



Context

Where did this request come from?

Minister
 Manager
 Senior leadership
 Other:

Why this task? Why now?

What's the big picture? What's the history of this issue? What are the linkages to other work?

Aim

What's the purpose and scope of this task? What do you want the decision maker to do or decide?

Resources

What are the key questions that need to be answered? What expertise do you need?

What information and evidence is relevant? Do you need input from other teams or agencies?

Deliverable

Cabinet paper
 Briefing (advice)
 Meeting brief
 Memo
 Slides

Aide memoire
 A3
 Other:

Deadline

When does it need to be completed? First draft: Final for approval:

What's the sign-off process? (tick all that apply)
 Manager
 General manager/director
 Deputy secretary

What level of quality assurance is required?

Proofreader

Peer reviewer

Tips for commissioning

Are you ready to commission?

- Are you clear enough about the details, scope, and outcomes to begin formal commissioning?
- Are you sure what impact you want to achieve and the best form of advice for doing so?
- Who is going to be managing the task, deliverable, or project, and are they clear on their responsibilities?
- Is the detail of your planned commission proportionate to the task and person?
- When and how will any changes to the commission be communicated and recorded?

For the new or developing

- Set tasks and be detailed
- Assign support / coach / expert
- Coach them through the steps
- Meet to discuss frequently

For the somewhat experienced

- Empower and support
- Check in regularly, clarify and confirm progress and direction
- Recommend as needed

For the expert

- Set parameters
- Respond to questions on request

Are you ready to be commissioned?

- Have you prepared your initial thinking and ideas about the output?
 - Key messages?
 - Purpose of documents?
 - Audience?
- Are you clear about what makes a good commission for you? Have you prepared questions that will get you the answers you need?
- What support and information do you think you need in this situation?
- Commissioning can be an ongoing process to decide how it will be updated and tracked over the course of the work.

The [Commissioning template for policy products](#) was released in March 2024 by the Policy Project.
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