

Assurance Mapping

A combined assurance approach

What is Assurance Mapping?

Detailed process to obtain a view of the organisational assurance provided at various levels of defence.

- ❑ Line 1: Operational Management
- ❑ Line 2: Management Oversight
- ❑ Line 3: Independent Oversight

Why Assurance Maps?

- ❑ Provides a visual and informative summary of various assurance activities
- ❑ Identifies gaps and overlaps in assurance
- ❑ Minimise business/operational disruptions (Assurance fatigue)
- ❑ Promotes collaboration and opportunities for reliance on other assurance providers
- ❑ Optimise assurance costs

Key stakeholders

- ❑ Board and Senior Management
- ❑ Risk and Audit Committees
- ❑ Internal Auditors
- ❑ External Assurance Providers
- ❑ Regulators

Text based assurance map

Entity business risks (taken from an entity's risk management plan)	Source and level of assurance provided					Overall assessment of level of assurance	Is level of assurance adequate?
	Work Area	Work Area	Management committees	Internal audit	Other assurance activities		
Failure to recruit, develop and retain sufficient skilled staff to sustain core service delivery at required levels.	low	moderate	(Human Resource Management) moderate	low	-	moderate	Yes
Failure to assess, monitor and appropriately manage key organisational requirements including resource and budget management in a changing business environment.	low	low	(Executive Board) moderate		(External review) low	moderate	Yes
Failure to adequately manage the entity's complex contractual arrangements	low	moderate	(Executive Board) moderate	low	-	moderate	No
Ineffective and/or inappropriate management of information.	low	low	(Information Management) moderate	moderate	-	moderate	Yes
Ineffective financial management	moderate	moderate	(Finance) moderate	moderate	(Audit Committee) High	high	Yes
Failure to work with or manage implementation partners.	moderate	low	(Executive Board) low	low	-	low	No

Level of entity assurance and advice provided on the entity business risks –high, moderate, low. The level of assurance provided will depend on the extent to which the controls in place and other arrangements address the business risk.

Visual assurance map



Example Key Risks	Sources of Assurance															
	Risk Assessment		1st Line of Assurance			2nd Line of Assurance				3rd Line of Assurance						
	Inherent (Pre controls)	Residual (Post Controls)	Mgmt. Reviews	Mgmt. Info	Self Assess Procure	Compliance	Quality	Group Functions	Risk Mgt.	EFA	3rd Parties	Partners	Regulator	Internal Audit	External Audit	Other
Enrolment	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red				Green						
Funding	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow				Yellow			Yellow		
Management	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red								Green
HSE	Red	Yellow		Green			Green	Green		Green			Red			
Change Programme	Red	Green	Yellow				Yellow	Yellow	Red							
Compliance	Red	Green			Red		Red	Red	Red				Green	Red		Red
Succession Planning	Red	Yellow	Red													
Data/IP Security	Yellow		Yellow	Yellow	Yellow											
Partnerships / Contracts	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green		Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow			Red		Yellow		
Etc...	Yellow	Yellow	Green			Green										

Risk Classification

- Critical
- Medium
- Minor

Level of Assurance

- Low
- Medium
- Low
- None

Benefits/Advantages

- ❑ Raise understanding of the risk profile, and strengthen accountability and clarity of ownership of controls
- ❑ Better understanding of the current state of assurance, highlighting areas of low coverage, extensive or over coverage and gaps in understanding
- ❑ Focus IA efforts where there are gaps in the first and second lines of defense and to include providing an independent assessment of the quality of assurance provided by the first and second lines of defense
- ❑ Identify the actual state of internal control prior to the external assurance engagement, and where any work may need to be focused

Challenges/Issues

- ❑ Lack of adequate risk/assurance information
- ❑ Time consuming exercise
- ❑ Lack of adequate support from key stakeholders
- ❑ High level of complexity resulting in inappropriate reliance
- ❑ Out of date information

Key steps in assurance mapping

- Define the extent of the assurance map (what is to be covered e.g. key risks/ key processes etc.)
- Engage with key stakeholders across the business
- Map the risks, systems/processes and assurances currently in place
- Assurance reality check - Assess the assurances in place
- Assurance blue print - Identify the gaps, overlaps etc.

Key learning from the session

- Engage with key stakeholders to enhance the understanding of their role in assurance and obtain accurate information
- Carry out a detailed mapping of all key assurance activities to identify gaps and overlaps in audit coverage (Assurance Blue Print)
- Work closely with all the assurance providers in order to provide a combined assurance and to make it a continuing reality (e.g. establish Combined Assurance Forum)