



Online Academic Summer School 2020
SOAS University of London

Project, Programme and Policy Evaluation
Course Handbook

Mode of Attendance: Full-time, Online

Duration: 2 weeks

SOAS Accredited: This course is worth 15 UK credits

Programme Description

Evaluations play an increasingly important role in the policy process. Stakeholders, including the public in general, hold expectations that governments demonstrate the results and effects of public interventions and their capacity to deliver value-for-money services. Nowadays, evaluations are often made for projects and programmes funded by super-national organisations, international organizations and donor institutions. Evaluations are also increasingly required by governments and audit institutions in many countries.

Developing the knowledge and skills to design, execute and appraise evaluations is fundamental for everyone who works in or with the government nowadays. Managers who are responsible for a project or a programme, elected civil servants who are held accountable for public policies, and auditors who review and appraise the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending are expected to understand or carry out evaluations on their own.

This course will provide the theoretical and methodological foundations for conducting evaluations. Students will learn how to evaluate projects, programmes and policies from the very design until the reporting and dissemination stages. The course will make use of several cases and examples of evaluations from various countries and regions of the world. The course will be highly practical and involve students working to produce an evaluation proposal.

Programme Schedule and Topics:

Week 1: Aims, functions and design of evaluations

- History, types and uses of evaluations
- Evaluation framework, programme theory and theory of change
- The design of an evaluation project
- Qualitative methods, quantitative methods and mixed methods

Week 2: Conducting and using evaluations

- Data collection and analysis
- Evaluations in the policy process
- Reporting and disseminating evaluations
- Being an evaluator

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand what evaluation is and its role in the policy process
- Explain how evaluations are designed, executed and appraised
- Design evaluations and select appropriate methods to implement them
- Carry out data collection and analysis for doing evaluations
- Report and disseminate evaluations to stakeholders

Assessment

Each course is assessed by two online assessments ('e-tivities'*) comprising of 30%, the remaining 70% is formed of a 2,500 word essay. The e-tivities provide formative and summative feedback to students as a means of monitoring their progress and encouraging areas in which they can improve. On successful completion of the assessments, students will receive a transcript confirming the credit awarded. Students that do not require credit are strongly encouraged to take part in the e-tivities, but are not required to complete the assessments.

* An 'e-tivity' is a framework for online, active and interactive learning following a format that states clearly to the students its 'Purpose'; the 'Task' at hand; the contribution or 'Response' type; and the 'Outcome' (Salmon, G. (2002) *E-tivities: The Key to Active Online Learning*, New York and London: Routledge Falmer.)

Course Convenor

Dr Alberto Asquer

Introductory Readings and Sources

- Athey S, and G W Imbens (2017) 'The state of applied econometrics: Causality and policy evaluation', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(2), 3-32.
- Bamberger M, J Rugh and L Mabry (2012) *RealWorld Evaluation: Working Under Budget, Time, Data, and Political Constraints*, Second edition, London: Sage.
- Clifton J and D Diaz-Fuentes (2010) 'Evaluating EU policies on public services: A citizens' perspective', *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, 81(2) 281–311.
- Flynn, N. and Asquer, A. (2017), *Public Sector Management*, 7th edition. London: SAGE.
- Hogwood B W and L A Gunn (1984) *Policy analysis for the real world*, Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.
- Nigel L and L Harrington (2012) 'The challenges to effective outcome evaluation of a national, multi-agency initiative: the experience of Sure Start', *Evaluation*, 18:93.

- Osman F A (2008) 'Health policy, programmes and system in Bangladesh: achievements and challenges', *South Asian Survey*, 15(2) 263–88
- van Oudenhoven N and R Wazir (2003) 'Replicating social programmes: approaches, strategies and conceptual issues' UNESCO Management of Social Transformations programme (MOST) Discussion paper 18: <http://www.unesco.org/most/dsp18.htm>
- Palfrey C, P Thomas and C Phillips (2012) *Evaluation for the real world*, Bristol UK: The Policy Press.
- Roche C and L Kelly (2012) 'The evaluation of politics and the politics of evaluation', Birmingham University UK: Developmental Leadership Programme Background Paper No 11: www.dlprog.org
- Staffan B, E Vedung and CG Larsson (2013) 'A Triangulation approach to impact evaluation', *Evaluation* 19: 56.