Alfaisal University

Policy Name:	IT Project Management Policy

Version #	**01**
Date Approved	
Effective Date	
Policy Owner	IT Services

Summary:

IT Project Management Policy is a structured approach to the way that IT projects are initiated, planned, implemented and finalised, will improve the University's ability to adapt to changing circumstances in a timely manner, whilst ensuring that fiscal responsibility is maintained and quality outcomes are achieved. Is an agreed set of principles, proper practices, values, standards, or rules of behaviour that guide the decisions, procedures and systems the university in a way that

(a) Contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders.

(b) Respects the rights of all constituents affected by its operations.

(C) Network security, data integrity and availability of resources.

Signature: …………………………………………………………………..

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1. Purpose

The University is committed to continuously improving the delivery of Information and Technology (IT) solutions within budget, on schedule, and in such a way to maximize the benefits realized by the University. This policy outlines a framework that promotes consistency and improved control of IT projects, thereby reducing risks and increasing project successes.

A consistent, structured approach to the way that IT projects are initiated, planned, implemented and finalized, will improve the University's ability to adapt to changing circumstances in a timely manner, whilst ensuring that fiscal responsibility is maintained and quality outcomes are achieved.

The major goals of this policy are to:

- Improve the quality of project deliverables.
- Increase the number of projects completed on time and within budget.
- Improve control over project requests and workload.
- Enhance control over project changes and "scope creep".
- Ensure that projects are aligned with business objectives.

2. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all staff and other members of the University community involved in the initiation and/or delivery of any type of IT project.

3. Policy

3.1. Guiding principles

The following principles underpin this policy:

Quality: Projects should always produce value for money, fit-for-purpose products and service solutions, delivered in a professional, efficient manner.

Timeliness: Projects should be completed on time and, when necessary, schedule adjustments should be made through a carefully considered process.

Teamwork: All project staff members should work together, share knowledge and information, and cooperate to deliver quality projects.

Consistency: Projects should be managed in a consistent fashion to maximize staff productivity and to take advantage of prior experiences.

Business Value: All projects, regardless of size or scope, should be linked to business objectives;

Communication: Projects should be managed to ensure that all parties are continually informed of progress, problems and changes to ensure support and effective participation

Flexibility: Project management practices should be structured to suit organizational needs and capacities, as well as project requirements. They should be scalable, so that reasonable practices are applied to projects of lesser scope, duration, risk and visibility.

3.2. Project identification and selection

3.2.1. IT Projects will be classified as Major, Medium or Minor, with the classification determining the level of governance and documentation required.

3.2.2. A formal IT Project Business Case must be prepared for all Major or Medium projects. This will include provision for a (fully funded) Feasibility Study as the first phase of any Major project unless the alternative solutions and costs of implementation are well understood.

3.2.3. All new initiatives classified as Major or Medium will be referred to one or both of the IT Steering Committees for consideration and prioritization.

3.2.4. Projects will be ranked and prioritized based on their urgency (Any project will be URGENT only in case it is affecting the core business.) and strategic value to the University, taking into account potential impacts on existing initiatives. Projects will only be fast-tracked and scheduled for action in the current year on approval from the VPFA.

3.2.5. The timeline of the project will be defined based on the availability of the resources.

3.2.6. Requests for Change or Enhancement to existing IT systems submitted to IT Services may also be evaluated as projects and referred to the IT Steering Committee(s) if appropriate.

3.2.7. Once identified, all IT projects will be registered in the AU IT Project Database, along with a brief description of the scope of the project and other relevant details.

3.3. Project resources and funding

3.3.1. Projects will neither be approved, nor will they commence until the sources of funds have been identified and committed.

3.3.2. All IT projects must be fully costed. Project costing will cover all capital expenditure and implementation costs associated with the project, including hardware, software and service fees. Any Annual Support & Maintenance Contract (AMC) fees payable

3.3.3. in the first year of operation will be included, and recurring costs over the first 5 years identified and documented.

3.3.4. All internal staffing requirements (both business area and IT Services) must be identified and costed in the project budget. In the case where it is necessary to hire or back-fill, all associated costs must be fully funded.

3.3.5. A minimum of an additional 25% of identified budgeted costs will be set aside for contingency funds for all IT projects.

3.3.6. Cost Centre Operational budgets are to be adjusted to reflect changes to recurring costs resulting from any IT Project.

3.4. Project governance and control

3.4.1. All IT projects will be assigned a Project Sponsor and a Project Manager. The Project Sponsor will normally be the Business Systems Owner (BSO).

3.4.2. A Project Steering Group must be established for all Major projects, with the Project Sponsor as Chairperson, and senior User and IT Services representatives.

3.4.3. The IT Services Executive team will act as the Project Steering Group in cases where a separate body is not established for an IT Project.

3.4.4. Project Managers will report to the Project Steering Group on a regular basis with the frequency of meetings and reporting determined by the Steering Group.

3.4.5. Project Managers assigned to Major projects must have appropriate training and experience.

3.4.6. A formal process for managing changes to scope, budget or schedule must be implemented for all Major and Medium projects.

3.4.7. Major projects will be reviewed by the Project Steering Group at each significant stage, to determine whether the project should continue to the next stage or be closed down.

3.4.8. The selection of the technology to achieve the business requirement is sole responsibility of the IT Steering Committee.

3.5. Project definition and planning

3.5.1. All projects must have goals, scope and requirements clearly defined prior to commencement.

3.5.2. For all Major and Medium projects, detailed Functional and Technical specifications must be documented and signed off by the Project Sponsor and the IT Director, IT Services or designate. (Upon signing the Functional Scope the requirements will be considered final and any change will be considered a separate project.

3.5.3. A Project Initiation Document must be produced for all Major and Medium projects, and will be approved by the Project Steering Group prior to the commencement of the implementation phase.

3.5.4. A resource plan must be developed for all Major and Medium projects, clearly identifying all University and external human resources (by skill type and level) required for the project. Periods required and FTE commitment levels should be identified relative to project start date.

3.5.5. A Risk register must be created at the start of all Major projects, with potential risks identified along with strategies to manage those risks.

3.5.6. A formal Communications Plan, covering all stakeholders, must be produced for all Major projects.

3.5.7. A Change Management Plan (including but not limited to training) must be developed for all Major and Medium projects. For Major projects, this may involve the use of external expertise. Training plans and business process training will normally be the responsibility of the Business System Owner.

3.6. Project closure

All Major projects will be formally handed over to functional and IT Services operations groups, ensuring that adequate training and documentation has been provided prior to the event.

A Post Implementation Review will be conducted for all Major projects 3-6 months after the new system or modifications are moved into production.

4. Exemptions

Exception to or exemptions from any provision of this policy must be approved by the VP for Finance & Administration. Similarly, any questions about the contents of this policy, or the applicability of this policy to a particular situation should be referred to the IT Director.

5. Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the loss of computing privileges and subject to disciplinary action as per the university code of conduct.

6. Responsibilities

Requestor – with assistance from IT Services, the Requestor is responsible for the development of the IT Project Business Case and for submitting a formal IT Project Request.

Cost Centre Manager – is responsible for approving the IT Project Request prior to submission.

IT Steering Committees – are responsible for the ranking and prioritization of all Major and Medium projects based on their urgency and strategic value to the University.

The Project Manager is responsible for the day to day running of a project. This includes planning, delegating, monitoring and control of all aspects of the project, and the motivation of those involved, to achieve the project objectives within the expected performance targets for time, cost, quality, scope, benefits and risks.

The Project Management Office (PMO) is responsible for assisting project managers by providing a framework for managing IT projects within the University (including templates and tools), reviewing project deliverables, offering advice and guidance, and supporting specific project activities (such as vendor management). The PMO is also responsible for monitoring and high-level reporting across the entire IT Portfolio.

7. Definitions

In this policy the following definitions apply:

IT Project Business Case means the justification for an IT project which contains costs, benefits, risks and timescales, and against which continuing viability is tested.

Business System Owner (BSO) means the staff member who has responsibility for the security of the data and application component of the Information Asset and is also accountable for those aspects of the Information System.

Feasibility Studies means the evaluation of technology and its use and may involve the selection of technical solutions and recommendations for future strategies.

IT Project means a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a product or service that includes a significant IT component such as the implementation of a new system or substantial modifications to an existing one.

IT Program means a set of related IT Projects and activities in order to deliver outcomes and benefits related to the University's strategic objectives. A programme is likely to have a life that spans several years.

IT Portfolio means all the IT Programs and stand-alone IT Projects being undertaken by the University.

IT Steering Committee means either or both IT Steering Committee for Administrative Systems and Services and/or the IT Steering Committee for Academic Systems

Project Initiation Document (PID) means a document which brings together the key information needed to start the project on a sound basis and to convey that information to all concerned with the project.

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