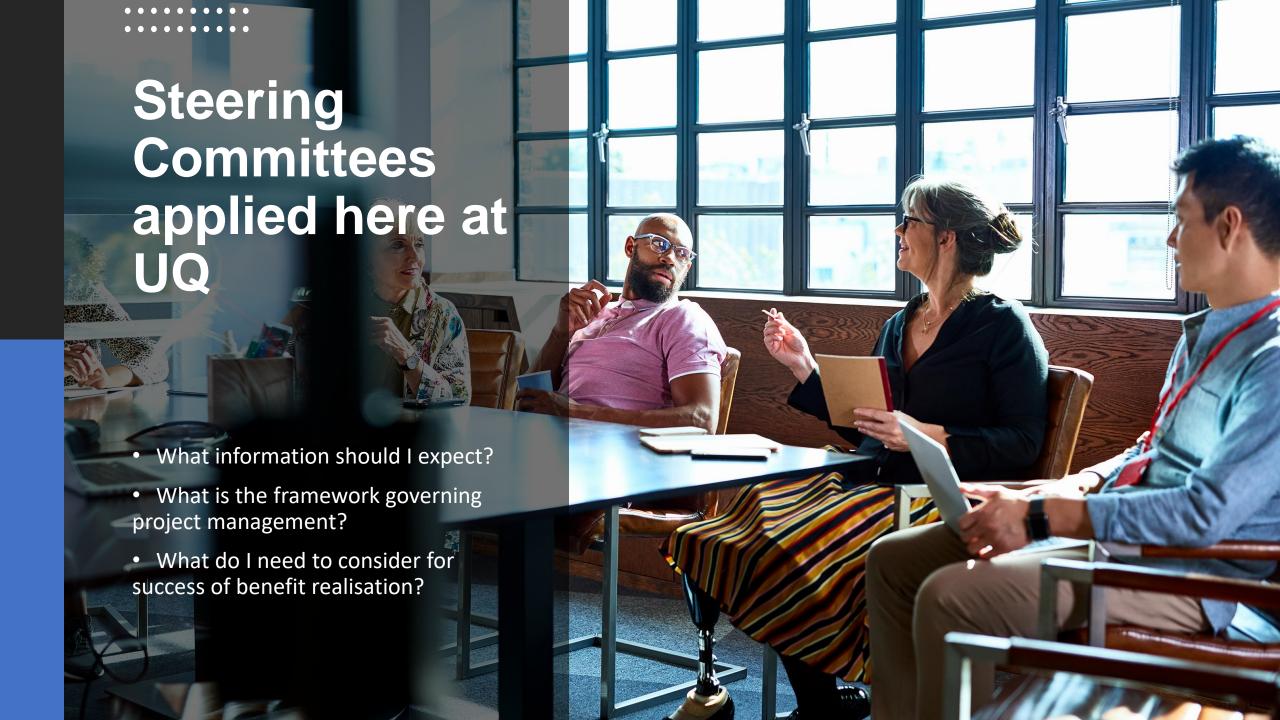
A Steering Committee will need sign off on the Terms of Reference

The Roles and Responsibilities of a Steering Committee

Steering Committees are responsible for:

a. Providing **oversight and direction** to the project/program. That is, assisting the Project Sponsor to govern the project and ensuring the overall **direction** of the project remains on track (as per approved Business Case and Project Management Plan) to deliver the defined outcomes and benefits.

b. **Reviewing** key proposals, make **decisions** on, or **endorsing** recommendations for **approval** by the appropriate delegate (financial and contract delegations to be exercised as per UQ's Delegations Framework).

c. **Approving** the performance and risk thresholds/tolerances for the program or project and defining the acceptable risk profile.

d. **Monitoring** the performance of the project or program including management of resources, risks, issues and compliance obligations.

e. **Advising** and **providing support** to the Project Owner, Project Manager and the project team.

f. Under direction from the Project Sponsor, **providing guidance** to resolve issues and risks that cannot be resolved at project level or that have major implications for the project/program.

g. **Help resolve** any disputes involving the Project Manager and the project stakeholders.

Steering Committees applied here at UQ

- What information should I expect?

- What is the framework governing project management?

- What do I need to consider for success of benefit realisation?

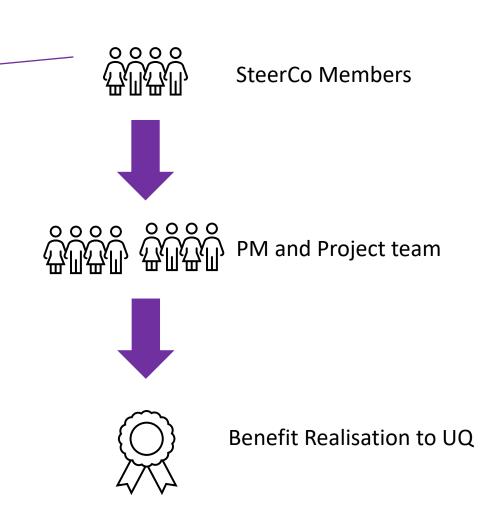# What the Project Manager must provide the Steering Committee

Inputs From PM	Analysis, Review and oversight by SteerCo	Outputs from SteerCo
Completion of Terms of Reference (ToR) for SteerCo approval	Review and agree on contents of ToR	Approval of ToR
Completion of Project Proposal	Review and agree on Project Proposal	Approval of Project Proposal
Completion of Business Case	Review and agree to endorse for submission to appropriate Governance Committees (CMG, Senate)	Approval and Endorsement to submit to CMG and Senate (if required) for project funding approval
Completion of Benefit Realisation Plan (BRP)	Review and Agree on BRP	Approval of BRP
Project Variation requests	Scrutinise, review and agree that variations are acceptable – focus on project benefits impacts (scale and timing)	Approval or decline of variation requests
SteerCo report - includes: • delivery report – that covers performance criteria and tolerances, • risks and issues logs, • financial status; approved budget vs actuals, commitments and forecast costs, • actions log, • decisions log, • Project Schedule including expected benefit realisation • Dependency monitoring, resource monitoring with identification of constraints • etc	• Oversee and analyse received reports and ask for clarifications, interpret and question project impacts, • Monitor accurate and timely implementation by PM of agreed actions • Challenge any (potential) impacts to Benefit realisation, • Support the PM and delivery team	Minutes taken, actions recorded, and action plans assigned and delivered in time for follow up dates

SteerCo member Due Diligence as a control

What Due Diligence looks like in terms of Planning:

- Project objectives/scope
  - Alignment with UQ's Strategic Plans
  - Business process re-engineering – clarity on business requirements and Target Operating Model
  - Future proofing
- Project Benefits
  - Are they logically aligned with the benefit targets?
  - Are they specific to the project deliverable and measurable?
  - Have baseline measures been established?
- Does the cost justify the benefit?
  - Sweet spot; basic functionality vs gold-plated
  - Short term pain can be long term gain; capex vs opex
- Is the team appropriately resourced with relevant budget provided for?
  - Business process re-engineering informing design
  - BAU staff back up – representatives of project owner team and key stakeholders; process design, operating procedures/PDs/guidelines, training, user acceptance testing
  - Change management critical for project outcomes to deliver forecast benefits
- Scheduling constraints; BAU staff, technical staff, 3rd parties
- Risk management plan; project delivery + benefits realisation

SteerCo Members

PM and Project team

Benefit Realisation to UQ

8

Due Diligence as a control as SteerCo member (cont.)

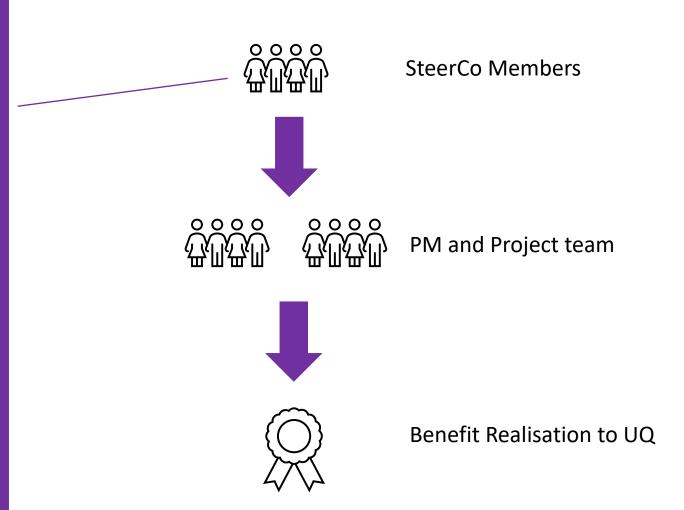**What Due Diligence looks like in terms of execution:**

Monitoring of delivery
- Is the project on track to meet its benefit realisation targets?
- I expect that Delivery adheres to the approved Project Management Plan
- Do I receive the appropriate reports from the Project Manager to meet my due diligence oversight obligations; do I get the right information?
- There was an agreed action in last month' SteerCo, therefore I expect the action is completed by the due date

Change Management
- Do I need to champion this project more to help deliver and achieve the benefits?
- Are the SME's either committed to the project or being utilised
- Do I know what my Target Operating Model will look like and do I know how I'm going to achieve my TOM?

Support of Project Team
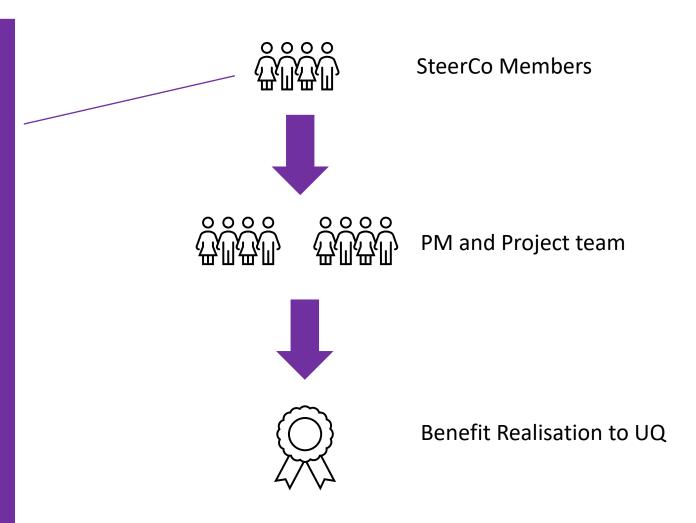- I demand accountability from my Project Manager, and I support them to get back on track

SteerCo Members

PM and Project team

Benefit Realisation to UQ

Due Diligence as a control as SteerCo member (cont.)

What Due Diligence looks like in terms of Benefit Realisation :

- What are the key risks and issues that could hinder benefit realisation? Have these been accurately identified and assessed?
- Is the Change Management Plan aligned to my Benefits Realisation plan?
- Will the action plans to mitigate risks and resolve issues help us achieve benefit realisation?
- I expect scope is met to the agreed standard
- I expect project delivery time is met to the agreed schedule
- The project owner is ready to transition the project outcomes into their BAU operations – target operating model successfully implemented:
  - Change management investment is critical
- I want confidence from my project manager that project deliverables are achievable and the forecast benefits will be realised

SteerCo Members

PM and Project team

Benefit Realisation to UQ

Steering Committee members' key considerations and focus areas

Project Sponsor

Key considerations: Return on UQ's Investment
* I steer the project towards successful delivery to realise forecast benefits and achieve a good return on UQ's investment

* I champion the project UQ-wide

"Has the project considered Change Management and do I need to champion this change?"

"Is the project staying true to its original objectives?"

"Are stakeholders playing their part in supporting the delivery team?"

"How do project variation requests increase risk to full benefit realisation?"

"Where there is considerable scope change, is additional scope a critical part of the solution we are aiming for? Or, is proposed reduction of scope no longer making the return on investment attractive?"

Project Owner

Key considerations: Benefits Realisation

* I need to ensure the system meets our business requirements

* I need to ensure successful integration into my BAU operations to deliver the forecast benefits

"What does my Target Operating Model (TOM) look like and do I have the right staff, budget, operational and governance processes in place to implement?"

"What is my back-up staffing plan to free up key experienced staff to support project planning and delivery?"

"What is the change management plan and is appropriate training provided?"

"What is the transition into operations plan and what are my key thresholds for acceptance?"

"What are my risks to realise the benefits and are my risk mitigations effective and appropriate?"

Project Manager

Key considerations: Successful project delivery
* I will deliver the project to scope, on time, and within budget

* I escalate to SteerCo when project delivery is at risk

"Do my reports to the SteerCo provide them with sufficient information to enable adequate project oversight and informed decision making?"

"What issues and risks do I need to escalate to SteerCo to resolve, approve, or receive counsel on?"

"Do I need more support from SteerCo members to champion the project in the relevant UQ communities?"

11

Examples of SteerCo Due Diligence in working projects

Subject Matter Experts (SMEs):

Key considerations: Enterprise Value and Compliance
* I advise on best practice and compliance obligations

* I monitor the project's integration/alignment, impacts, risks, and opportunities at enterprise level

"How does the project impact UQ's risk profile?"

"What systems do we need to integrate with?"

"Are legal and regulatory compliance obligations met e.g., privacy laws?"

"Are data security, cyber security and data governance matters and risks adequately addressed?"

"Who is providing technical support after project implementation?"

"What is the impact on future operational budgets after implementation; e.g., helpdesk services, licence costs, system maintenance and administration?"

Key Stakeholders, including end-users

Key considerations: Will this work? Are we ready?
* I make sure the system design will be effective and workable in UQ's operating environment

* I champion the project to my UQ community, and monitor adequate stakeholder communication and effective change management

"Does the proposed solution makes sense in my operating environment?"

"Are stakeholder communications adequate to inform on project status, prepare for change, and make people excited about the new system (what's in it for them)?"

"Is change management adequately planned for and resourced to minimise operational disruptions and adoption of new way of working is adopted?"

"Is the project disrupting operations, students, staff during implementation and how will this be mitigated?"

Steering Committee resources for good governance

- Checklist for SteerCo members

- Reference to the Project Governance Management Framework

- Additional resources

- Contact information for the PGO

SteerCo Checklist in line with PGMF

Artefact	Project Lifecycle or stage	Importance
Project Proposal	Stage 1	Articulates the proposed project for business case
Business Case	Stage 2	Formal document requesting funding and execution to CMG and Senate
Benefits Realisation Plan and profile	Stage 2	Formal document that outlines the benefit and how it will be realised
Project management Plan	Stage 3	Sign off of the Plan of which the plan can adapt (i.e. variation requests)
Tendering Timeline and guidance	Stage 3	Formal process to ensure UQ is protected under procurement processes
Change Management assessment tools and Impact assessment	Stage 3	Formal process to ensure change plans support benefit realisation
Terms of Reference	Stage 3	Sets the roles, responsibilities and expectations of SteerCo
Performance Criteria and Tolerance Threshold	Stage 4	Guidance around how projects are going for oversight and monitoring
Project Variation Request	Stage 4	Formal document Steerco must sign off when a change is scope or additional funding is required
Risk Register	Throughout lifecycle	Formal document to list risks and action plans and owners to mitigate risks
Risk Matrix	Throughout lifecycle	Formal diagram to show the key risks to the project

Additional Resources

https://governance-risk.uq.edu.au/pgo/resources/forms-templates

https://governance-risk.uq.edu.au/project-governance/reporting

https://governance-risk.uq.edu.au/functions-and-services/pgo

https://blogs.qut.edu.au/qutex/2021/07/12/why-projects-fail-part-2-project-committees/

Who we are

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