RESEARCH PROJECT LIFECYCLE

Feasibility and Business Capability Assessment (Gate 2)

Stage: Business Capabilities → Gate 2 · Previous template: Evidence Scoping Summary (Gate 1) · Next template if it passes: Full Research Plan, or the Light-Touch Trial Protocol

How to use this form

Use this form to check that the project can really be delivered and tested, so a reviewer can decide at Gate 2 whether **"This research project is feasible"**. It takes **three to four pages**, and about half a day once the data has been pulled.

- **Who completes it:** the Project Lead and the Research Lead together.
- **Who reviews it:** the Gate 2 Reviewer. Your organisation names who this is.
- **Measure before you commit.** Look at last year's data to see how often the outcome happens and how many eligible people come through each month. This is the step most often skipped, and skipping it is the most common reason trials fail.
- **Define the cohort so others could repeat it.** Use criteria someone else could apply from their own data.
- **Two small complete trials beat one unfinished trial.** If you can't reach the numbers alone, partner with other areas or organisations.
- **Choose your route.** Section G includes a short check. If the trial is low risk and simple, the Light-Touch Trial Protocol can replace the next four templates.

Stage: Business Capabilities → Gate 2 · **Previous template:** Evidence Scoping Summary (Gate 1) · **Next template if it passes:** Full Research Plan, or the Light-Touch Trial Protocol

A. The project

Most of this section carries forward from earlier templates. Check it is still right.

Field	Your answer
A1. Project title *(essential)* As on the Evidence Scoping Summary.	
A2. Project reference From the Research Portfolio Register.	
A3. Project Lead *(essential)* Name and role of the person leading delivery.	

Field	Your answer
A4. Gate 1 decision date *(essential)* The date the project was judged "This research project is worthwhile".	Date: _____ / _____ / _____
A5. Likely study design *(essential)* Pick one. This can still change during Research Development.	☐ Randomised controlled trial ☐ Quasi-experimental ☐ Qualitative ☐ Not decided yet

B. Cohort and eligibility

Field	Your answer
B1. Who is included *(essential)* The criteria a person must meet to take part. Write them so someone else could find the same people in their own data.	
B2. Who is excluded Anyone who meets the criteria but should not take part, and why. For example, people already receiving a similar service.	
B3. How the cohort will be identified *(essential)* The data source, the system or the process that finds eligible people. Avoid relying on professional judgement to choose who takes part. Efficient identification increases power, so the study finishes sooner and the findings can be used sooner. Say how many eligible cases it might miss, and how you know.	
B4. Could another organisation identify the same cohort? *(essential)* Pick one. If the answer is "partly" or "no", say what would make it repeatable.	☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No

Field	Your answer
B5. Partner areas or organisations Anyone you would need to work with to reach enough people, and whether they have agreed.	

C. Baseline measurement

Use your own recent data. The baseline tells you how big a difference is possible, and how many people you will need.

Field	Your answer
C1. Main outcome *(essential)* The one outcome the project most needs to change, and how it is recorded now.	
C2. Baseline rate of the outcome *(essential)* How often the outcome happens in this cohort now, over the follow-up period you plan to use. For example: "38% are referred again within 12 months".	
C3. Data source and period used *(essential)* Where the baseline figures came from, and the dates they cover.	
C4. Eligible cases per month *(essential)* How many eligible people come through in a typical month. Count from last year's data rather than estimating.	
C5. Patterns to plan around Seasonal changes, school terms, holidays, or changes in recording that could affect the numbers.	

D. Numbers and timescale

Field	Your answer
D1. Smallest change worth detecting *(essential)* The smallest improvement that would matter in practice, or be worth paying for. Use the effect sizes found at Research Scoping as a guide.	
D2. Sample size needed *(essential)* How many people you need in total, and how this was worked out. Attach the power calculation if you have one.	
D3. Time to reach the sample *(essential)* In months, based on the eligible cases per month.	
D4. Follow-up period *(essential)* How long after taking part you will measure the outcome.	
D5. Earliest date for final results Recruitment time plus follow-up time plus time for analysis.	Date: ____ / ____ / _____

E. Delivery capability

Field	Your answer
E1. Who will deliver it *(essential)* The team, roles and number of staff.	
E2. Realistic caseload *(essential)* How many people each member of staff can support at once and still deliver a good service. If you don't know, plan to test it during the Pilot Test Phase.	

Field	Your answer
E3. Training or briefing needed What delivery staff need to know, including why the project is being tested.	
E4. Access to outcome data *(essential)* Pick one, then say who holds the data. You must be able to get the outcome data for any control group, as well as for treatment groups.	☐ Already have access ☐ Agreement needed ☐ Not available
E5. Overlap with other trials or services *(essential)* Pick one. Check the Research Portfolio Register and ask partners. Two interventions on the same people make both results hard to read.	☐ No overlap found ☐ Possible overlap ☐ Overlap found
E6. Efficient delivery Ways to keep delivery simple and cheap. For example, clustering sites close together to reduce travel.	
E7. Can delivery be tracked in every group? *(essential)* Is there a way to record who receives the treatment, how much they receive, and what any control group receives? If tracking needs a new system or extra staff time, say so here. The full tracking plan comes later, in the Experimental Planning Document.	

F. Cost and funding

Field	Your answer
F1. Estimated cost of delivery *(essential)* The cost of delivering the intervention to the full sample, including staff time.	

Field	Your answer
F2. Estimated cost of the research Staff time for planning, tracking and analysis, and any external support.	
F3. Funding status *(essential)* Pick one.	☐ Fully funded ☐ Partly funded ☐ Funding needed for development ☐ Funding needed for research ☐ Not known
F4. Who would pay to continue it if it works? *(essential)* The organisation or budget that would fund it after the trial. Testing something nobody could afford to continue is rarely worth it.	

G. Research requirements and route

Field	Your answer
G1. Research requirements *(essential)* Everything that must be true or in place before Research Development starts. For example: data agreements, approvals, partners signed up, staff recruited, systems ready.	
G2. Route *(essential)* Pick one. **Full route:** the Full Research Plan, Experimental Planning Document, Ethical Oversight Review and Gate 3 Readiness checklist. **Light-touch route:** the Light-Touch Trial Protocol replaces those four templates. Only if every answer in the check below is "Yes".	☐ Full route ☐ Light-touch route

Light-touch route check

Answer every question. One "No" means the full route.

Question	Yes or no
Is the risk of harm to participants low? Please consider emotional harm, physical harm, and other harms including privacy and fairness concerns	_____
Is there no change, or only a small change, to the service people receive?	_____
Can the outcomes be measured from routine data?	_____
Can it be done without collecting new data from participants?	_____
Can it be delivered within existing resources?	_____
Is every part of the trial within our control?	_____

H. Feasibility summary

Field	Your answer
H1. Recommendation *(essential)* Pick one. **Proceed:** the cohort, numbers, delivery and funding all work. **Pause:** worth doing, but something must be fixed first, such as funding or a partner. **Stop:** it cannot be delivered or tested well enough.	☐ Proceed ☐ Pause ☐ Stop
H2. Main risks to feasibility The things most likely to stop the project reaching its sample or its results.	
H3. Reasons *(essential)* Two to four sentences linking the recommendation to the sections above.	

Gate 2 Decision Record

Gate statement: "This research project is feasible". Completed by the Gate 2 Reviewer. Proceed only if the statement is true.

Field	Reviewer's answer
Decision *(essential)* **Proceed:** start Research Development, or the Light-Touch Trial Protocol. **Pause:** worth doing, but not feasible yet. **Stop:** drop it, for example because the cohort is too small or the data cannot be reached.	☐ Proceed ☐ Pause ☐ Stop
Route confirmed *(essential)* Pick one.	☐ Full route ☐ Light-touch route
Reasons *(essential)* One to three sentences the project team will read.	
Conditions or next steps For example, funding to secure, or agreements needed before Research Development.	
If paused: review again on	Date: _____ / _____ / _____
Reviewer role *(essential)*	
Reviewer name(s) *(essential)*	
Decision date *(essential)*	Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Tell the project team the decision and the reasons, whatever the outcome. Record the decision in the Research Portfolio Register and the Gate Decision Record log.

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