

Use of evaluation maturity matrix

Introduction

This maturity matrix is a self-assessment tool to assess the use of evaluation of local economic development policy. It helps identify areas for improvement and plan next steps.

This tool can be used at a directorate or portfolio level, organisation level, or across a region (e.g., MSA and constituent LAs).

Structure

This maturity matrix is separated into seven dimensions— **culture; strategic policies; skills, knowledge, and capacity; training; developing and delivering programmes and projects; use of data to support evaluation; and sharing evaluation evidence.**

Within each dimension, there are multiple criteria, one per row. Each criterion has descriptions at four levels of maturity— **basic, early progress, substantial progress, and mature.**

Example of criteria and levels of maturity:

Criteria	Basic level	Early progress	Substantial progress	Mature
1.1 Understanding the value of evaluation	Evaluation is not highly valued across the organisation; it tends to be conducted retrospectively OR only when prompted by funders' accountability requirements.	Evaluation is valued across the organisation for accountability BUT this is not always reflected in funding agreements with delivery partners. Officers rarely value evaluation evidence for learning and to inform policy design.	Evaluation is valued across the organisation for accountability. There are specific plans in place to improve culture of evaluation to inform policy design across the organisation, and in relationships with delivery partners.	Evaluation for accountability is valued alongside, but distinct from, monitoring, performance management and benefits realisation. Evaluation for learning is core to the organisation and learning from interventions – that do and don't work – is valued at all levels.

These maturity levels are not part of an accreditation or league table. They are designed to highlight the steps needed for a team or organisation to consistently and effectively make evidence-informed decisions from evaluation evidence and to conduct evaluation.

At the end of this document, there are definitions for terms used in the maturity matrix.

How to use this maturity matrix

Assess the current position

Assess each criterion separately, finding the best fit in each row where you meet all elements of that criterion. If you feel the best fit is between two maturity levels, select the lower level.

The criteria are interrelated. The level of maturity for each dimension is based on the lowest level within that dimension. For example, three 'substantial progress' and one 'early progress' would mean that the overall level for that dimension is 'early progress'.

At the end of this process, you will have a maturity level for each criterion, and for each of the seven dimensions.

Gather a range of views

We recommend either working through each dimension as a team or having several people complete it individually for discussion. You might not have insights into all the criteria, or how they are working in different Directorates. Consider gathering evidence or examples to illustrate the maturity level and support discussion.

Different people will have different experiences with evaluation, so it is important to gather a range of views. **The main aim is to identify next steps to improve, so disagreements between team members on the level of maturity of a criterion can highlight where more support is needed.**

For example, if the delivery team feels that monitoring data to feed into evaluations is collated and stored at a 'mature' level, but the evaluation manager reports 'early progress', that is useful to inform next steps.

Don't average answers (i.e. an 'early progress' and a 'mature' on the same criteria, does not mean 'substantial progress'). Instead, discuss the reasons behind people's assessment, and try to reach an agreement on the most suitable level for that criterion. If many people have completed an assessment, collate the responses and use your judgement to choose a best fit.

Record your assessment

Fill in the blank column on the righthand side of the maturity matrix below or complete the [Excel version](#). You can also use the next steps summary below or as a separate document to summarise your answers and make notes.

Identify areas for improvement

Once you have assessed all criteria in a dimension, identify the criteria that need development to move to the next level of maturity. "What does our team or organisation need to do to progress to the next level of maturity?"

If you prefer, assess all the dimensions first, and then identify those that need development.

Other parts of your organisation may have completed our [maturity matrix on evidence in local economic growth](#), a data maturity assessment, such as [this one from the LGA](#), end-to-end process mapping, reviews of project management processes, or other change or transformation processes. These can feed into the next stage when agreeing next steps.

Agree next steps

For most teams and organisations, there will be room for improvement in almost every criterion, so it's important to prioritise.

Do some dimensions need to be progressed before others? (e.g. You may need to secure leadership buy-in before getting approval for staff training. Or you may need officers in other teams to be trained before introducing processes.) Would progress on some criteria be a 'quick win'?

Changing habits and processes in a team or organisation is hard and takes time. Select one or two areas to focus on. Ask 'what can I or my team do now?' to help identify next steps.

An action plan with specific tasks, timelines and who is responsible can help ensure progress. A short next steps summary is available below.

Maturity matrix

Use of evaluation in local growth policy maturity matrix

This self-assessment tool covers the use of evaluation in local growth policy. 'Use' covers many elements, including ensuring the evaluation is a good fit for the project and the policy questions being asked, designing appropriate evaluation, and learning from evaluation evidence when developing strategies.

The matrix can be found on the following page.

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A. Organisation-wide approach to evaluation

This section assesses the attitudes and approach towards evaluation across the organisation and by leaders. ‘Leaders’ refers to whoever needs to use evaluation or evaluation evidence in their decision-making role – e.g. Gateway Board considering business cases, Directors reviewing interim findings.

Dimension	Criteria	Basic level	Early progress	Substantial progress	Mature	Assessment
1. Culture Attitudes towards evidence and its uses	1.1 Understanding the value of evaluation	Evaluation is not highly valued across the organisation; it tends to be conducted retrospectively OR only when prompted by funders’ accountability requirements.	Evaluation is valued across the organisation for accountability BUT this is not always reflected in funding agreements with delivery partners. Officers rarely value evaluation evidence for learning and to inform policy design.	Evaluation is valued across the organisation for accountability. There are specific plans in place to improve culture of evaluation to inform policy design across the organisation, and in relationships with delivery partners.	Evaluation for accountability is valued alongside, but distinct from, monitoring, performance management and benefits realisation. Evaluation for learning is core to the organisation, and learning from interventions – that do and don’t work – is valued at all levels.	
	1.2 Leaders’ value of evaluation	Leaders do not value evaluation within the policymaking process.	Leaders value evaluation for limited reasons (e.g. accountability or to tell ‘good news’ stories).	Leaders set an expectation for proportionate evaluation for both accountability and learning AND ensure adequate budgets.	Leaders set and reinforce expectations for proportionate evaluation to learn what works and what doesn’t, ensure adequate budgets AND senior leader responsibility.	
	1.3 Leaders’ use of evaluation evidence to inform decision making	Leaders rarely request evaluation evidence to inform policy development.	Leaders sometimes request evaluation evidence to inform policy development.	Leaders request good quality and relevant evaluation evidence when making decisions.	Leaders request quality, relevant evaluation evidence when making decisions AND support both experimentation and impact evaluation where evidence of ‘what works’ isn’t available.	

B. Strategy

This section assesses the use of evaluation at a strategic level. It refers to how evidence and evaluation are embedded in documents and processes.

Dimension	Criteria	Basic level	Early progress	Substantial progress	Mature	Assessment
2. Strategic policies How evaluation is embedded and used in strategies	2.1 Use of an evaluation strategy or M&E framework	The need for an evaluation strategy or M&E framework has been identified, but is not in place.	A draft or basic evaluation strategy or M&E framework is occasionally used to support decisions, strategy development and funding bids.	A good quality evaluation strategy and/or M&E framework is often used to support decisions, strategy development and funding bids. It talks to and is referenced by other strategy documents (e.g. data strategy).	A good quality evaluation strategy and/or M&E framework is in place and published. It is consistently used from the earliest stage in project and programme development, throughout business case development. It sits alongside other strategy documents (e.g. data strategy) and is updated as part of a cycle.	
	2.2 Processes to underpin evaluation (e.g. templates, project initiation, checklists for strategic fit and proportionality, guidance)	Evaluation occurs rarely and is ad hoc as required by funders, without set processes in place.	Some processes to consider and design evaluation in early stages of both programme and project development are in place.	Organisation-wide policies, processes, and tools to standardise evaluation assessment and design from the earliest stages of programme and project development are in place.	Evaluation is established and underpinned by a range of organisation-wide policies, processes and practices. Time to plan and undertake evaluation is built into project gateways and delivery plans. These are reviewed alongside other processes (e.g. project management, benefits realisation).	
	2.3 Quality assurance	Officers rarely ask colleagues to check the quality of commissioned evaluations. There are no evaluation specialists in place to offer expert advice.	Officers sometimes ask evaluation specialists to review or draft specifications to commission external evaluations.	Evaluation specialists are often involved early to assess proportionate evaluation, support commissioning of evaluators, and assure quality of evaluation outputs. This varies across teams or directorates.	Evaluation specialists are consistently involved early to assess proportionate evaluation and assure quality of evaluation outputs, both in-house and commissioned AND governance structures guide significant evaluations and ensure senior leader responsibility for quality assurance of evaluation.	

C. Skills and capacity to use evaluation in local economic growth

This section assesses the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to conduct and commission evaluation in local economic growth. It refers to the understanding of appropriate evaluation methods, the assessment of quality of evaluation proposals and findings, and the availability of training and support to use evaluation.

‘Officers’ refers to whoever needs to use evaluation for particular tasks both in the evaluation team and the wider organisation. ‘Evaluation officers’ and ‘evaluation teams’ refers to those with evaluation roles, whether in a central team or embedded within directorates.

This is an assessment of collective knowledge and skills, as well as the capacity to undertake these tasks. For individual assessment and planning personal development, MSAs can use or adapt the [Government analytical evaluation capabilities framework](#).

Dimension	Criteria	Basic level	Early progress	Substantial progress	Mature	Assessment
3. Skills, knowledge and capacity Officers' ability to conduct and commission evaluation	3.1 Officers' ability to construct a theory of change	Some officers can develop a basic logic model with support from colleagues to explain an intervention, sense-check assumptions, and engage with the evidence base.	Most officers can develop a basic logic model with support from colleagues to explain an intervention, sense-check assumptions, and engage with the evidence base.	Officers can consistently develop a basic logic model with support from colleagues to explain an intervention, sense-check assumptions, and engage with the evidence base AND most officers can respond to issues flagged around evaluation.	Officers can consistently develop a basic logic model with support from colleagues to explain an intervention, sense-check assumptions, and engage with the evidence base AND refine an evaluation plan with support from the evaluation team.	
	3.2 Officers' knowledge of evaluation	Some officers in non-evaluation roles understand evaluation's purposes for accountability.	Most officers in non-evaluation roles understand evaluation's purposes for accountability, and their role in evaluation.	Officers in non-evaluation roles understand evaluation's purposes for accountability AND learning, as well as their role in evaluation. Some officers have basic knowledge of evaluation methods and how to assess evaluation evidence.	Officers in non-evaluation roles understand evaluation's purposes for accountability and learning. Officers also understand their role in evaluation AND have basic knowledge of evaluation methods and how to assess evaluation evidence.	

3. Skills, knowledge and capacity Officers' ability to conduct and commission evaluation	3.3 Dedicated evaluation expertise Evaluation responsibilities are covered ad hoc; there are no dedicated evaluation roles filled by evaluation specialists.	There is a dedicated evaluation role(s) which can provide advice on some evaluation requirements, but is insufficient for the needs of the organisation AND the need for more evaluation resource has been identified, but is not in place.	There is an evaluation team (whether sitting within directorates or centralised) with some core funding, which has the capacity to meet most evaluation needs of projects or programmes (in-house or through commissioning).	There is a well-resourced evaluation team (whether sitting within directorates or centralised). Evaluation resource needs are reviewed alongside broader business planning and have core funding. The team has capacity to cover evaluation of individual projects (in-house or through commissioning) AND to systematically address gaps in evidence.
	3.4 Evaluation teams' ability to refine evaluation questions and select appropriate evaluation methods Evaluation responsibilities are covered ad hoc, and officers have very limited ability to refine evaluation questions or appropriate evaluation methods.	Evaluation officers can sometimes work with colleagues to refine policy questions, develop evaluation questions, recommend appropriate evaluation methods, and provide feedback on evaluation plans, but this is limited by both knowledge and capacity.	Evaluation teams can work with colleagues to refine policy questions, develop evaluation questions, recommend appropriate evaluation methods, and provide detailed feedback and advice on evaluation plans.	Evaluation teams confidently support colleagues throughout the policy cycle by providing detailed advice on the most appropriate evaluation approach and methods for a particular intervention, and provide recommendations that consider overall evaluation priorities and resourcing.
	3.5 Evaluation teams' ability to commission evaluation Evaluation responsibilities are covered ad hoc, and officers have very limited ability to commission evaluation.	Evaluation officers can sometimes develop specifications for some types of evaluation. Evaluation officers may lack confidence in assessing quality of some approaches suggested by consultants.	Evaluation teams can develop specifications for most types of evaluation, and feel confident in probing suggested approaches even if they lack knowledge or experience in specific methods.	Evaluation teams can develop high quality specification/Terms of Reference to underpin evaluation, AND can confidently assess quality of approaches. Where specialist skills are needed, colleagues provide support.

3. Skills, knowledge and capacity Officers' ability to conduct and commission evaluation	3.6 Evaluation teams' ability to quality assure evaluation	Evaluation responsibilities are covered ad hoc, and people have very limited ability to quality assure commissioned evaluation.	Evaluation officers know how to quality assure some methods and findings used by commissioned evaluators, but this is limited by knowledge or capacity.	Evaluation teams know how to quality assure most methods and findings in evaluation proposals, plans and reports, and feel confident negotiating changes to methods as needed.	Evaluation teams know how to quality assure methods and findings in evaluation proposals, plans, and reports from commissioned evaluators, and feel confident negotiating changes to methods as needed. Where specialist skills are needed, colleagues provide support.
	3.7 Specialist evaluation skills (e.g. social research, QED, VFM, R, Stata, AI, etc.)	Evaluation responsibilities are covered ad hoc, and officers have limited access to specialist skills through commissioning.	Evaluation officers have some access to specialist skills either in-house or externally.	Evaluation teams have access to specialist skills needed to design, deliver and understand evaluation either in-house or externally.	Evaluation teams have access to specialist skills needed to design and understand evaluation, and have access to specialists skills for evaluation delivery (e.g. within their team, a central team, commissioned) AND these skills needs are reviewed regularly in line with the evaluation strategy.
4. Training Officers access to improving skills and knowledge around evaluation	4.1 Availability of training and knowledge resources to officers	The need for generalised training on the use and value of evaluation has been identified, but training provision is not yet in place.	Introductory training on evaluation concepts (e.g. logic models, types of evaluation, appraising evaluation evidence) and the value of evaluation is offered sometimes .	Introductory training on evaluation concepts (e.g. logic models, types of evaluation, appraising evaluation evidence) and the value of evaluation is offered regularly and 'self-service' learning is available, but completion is not required.	Use and value of evaluation within policymaking is a core element of officer development in the organisation. Training and self-service learning is embedded in officer induction AND further development (e.g. periodic refresher training or training on policy updates).
	4.2 Availability of specialist training to evaluation teams (e.g. social research, QED, VFM, R, Stata, AI, etc.)	The need for specialist training on evaluation has been identified, but provision for training is not yet in place.	Training on specialist evaluation skills and knowledge is rarely offered through ad hoc opportunities.	Training (both formal and informal) on specialist evaluation skills is sometimes offered AND a skills audit has been used to identify gaps and training needs. Membership/subscription to evaluation bodies is offered.	Training (both formal and informal) on specialist evaluation skills is consistently offered based on a regularly updated skills audit that identifies gaps and training needs. Membership/subscription to evaluation bodies is offered.

D. Use of evaluation in local economic projects and programmes

This section assesses how the use of evaluation is embedded in developing and delivering programmes, and projects in local economic growth, including business cases, logic models, bid applications and commissioning suppliers.

‘Officers’ refers to whoever needs to consider or use evaluation (e.g. officers developing a business case, regardless of what team they are in or if they are commissioned suppliers, need to consider opportunities for evaluation).

Dimension	Criteria	Basic level	Early progress	Substantial progress	Mature	Assessment
5. Developing and delivering programmes and projects How evaluation is used in design and delivery	5.1 Use of processes to embed project-level evaluation (e.g. templates, project initiation, checklists for strategic fit and proportionality, guidance)	The need for processes and tools to prompt the routine use of evaluation in project design and delivery has been identified, but is not yet in place.	Some processes and tools (e.g. templates or prompts) are in place. Officers sometimes use these in project design and delivery.	Officers usually use standard processes, templates and checklists to plan evaluation before project signoff (e.g. FBC sign-off). The evaluation team is involved for larger or more complex work.	Officers consistently use standard processes, templates and checklists that prompt the routine use of evaluation at the earliest stages and involvement of the evaluation team in project and programme design and as needed throughout delivery.	
	5.2 Planning evaluation when developing programmes	Evaluation is planned only to meet funder or reporting requirements, and not considered across a programme.	Evaluation is sometimes considered at early stages of programme design.	Evaluation is usually discussed early in programme development and are reflected in M&E plans for individual projects.	Evaluation is consistently discussed at early stages of programme development. This process follows set guidance and is part of a broader strategic approach to evaluation. This is reflected in M&E plans for individual projects.	
	5.3 Use of logic models in project development	Officers use logic models if required by funders OR officers only use logic models retrospectively near project end.	Logic models are sometimes used to develop projects and programmes, but are sometimes only used retrospectively near project end.	Logic models are usually used during development of projects and programmes to clarify outcomes and indicators, and often inform monitoring and evaluation plans.	Officers consistently use logic models to refine M&E requirements at early stages of project or programme design. Officers work with the evaluation team to refine logic models that inform M&E plans as appropriate.	

5. Developing and delivering programmes and projects How evaluation is used in design and delivery	5.4 Use of impact evaluation	Impact evaluation is rarely considered unless a funder's requirement, and quality varies.	Impact evaluation is sometimes considered early in programme and project design, but not prioritised.	Impact evaluation is usually considered early in programme and project design, but is not consistently pursued. Proportionate impact evaluation is sometimes conducted.	Impact evaluation is consistently considered using set criteria and priorities early in programme and project design AND proportionate impact evaluation is usually conducted.
	5.5 Individual project M&E plans	M&E plans are created for some projects BUT usually not until delivery is underway.	M&E plans are created for most projects, but quality varies and sometimes not until delivery is underway.	Proportionate M&E plans are developed routinely and early for new projects, and are increasingly aligned to a wider M&E approach.	Proportionate M&E plans are embedded in the development of all projects AND individual M&E plans support wider strategic outcomes.
	5.6 Budgetary provision for evaluation	M&E costs are rarely included in project budgets.	M&E costs are included in budgets sometimes , typically when required by funders.	M&E costs are usually included and identified within project budgets, with guidance on what to cost; ringfencing happens for priority evaluations.	Costs of evaluation are included in core budgets , or consistently ringfenced in project or programme budgets. Funding is proportionate and allows for data collection and analysis before and after delivery as required.
	5.7 Management of evaluation	Evaluation management is ad hoc, with unclear roles and minimal oversight.	There are some defined roles and processes to manage evaluation and evaluation contracts, but applied inconsistently. Evaluation governance is poorly defined.	Evaluations are usually well-managed, with clear roles, governance structures, and processes to support active management of commissioning, delivery, risks management, and quality assurance, BUT consistency varies across directorates or programmes.	Evaluation is consistently and proactively managed across the organisation. Clear roles and accountabilities are embedded to actively manage and align evaluations with intervention design, ethical standards, and organisational priorities. Strong governance provides continuous oversight of quality, risks, and use of findings.

5. Developing and delivering programmes and projects How evaluation is used in design and delivery	5.8 Quality assurance of evaluation	The need to assure quality of evaluation methods and findings has been identified. There is a reliance on commissioned evaluators.	Evaluation specialists quality assure methods and findings proposed and used in a limited number of commissioned evaluators.	Evaluation teams quality assure most methods and findings in evaluation proposals, plans and reports. Other teams usually involve evaluation specialists to review methods in tender responses as well as interim and final findings.	Evaluation teams are part of processes to quality assure methods and findings in all evaluation proposals, plans, and reports. Evaluation teams are involved early to review methods and approaches in specifications to improve quality throughout.
	5.9 Evaluation results inform decisions	There are no processes to support the use of evaluation evidence in developing interventions.	Processes to learn from interim evaluation evidence during project development have been identified, but use is ad hoc .	Interim evaluation results are often used to refine and adjust projects in delivery. Processes are in place to learn from evaluation evidence in early stages of project and programme design and are often used.	Officers consistently use interim evaluation results to refine and adjust projects. Use of evaluation findings, both internal and more widely, is embedded in processes at early stages or project and programme development.

E. Storing and accessing M&E evidence in local economic growth

This section assesses how monitoring data is used for current and future evaluations, as well as how evaluation evidence in local economic growth is produced and stored. (e.g. baseline data from projects, monitoring data, stakeholder feedback, evaluation results)

Officers refers to whoever uses evidence for a particular task. For example, delivery officers may be responsible for monitoring data (whether in-house or commissioned), while a central bid writing team may collate research used in strategic cases of bids.

Dimension	Criteria	Basic level	Early progress	Substantial progress	Mature	Assessment
6. Use of data to support evaluation How data is collected, systematised and stored to inform evaluations	6.1 Collection of data (qualitative and quantitative)	Data is sometimes collected during project delivery, BUT baseline and post hoc data are rarely collected.	Data is usually collected during delivery AND for a baseline, BUT post hoc data is only collected sometimes .	In line with the project M&E plan, relevant data is usually collected for baseline, during delivery, and post hoc, but quality and completeness vary.	In line with an overarching M&E strategy and project M&E plan, good quality and relevant data is consistently collected to inform delivery and feed into evaluation.	
	6.2 Data quality	Data definitions and collection processes are sometimes standardised within projects (e.g. across multiple collection points) BUT not across projects or programmes.	Data definitions and collection processes are usually standardised within projects (e.g. across multiple collection points), BUT rarely standardised across projects and programmes.	Standardised indicators are usually used across similar projects. Overarching data definitions and guidance are in development, and data quality is checked in some projects.	Standardised indicators are consistently used (and reviewed) across relevant work. Definitions match existing administrative datasets where possible to enable evaluation. Overarching data definitions, guidance, and collection processes are tested and adapted to improve data quality.	
	6.3 Use of administrative datasets	Administrative datasets are rarely used in evaluations, unless by commissioned evaluators.	Administrative datasets are explored or used (where available) for some projects on an ad hoc basis, typically only when suggested by a commissioned evaluator.	Administrative datasets are often used (where available) to inform evaluation plans, and evaluation teams know what datasets are available for use. Repeatable processes are not yet in place.	Administrative datasets are routinely used (where available) to strengthen evaluation, supported by clear governance, established access routes and documented, repeatable processes.	

6. Use of data to support evaluation How data is collected, systematised and stored to inform evaluations	6.4 Data sharing agreements in supplier contracts and grant funding agreements (GFA)	Contracts or GFAs rarely include clear data sharing or data quality requirements for M&E. Data access and ownership are often unclear.	Contracts or GFAs sometimes include data sharing clauses, BUT terms vary and requirements for format, timeliness and quality are not consistently specified.	Contracts or GFAs usually include data sharing requirements, including expectations on data fields, definitions and reporting schedules, though enforcement and consistency vary.	Contracts or GFAs consistently include robust data sharing agreements and data standards (including quality assurance, security and access), enabling timely use of supplier data for monitoring and evaluation.
	6.5 Storage and management of evidence	Officers collect and store evidence to inform individual evaluations if required.	Evidence is stored for some projects (for example where required), but storage is ad hoc across locations and formats, with limited version control and inconsistent naming.	Evidence is usually stored in agreed locations (for example shared drives or a central repository) using basic conventions for naming and access, but collation, quality checks and regular updates are not yet consistent.	Officers systematically collect, collate and store in-house and commissioned evidence. AND an officer is responsible for regularly reviewing and updating the evidence. AND data collection works harmoniously with other parallel processes (e.g. performance management).
7. Sharing evaluation evidence Whether evaluation evidence is available to officers and easy to access	7.1 Communicating interim results of evaluation internally	Officers responsible for collating evidence share findings when asked BUT there is no requirement or standard process OR this process is under-resourced.	Interim evaluation findings are shared sometimes (for example in team meetings or by email), but it depends on individuals.	Interim evaluation results are often shared with the project team. There are emerging approaches to set out when and how to share learning, BUT vary by directorate.	Interim evaluation results are shared and discussed with the project team, enabling changes to delivery as required. Interim evaluation results are collated and broader learning shared with relevant teams.

7. Sharing evaluation evidence Whether evaluation evidence is available to officers and easy to access	7.2 Communicating evaluation evidence internally	The organisation has no formal mechanisms to capture or share evaluation findings or learning. Reports are not filed in one location.	Evaluation findings are sometimes shared within directorates, BUT evaluation reports are not collated within directorates or centrally.	Evaluation findings are usually shared within directorates AND evaluation reports are usually stored in an agreed location with basic conventions for naming, filing and signposting evidence, BUT knowledge of this resource is patchy.	There are processes in place and consistently used to share evaluation findings both proactively (e.g. updates, one-page summaries), and relevant teams (e.g. insights, policy) can draw on them regularly. There is a systematic approach for how evaluation reports and findings are collated and stored centrally. Findings and learning are distilled for ease of use.
	7.3 Communicating evaluation evidence externally	The organisation has no formal mechanisms to capture or share evaluation findings or learning. There are no agreed standards for publishing online.	Evaluation findings are shared externally sometimes (e.g. when required by funders or comms priorities).	There is a process for publishing completed evaluation findings (and occasionally evaluation plans), and this is usually followed.	Planned, live, and completed evaluations are published online. Officers are encouraged to share findings and key learning from evaluations with peers, including where a policy has not been effective.
	7.4 Addressing evidence gaps	No process or systems in place to identify or address evidence gaps.	Informal and ad hoc processes identify evidence gaps, but no coordination to address with new evaluation.	Formal processes in place to identify evidence gaps, but these gaps feed ad hoc into project or programme evaluation plans.	Processes ensure evidence gaps are systematically reviewed internally and with wider sector. Evidence gaps are factored into the evaluation strategy and business planning of directorates.

Next steps worksheet

For each dimension and criterion, identify which are the statements that describe your team or organisation. The maturity level for each dimension corresponds to the lower maturity level achieved in the criteria on that dimension.

For example, if in Culture 1.1 is mature, 1.2 is mature, and 1.3 is early progress, the maturity level for Culture as a whole is early progress.

Next, identify the criteria that need development in order to move to the next level of maturity in each dimension – What is missing? What part of the next level statement is not fulfilled?

Using the example above, to move from early progress to substantial progress in Culture, criteria 1.3 shows that the team needs to put into place processes around the routine use of evidence (i.e. processes to support understanding and using good quality and relevant evidence).

Making progress may require a series of actions that should be clearly laid out in a more detailed action plan.

Continuing the example, implementing processes requires understanding existing processes in place, securing agreement on changes, communicating the new way of working, etc.

Dimension	Criteria	Assessment		
		Criteria's level of maturity	Dimension's level of maturity	What is needed to achieve the next maturity level?
1. Culture	1.1			
	1.2			
	1.3			
2. Strategic policies	2.1			
	2.2			
	2.3			

3. Skills and knowledge	3.1	
	3.2	
	3.3	
	3.4	
	3.5	
	3.6	
	3.7	
4. Training	4.1	
	4.2	
5. Developing and delivering	5.1	
	5.2	
	5.3	
	5.4	
	5.5	
	5.6	
	5.7	
	5.8	
	5.9	

6. Use of data to support evaluation	6.1	
	6.2	
	6.3	
	6.4	
	6.5	
7. Use of data to support evaluation	7.1	
	7.2	
	7.3	
	7.4	

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Definitions

This section defines terms used within the matrix. Please keep in mind these definitions when assessing each criterion.

- **Benefits realisation:** The measuring and tracking of the intended benefits of a project or programme, as part of [benefits management](#).
- **Data:** Qualitative and quantitative information that is analysed during evaluation.
- **Economic development:** This can include any policy area or project that aims to improve the economy (e.g., skills, regeneration, business support, planning, tourism, transport).
- **Embedded:** Inserted or ingrained in the document or process; part of 'business as usual'.
- **Evaluation:**
 - **Impact evaluation:** Examines whether a policy had an impact on specific outcomes (i.e. 'causal impact' or '**causality**') by using a similar comparison group (i.e. **counterfactual**). A similar comparison group isolates the effects of the intervention – the only difference between treatment group and comparison group is the intervention itself. Any difference in outcome can be directly attributed to the intervention.
 - **Process evaluation:** Examines the way an intervention has been implemented and helps to understand the challenges. Methods vary but usually involve interviews, surveys, and collection of monitoring data on key immediate outcomes. If it includes good monitoring data, process evaluation can also give a rough idea of how well the implementation and initial effects of an intervention are going in real time.
 - **Value for money (VfM) evaluation:** Compares the costs and benefits achieved through the programme to establish cost effectiveness, usually compared against the original expectations outlined before the programme commenced.
- **Evaluation evidence:** Findings from evaluations of previous project and programmes, whether in-house or from other organisations. If impact evaluation, use an [evidence standard](#) to assess robustness.
- **Evidence base:** A collection of information (i.e. evidence) used to understand a specific policy area or problem.
- **Frequency:**
 - **Good quality evidence:** Reliable, credible and objective information presented clearly, accurately and precisely. Good quality evidence states how it was collected, the assumptions made, and its limitations. It is usually provided by a recognised authority or a well-known and reliable source. NB: Not all good quality evidence is relevant for a particular purpose.
 - **Relevant evidence:** Information that is valid for the context, group of people and topic, and answers the questions asked by the policymaker. NB: Relevant evidence is not always of good quality.
- **Evidence base:** A collection of information (i.e. evidence) used to understand a specific policy area or problem.
- **Frequency:**
 - **Systematically:** Frequently and according to a fixed plan or system.
 - **Consistently:** In every case, with no or few exceptions.

- **Usually:** Under normal conditions.
- **Sometimes:** Less than half the time, whether by volume or instances across an organisation (e.g., one Directorate out of five).
- **Rarely:** Infrequently and not according to a fixed plan or system.
- **Logic model:** A visual representation of a theory of change, which explains how and why an intervention is expected to lead to desired outcomes, setting out the links between activities, outputs, outcomes and assumptions.
- **People:**
 - **Officers:** A blanket term for whoever needs to use evidence for a particular task (e.g., member of senior leadership, communications officer, project manager).
 - **Evaluation officers or evaluation team:** Officers with skills and responsibility around evaluation, whether they sit within a central team (e.g. insights and research, performance management) or within Directorates (e.g., transport, employment and skills).
 - **Policymakers:** Policy officers and leaders (i.e. more senior staff) involved in the development of policies, projects and bids.
 - **Leaders:** Leaders in a team or Directorate (e.g. Economic Development Manager, Head of Service, Director), or senior leaders (e.g. Mayor, CEO, Executive Directors).
 - **In-house:** People within the organisation.
 - **Externally:** People from a third party (e.g., from a commissioned consultant or think tank, university, delivery supplier, partner, or another organisation).
- **Strategy:**
 - **Evaluation strategy:** A strategy for improving the generation of good quality evaluation evidence. It sets out the approach for how evaluation is used to support policy delivery and inform decisions, and the main principles and commitments that guide evaluation.
 - **M&E framework:** A set of guidelines, policies, and procedures on how monitoring and evaluation is approached across the organisation.

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