

SCHEDULING

Initiation



Scheduling

A project schedule is an action plan that documents what needs to occur, by who, when and in what order. This will help you stay on track, monitor progress and identify project blocks.

Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

Key points

1. Identify project milestones

Scheduling involves identifying key dates when certain activities and tasks must be done in order to meet your deadlines. Identify project milestones from the start, and then monitor progress against the milestones to stay on track. This allows you to identify risks, delays and barriers and communicate these in a non-biased way to the project team and governance group.

2. Include relevant information

Your schedule should include major tasks (and subtasks), meetings and deliverables, the due date and who is responsible. Include a comment, or a colour key, to indicate if the task is on track, completed or delayed. Schedule milestones in line with anything that could influence the timing of the deliverable. For example, you may need to plan a deadline two weeks earlier to align with internal approval processes or meetings.

Consider the deliverables

Starting with the final deliverable and working backwards is one way to start developing a schedule. Asking yourself, 'What needs to occur in order for that to happen?' will help you identify the subtasks that you need to do to achieve the deliverable on time. This is a good brainstorming activity for the project team, as it gives everyone input about the tasks and timeframes.

4. Define the sequence

Sequencing will help you define the flow of the project and align your resources, so you have what you need, when you need it. In the project schedule, order the tasks in sequence of what needs to be done first, second etc and be realistic about times allocated for each one. Highlight which steps are dependent on others. Sequencing can help you to avoid surprises.

Considerations and tips

You should consistently monitor the progress of your project and assess it against the schedule. Steering committees, project working groups and communications will all be important audiences for the project schedule.

Keep on track with the schedule

An agreed schedule helps you and the team to establish clear actions and responsibilities. Review schedules with the team, discuss any delays, and agree on rescheduled timelines. Escalate major delays to the governance group if they cannot be managed quickly.

Consider external influences

Identify external factors that could influence the project schedule. If you are new to your organisation, it might be helpful to consult with others who have worked in the organisation for a while. Things to consider here include accreditation, staff leave/absences or major conferences.

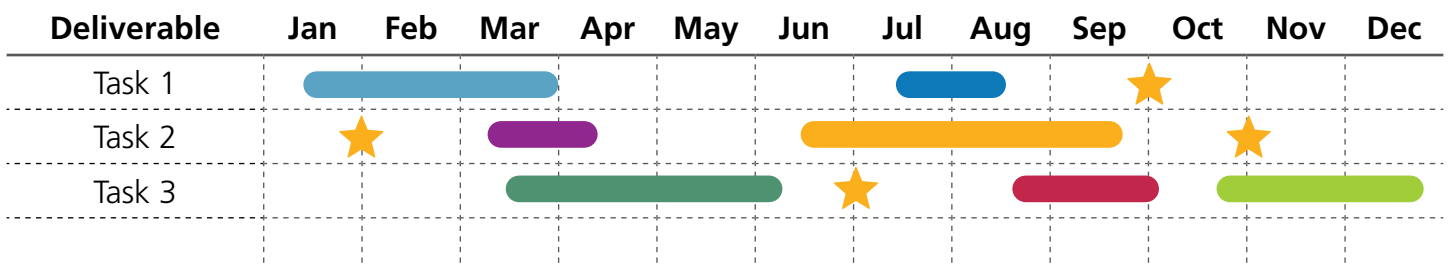
Know the resources required

It's important to estimate the resources required for the project. This not only includes the time required for each task, activity and deliverable, but also the people required to undertake the work. Please refer the Resources fact sheet for more information.

How will we document?

There are several project scheduling programs available. A Gantt chart is an ideal tool that can easily track tasks, times, meetings, etc, for the whole team to keep on track. This should be a 'living document', which means it is updated as the project progresses.

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Further information

[My Health Learning Log in Form](#) – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Project Deliverables and Scheduling
Introduction to project initiation (schedule examples)

Next Steps

Now that you are set to keep the schedule on track, you need to consider the risks and issues that can negatively impact achieving your deliverables and goals.