

Production Issue Investigation Checklist

A one-page field guide for BAs, QAs, developers and support teams investigating intermittent or hard-to-reproduce production issues. “Cannot reproduce” is not a root cause — it is an investigation status.

1 · LISTEN & CAPTURE

- ☐ What the user was trying to do captured
- ☐ Timestamp, user/reference ID, transaction/order ID recorded
- ☐ Expected vs actual behaviour written down
- ☐ Screenshot or error captured

2 · COLLECT EVIDENCE

- ☐ Application logs pulled
- ☐ API responses captured
- ☐ Correlation or trace IDs found
- ☐ One failed journey followed end to end

3 · UNDERSTAND CONTEXT

- ☐ User role and permissions checked
- ☐ Device, browser and app version checked
- ☐ Location, network and timezone checked
- ☐ Data and account state checked
- ☐ Timing (peak period, batch, schedule) checked
- ☐ Sequence before the failure reviewed

4 · COMPARE ENVIRONMENTS

- ☐ UAT vs Production data compared
- ☐ Configuration and feature flags compared
- ☐ Integrations and service versions compared
- ☐ Traffic, infrastructure and scheduling compared

5 · REPLICATE SMARTER

- ☐ Same data, user type and device recreated
- ☐ Same configuration and integration path recreated
- ☐ Same sequence and timing recreated
- ☐ Smallest failing condition reproduced

6 · INCREASE VISIBILITY

- ☐ Structured logging / correlation IDs added
- ☐ Metrics, alerts or audit events added
- ☐ Temporary diagnostics considered
- ☐ Evidence gap named as a requirement

7 · ISOLATE & NARROW

- ☐ One variable changed at a time
- ☐ Trigger condition documented
- ☐ “Fails sometimes” turned into “fails when X is true”

8 · PROVE & FIX

- ☐ Root cause explained
- ☐ Original failing condition verified after the fix
- ☐ Related scenarios checked
- ☐ Monitoring updated to detect recurrence

BEFORE YOU CLOSE THE ISSUE

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Root cause explained | ☐ Monitoring / alerts updated |
| ☐ Reproduced consistently, or proven from evidence | ☐ Business / users informed |
| ☐ Verified under production-like conditions | ☐ Documented for future reference |