

OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR UNDERTAKING EVALUATIONS, REVIEWS, PILOTS AND TRIALS

On the recommendation of the Corporate Executive and at the discretion of the Director General, the Department of Education undertakes evaluations, reviews, pilots and trials.

BACKGROUND

All projects and programs need to have appropriate monitoring and evaluation activity determined at the outset. Evaluations, reviews, pilots or trials are distinct from systematic ongoing monitoring and reporting and require special reporting activity.

Department programs, projects, service provision and operations can be the subject of an evaluation or review as a project in its own right. These can be quite localised efforts through to Corporate Executive commissioned evaluations and very formal reviews that are established by government. The Program Governance Group (PGG) considers the Department's activity in these areas on a regular basis.

Evaluations and reviews

Evaluations and Reviews may be conducted to:

- assess whether a Department project or program has achieved the outcomes that were expected;
- investigate the extent to which programs or services address a particular need or strategic issue;
- improve the provision of services across or within directorates;
- investigate problem areas identified through the analysis of performance information; and/or
- satisfy a statutory or regulatory requirement.

Pilots and trials

Pilots and trials:

- are small-scale investigations intended to test methods or assess the effectiveness of an aspect of service provision or aspects supporting service provision;
- confirm that proposed methods and procedures will work in practice before being applied on a larger scale; and/or
- provide an opportunity to make adjustments and revisions before investing in costs and resources associated with a large-scale projects, programs or service delivery.

NEW EVALUATIONS AND REVIEWS

Gaining approval

An evaluation can be a project in its own right or a component of a project. A review would typically be a project in its own right. They may be undertaken by Department employees, individuals or parties external to the Department, or both.

Evaluation and review proposals, endorsed by the evaluation project sponsor, are submitted to the PGG for endorsement prior to the proposed commencement date.

Where an evaluation is included as part of a project, gaining approval occurs during the project proposal stage. Where an evaluation or review is being considered as a project in its own right, a proposal can be submitted using the [evaluation and review proposal form](#).

The PGG will consider proposals and provides recommendations to Corporate Executive and the Director General. Evaluations and reviews cannot commence until Director General approval is received.

Ongoing management

The Evaluation and Accountability Directorate can provide advice in relation to monitoring and evaluation activity, particularly when a formal, independent evaluation is being considered. This includes developing and assessing evaluation contracts, negotiating methodologies and providing quality assurance of interim and final reports.

Outcome targets and type and method of data collection are to be in place at the commencement of an evaluation or review. These variables can be determined with the assistance of the Evaluation and Accountability Directorate.

Typically, evaluations present findings and do not include recommendations. The business area determines appropriate actions in response to the findings and presents them to the PGG and Corporate Executive.

Formal reviews are different in that as a result of investigating and responding to agreed terms of reference the intention is to provide both findings and recommendations. The Department business area needs to formally respond to the recommendations.

For the duration of the process, the Program Governance Group and Corporate Executive will expect an [evaluation/review plan](#) and regular progress reports.

NEW PILOTS AND TRIALS

Gaining approval

Pilot and trial proposals are submitted to the PGG for endorsement prior to the proposed commencement date. This occurs during the project proposal stage.

The PGG will consider and provide a recommendation to Corporate Executive and the Director General in respect of the proposal. Pilots and trials cannot commence until Director General approval is received.

Ongoing management

For the duration of the project, the PGG and Corporate Executive expects:

- a project plan;
- regular interim reports; and
- a closure report.

Additional documentation to be provided includes:

- recommendations and a proposal for how the recommendations are to be addressed;
- an action plan; and
- a communication plan.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Alan Dodson
Director
System and School Performance
Department of Education
151 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004
Phone: 9264 4035

Policy and Program Governance
Department Of Education
151 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004
Phone: 9264 4102