If you have decided that a piece of work is in fact a project, then make sure that the principles are consistently applied. For a project to be a PRINCE2® project it must comply with the principles:

- continuous business justification
- learn from experience
- defined roles and responsibilities
- manage by stages
- manage by exception
- focus on products
- tailor to suit the project environment

The three principals in red specifically support scaling to minimise overhead and increase efficiency.

When tailoring your PRINCE2® project consider how each theme can be adjusted to maintain the principles:

Theme	PRINCE2 purpose	Small project needs
Business Case	Establish mechanisms to judge whether the project is (and remains) desirable, viable and achievable as a means to support decision-making in its (continued) investment	A simple Business Case to explain why the project is needed and what the costs and benefits are. This will be tracked to make sure the project is still worth doing
Organization	Define and establish the project's structure of accountability and responsibilities	A Project Manager and a project sponsor with clear roles to explain who is doing what
Quality	Define and implement the means by which the project will create and verify products that are fit for purpose	A description of the quality standards to be used and an agreed process to make sure the products are fit for purpose
Plans	Facilitate communication and control by defining the means of delivering the products	A Project Plan showing products, timelines, resources, costs and assumptions to show when the project will deliver
Risk	Identify, assess and control uncertainty and, as a result, improve the ability of the project to succeed	A Risk Register to help identify and then track the uncertain events, both threats and opportunities
Change	Identify, assess and control any potential and approved changes to baselines	The sponsor decides on any changes to the project
Progress	Establish mechanisms to monitor and compare actual achievements against those planned in order to provide a forecast for the project objectives, including its continued viability	An updated project plan and a Highlight Report to track progress. An Exception Report if tolerances are forecast to be exceeded to help the sponsor decide

Table 2 - Project Level Decision Support Tool

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Scaling PRINCE2® - When is a Quantity of Work a Project?

Richard Hemsworth Project Coach and EMPO Director

The popularity of PRINCE2, and project management more generally, has resulted in the use of the word 'project' to describe pieces of work that do not need to be set up and run as a project. Combine this with a view where PRINCE2 has previously been called 'bureaucratic and administratively burdensome and only suitable for large-scale projects' and you get some unusual project management behaviours in organisations. In 2009, PRINCE2 was revised to include aspects of tailoring to allow for scale and environment.

The capabilities that managers should have, to be able to deliver work includes a set of skills that can easily be identified as project management skills. That does not mean that all work needs to be turned into a project. Some organisations have recognised this over use of 'projects' and have a graded approach to work using terms like 'initiative' or 'task' to describe smaller work packages. The rules for where the boundaries between task, initiative and project lay are dependent on the type and scale of an organisation.

So, Table 1 is a template to help decide whether work needs to be a project. It should be adjusted to meet the particular circumstances of your organisation. The table has aspects of the work that can be easily evaluated to determine the appropriate level of governance; or in fact whether the work is a project at all.

PRINCE2 says that a project is a temporary organisation that is created for the purpose of delivering one or more business products according to an agreed Business Case. The deliverables are unique and bounded by a start date and an end date. A project has a higher level of risk than 'business-as-usual' activities and therefore requires specific monitoring and governance.

Tolerance Area	**One-off Task**	**Small Project (Initiative)**	**Large Project**
Resources	Just you to manage and do the work	You and others contribute to the work	Cross functional teams, with specialist input, working at different times on different elements
Duration	Very short term - less than a number of weeks. Defined by the organisation as appropriate to the their business. Single stage, concurrent output.	Short-term - more than a number of weeks. Defined by the organisation as appropriate to the their business.	Medium to long term. Multi-stage, sequenced output.
Costs and Effort	Using internal staff only (often seen as free resources) and consuming very low effort	Working across two or more boundaries and incurring extra costs	More than a value defined by the organisation as appropriate for their needs
Scope	One main deliverable. A single work package	Multiple deliverables	Complex vague dynamic dependencies
Risks	Very low, if any. Failure a mild irritation	Low risk, modest changes, failure an local difficulty	High risk, major changes, failure has significant business impact. Failure considered a disaster by the business.
Quality	Single review of work done and product delivered	Fit for purpose. Single discipline.	Complex, multi-disciplinary.
Benefits	Often trivial, limited to a small group, otherwise minor and intangible	Direct from the project and clearly defined. Single sponsor.	Related to other projects and hard to pin down. Multiple sponsors (Board).

Table 1 - Project Level Decision Support Tool

Please turn to the back page to continue....

PRINCE2® Processes

Ideation, feasability, gap and options analysis are external to the PRINCE2 methodology

Corporate / Program

Project Board request for advice

Corporate advice and decisions

Notifications

Project Board - authorising and approving

Directing

Controlling

Managing

Project Mandate

Nominate Executive Sponsor
Nominate PM

Request to initiate Project Plan

Starting Up a Project

Project Brief (C)
- Outline Business Case (C)
- Capture previous lessons (C)
- PM Team Structure (C)
- Project Product Description (C)
- Project Strategy (C)
- Project Approach (C)

Lessons Learned Log (C)
Daily Log (C)

'Initiating a Project' Plan (C)

What PRINCE2 is NOT:
PRINCE2 allows users to select industry specific engineering models, change management methods, and life cycle models. PRINCE2 does not specify any particular techniques, like: critical path methodology or earned value analysis. Neither are change, leadership, interpersonal or motivational skills addressed in the method. Specific manufacturing techniques are also not part of the method; so Agile, RDT, Crystal Methods or generic waterfall approaches can be used with PRINCE2. Requirement elicitation and capture can use any technique or approach.

Pre-Project Stage

Instructions

Request to deliver a project (PID)

Request to initiate next stage plan or exception plan

Managing Stage Boundary

Project Plan (U)
End Stage Report (C)
Next Stage Plan (C)
Produce Exception Plan (C)
Lessons Learned (U)

Initiating a Project Stage

Project Initiation Document (PID)
- Contract between PM and Board ©
- Project Plan (U)
  - Project Product Description (U)

Detailed Business Case (U)
Project Approach (U)
PM Team Structure (U)
Risk Management Strategy (C)
Configuration Mgt Strategy (C)
Communication Mgt Strategy (C)
Quality Mgt Strategy (C)
Registers x 3 (Issues, Risk and Quality) (C)
Configuration Item Record (C)
Benefits Review Plan (C)
Project Control (C)

Initiation Stage

Authorise stage

Instructions

Scheduled Periodic Highlight Reports

Request for advice / exceptions

Request to initiate next stage plan or exception plan

Management information

Managing Stage Boundary

Project Initiation Document (U))
Configuration Item Record (CU)
Project Plan (U)
End Stage Report (C)
Next Stage Plan (C)
or Produce Exception Plan (C)

Controlling a Stage

Work Package (C)
Issues Register (CU)
Lessons Learned Register (CU)
Risk Register (CU)
Quality Register (CU)
Escalation by exception
Manage within tolerances
Communication Strategy (U)
Highlight Reports (C)
Receive completed Work Packages
Review Stage Status

Work Package

Issues

Periodic Checkpoint Report

Completed WP

Managing Project Delivery

Receive Work Package
Team Plan (CU)
Quality Register (U)
Issue (R)
Specialist Products (C)
Checkpoint Report (C)

(Repeated for each delivery stage)

Subsequent Delivery Stage

Instructions

Stage Approval

Scheduled Periodic Highlight Reports

Premature Closure

Draft Project Closure notification

Management information

Closing a Project

End Project Report (C)
Additional Work Estimate (C)
Benefits Review Plan (U)
Project Closure Notification (C)
Registers x3 (Close)
Product Status Account (C)
Acceptance Record (Obtain)
Follow-on action report (C)

Controlling a Stage

Work Package (C)
Issues Register (CU)
Lessons Learned Register (CU)
Risk Register (CU)
Quality Register (CU)
Escalation by exception
Manage within tolerances
Communication Strategy (U)
Highlight Reports (C)
Receive completed Work Packages
Review Stage Status

Work Package

Issues

Periodic Checkpoint Report

Completed WP

Managing Project Delivery

Receive Work Package
Team Plan (CU)
Quality Register (U)
Issue (R)
Specialist Products (C)
Checkpoint Report (C)

Final Delivery Stage

Notes/Key:
(U) Updated
(C) Created
(R) Reviewed
(A) Approved

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This chart is based on Axelos Prince2 - 2009 version

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