Planning, Analysis, & Change

A city with tall buildings in the background

Description automatically generated

*Project Management Office (PMO)*

Issue Management Plan

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| Issue Management Plan *An* ***Issue Management Plan*** *is a structured approach for identifying, documenting, prioritizing, and resolving project-related issues. It defines roles, responsibilities, and processes to ensure that issues are effectively managed and resolved to minimize their impact on project objectives such as scope, schedule, and budget.* |

| **Project name:** | **<Project name>** |
| --- | --- |

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| **Executive Sponsor** |  |
| **Project Sponsor** |  |
| **Project Manager** |  |
| **Issue Manager** |  |

**CU Denver Strategic Plan**

*Describe how the outcomes of this project will support the university strategic plans, such as referencing CU Denver University’s* [*Strategic Plan*](https://www.ucdenver.edu/2030/goals-for-2030)*. Please check all related CU Denver strategic plan objectives pertaining to this project.*

CU Denver will be the equity-serving institution in the nation

Become known as a university for life

Be internationally known for its research and creative work

Serve as the anchor institution for an open innovation district in downtown Denver

Be known as a people-centered "Best Place to Work"

Operationally aligned

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# Issue Management Plan

## Overview

* 1. Introduction

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| The Issue Management Plan for [Project Name] delineates and documents the activities, roles, and responsibilities of all individuals involved in identifying, assessing, assigning, resolving, and controlling project issues. In this context, issues are defined as unplanned project-related events that have occurred and require immediate project management action to address and resolve.  In addition to issue management, this plan also documents key decisions, defines decision owners, and tracks the implementation of these decisions. Decisions may be made during Project Core Team (PCT) meetings or other relevant gatherings involving stakeholders and project team members. |

* 1. Objectives

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| *The objectives of this Issue Management Plan* |
| * + 1. Outline the Issue and Decision Management Processes: Provide a clear and structured framework for managing issues and decisions throughout the project lifecycle. |
| * + 1. Identify Roles and Responsibilities: Define the specific roles and responsibilities associated with issue and decision management to ensure accountability and clarity among all participants. |
| * + 1. Specify Methodologies, Standards, Tools, and Techniques: Detail the methodologies, standards, tools, and techniques that will be employed to support effective issue and decision management activities. |
| * + 1. Ensure Timely Resolution: Establish procedures to resolve issues promptly to minimize their impact on project objectives and prevent delays. |
| * + 1. Promote Effective Communication: Facilitate open and transparent communication among project team members and stakeholders regarding issues and their resolutions. |
| * + 1. Maintain Comprehensive Documentation: Ensure all issues and decisions are thoroughly documented for future reference, accountability, and auditing purposes. |
| * + 1. Facilitate Continuous Improvement: Use insights gained from issue management to improve project processes and prevent similar issues in the future. |
| * + 1. Enhance Stakeholder Engagement: Involve stakeholders appropriately in the issue resolution process to ensure their concerns are addressed and to maintain their support. |

## Issue Management Roles and Responsibilities

* 1. Team Resources

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|  | Role | Responsibilities |
| [Name] | Project Owner (PO) | * Accountable for all the identified issues. * Responsible for approving or rejecting the remediation actions related to major issues. * Escalate issues according to the escalation procedure when necessary. |
| [Name] | Project Manager (PM) | * Responsible for managing, monitoring, controlling, and reporting issues. * Consolidates and documents issues in the Issue Log. * Assigns issue remediation tasks to Project Core Team (PCT) members or other project stakeholders. * Ensures the assigned person works on the issue according to the given priority. * Requires the assigned person to report when the issue can be closed. |
| [Name] | Project Core Team (PCT) | * Consulted for issue management activities. * Identifies issues throughout the project lifecycle. * Assesses identified issues. * Solves issues as they arise during the project lifecycle. |
| [Name] | Project Sponsor (PS) | * Accountable for the overall success of the project. * Provides high-level support and guidance. * Approves or rejects remediation actions for major issues. * Ensures the project remains aligned with business objectives. * May escalate critical issues according to the escalation procedure when they cannot be resolved at the project level. |
| [Name] | Executive Sponsor (ES) | * Informed of critical issues that have significant impact on organizational objectives. * Provides executive-level support to resolve escalated issues. * Can authorize major changes to project scope, budget, or resources. * Collaborates with the Project Sponsor and Executive Leadership Team to facilitate issue resolution. |
| [Name] | Issue Management Committee (if applicable): | * Review and approve the Issue Management Plan. * Provide guidance and support for complex issues. * Ensure alignment of issue management activities with organizational objectives. |
| [Name] | Executive Leadership Team (ELT) | * Comprises senior executives who are consulted for issues that affect the broader organization. * Makes strategic decisions on high-impact issues that cannot be resolved at lower levels. * Provides direction for issue resolution. * Approves substantial resource allocations. * May adjust organizational priorities to support the project’s needs. |
| [Name] | Issue Manager (IS) | * Responsible for maintaining the overall issue management process, the Issue Register containing the issue details * Ensures the issues managed by this Plan are organized, managed, communicated and controlled. * Ensures that project related issues are identified and mitigated in a timely manner in order to minimize impact. * Periodically obtain status from Issue Owners on mitigation progress. |
| [Name] | *Issue Owner (IO)* | * Responsible for management, administration and delivery of assigned Issues, including updating the Issue Register, the mitigation plan, and contingency plan details in the Issue Register. * Shared responsibility with the Issue Manager and the Project Manager for ensuring that Issues are organized, managed, and controlled and that Issues are identified and mitigated in a timely manner in order to minimize impact to the project. * Provide status updates to Issue Manager. |

## Communications

* 1. On-Going Reporting

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| * + 1. Project Manager's Responsibility: * The Project Manager (PM) is responsible for reporting on all identified issues until they are fully resolved and closed. * This includes providing regular updates on the status of each issue, progress on resolution efforts, and any changes in priority or impact. |

* 1. Regular Status Updates

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| * + 1. Team Communication: * The PM will share the status of issues with team members on a regular basis to ensure transparency and collective awareness. * Regular team meetings will include dedicated time to discuss current issues, actions being taken, and any assistance required from team members. |
| * + 1. Stakeholder Communication: * The PM will also communicate issue statuses to the project leadership team and other relevant stakeholders. * Monthly reports or scheduled meetings will include summaries of open issues, their impact on the project, and the steps being taken to resolve them. |

* 1. Transparency and Accessibility

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| * + 1. Issue Log Maintenance: * The Issue Log will be continuously updated to reflect the most current information on each issue. * This includes changes in status, updates on action plans, and any new developments. |
| * + 1. Accessible Information: * Ensure that updated issue information is accessible to all authorized team members and stakeholders through shared platforms or project management tools. * Encourage team members to review the Issue Log regularly to stay informed. |

## Issue Escalation

* 1. Determine Need for Escalation

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| * + 1. Assessment Criteria: * Evaluate whether an issue needs to be escalated based on specific criteria:   + Cross-Project Impact: Issues that affect more than one project.   + Threat to Key Milestones: Issues that, if left unresolved, may jeopardize a key milestone or deliverable.   + Unresolved High-Priority Issues: High-priority issues that are not being resolved in a timely manner. |
| * + 1. Decision to Escalate: * The PM assesses the situation and decides if escalation is necessary to obtain additional support or decision-making authority. |

* 1. Escalation Process:

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| * + 1. Update Issue Status: * If escalation is deemed necessary, update the status of the issue in the Issue Log to "Escalated." * Document the reasons for escalation and any previous actions taken in the Resolution/Status Comments section. |
| * + 1. Communication of Escalation: * Inform the originator of the issue and the person originally assigned to resolve it that the issue has been escalated. * Provide details on the escalation path and any changes in responsibility or action plans. |

* 1. Escalation Path

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| * + 1. Hierarchy for Escalation: * The escalation path for unresolved or critical issues is as follows:   + Project Manager   + Project Sponsor   + Executive Sponsor   + Leadership Team |
| * + 1. Project Manager * Initial Resolution Attempts:   + Problem-Solving: The Project Manager (PM) is responsible for attempting to resolve issues at the project level using available resources and authority.   + Analysis and Action: Analyzes the issue, develops action plans, and implements solutions within the scope of their role.   + Team Coordination: Coordinates with team members to address the issue promptly and efficiently. * Decision to Escalate:   + Assessment: Determines if the issue cannot be resolved at their level due to constraints such as resource limitations, authority boundaries, or potential impact on project objectives.   + Criteria Evaluation: Evaluates whether the issue meets the escalation criteria (e.g., affects multiple projects, jeopardizes key milestones, or remains unresolved despite efforts).   + Timely Escalation: Decides when escalation is necessary to prevent delays or adverse effects on the project. * Communication of Issues:   + Detailed Reporting: Communicates the issue and provides all relevant information to the next level (Project Sponsor) in a timely and clear manner.   + Documentation: Prepares and shares documentation, analysis, and details of attempted resolutions.   + Stakeholder Updates: Keeps stakeholders informed about the issue status and any potential impacts on the project. |
| * + 1. Project Sponsor * Support and Authority:   + Resource Provision: Provides additional resources or authority beyond the Project Manager's capacity to facilitate issue resolution.   + Budget and Personnel Allocation: Has the ability to allocate extra budget, approve additional personnel, or provide necessary tools and equipment.   + Barrier Removal: Helps remove organizational obstacles that hinder issue resolution. * Decision-Making:   + Issue Resolution: Makes decisions to resolve issues that have escalated beyond the Project Manager's control.   + Approval of Changes: Approves adjustments to project plans, scope, or objectives as needed to address the issue.   + Risk Management: Assesses risks associated with the issue and endorses mitigation strategies. * Guidance and Oversight:   + Strategic Alignment: Offers strategic guidance to ensure that issue resolution aligns with project goals and organizational objectives.   + Policy Compliance: Ensures that proposed solutions comply with organizational policies and regulatory requirements.   + Monitoring Progress: Tracks the implementation of resolutions to ensure effectiveness. |
| * + 1. Executive Sponsor * Strategic Decisions:   + High-Impact Resolution: Makes decisions on issues that significantly affect organizational objectives or require substantial resource commitments.   + Authority: Addresses critical issues that cannot be resolved at lower levels due to their complexity or impact.   + Organizational Priorities: Balances the needs of the project with broader organizational priorities. * Direction and Alignment:   + Vision Alignment: Provides direction to ensure that issue resolutions are in line with the organization's vision, mission, and strategic initiatives.   + Cross-Functional Coordination: Facilitates coordination among different departments or projects if the issue spans multiple areas.   + Long-Term Considerations: Considers long-term implications of issue resolution on the organization's performance and reputation. * Approval of Major Changes:   + Scope and Budget Adjustments: Authorizes significant changes to the project scope, budget, or timeline necessary to resolve critical issues.   + Policy Changes: May approve exceptions to policies or the creation of new policies to address unprecedented issues.   + Stakeholder Communication: Engages with high-level stakeholders to communicate decisions and their rationale. |
| * + 1. Leadership Team * Organizational Impact Assessment:   + Issue Evaluation: Assesses issues with widespread implications across multiple projects or departments.   + Strategic Impact: Evaluates how the issue affects the organization's overall strategy and performance metrics.   + Prioritization: Determines the priority of the issue relative to other organizational challenges. * Resource Allocation:   + Enterprise Resources: Allocates organizational resources, including funding, personnel, or technology, to address critical issues.   + Investment Decisions: Makes decisions about significant investments required for issue resolution.   + Resource Optimization: Ensures optimal use of resources across the organization when addressing the issue. |

## Issue Identification

* 1. Purpose

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| The purpose of this step is to facilitate the prompt identification and thorough documentation of issues that may arise throughout the project lifecycle. Early detection is crucial for timely resolution and minimizing negative impacts on project objectives such as scope, schedule, cost, and quality. |

* 1. Identification

| *The following is a description of the scope (work) that will be performed within the project.* |
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| * + 1. Encourage Prompt Reporting: * Team members and stakeholders are encouraged to report issues as soon as they are identified. * Open communication channels such as meetings, emails, and reports should be utilized for issue reporting. |
| * + 1. Use Standardized Documentation: * Implement standardized forms or tools to ensure consistent and accurate documentation of all issues. * This consistency aids in tracking, analyzing, and resolving issues effectively. |

* 1. Common Examples of Issues

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| *Issues can arise from various sources and may include, but are not limited to:* |
| * + 1. Disagreements on Requirements: * Conflicts or misunderstandings regarding the interpretation of project requirements among team members or stakeholders. |
| * + 1. Challenges in Achieving Goals: * Difficulties faced by the Project Core Team (PCT) in meeting set objectives related to time, resources, or quality standards. |
| * + 1. Non-Conformities: * Deviations from project plans, specifications, or quality standards identified by the PCT or other stakeholders such as the Quality Assurance Manager. |
| * + 1. Realized Risks: * Risks documented in the Risk Log that have materialized into actual problems requiring immediate attention and action. |
| * + 1. External Negative Effects: * Unforeseen external factors adversely impacting the project, such as market fluctuations, regulatory changes, or technological disruptions. |
| * + 1. Other Emerging Issues: * Any additional unplanned events or problems that arise and necessitate project management action. |

* 1. Reporting and Logging Issues

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| * + 1. Identification by Stakeholders: * Any project stakeholder can identify or raise issues at any point during the project lifecycle. * Communication channels include meetings, emails, reports, and direct communication with project team members. |
| * + 1. Role of the Project Manager (PM): * Upon receiving information about an issue, the PM is responsible for registering it in the Issue Log. * Project Core Team (PCT) members may also register issues in the Issue Log, which are then validated by the PM. |

* 1. Issue Log Details

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| *At this stage, the Issue Log should be updated with the following information for each identified issue:* |
| * + 1. Issue Identifier (ID): Assign a unique ID to each issue for easy reference and tracking. |
| * + 1. Title: Provide a brief and descriptive title summarizing the issue. |
| * + 1. Description: * Offer a clear and concise explanation of the issue. * Outline the potential impact on the project, including effects on scope, schedule, cost, and quality. |
| * + 1. Category: Classify the issue based on its nature (e.g., IT, Business, People & Organization). |
| * + 1. Priority: Assign a priority level (e.g., High, Medium, Low) based on the urgency and impact of the issue. |
| * + 1. Status: Indicate the current status of the issue (e.g., New, Open, Under Review, In Progress, Resolved, Closed). |
| * + 1. Due Date: Specify the target date by which the issue should be resolved. |
| * + 1. Reporter Information: Record the name and role of the person who identified the issue. |
| * + 1. Date of Identification: Document the date when the issue was first reported. |

## Issue Assessment and Action Recommendation:

* 1. Purpose

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| The purpose of this step is to assess the urgency and impact of the identified issue and decide on a priority for its resolution. This ensures that issues are addressed in a timely manner, minimizing their negative effects on project objectives such as scope, schedule, cost, and quality. |

* 1. Initial Assessment

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| *When an issue arises, an initial (informal) assessment is performed by the person who raised the issue. This assessment considers the following dimensions:* |
| * + 1. Category: * Classify the issue based on its nature (e.g., technical, logistical, contractual, business, people & organization). * Determine if the issue is related to a specific area or domain within the project. |
| * + 1. Impact: * Analyze the potential consequences of the issue on project deliverables and outcomes. * Consider whether the issue will have contractual impacts or affect compliance requirements. * Assess effects on scope, schedule, cost, and quality. |
| * + 1. Urgency: * Evaluate how quickly the issue needs to be addressed to prevent escalation. * Determine the time sensitivity for resolving the issue, which influences the speed and planning of issue reporting and resolution. |
| * + 1. Size: * Consider the magnitude of the issue in terms of resources and effort required for resolution. * Decide if it requires significant effort/cost to solve or if it can be handled through immediate action. |
| * + 1. **Note:** In the initial assessment, it is not necessary to delve deeply into each dimension, but the reporting of the problem should be adjusted based on its situation and impact. If the issue is judged to be urgent, the Project Manager must be advised promptly to ensure immediate handling. |

* 1. Assess Severity

| *Assess the severity of the issue based on its potential impact on project objectives, considering both quantitative and qualitative effects. Severity levels are classified as:* |
| --- |
| * + 1. High Severity: * Description: Issues that have a significant impact on project objectives. * Impact: May cause major delays, substantial cost overruns, or critical quality deficiencies. * Action Required: Requires immediate attention and swift action to mitigate adverse effects. |
| * + 1. Medium Severity: * Description: Issues that moderately affect project objectives. * Impact: Could lead to some delays, additional costs, or minor quality concerns. * Action Required: Should be addressed in the near term to prevent escalation. |
| * + 1. Low Severity: * Description: Issues with minimal impact on project objectives. * Impact: Unlikely to cause significant delays, cost increases, or quality issues. * Action Required: Can be resolved during regular project activities without urgent action. |

* 1. Evaluate Urgency

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| *Decide how quickly action must be taken to address the issue. Urgency affects prioritization and resource allocation. Urgency levels are classified as:* |
| * + 1. High Urgency: * Description: Immediate action is required to prevent the issue from escalating or causing significant impact. * Time Frame: Action needed within 24 hours or as soon as possible. * Action Required: Mobilize resources promptly to address the issue. |
| * + 1. Medium Urgency: * Description: Action is needed soon to prevent the issue from becoming more severe. * Time Frame: Action needed within a few days to a week. * Action Required: Schedule resources to address the issue in the near term. |
| * + 1. Low Urgency: * Description: Issue does not require immediate action and can be scheduled during normal project planning. * Time Frame: Action can be taken during regular project activities. * Action Required: Monitor the issue and address it as part of routine tasks. |

* 1. Determine Priority

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| *Based on the assessed severity and urgency of the issue, assign a priority level to determine the order in which issues should be addressed and the allocation of resources.* |
| * + 1. High Priority: * Issues that have a significant impact on project objectives and are highly urgent. * Problems that can cause major delays, substantial cost overruns, or critical quality deficiencies. * Situations that may lead to project failure or severe stakeholder dissatisfaction if not addressed immediately.   Action Required:   * Requires immediate attention and swift action. * Allocate necessary resources promptly, possibly reallocating from other tasks. * Consider escalating to higher management |
| * + 1. Medium Priority: * Issues that moderately affect project objectives and have medium urgency. * Problems that could lead to delays or additional costs but are manageable within project constraints. * Situations that may escalate if not addressed in a timely manner.   Action Required:   * Should be scheduled for resolution in the near term. * Plan and allocate resources accordingly without disrupting high-priority tasks. * Monitor the issue to ensure it does not escalate to a high-priority level |
| * + 1. Low Priority: * Issues with minimal impact on project objectives and low urgency. * Problems that do not significantly affect the project's scope, schedule, cost, or quality. * Situations that can be addressed during routine project activities without immediate action.   Action Required:   * Can be scheduled during regular project activities or deferred to a later date. * Allocate resources as they become available without impacting higher-priority tasks. * Keep a watchful eye to ensure the issue does not become more severe over time. |

* 1. Action Recommendations: *Assigned Detailed Analysis*

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| * + 1. **Project Manager's Role:** * The Project Manager (PM) assigns a project stakeholder or team member who has the appropriate expertise and experience related to the issue to perform a detailed analysis. * The selection of the individual or team is crucial and should be based on their knowledge of the specific area affected by the issue (e.g., technical, financial, operational). * The PM provides the assigned person with all relevant information gathered during the initial assessment. |

* 1. Action Recommendations: *Identify Root Cause*

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| * + 1. **Comprehensive Evaluation:** * **The assigned individual conducts a thorough assessment of the issue to uncover its underlying root cause.** |
| * + 1. **Utilizes appropriate analytical techniques such as:** * **5 Whys: Repeatedly asking "Why?" to drill down into the fundamental cause of the issue.** * **Fishbone Diagram (Ishikawa Diagram): Visually mapping out potential causes across various categories (e.g., people, processes, equipment) to identify contributing factors.** * **Fault Tree Analysis: Breaking down the issue into a hierarchical model to understand the pathways leading to the root cause.** |
| * + 1. **Data Collection:** * **Gathers all necessary data and evidence to support the analysis.** * **May involve interviews with team members, review of project documents, or examination of process workflows.** |

* 1. Recommend Solutions: *Develop Remediation Actions*

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| * + 1. Based on the root cause analysis, the individual proposes specific remediation actions aimed at addressing the fundamental issue. |
| * + 1. Ensures that the proposed solutions are aligned with project objectives and do not introduce new risks. |
| * + 1. Considers multiple solution options and evaluates them for feasibility, effectiveness, and impact. |

* 1. Recommend Solutions: Detail Implementation Plan:

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| * + 1. Outlines the necessary steps to implement the recommended solutions. |
| * + 1. Provides estimates of the effort required, including time frames, resource needs (personnel, budget, tools), and any dependencies. |
| * + 1. Identifies any potential obstacles to implementation and suggests ways to overcome them. |

* 1. Identify Responsible Parties

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| * + 1. Assign Clear Ownership: * Specifies who will be responsible for implementing each part of the recommended actions. * Assigns clear ownership to ensure accountability and effective execution. * May involve assigning tasks to specific team members, departments, or external partners. |
| * + 1. Establish Accountability Mechanisms: * Sets expectations regarding roles and responsibilities. * Defines performance metrics and monitoring processes to track progress. * Schedules regular check-ins or meetings to review the status of the action plan implementation. |

## Document History

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Record the changes and updates made to the document, including dates, descriptions of changes, and the names of individuals who made the updates.* | | | |
| **Version** | **Date** | **Author** | **Comments** |
| 1.0 | 10/18/2024 | Eric Campagna | First draft |
|  |  |  |  |

## Approval and Authority to Proceed

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| *We approve the proposal and authorize the team to proceed.* | | |  |
| ***Role*** | ***Name*** | ***Title*** | ***Date*** |
| Executive Sponsor |  |  |  |
| Project Sponsor |  |  |  |

## Appendix

* 1. Glossary: Definition of Terms

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| --- | --- |
| **Term / Acronym** | **Definition** |
| **Category** | Classification of an issue based on its nature (e.g., IT, Business, People & Organization). |
| **Communication Channels** | Methods used for reporting issues (e.g., meetings, emails, reports). |
| **Continuous Improvement** | Using insights from issue management to enhance project processes. |
| **Decision Owner** | The individual responsible for making key project decisions. |
| **Due Date** | The target date by which an issue should be resolved. |
| **Escalation** | The process of raising an issue to higher authority levels for resolution. |
| **Executive Leadership Team (ELT)** | Senior executives making strategic decisions on high-impact issues. |
| **Executive Sponsor (ES)** | An executive providing support for resolving escalated issues and authorizing major changes. |
| **External Negative Effects** | Unforeseen external factors adversely impacting the project. |
| **Issue** | Unplanned project-related events requiring immediate management action. |
| **Issue Identifier (ID)** | A unique ID assigned to each issue for easy reference. |
| **Issue Log** | A tool for recording and tracking issues, including their status, priority, and resolution efforts. |
| **Issue Management Plan** | A document outlining the activities, roles, and responsibilities for managing project issues. |
| **Non-Conformities** | Deviations from project plans, specifications, or quality standards. |
| **Priority** | The level of urgency assigned to an issue (e.g., High, Medium, Low). |
| **Project Core Team (PCT)** | A group of stakeholders and team members involved in project decision-making and issue resolution. |
| **Project Manager (PM)** | The individual responsible for managing, monitoring, and reporting issues. |
| **Project Sponsor (PS)** | The person accountable for the overall success of the project, providing high-level support and guidance. |
| **Realized Risks** | Risks that have materialized into actual problems requiring immediate attention. |
| **Reporter Information** | Details of the person who identified the issue. |
| **Stakeholder** | Any individual or group affected by or involved in the project. |
| **Standardized Documentation** | Consistent forms or tools used for documenting issues. |
| **Status** | The current state of an issue (e.g., New, Open, Under Review, In Progress, Resolved, Closed). |
| **Transparency** | Open and accessible communication about issues and their resolutions. |

* 1. RACI Table



**Legend:**

**R: Responsible -** The person who performs the task.

**A: Accountable -** The person who is ultimately accountable and has yes/no/veto authority.

**C: Consulted -** The person who provides input based on how it will affect their work.

**I: Informed -** The person who needs to be kept informed of progress and decisions.