

Performance Management Framework

Glossary of Terms

Reference Guide

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Introduction

Purpose

This Glossary of Terms (the Glossary) establishes a common language for planning, measuring and monitoring performance and public reporting. It also captures terms used in risk management and evaluation.

Application

The Glossary is relevant to all Queensland Government departments and statutory bodies.

In most cases, the term 'agency' is used in this glossary to refer to departments and statutory bodies. When necessary, an indication is made if specific sections apply to departments only or statutory bodies only.

Some definitions within the Glossary have been taken from Queensland Treasury publications — *A Guide to Risk Management* and the *Queensland Government Program Evaluation Guidelines*. The designation of 'QT' (Guide to Risk Management) and 'QT1' (Evaluation Guidelines) identifies these definitions within the Glossary.

Further refinement of definitions of common terms will continue to occur. Agencies are encouraged to use the common terms consistently, for example, in published documents and internal conversations/communications.

Terms in dark grey text indicates that the term is defined in the Glossary.

accountability	<p>Accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for governance and the obligation to report and justify resulting consequences.</p> <p>The extent to which individuals or organisations are held responsible for achieving particular results and for the management of capabilities used.</p> <p>An expansive definition of accountability can be found in the <i>Public Sector Ethics Act 2004</i>.</p>
accountable officer	<p>The chief executive of a department of government declared under the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i>, section 16, is the accountable officer of the department (<i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i>, section 65). In Queensland Government departments, most accountable officers/chief executives are referred to as a Director-General.</p>
activity	<p>An element of service delivery. It may be a task or a set of tasks to be completed. An activity has a finite duration and will result in one or more deliverables. An activity will generally have cost and resource requirements.</p>
agency	<p>Used generically to refer to the various organisational units within Government that deliver services or otherwise contribute to the achievement of Government objectives. For the purposes of the Performance Management Framework, the term includes departments and statutory bodies.</p>
agency business direction	<p>An agency's strategic direction that aligns with the whole-of-Government direction.</p>
agency objective	<p>See objectives.</p>
agency service delivery	<p>Agencies deliver services to customers using products, engagements, capabilities and processes, and improve service provision through managing projects and programs to effect changes.</p>
annual report	<p>A published report on the operations of the agency during the financial year, as prescribed by the <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> (section 63).</p>
Cabinet	<p>The <i>Constitution of Queensland 2001</i> provides for a Cabinet consisting of the Premier and a number of other Ministers, to a maximum total of 19 Ministers. Cabinet is the supreme decision-making body of the Government in matters such as initiating or refining new Government policies, making senior appointments, approving Government expenditure and assenting to important contracts.</p>
Cabinet Budget Review Committee (CBRC)	<p>The CBRC has a primary role of considering matters with financial or budgetary implications for the Government. Initiatives or proposals with a material impact on government services or resourcing must be directed to CBRC in the first instance for consideration. At the direction of the Premier or Cabinet, CBRC may also consider other issues that require dedicated or longer-term scrutiny or otherwise might best be considered in the committee environment.</p> <p>CBRC has a membership of four Ministers, with the Premier and Treasurer as standing members along with two rotational senior Ministers occupying the positions for generally one year.</p>
capabilities	<p>Resources of an agency (including human, financial, information, physical assets and ICT) that are used to their maximum potential for efficient and effective service delivery.</p>

Chief Executive (CE) Performance Agreement	Departmental chief executives are required to enter into a performance agreement with the relevant Minister at their substantive appointment and annually thereafter. The agreement is the means by which the chief executive is held accountable for the delivery of the department's strategic plan .
code of conduct	<p>The purpose of a code of conduct is to provide standards of conduct for public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials, consistent with the ethics principles and values.</p> <p>A code of conduct is required under the <i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i>. The <i>Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service</i> applies to all Queensland public service agencies, and can also be supported by an agency-specific Standard of Practice.</p>
compliance	The degree to which an agency adheres to (acts in accordance with) legislation, regulation, policy and standards set by government, agency or industry.
cross jurisdictional commitments	Agreements with other governments to deliver or work towards a particular shared outcome .
customer	<p>Person or organisation that receives a service. Note that a customer can be internal or external to the organisation.</p> <p>Synonyms include: client, consumer, end user, resident, retailer, beneficiary and purchaser.</p>
data dictionary	A tool that is used to document the purpose of a measure, alignment of the measure to agency and whole-of-Government objectives, data collection, calculation methodology and reporting requirements.
department	An administrative arrangement where the entity has been declared to be a department by the Governor in Council as defined by the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i> and the <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> . A department may also be a body for which an accountable officer has been appointed (see also public service offices, agency).
direction setting	<p>At the whole-of-Government level, it is the mechanism by which the Government decides on its whole-of-Government direction through consideration of the external drivers. The extent to which the direction is achieved is measured using the Queensland Government Performance Management Framework. Government is held accountable for its performance by customers, stakeholders and the community.</p> <p>At the agency level, it is the mechanism by which an agency decides on its agency business direction through developing objectives which contribute to the whole-of-Government direction. The objectives are described in the agency's strategic plan and the extent to which the outcomes meet the objectives are measured using performance indicators. Accountable officers and statutory bodies are accountable for their agency's performance.</p> <p>At the service level, it is the mechanism by which an agency decides on its service objectives which contribute to its agency business direction. The service objectives are described in agency operational plans and the extent to which the outcomes meet the service objectives are measured using service standards.</p> <p>To be effective, the direction should be collectively understood by governance bodies and ensure buy-in across the entire government or agency through effective communication and engagement.</p>

effectiveness	<p>Effectiveness measures reflect how well the actual outputs of a service achieves the stated purpose (objective) of the service.</p> <p>Also relates to service standard.</p>
efficiency	<p>Efficiency measures reflect how capabilities (resources) are used to produce outputs.</p> <p>Also relates to service standard.</p>
engagement	<p>Interactions, connections and relationships developed between government and its customers and/or stakeholders.</p>
ethics principles	<p>See public sector ethics principles.</p>
evaluation <small>QT1</small>	<p>The systematic, objective post-implementation assessment of the appropriateness, relevancy, process, effectiveness and/or efficiency of a program. Post-implementation evaluation is not disparate to monitoring or assurance. It is likely that monitoring of outputs, processes and outcomes or internal and external assurance functions could either constitute an evaluation or provide valuable input into an evaluation.</p>
external driver	<p>External drivers are factors outside of the government that are likely to influence it or impact on it in some way. These may include customer stakeholder and community expectations and opinions, political commitments and cross-jurisdictional commitments, financial and/or environmental considerations.</p>
fiscal principles	<p>The Government's commitment to maintaining a strong fiscal position for the State, and ensuring the State's asset base supports the current and future service delivery needs.</p>
governance	<p>Governance includes how an organisation is managed, its corporate and other structures, its culture, its policies and strategies and the way it deals with its various stakeholders. The concept encompasses the manner in which public sector organisations acquit their responsibilities of stewardship by being transparent, accountable and prudent in direction setting, decision making (including investment decision making), performance management, risk management and other compliance activities, in providing advice and in managing and delivering services, programs and projects.</p> <p>The <i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019</i> (section 6) describes 'Governance' as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporates the cultural and operational aspects of an agency that are influenced by its actions and decisions • includes the concepts of openness, integrity and accountability; due care; and public defensibility • incorporates the ethics principles for public officials under the <i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i>, section 4 • includes establishing a performance management system, a risk management system and an internal control structure.
government commitments	<p>A pledge by the Government to deliver a particular outcome for its customers, stakeholders and the community (such as, Ministerial charter letter commitments and election commitments).</p>

government targets	<p>Specific, observable and measurable objectives for improvement in key policy areas. Achievement of government targets may require collaboration between multiple government agencies, business and the community.</p> <p>For example, all agencies subject to the Queensland Procurement Policy must contribute to a collective 30% target of government procurement spend by value from Queensland small and medium enterprises (SMEs)</p>
government's objectives for the community	<p>See objectives.</p>
information	<p>Any collection of data that is processed, analysed, interpreted, organised, classified or communicated in order to serve a useful purpose, present facts or represent knowledge in any medium or form. This includes presentation in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, graphical (infographic), cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical form.</p>
initiative	<p>An introductory act or step; a leading action; projects, programs or a recommended course of action collated for analysis and possible incorporation into a forward work plan or portfolio for the organisation.</p> <p>Also see project and program.</p>
investment decision-making	<p>The mechanism by which, at the whole-of-Government or agency level, capabilities are prioritised in order to deliver services which maximise the value to customers, stakeholders and the community.</p>
Machinery-of-Government (MOG) change	<p>Changes to responsibilities of Ministers set out in <i>Administrative Arrangements Orders</i> and/or changes to departmental functions and responsibilities made by the Premier and set out in <i>Department Arrangement Notices</i>.</p>
materiality	<p>The threshold at which omission or misstatement of performance information could influence decision making.</p>
measure	<p>The act or process of gauging performance by ascertaining the extent, dimensions, quantity, etc., of something, especially by comparison with a standard. There are various types of measures employed by agencies to quantify their core business:</p> <p>Activity – measure the number of service instances, service recipients, or other activities for the service. They demonstrate the volume of work being undertaken. They are generally measures of busyness. While not generally demonstrating the achievement of service objectives, activity measures provide a basis for judging whether an agency is contributing to the desired social change of the service being delivered. For example, number of services provided, number of patients screened.</p> <p>Cost – cost of outputs/services produced (direct and/or fully absorbed). Ideally, the outputs are uniform and the cost per unit of output provides an obvious benchmark for measuring performance both over time and between like service providers. However, such uniformity is not always possible. For example, average cost of school per student, average cost of processing application.</p>

Equity – measures how well a **service** is meeting the needs of particular groups that have special needs or difficulties in accessing government services. For example, measures disaggregated by sex, disability status, ethnicity, income and so on. Equity measures focus on any gap in performance between special needs groups and the general population.

Equity indicators may reflect equity of access – all Australians are expected to have appropriate access to services; and equity to outcome – all Australians are expected to achieve appropriate outcomes from service use ([Report on Government Services, 2022, Part A, Section 1](#)).

Input – measures the resources consumed in delivering a **service**, either as an absolute figure or as a percentage of total resources. Input measures demonstrate what it costs to deliver a service. Input measures can often be converted to **efficiency** measures by combining them with activity measures to show the unit cost of the activity. For example, number of inputs, resources, FTEs used to deliver a service.

Location – measures relate to where the **service** is delivered. This is usually as a measure of access and equity for customers in rural remote or targeted locations. For example, percentage of customers in rural areas.

Process – measure throughput, or the means by which the **agency** delivers the **service**, rather than the service itself. They demonstrate how the agency delivers services, rather than how effectively services are delivered. For example, average time for screening service, compliance with medical protocols.

Quality – measures of whether **service** is fit for purpose, for example, extent to which **outputs** conform to specifications. Quality itself is one dimension of **effectiveness**, but does not necessarily fully represent how effective a service is (for example, a service could be high quality, but still not effective, and vice versa – a low quality service could be highly effective). The quality of a service can be measured in various ways – timeliness, accuracy, completeness, accessibility and equity of access, continuity of supply, and/or customer satisfaction. For example, average waiting time (accessibility), percentage population screened (market penetration), percentage of premises inspected and deemed complete and compliant.

Timeliness – relates to the time taken to produce an **output** and provide an indication of the processing or **service** speed. Measures of timeliness provide parameters for 'how often' or 'within what time frame' outputs are to be produced. For example, licences are supplied to clients within two working days.

objectives

The effects or impacts that an entity seeks to have on its **customers, stakeholders** and the community.

- **agency objectives** – should deliver the **agency business direction** and contribute to the **whole-of-Government direction** and, collectively, agencies' objectives should deliver the **whole-of-Government direction**.
- **Government's objectives for the community** – the effects and impacts that the Government wishes to have on the community. The Government is required to prepare and table a statement of the Government's broad **objectives** for the community, including details of arrangements for regular reporting to the community about the outcomes the Government has achieved against these objectives for the community (*Financial and Accountability Act 2009*, section 10).

objectives for the community

See [objectives](#)

operational plan	Sets out how the agency plans to deliver its services over the relevant year. It also includes service standards and other measures that allow the agency to assess progress in delivering services in an effective and efficient manner to the standards as set out in the plan (<i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019</i> , section 8).
operational risk <small>QT</small>	Those risks that arise in day to day operations, and require specific and detailed response and monitoring regimes. If not treated and monitored, operational risks could potentially result in major adverse consequences for the agency .
outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agency outcomes— those outcomes for which a single agency has direct influence and control on delivery. • whole-of-Government outcomes—those on which a collaborative effort by several agencies must be exerted to achieve the desired result. While no single agency can control the outcome, lack of input from a single agency can affect the success of the resulting outcome.
output	Products and/or engagements delivered as part of a service .
performance	A generic term referring to the execution, by an individual, agency or government, of duties, actions or activities for the achievement of stated objectives , which can be measured and reported.
performance audit	A performance audit is an independent examination by the Queensland Auditor-General of all or any particular activities of a public sector entity, to determine whether its objectives are being achieved economically, efficiently and effectively and in compliance with all relevant laws. The intent of a performance audit is to provide assurance to Parliament and to act as a catalyst for adding value to the quality of public administration by assisting entities in the discharge of their governance obligations.
performance indicator	Indicates the extent to which the outcomes achieved by an agency are meeting their objectives in its strategic plan .
performance management	The management and evaluation of information on the efficiency and effectiveness of whole-of-Government direction , agency business direction and agency service delivery to improve accountability of government, to inform policy development and implementation and to create value to customers , stakeholders and the community .
policy <small>QT1</small>	A statement of Government intent in relation to an issue , which can be implemented through the use of policy instruments, such as laws, advocacy, monetary flows and direct actions. The development and implementation of programs is one way that Government can act in response to a policy decision.
Portfolio Contact Officer (PCO)	Officer of the Policy business area within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. PCO responsibilities include working closely with departments and briefing the Premier on Cabinet and CBRC submissions to ensure that they are consistent with the whole-of-Government direction .
products	Tangible deliverables created for consumption by customers and/or stakeholders.
program <small>QT1</small>	A structure (such as an intervention, initiative , strategy or service) created to coordinate, direct and oversee the implementation of a set of related projects and activities, in order to deliver value for the agency and/or its stakeholders (including customers) in response to an identified need and policy position.

program logic <small>QT1</small>	A method to assist program design. It depicts the logic or pathways through which the programs processes (inputs, activities and outputs) are intended to achieve the desired outcomes . Logic models can assist in understanding how the program is intended to work, what it is trying to achieve and why. Program logic is also commonly referred to as program theory or service logic.
project	A finite initiative to improve service delivery . Projects that require significant resources or involve major change should apply the processes to be found on the Queensland Government Chief Information Office website at www.qgcio.qld.gov.au/products/qgea-documents/547-business/2487-portfolio-program-and-project-management .
Project Assessment Framework (PAF)	Overseen by Queensland Treasury, the PAF provides tools and techniques to assess projects throughout the project lifecycle. PAF is applied according to strict guidelines of financial value for each project and where PAF is not applied, agencies must have regard for the PAF as required by the FPMS.
Portfolio, Project and Program Management	Part of the Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture suite of documents this is a policy which seeks to ensure a structured, effective and consistent approach for portfolio, program and project management is adopted across the Queensland Government. The establishment of consistent processes supports the conditions that enable successful governance to improve program and project delivery and services across the Queensland Government.
public sector ethics principles	The principles established in the <i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> .
public service entities	An entity, or part of an entity, designated to be a public service entity under the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i> (section 9)
public service values	The values guide Queensland public servants' behaviours and the way the Queensland Government conducts business.
purpose (of the agency)	A statement that specifies the overall aim of the agency . An agency articulates its purpose in its strategic plan .
Queensland Government Performance Management Framework (PMF)	The PMF is designed to improve the analysis and application of performance information to support accountability , inform policy development and implementation, and deliver value to stakeholders . The PMF ensures a clear line of sight between planning, measuring and monitoring performance and public reporting.
residual risk <small>QT</small>	Risk remaining after additional controls or treatments are taken into account.
risk <small>QT</small>	The chance of something happening that will have an impact on the achievement of the agency's objectives . Risk is measured in terms of consequences and likelihood, and covers threats and opportunities.
risk acceptance <small>QT</small>	An informed decision by the risk owner to accept the consequences and the likelihood of a particular risk.
risk analysis <small>QT</small>	A systematic process to determine the nature of risk and the magnitude of consequences.
risk appetite <small>QT</small>	The amount of risk that the agency is prepared to accept or be exposed to at any point in time.

risk assessment <small>QT</small>	The overall process of risk identification, analysis and evaluation .
risk avoidance <small>QT</small>	An informed decision not to become involved in, or to withdraw from, a risk situation.
risk evaluation <small>QT</small>	The process used to determine risk management priorities by comparing the level of risk against predetermined standards, target risk levels or other criteria.
risk management framework <small>QT</small>	An agency's policies, procedures, systems and processes concerned with managing risk .
risk management process <small>QT</small>	The systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the tasks of establishing the context, identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and communicating risk .
risk profile <small>QT</small>	The documented and prioritised overall assessment of a range of specific risks faced by the agency .
risk rating <small>QT</small>	The rating resulting from the application of the agency's risk assessment matrix on the likelihood and consequence of a risk occurring.
risk retention <small>QT</small>	Intentionally or unintentionally retaining the responsibility for loss, or financial burden of loss within the agency . Risk sharing with another party the burden of loss, or benefit of gain from a particular risk .
risk tolerance <small>QT</small>	The variation from the pre-determined risk appetite an agency is prepared to accept.
risk transfer <small>QT</small>	Shifting the responsibility or burden for loss to another party through legislation, contract, insurance or other means.
Senior Executive (SE) Performance Agreement	<p>Senior Executive Service (SES) are required to enter into a performance agreement with departmental chief executives at their substantive appointment and annually thereafter.</p> <p>Collectively, the SES performance agreements for a department will assist the chief executive to deliver all aspects of their performance agreement.</p>
services	The products and engagements undertaken by agencies that deliver outputs and result in outcomes for customers, stakeholders and the community, and as a result are valued by them. The efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery is measured using service standards.
service area	Related services grouped into a high level service area for communicating the broad types of services delivered by an agency . Service areas for each agency are detailed in the Service Delivery Statements .
service delivery	Services provided to customers by agencies . Service delivery is changed or improved through projects and programs .
Service Delivery Statements (SDS)	Published annually as part of the State Budget , the SDS provides budgeted financial and non-financial information for the financial year. The non-financial component of the SDS sets out the service areas each agency will deliver and the standards to which these will be delivered.
service standard	Define a level of performance that is expected to be achieved appropriate for the service area or service and must be a measure of efficiency or effectiveness .

stakeholder	<p>Person or organisation that can affect, be affected by, or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision or activity.</p> <p>Stakeholders include business or the community. Note, a decision maker can be a stakeholder. Stakeholders who are direct or potential service recipients are referred to as customers.</p>
standards of conduct	<p>Standards that reflect and support the values and principles underlying good public administration are contained within codes of conduct, which must be complied with by public service employees.</p>
State Budget	<p>Tabled in Parliament annually, the State Budget is an outline of the Government's priorities and plans for the coming year, expressed in terms of financial and non-financial performance information.</p>
State Budget submission	<p>Agencies prepare submissions to the Cabinet Budget Review Committee (CBRC) each year highlighting how they plan to apply their budget and, where necessary, seeking CBRC's consideration of changes to their budget allocation to address new or emerging demands.</p>
statistic	<p>A value that has been produced from a data collection, such as a summary measure, an estimate or projection. Statistical information is data that has been organised to serve a useful purpose.</p>
statutory body	<p>An entity established by legislation for a specific purpose, which can operate either inside or outside the general government sector.</p> <p>As defined in the <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> (section 9), a statutory body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is established under an act (that is, its enabling legislation) • has control of its funds (that is, can make decisions about how funds are expended) • includes, or its governing body includes, at least one member who is appointed under an act by the Governor in Council, or a Minister, or whose appointment is confirmed by the Governor in Council or a Minister.
strategic plan	<p>A concise document used by an agency to describe its vision, purpose, objectives and performance indicators. The agency business direction must align with the whole-of-Government direction.</p> <p>Each accountable officer and statutory body must develop a strategic plan for the agency to cover a period of at least four years (<i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019</i>, section 8).</p>
strategic risk <small>QT</small>	<p>Risks that may affect the agency's ability to meet its strategic objectives and require oversight by senior executives.</p>
strategy	<p>The way in which the Government or an agency intends to pursue its objectives and deliver its services.</p> <p>Strategies included in an agency's strategic plan would generally be longer term 'strategic' strategies that are pursued over a number of years.</p> <p>Strategies included in an agency's operational plan(s) would generally be shorter term 'operational' strategies that are pursued over a year or less timeframe.</p> <p>(see also whole-of-Government strategies)</p>

Treasury Analyst (TA)	Officer within the business branches in Queensland Treasury with responsibilities, including briefing the Treasurer on an agency's Cabinet and CBRC submissions to inform an assessment of value for money and ensure that they reflect sound fiscal management.
value	The benefits received by customers, stakeholders, the community , or the agency from services . Value is determined by the perception of the usefulness and importance of the benefits , whether those benefits are received individually or on a communal basis, received as a member of the public, a member of the legislature or the public service.
value for money	A measure used for determining the best return and/or performance of money spent based on the relationship between value and total cost.
variance	The difference between planned and actual performance. There is no quantitative threshold that will uniformly determine if a variance is considered material for each agency.
vision (of the agency)	Indicates what the agency aspires to be and/or achieve for Queensland by reflecting on how it wishes to be perceived by its customers, stakeholders and the community and/or what it is working towards achieving for Queensland. This statement takes into account the current status of the agency and outlines its future direction.
whole-of-Government direction	The Government's objectives for the community, whole-of-Government priorities and whole-of-Government strategies to address current and future challenges and opportunities for the Government.
whole-of-Government measures	Apply across multiple services and departments and outputs to achieve an outcome that one department or service area alone cannot achieve –generally outside the control of one agency, requiring action on the part of several agencies.
whole-of-Government priorities	Focus areas that support the whole-of-Government direction . The whole-of-Government priorities are informed by the external drivers .
whole-of-Government strategies	Strategies which describe the way the Government intends to achieve its objectives for the community and whole-of-Government priorities .