

The OGC Gateway™ Review Process
Designed to make you successful

Senior Civil Servants

Q. How can I enhance my delivery skills?



A. Become a Gateway Reviewer! Nothing beats the experience of being on a Review team

“The management qualities that are required for people getting to the top of the Civil Service are changing. They increasingly require people who are competent in delivery skills. If you do not take this opportunity to acquire those skills early in your career you may find yourself responsible for programmes and projects that you are not sufficiently equipped to handle or even missing out on promotion opportunities. Becoming a Gateway Reviewer is a worthwhile investment for a successful SCS career.”

Sir Andrew Turnbull, Head of the Home Civil Service

What is an OGC Gateway™ Review?

In simple terms it is a review of a programme or project which usually, but not always, includes procurement carried out at a key decision point by a team of experienced people, independent of the project team.

The reviews are based on best practice and are independent in order to provide an objective ‘peer’ assessment. This is helpful because the review team is one step removed from the day-to-day pressures of managing the project.

The OGC Gateway Process is based on well-proven management techniques that lead to more effective delivery of benefits, together with more predictable costs and outcomes. The process examines a programme or project at critical stages in its lifecycle to provide assurance that it can progress successfully to the next stage. There are five OGC Gateway Reviews (Gates 1-5) during the life cycle of a project, three before contract award and two looking at service implementation and confirmation of the operational benefits. The process emphasises early review for maximum added value.

OGC Gateway Review 0 is a programme-only review that is repeated throughout the programme's life; it can be applied to policy implementation, business change or other types of programme. It sets the programme review in the wider policy or corporate context.

We stress that reviews are not about 'passing' or 'failing' gates, but about improving the chances of a projects' success. It is a partnership between review and project teams and is not an audit.

OGC Gateway Reviews are not only about pure IT or construction projects; you could be involved in high-profile projects such as Wembley Stadium, the Home Office's new central London accommodation, the Olympic Bid or policy delivery.

OGC's introduction of the Gateway Review Process is improving the delivery of major projects right across government. Over 800 reviews have now been carried out covering in excess of 500 programmes/projects (October 2004). This could not have been achieved without the support and dedication of our pool of Gateway Reviewers. We want to widen our pool to include more SCS people: we want to add you to our team.

"The introduction of Gateway Reviews has been a major improvement in central government in recent years. The Reviews I have seen have all been valuable for the organisation. They are also very valuable experiences for the participants and I hope many Home Office SCS members will seize the opportunity to work on a Review."

John Gieve, Permanent Secretary, Home Office

Why become an OGC Gateway™ Reviewer?

Being part of a review will give you a real insight into how other departments are tackling the sort of issues common to many projects, such as risk management and internal communications. You rapidly gain a good strategic grasp of a set of policy and operational issues that you may not have focussed on before.

You will see how other team members, who have been deliberately chosen because they have different skill sets from your own, tackle the review process.

SCS skills and experience both in the policy-making and delivery arena add significant value to review teams. Their competencies are as valuable to a review as programme and project management skills; especially when looking at the impediments to successful delivery e.g. lack of political foresight. SCS staff have the skills to take a step back and consider a project within its strategic context and can constructively challenge, as well as set priorities.

What you can expect?

Reviews involve three or four days of intense activity looking at a major programme or project in another department. You can expect to spend a lot of time talking to those who have been living with the issues day in and day out, looking at the documentation and other evidence. Working as part of a multi-skilled team, you will identify areas of best practice and prioritise the issues that need to be addressed to support the future success of the programme/project. You will have to present your findings as succinctly and persuasively as possible. As a team member you are guaranteed to derive a great deal from the process.

"The reviews are not only stimulating and stretching, but also very useful and enjoyable. What seems to be almost universally the case is that the host department and project members find the different perspectives that the team members bring, and the fairly structured interview process which enables them to take stock and to feed in their thoughts and concerns, helpful in itself. The report and recommendations are very much the result of this collaborative process between the review team and those interviewed."

Jenny Williams, formerly Lord Chancellor's Department

"I have been surprised by how rewarding Gateway Reviews have been. I personally have gained a lot from them. With the help of the OGC workpacks to focus the review in the right areas, I found myself able to apply my management competencies to help the project under review consider issues from different angles whilst myself gaining from them new ideas and perspectives. The whole experience grounds you in the key ingredients for successful project delivery."

Tony Finch, EDS Contract Manager, Inland Revenue

How to become an OGC Gateway™ Reviewer

If you are interested in becoming a Gateway Reviewer you should attend our seminar, which has been specially designed to develop your understanding of:

- the principles of Gateway
- the background of Gateway
- the stages in the Gateway Review Process
- the stages of a Gateway Review
- how gates relate to the life cycle of a programme/project
- the benefits of Gateway to each of the stakeholders
- your role as member of a review team
- the skill profile of a Gateway Reviewer.

The seminar is designed for twelve participants in a department. This is the optimal number in terms of cost effectiveness and size of the work groups in each session.

Each seminar is charged to the sponsoring department, and includes the cost of pre-reading material, facilitation and direct running expenses.

The seminar is administered and run by our training providers Skillbase on behalf of OGC. To attend a seminar, please contact your Departmental Gateway Co-ordinator.

"I generally found it just an enormously re-charging and refreshing experience, even though it was hard work. I really liked the egalitarian team-based approach – everybody's voice and abilities carried the same weight. It was a good team, and I imagine most of them are, because you're bringing in your different skills and you need everybody. It's a good illustration of the project-based approach which I think is key."

*Sue Street, Permanent Secretary,
Department of Culture, Media and Sport*

Further information

You can contact the Gateway Helpdesk on 020 7271 1396 or email: Gateway.Helpdesk@ogc.gsi.gov.uk

For all the latest information on Gateway, log on to our website at: www.ogc.gov.uk

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OGC customers can contact the central OGC Service Desk about all aspects of OGC business.

The Service Desk will also channel queries to the appropriate second-line support. We look forward to hearing from you.

You can contact the Service Desk 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday

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