



keynote

Prince2: 2009 Quick Guide

A guide to what is in the new version of Prince2

INTRODUCTION

The updated Prince2: 2009 was launched on 16 June after a refresh lasting approximately 2 years. This note summarises the key changes for those already familiar with Prince2.

SUMMARY

Style

The refresh aimed to make Prince2 more accessible and easier to use, without losing any of the core features of the method, and this is exactly what it does.

The overall scope is unchanged so no substantive new topics are introduced. A modest simplification in the content and a useful reduction in size of the manual have resulted. Basic concepts have not changed but there are many changes in the detail. The content is presented more logically, explained more clearly, and is easier to understand. Most existing anomalies have been resolved. Where names and terms have changed the new meanings will generally be obvious to anyone of practitioner level.

The style is less didactic and there is more recognition for other methodologies that may be relevant. A range of project types and situations are described with guidance on applying and tailoring the method appropriately (most probably already known to experienced users).

Overall, using the method appropriately will involve the same amount of skill and effort as before but new users should find their use of the method progresses more quickly.

Content

Key changes to the content of the method are as follows:

- A set of 7 principles are defined which underpin Prince2 (drawn from existing ideas)
- The 8 components have been replaced by 7 themes covering basically the same subjects. Controls has become the Progress theme and Configuration Management has been incorporated into the Change theme
- The three Prince2 techniques have been embedded into the themes (product based planning into Planning, quality review into Quality and configuration management into Change)
- There are now only 7 processes, dispensing with the Planning process. The overall scope and sequence of processes is unchanged. Approximately 30% of sub-processes (now called activities) have been replaced and the remainder have changes in detail but not the basic purpose.
- There are now only 26 product descriptions (2 being added and 12 removed).

Presentation

The new manual is significantly shorter (around 325 pages rather than the previous 450 pages). Its main audience is defined as project managers (there is a separate smaller manual on directing projects) but it does define the totality of the method.

The new manual presents the themes (old components) first, then the processes. The old process-orientated diagrams have been replaced by much clearer product orientated ones.

Key appendices - the Product Descriptions (App. A) and the Role Descriptions (now App. C) are fundamentally the same. Other appendices have changed but their content is of lesser importance.

A comprehensive glossary and index are provided as before.

The authors have resisted the temptation to change content that did not need changing although sometimes it may have been moved to a different place.

PROCESS CHANGES

General

The interface between the activities of Directing a Project and the other processes has now been formalised into a set of triggers and outputs which is methodical and clear. Sub-processes have been replaced by activities and there is no numbering (like the old CS1, CS2 etc).

Updating the Risk Log is no longer an explicit step in most processes - examining risks is an ongoing activity.

All processes now have responsibilities documented through a RCI matrix for each process (the contents of these contain no surprises).

Starting Up

The Project Manager is now appointed by the Executive and designing and appointing the project team is now one activity. An explicit activity to collect and examine lessons from previous projects has been added. All the process outputs (project definition, approach outline business case etc.) are now elements of the Project Brief with the exception of the next Stage Plan. No content is suggested for the mandate and it is now clear that whatever is provided is superseded by the Project Brief.

Initiating a Project

Creation of the Quality Plan has been replaced by creation of 4 management strategies for Risk, Quality, Configuration Management and Communications in the style of MSP. These have the expected contents; noting that Configuration Management includes change control and Communications includes an element of stakeholder analysis. Setting up project controls activity has been made clearer; setting up project files and any suggestion of file structures has been removed.

All the outputs (project definition, approach business case, project plan etc are now elements of the PID and it is now clear that this supersedes the Project Brief. A new product – the Project Product Description defines the main outputs of the project and holds the Customer Quality Expectations and Acceptance Criteria.

Directing a Project

The only fundamental change is that after Initiation, two concurrent DP processes are now used (Authorising a Project and Authorising a Stage or Exception Plan) to take the two decisions to go ahead with the project and the next stage.

Controlling a Stage

This is largely unchanged, although clarified and, improved (for example issues and risks are treated more consistently). The two activities of capturing and examining project issues are combined into one.

There are now only 7 processes dispensing with the Planning process

Managing Product Delivery

Largely unchanged

Managing Stage Boundaries

The activities are largely unchanged although the Benefit Review Plan is also updated and the composition of the End Stage Report has changed (it may for example include a lessons report). The exception plan route through the process is more clearly differentiated and explained.

Closing a Project

Separate routes through the process are provided for normal and premature close, there are now 5 activities rather than 3 sub-processes and several name changes. Confirming handover of the final products is more explicit whilst administrative tidying up is played down. The composition of the end Project Report has changed with follow-on actions and lessons embedded in it.

THEMES

Themes are now what were previously called components. They all include a table describing roles and responsibilities

Business Case

A clearer description of the business case lifecycle is provided and minor change to content but all the essential Prince2 principles are unchanged. The Post Project Review Plan is replaced by a Benefits Review Plan which is created with the Business Case and used to inform it (in Initiation). Subsequently it is updated alongside the Business Case at stage ends and finalised in project closure for later use just like the old PPRP.

Organisation

The essential elements are unchanged – the generic organisation chart now correctly includes the Change Authority. There is additional guidance information on people elements of teams, project operation in different organisational structures and working with stakeholders. The role descriptions (now App C) have been improved.

Quality

This is much clarified and terminology made more consistent with published standards and everyday use. The Project Quality Plan is replaced by the Quality Management Strategy. Customers Quality Expectations and Acceptance Criteria for the project are now contained in the Project Product Description and a clear diagram replacing the 'path to quality' shows how this links with product approval, quality control and planning. There is now no mention of the Stage Quality Plan.

The Quality Log has become the Quality Register. The description of the Quality Review technique has been simplified to focus on the essential aspects.

Plans

Principles and the emphasis on product based planning are unchanged. The old 7 steps in planning appear as part of the planning theme, but now recognise that analysing risks runs all the way through, not just at the end. Many of the example planning diagrams which accompanied the 7 steps have been removed. The 4 steps of product based planning remain as important as ever, now beginning with the creation of a Project Product Description.

Detailed rules about how a Product Breakdown Structure and Product Flow Diagram should be drawn have been removed. These are now left to individual preference and examples using different styles are provided in Appendix D. Minor improvements have been made to the generic product description outline.

The 8 Components have been replaced with 7 themes covering basically the same subjects

Risk

As might be expected the approach now follows the Management of Risk model and is very similar to Managing Successful Programmes. Creation of a Risk Management Strategy provides a place to describe project standards for risk and to link to corporate ones (previously vague or missing).

The old Prince 2 risk responses [PRATC] have of course been replaced (the new ones are differ slightly from both the current MoR and MSP standards). The new material is better with a good integrated summary of opportunity and threat responses. There is welcome guidance on risk aggregation. The Risk Log is now called the Risk Register and the Contingency Budget now called the Risk Budget.

Change

The dual terminology of issues/changes persists but the description of how to manage them is much improved, together in one place, and involves fewer products. A much clearer process model is provided covering all types of issues. Off-specifications have been broadened to include omissions; a question is no longer a specific type of issue. This theme now incorporates configuration management. The Configuration Management Strategy product created also contains the change management process.

Progress

Previously called Controls – this section contains most of the same core ideas (stages, tolerances) but with a more practical emphasis in managing progress in the body of the project. Previous ambiguity about where tolerances were defined has been resolved with a very clear table.

PRODUCTS

Structure

Defined management products are now categorised into 3 groups Baseline, Records and Reports. Baseline products define the project and are subject to change control. They comprise the Project Brief , the Project Initiation Document (with all components) plus the Benefits Review Plan and Work Package.

Records are regularly updated information and consist of the logs and registers. Logs are less formal than records and are created in Start-up. Registers are created in Initiation. Reports reflect the status of the project at a point in time. They all end in the word 'report' with the exception of the Product Status Account.

New to Old Product Mapping

Prince2: 2009 Product	Old product or contributor
BASELINE	
Project Brief	Project Brief, Project Approach
Project Initiation Documentation	Project Initiation Document
Business Case	Business Case
Communication Management Strategy	Communications Plan
Quality Management Strategy	Project Quality Plan
Risk Management Strategy	None
Configuration Management Strategy	Configuration Management Plan
Project Product Description	Customer Quality Expectations, Acceptance Criteria
Work Package	Work Package
Benefits Review Plan	Post Project Review Plan
Plan (Project, Stage and Team)	Project, Stage, Exception Plan
Product Description	Product Description

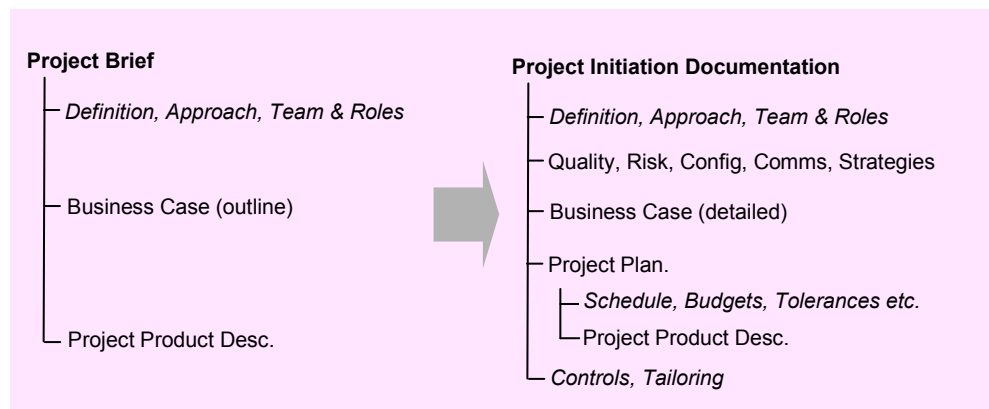
Prince2: 2009 Product	Old product or contributor
RECORDS	
Daily Log	Daily Log
Lessons Log	Lessons Learned Log
Issue Register	Issue Log
Risk Register	Risk Log
Quality Register	Quality Log
Configuration Records	Configuration Item Records
REPORTS	
Highlight Report	Highlight Report
Checkpoint Report	Checkpoint Report
Exception Report	Exception Report
Issue Report	Project Issue/Request for Change/Off Spec
Lessons Report	Lessons Learned Report
Product Status Account	Product Status Account
End Stage Report	End Stage Report
End Project Report	End Project Report Follow-on Action Recommendations

Composite Products

As previously, some products are composite containing others. Assembly of the Brief and Project Initiation Documentation (note the slight change of name) from their constituent elements is more clearly described and most of the previous uncertainties resolved. The End Stage and Project Reports incorporate the Lessons Report and Follow-on Action Recommendations – in some situations they may not be required and in others they could be issued separately.

Removals with No Equivalent

A product description is not now provided for the Project Mandate. Product descriptions are not now provided for the Product Breakdown Structure, Product Flow Diagram or Product Checklist. These are still recognised as elements of a plan and described in the text with examples.



Implementation

For projects already under way there is no need to make any immediate changes and shorter projects should run to completion using the old version. Stage boundaries are clear break points - larger projects can switch over to the new version at a convenient stage boundary.

Where Prince2 terminology (rather than organisation specific) is being adhered to use, it is probably better to move to the new terminology but this can be done gradually. Where templates and in-house guidance exist, these will need to be revised. There is no requirement to move to the new version at all, although publications and training courses in the old versions are likely to die out fairly quickly. The new version is much easier to understand so it makes sense for any new training to be in Prince2: 2009. In larger organisations with many projects, inconsistent terminology and processes is likely to create confusion and full transition to the new version over a 3 or 6 month period would be reasonable.

The introduction of project Risk, Quality Configuration Management and Communications strategies will require new templates. In larger organisations these should consist mostly of references corporate standards (with the possible exception of the Communications Strategy) so it would be beneficial to ensure corporate standards are well developed in these areas. Light-weight templates can then be created to draw on these.

Existing foundation and practitioner qualifications remain valid and there is no requirement to re-train.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on managing projects using Prince2 please contact:

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