Evaluation Standards for Aotearoa New Zealand

FOR PEOPLE COMMISSIONING, USING, PARTICIPATING IN, OR CONDUCTING EVALUATIONS

JUNE 2015

This is a summary of the full evaluation standards that can be found at: www.superu.govt.nz/standards

EVALUATION

Involves the systematic determination of the quality, value or significance of something. This includes discrete evaluation projects, evaluative monitoring, the production of evaluative information, evaluative learning and evaluation science.

EVALUATION STANDARDS

These standards outline expectations of evaluation process, practices and products.

Evaluation standards are important principles underpinning robust, ethical and trustworthy evaluation.

Evaluation enables us to understand what policies and programmes are achieving for Aotearoa New Zealand families, whānau, communities, society and the environment. It informs us about how valuable the investment has been and what can be improved. To best inform decision-making and future actions, it is vital that evaluation practice, findings and conclusions are of the highest quality. Evaluation standards have been developed to make a strong public statement about the principles underpinning robust, ethical and trustworthy evaluation. Evaluation enables us to understand what policies and programmes are achieving for Aotearoa New Zealand families, whānau, communities, society and the environment.

Four principles frame the evaluation standards for Aotearoa New Zealand. These principles are

1. Respectful, meaningful relationships
2. Ethic of care
3. Responsive methodologies and trustworthy results
4. Competence and usefulness

Our purpose

The Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit’s (Superu’s) purpose

is to increase the use of evidence by people across the social sector

so that they can make better decisions – about funding, policies or services – to improve the lives of New Zealanders, New Zealand communities, families and whānau.

superu.govt.nz

About ANZEA

The Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (ANZEA) was established in 2006 to represent the unique values, needs, obligations and working context of Aotearoa New Zealand evaluators and to provide leadership on the development and enhancement of evaluation professional standards, ethics models, frameworks, theories and practices that pertain to Aotearoa New Zealand.

anzea.org.nz

THE STANDARDS ARE WIDELY APPLICABLE

These standards apply with care

Applying the standards in each evaluation setting requires careful deliberation, responsiveness and judgment. They should be applied in conjunction with good practice and ethical conduct.

The standards apply to evaluation where public, organisational or community resources are used to meet human and/or environmental needs and should apply to all stages of the evaluation journey.

The standards are: the foundational principles of respectful, meaningful relationships and ethic of care; the principles of responsive methodologies and trustworthy results; and the principle of competence and usefulness.

These principles are the fundamental principles that underpin the conduct of evaluation with integrity. Each principle has five standards. The diagram contained in this summary shows four principles that

The Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit

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Evaluation standards are important

Evaluation enables us to understand what policies and programmes are achieving for Aotearoa New Zealand families, whānau, communities, society and the environment. It informs us about how valuable the investment has been and what can be improved. To best inform decision-making and future actions, it is vital that evaluation practice, findings and conclusions are of the highest quality. Evaluation standards have been developed to make a strong public statement about the principles underlying robust, ethical and trustworthy evaluation.

Four principles frame the evaluation standards for Aotearoa New Zealand

The diagram contained in this summary shows four principles that underpin the conduct of evaluation with integrity. Each principle has five standards. The first two principles; 1) respectful, meaningful relationships and 2) ethic of care, are the foundational principles. These influence the realisation of the other two principles; 3) responsive methodologies and trustworthy results and 4) competence and usefulness.

The standards should be applied with care

Applying the standards in each evaluation setting requires careful deliberation, responsiveness and judgment. They should be applied in conjunction with good practice and ethical conduct.
Evaluation with integrity

- Reciprocity: Involves recognising and valuing participants' contribution to evaluation, as well as ensuring evaluation contributes to the wellbeing of participants and their communities.
- Protection: Evaluation participants and their communities are protected through the identification and use of appropriate ethical guidelines.
- Inclusion: The values, concepts and cultural protocols important to all involved in the evaluation are acknowledged and included in the evaluation process.
- Respect: Care is taken so that the practices, processes and products of evaluation uphold and enhance the dignity of all involved.
- Care: Honest, respectful and reciprocal relationships with people involved in and affected by evaluation.
- Professional: Reciprocity involves recognising and valuing participants' contribution to evaluation, as well as ensuring evaluation contributes to the wellbeing of participants and their communities.
- Ethic of care: The dignity of all involved in the evaluation is respected.
- Responsive: Stakeholders affected by evaluation are appropriately informed and involved.
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- Multicultural validity: The evaluation methodology and design is appropriate and responsive to the purpose and context of the evaluation and the information needs of users.
- Evaluative validity: The evaluation methodology and design is appropriate and responsive to the purpose and context of the evaluation and the information needs of users.
- Transparent: Evaluation findings and conclusions are accessible, defensible and transparent, and the evaluation purpose, design and criteria are explicit and transparent. Limitations are clearly specified.
- Communication: Forms of communication and timetables are negotiated throughout the evaluation. Participants and users of the evaluation receive clear and timely information from commissioners and evaluators.
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- Self-determination: In evaluation contexts, self-determination means respecting the rights, worldviews and aspirations of participants and their communities, including their guardianship of knowledge and resources.
- Governance: The governance of the evaluation and stakeholder accountabilities to each other are negotiated from the outset.
- Responsive: The evaluation methodology and design is appropriate and responsive to the purpose and context of the evaluation and the information needs of users.
- Robust: All aspects of the evaluation are carried out systematically, rigorously and appropriately to ensure robust findings.
- Evaluative validity: Defensible, data-informed evaluative reasoning ensures evaluation findings and judgements are accurate and valid.