



Evaluation standards for Aotearoa New Zealand

APRIL 2015



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 whanau.

Superu
PO Box 2839
Wellington 6140

Telephone: 04 917 7040
Email: enquiries@superu.govt.nz
Website: superu.govt.nz

Follow us on Twitter: [@nzfamilies](https://twitter.com/nzfamilies)

Like us on Facebook: Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit



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 goals are to:

- promote and facilitate the development of evaluation practices and standards which are relevant to Aotearoa New Zealand, with particular reference to the principles and obligations established by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and reflecting the unique bi-cultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand, while also providing a framework from which multi-culturalism can be embraced and responded to
- promote excellence in evaluation in Aotearoa New Zealand, with a focus on the maintenance of appropriate ethical standards for the profession and the development of effective evaluation practice and craft requiring methodological appropriateness, integrity and quality
- facilitate debate and exchange of ideas and dissemination of knowledge in the practice of evaluation through the provision of meetings, conferences, professional development, education and training events, newsletters and other scholarly publications, and other similar activities
- encourage accessibility of the services of the Association to evaluation providers, practitioners, purchasers, and others affected by and interested in evaluation.

Email: info@anzea.org.nz

Website: anzea.org.nz

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Robyn Bailey for her significant contribution to this document.

We also acknowledge the insights, advice and contributions of the Evaluation Standards Working group: Vyletta Arago-Kemp, Kate McKegg, Dr Tamasailau Suaalii-Sauni, Louise Were, Dr Gail Kelly, Dr David Turner and Kathleen Seataoai Samu.

Foreword

Aotearoa New Zealand invests considerable resources in policies and programmes intended to contribute to the wellbeing of our society, communities, families and whānau and environment. We need to know what these investments achieve, how their results can be improved and how valuable our investment has been.

Evaluation can answer these questions. It is vital that evaluation information, findings, judgments and conclusions informing decisions and actions in the public interest are of the highest quality. Standards make a strong public statement about what we consider to be robust, ethical and trustworthy evaluation.

We are pleased to present evaluation standards for Aotearoa New Zealand. The standards were developed in partnership by the Social Policy Evaluation Research Unit (Superu) and the Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (ANZEA).

These standards set out expectations for good quality evaluation in Aotearoa New Zealand. That is:

The practices, processes and products of evaluation are to be respectful of people, undertaken with care, methodologically

responsive and appropriate, trustworthy, undertaken with competence and useful.

The standards are principle-based enabling application across a range of evaluation settings. The standards were developed in the context of, and for, Aotearoa New Zealand but also draw on evaluation standards developed in other countries.

We strongly encourage you to use the evaluation standards. They are relevant for commissioners, evaluators, participants and users of evaluation. We hope they will support the development of high quality practice in the range of evaluation settings in which you work.

We are grateful for the generous contribution of time, energy, feedback and creativity by a wide range of people across New Zealand.

This work is a collaborative effort of many dedicated people. Thank you.



Dr Gail Kelly
DIRECTOR CLIENT SERVICES
& SECTOR CHANGE, SUPERU



Kate McKegg
ANZEA CONVENOR

Contents

01 Introduction	7
02 About the standards	8
2.1. Context of standards in Aotearoa New Zealand	9
2.2. Evaluation standards are important	9
2.3. Who the standards apply to	10
2.4. Quality evaluation practice	11
2.5. The purpose of the standards	12
2.6. Principle-based standards	12
2.7. How the standards were developed	13
03 Evaluation	14
3.1. Defining evaluation	15
04 Evaluation standards	16
4.1. The standards framework	17
4.2. Principle-based evaluation standards	18
4.3. First principle: Respectful, meaningful relationships	19
4.4. Second principle: Ethic of care	20
4.5. Third principle: Responsive methodologies and trustworthy results	21
4.6. Fourth principle: Competence and usefulness	23
05 Applying the standards	25
5.1. When the standards apply	26
5.2. Who the standards apply to	26
5.3. Standards in the evaluation journey	27
Resources	29

Figures

Figure 1	Quality evaluation practice	11
Figure 2	The purpose of evaluation standards	12
Figure 3	Range of definitions for 'evaluation'	15
Figure 4	Standards framework	17
Figure 5	Evaluation is...	26

Tables

Table 1	Principles-based standards	12
Table 2	Evaluation standards	18
Table 3	Standards in the evaluation journey	27

01

Introduction

This document presents the standards for evaluation in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Aotearoa New Zealand evaluation standards are principle-based rather than a set of rules. They are aspirational in their entirety. They outline expectations of evaluation processes, practice and products. They provide guidance on what should occur and how to judge the quality of an evaluation. They recognise a range of evaluative activity and people involved, and sectors, contexts and cultural settings in which evaluation occurs in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The four principles framing the evaluation standards are:

- Respectful meaningful relationships
- Ethic of care
- Responsive methodologies and trustworthy results
- Competence and usefulness.

Integrity is the core value underlying these principles.

Each principle is accompanied by five standards.

The first two principles and their standards are influenced by the values and principles from Māori and Pasifika worldviews, and form the foundation for realising the other two principles.

ANZEA and Superu jointly developed the standards specifically for Aotearoa New Zealand. It is an important step in ensuring that evaluation in Aotearoa New Zealand is high quality, credible, valid, cost effective, culturally sound and responsive, ethical and meets the learning, development and accountability needs of our organisations, communities, projects and initiatives.

02

About the standards

2.1 Context of standards in Aotearoa New Zealand

The Treaty of Waitangi (Treaty) as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand sets out a broad framework for this nation's development. In developing the standards we recognised the Treaty principles of partnership, participation and protection. The values and principles of Māori, Pākehā, and Pasifika¹ are threaded through the standards.

2.2 Evaluation standards are important

Standards make a claim about what constitutes high quality practice. They are much more than a set of professional or better practice guidelines. They constitute an agreed 'working philosophy of evaluation'² for Aotearoa New Zealand. They emphasise what we consider important and valuable in evaluation in this country.

Evaluation informs decisions and actions across the government and non-government sectors, which affect the wellbeing of people and the environment of Aotearoa New Zealand now, and into the future.

Evaluation is part of the democratic process for ensuring that public and not-for-profit sector resources are being used in the best possible way, including whether they are providing people with the best possible services.

Evaluation is used in the private sector to assist business and philanthropic organisations to achieve the best possible results.

Therefore, evaluation practices, processes and products need to be of the highest quality to assure trust and confidence in the information, findings, judgments and conclusions. Standards are one way of facilitating quality practice and gaining the confidence of users.

The **values** and **principles** of Māori, Pākehā, and Pasifika are threaded through the standards.

¹ Pasifika (or Pasefika) is a New Zealand-oriented Polynesian transliteration of the term "Pacific". It has been mobilised by Pacific leaders and organisations in New Zealand as a term of empowerment. Its Polynesian orientations reflect the fact that New Zealand's Pacific population is overwhelmingly Polynesian.

² Keith, G. (2003). The Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) Experience in Developing Standards for Evaluation & Ethical Issues. The 5th European Conference on the Evaluation of Structural Funds. Budapest, Hungary.

2.3 Who the standards apply to

The standards apply to all those involved in an evaluation activity, including:

- **Commissioners** – funders and direct clients of an evaluation. They typically request and fund the evaluation, and receive the resulting reports or other products.
- **Evaluators** – all those who undertake ‘evaluation’, for example, discrete evaluation projects, evaluative monitoring, the production of evaluative information and evaluative knowledge, evaluative learning.

This includes those with professional experience and training in evaluation, and others who undertake evaluation as part of their work role.

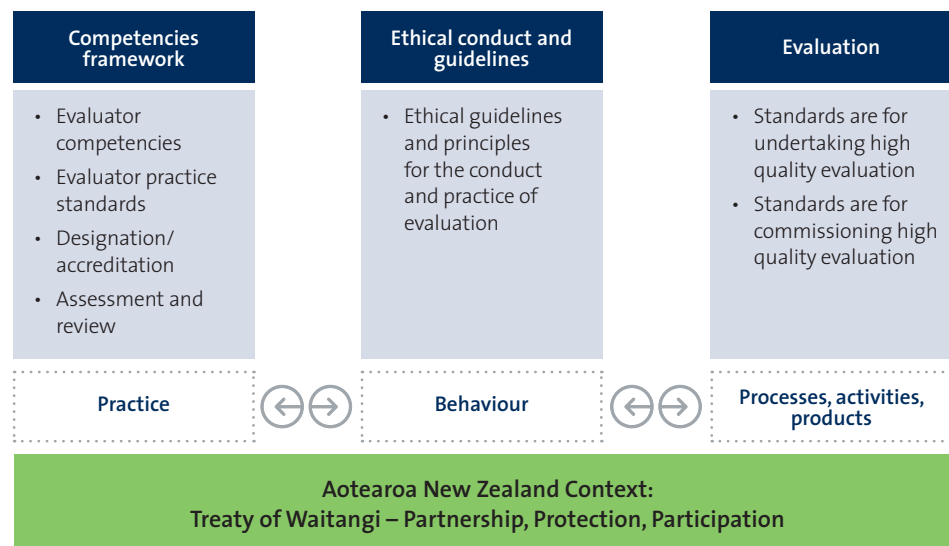
- **Participants** – providers and recipients of the ‘something’ (e.g. programme, service or initiative) being evaluated; members of families, whānau, organisations, iwi, Pasifika groups, businesses and communities where the ‘something is located and evaluation is occurring.
- **Users** – those whose needs are addressed by an evaluation; those making decisions based on the information from an evaluation; those who will be affected by such decisions; and those benefiting from improved knowledge, skills, learning or other actions from an evaluation.

Enacting the standards and assessing quality in each evaluation setting is critical and requires deliberation, responsiveness and judgment. This includes an ongoing conversation by all those who are affected by the use of the standards exploring how best to apply them in a manner that respects the different worldviews, values and perspectives in Aotearoa New Zealand. Additional resources are provided at the end of the document.

2.4 Quality evaluation practice

The standards are part of a wider evaluation quality strategy, as illustrated in the following diagram.³

Figure 1 _ Quality evaluation practice



They sit alongside:

- evaluator competencies <http://www.anzea.org.nz/anzae-evaluation-competencies>
- Kaupapa Māori evaluation standards (forthcoming)
- Superu Research and evaluation publishing protocol (forthcoming) www.superu.govt.nz
- other relevant evaluation and research good practice and ethical conduct guidelines (refer end of document).

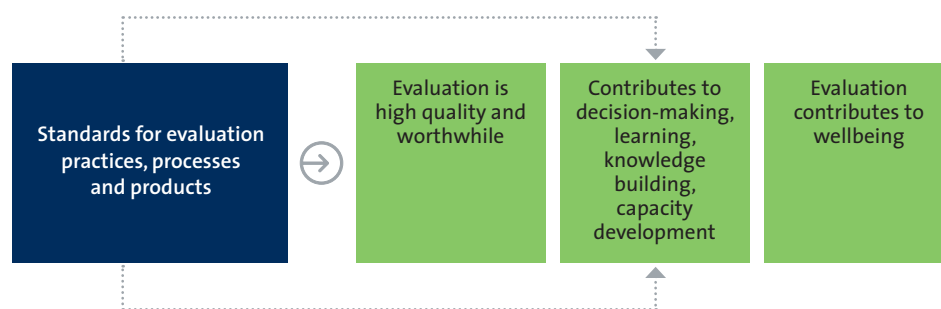
³ ANZEA's Quality Evaluation Practice Strategy <http://www.anzea.org.nz/evaluation/evaluation-competencies-project/>

2.5 The purpose of the standards

The evaluation standards provide guidance and clear expectations for everyone involved in evaluation. Meeting the standards will contribute to (as illustrated below):

- high quality and worthwhile evaluation in Aotearoa New Zealand
- policy, organisational and community decision-making, learning, knowledge, knowledge building, capacity development
- the wellbeing of people and/or the environment.

Figure 2_ The purpose of evaluation standards



2.6 Principle-based standards

The Aotearoa New Zealand evaluation standards combine elements from the definitions of principles and standards in the following table⁴.

TABLE 01

Principle-based standards

Term	Oxford English Dictionary	Additional comments
Principle	A proposition serving as the foundation of belief or action	Commonly perceived as aspirational
Guideline	A general rule or piece of advice	Frequently intended as recommendations that do not take precedence over the judgment of experienced practitioners
Standard	A thing serving as a recognised example or principle to which others conform or others should conform or by which accuracy or quality of others is judged	Preferred term for mandatory norms, accompanied by enforcement or certification mechanisms

⁴ Picciotto, R. (2005). The Value of Evaluation Standards: A Comparative Assessment. *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation*, 2 (3), 30–59.

2.7 How the standards were developed

ANZEA and Superu formed a partnership to jointly develop the standards.

Superu has been tasked with setting standards and specifying best practice for monitoring and evaluating programmes and interventions in the social sector⁵.

ANZEA's strategic plan has made development of evaluation standards a priority; recognising that evaluation standards are critical to ensuring evaluation quality along with other important 'pillars of quality' including ethical principles and guidelines, and evaluator competencies⁶.

We began developing the standards in 2013. This work was informed by:

- local and international literature
- Aotearoa New Zealand evaluation and research guidelines and ethics
- evaluation standards developed in other countries
- a cross-sector workshop, a hui Māori, Pasifika fono and open, on-line session
- working group committee consisting of Superu and ANZEA members
- consultation and feedback on an exposure draft.

⁵ Families Commission Statement of Intent 2014 – 2018 p. 6.

⁶ Pillars of quality: http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/txt/three_pillars.pdf

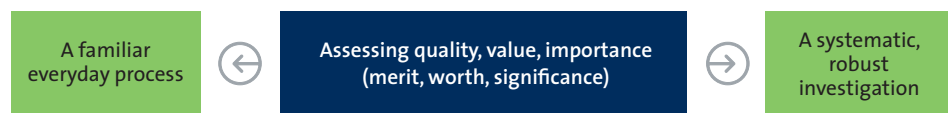
03

Evaluation

3.1 Defining evaluation

The definitions for the term evaluation range from what people do as part of everyday decision-making through to large-scale investigations. This project has adopted two complementary descriptions of evaluation that emphasise the concept of the ‘systematic’ investigation or determination of ‘quality’ or ‘value’.

Figure 3 _ Range of definitions for ‘evaluation’



The term ‘evaluation’ encompasses the range of activities involving the systematic determination of the quality, value and importance of something⁷. This includes and is not limited to discrete evaluation projects, evaluative monitoring, the production of evaluative information and evaluative knowledge, evaluative learning and evaluation science.

The Program Evaluation Standards (Yarbrough et al, 2011)⁸ describes evaluation as including:

- “the systematic investigation of the quality⁹ of programs, projects, subprograms, subprojects, and/or any of their components or elements, together or singly¹⁰
- for purposes of decision making, judgments, conclusions, findings, new knowledge, organisational development, and capacity building in response to the needs of identified stakeholders
- leading to improvement and/or accountability in the users’ programs and systems
- ultimately contributing to organizational or social value.”

The description from ANZEA’s Evaluation 101 Workshop adds:

- The process and product of reaching robust, defensible evaluative conclusions logically derived from evidence is what distinguishes evaluation from many other activities such as research, audit, decision-making methodology, monitoring, rich description, policy analysis, and the like. These activities may include evaluative components but often do not. On the other hand, evaluation always focuses particularly and intentionally on the quality, value and importance of things.
- What is unique about evaluation as a discipline is that it requires the systematic determination (reaching evaluative conclusions) of quality, value and importance¹¹. At the end of an evaluation process, an evaluation needs to be able to say whether something is any good, or not, and why.

⁷ Definition from ANZEA’s Evaluation 101 conference workshop, Wellington 2014. Quality, value and importance are considered to be roughly equivalent terms to merit, worth and significance.

⁸ Yarbrough et al., (2011). *The program evaluation standards: a guide for evaluators and evaluation users*. (3rd ed.). Sage Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, California, United States of America.

⁹ Quality is used to encompass “terms that denote value [including] merit, worth, importance, and significance” (Yarbrough et. al, (2011), p. xxv).

¹⁰ ANZEA similarly describes evaluation as the systematic determination of the quality, value and importance of something. The ‘something’ could be a project, programme or policy; an initiative, organization or artifact; it could relate to personnel or organisational performance; or something similar. The American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators also adds proposals, technology, research, theory and evaluation.

¹¹ Quality, value and importance are considered here to be roughly equivalent terms to merit, worth and significance.

04

Evaluation standards

4.1 The standards framework

Four principles frame the evaluation standards for Aotearoa New Zealand:

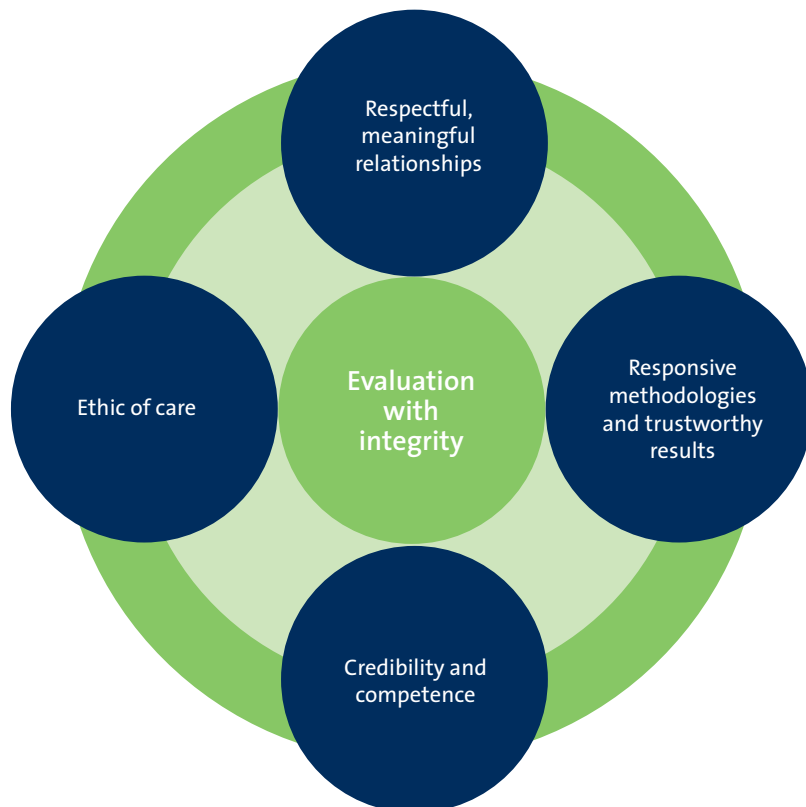
- respectful, meaningful relationships
- ethic of care
- responsive methodologies and trustworthy results
- competence and usefulness.

Integrity is the core value underlying the principles.

The practices, processes and products of evaluation are to be respectful of people, undertaken with care, methodologically responsive and appropriate, trustworthy, undertaken with competence and useful.

The first two principles – respectful, meaningful relationships and ethic of care, are the foundational principles, influencing the realisation of the other two principles – responsive methodologies and trustworthy results, and competence and usefulness. This is shown in the following diagram, which also illustrates the interconnectedness of the four principles supporting the core value of ‘evaluation with integrity’.

Figure 4_ Standards framework



4.2 Principle-based evaluation standards

Each principle has five standards making a total of twenty standards. The standards are listed in the following table.

TABLE 02

Evaluation standards

Respectful, meaningful relationships	Ethic of care	Responsive methodologies and trustworthy results	Competence and usefulness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships • Involvement • Communication • Negotiated accountabilities, resources and governance • Self-determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care • Respect • Inclusion • Protection • Reciprocity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive • Systematic and robust • Evaluative validity and reasoning • Multicultural validity • Transparent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional competence • Independence and interdependence • Project management • Usefulness • Evaluation accountability

As already noted, the standards are principle-based. They outline expectations of evaluation processes, practices and products. They provide guidance on what should occur and how to judge the quality of an evaluation.

We adopted a principle-based approach given the challenge of developing standards that would be relevant to all types of evaluative activity, contexts, cultural settings and stakeholder needs in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Reminder

The term 'evaluation' encompasses the range of activities involving the systematic determination of the quality, value and importance of something. This includes and is not limited to discrete evaluation projects, evaluative monitoring, the production of evaluative information and evaluative knowledge, evaluative learning and evaluation science.

The principles and standards build on and support each other. Their order does not imply any ranking of importance. They do not set out detailed rules or procedures, or provide a 'how to' guide. They do not, and do not intend to, specify any particular methodological approaches or methods that should be followed.

4.3_ First principle: Respectful, meaningful relationships

Respectful, meaningful relationships are built, nurtured and maintained over time. Engagement between commissioners, evaluators, participants and users is negotiated, respectful of differences, mutually beneficial and occurs in culturally appropriate ways. The historical and contemporary context(s) in which people are coming together for the purpose of the evaluation is acknowledged. The interconnectedness of people's roles as individuals, members of families, whānau, organisations and communities¹², and in relation to other living and inanimate entities and the environment, is acknowledged and appropriately negotiated in establishing relationships, arrangements and agreements.

4.3.1_ Standards

Relationships

Honest, sincere, respectful, reciprocal and meaningful relationships (individual and collective) are built, nurtured and maintained with the people, organisations and communities involved in and affected (or likely to be affected) by evaluation.

Involvement

The people, organisations and communities (or their representatives) involved in and affected (or likely to be affected) by evaluation are appropriately informed and involved.

Communication

Evaluation commissioners and evaluators provide timely, clear, informative and easily understandable information to each other, and to evaluation participants and users.

All communication is mindful of the historical and contemporary context(s) in which evaluation is occurring.

The appropriate forms and timeframes for communication are negotiated, including the sharing and dissemination of evaluation findings, judgments and conclusions.

The following information is provided and/or negotiated at the beginning, and throughout the evaluation:

- the genesis of a specific evaluation
- purpose and use
- scope and boundaries
- roles, responsibilities and interests of all those involved in, or affected by the evaluation
- the benefits, risks and outcomes of the evaluation for participants and users.

Engagement between commissioners, evaluators, participants and users is **negotiated**, respectful of differences, **mutually beneficial** and occurs in culturally appropriate ways.

¹² Communities include iwi, hapū, whānau, Pasifika communities and church groups, other ethnic or cultural groupings, geographic communities and communities of interest.

Negotiated accountabilities, resources and governance

The accountabilities of evaluation commissioners, evaluators, participants and users to each other, and to their respective families, whānau, organisations and communities is identified, acknowledged and negotiated at the beginning and, where necessary, throughout an evaluation.

There are sufficient resources available to undertake evaluation and address the key purposes and evaluative questions.

Governance of an evaluation is negotiated between those who have the authority in the context of the evaluation. This includes the evaluation commissioner, evaluators and those with authority in the organisations and/or communities where the evaluation is taking place.

Self-determination

The rights, worldviews, aspirations and desires of the evaluation participants and their communities are respected in the evaluation process. This includes honouring the principle ‘nothing about us, without us’, and respecting guardianship of knowledge and resources.

4.4 **Second principle: Ethic of care**

Kindness, respect, humanity and reciprocity are extended to all involved. Care is taken to ensure that the dignity of everyone is enhanced. Indigenous and other cultural worldviews, concepts and protocols are valued. Cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion occur. This also applies to ethnic, religious, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and any other ways of being. Individual and collective rights and protections, including privacy and confidentiality are negotiated.

4.4.1 Standards

Care

The practices, processes and products of evaluation uphold and enhance the dignity of all those involved (people, organisations, communities). This includes:

- respectful, accessible and appropriate engagement
- consideration of the context(s) and culture(s) in which evaluation is taking place
- respectful and ethical treatment of information
- mindfulness regarding the potential impact of the evaluation results.

Respect

The dignity, inherent value, wisdom, knowledge, skills and experience of all those involved in evaluation is respected.

Indigenous and other cultural worldviews, concepts and protocols are valued.

Inclusion

The interests, values, concepts and cultural protocols important to the evaluation commissioners, evaluators, participants and users are acknowledged and their inclusion negotiated at the beginning and throughout an evaluation.

The implications of cultural, ethnic, religious, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and other ways of being, and any inequities or power imbalances are acknowledged and accounted for throughout evaluation.

Appropriate advice is sought (e.g. organisational and/or knowledge experts, elders, community representatives, advocates).

Protection

Evaluation commissioners, evaluators and participant organisations and/or communities identify and adhere to the appropriate ethical guidelines for an evaluation. This includes addressing:

- cultural safety
- confidentiality
- privacy
- informed consent
- the identification and management of potential risks or harms to individual participants, their organisations and/or communities.

Reciprocity

Evaluation commissioners and evaluators are responsible for ensuring balance and mutual benefit occurs in the relationships and exchange of information with evaluation participants. This includes respectfully and appropriately recognising and valuing participants' contributions of information, knowledge, resources, time and goodwill. It also includes ensuring evaluation contributes in some way to the wellbeing of participants, families, whānau, organisations and communities.

4.5_ Third principle: Responsive methodologies and trustworthy results

Evaluation findings, judgments and conclusions are **credible, trustworthy,** and contextually and culturally **meaningful.**

The methodology and methods are culturally responsive and appropriate for the context, and 'fit for purpose'. Evaluation findings, judgments and conclusions are credible, trustworthy, and contextually and culturally meaningful.

4.5.1_ Standards

Responsive

The purpose and use of an evaluation is clearly identified. The methodology and methods [design] are appropriate for the purpose(s) of an evaluation, and the information needs of the commissioners and other users. They enable the key evaluative questions to be answered within the available timeframes and resources.

Evaluation designs are appropriate to the context of commissioners, and the context and culture(s) of participants, their organisations and communities.

Systematic and robust

All aspects of evaluation are carried out in a systematic manner, including design (which includes the development of evaluative questions and criteria), gathering and collation of information, analysis and synthesis, evaluative reasoning, and reporting of evaluation findings, judgments and conclusions [the results].

The design, data collection and analytical components of evaluation are rigorous to the extent required and agreed, and appropriate to the context and intended use of the evaluation. Information gathered is accurate.

Evaluative validity and reasoning

Evaluation findings, judgments and conclusions [the results] are data-informed, sound, cogent, well-grounded, logical and defensible. Evaluative reasoning clearly links results to the information and analyses (the evidence), the evaluative criteria of quality (merit, worth, importance and/or significance), and any appropriate warrants.

Commissioners and other users of evaluation can easily understand the evaluation process, the findings, judgments and conclusions, and how they were reached.

Multicultural validity

Evaluation findings, judgments and conclusions are accurate, credible and trustworthy across the range of the cultural contexts of the evaluation.

Transparent

The interests and values informing the purpose, design, evaluative questions and criteria are explicit. The role and positioning of evaluators is transparent.

The strengths and limitations of the design and any other factors affecting evaluation are clearly specified.

The process of an evaluation is logical, traceable, documented, and can be audited.

4.6 Fourth principle: Competence and usefulness

Evaluation is well-managed and undertaken by people with the appropriate professional, contextual and cultural competencies. Evaluation is planned, designed and implemented to ensure use, and produces information that is useful.

4.6.1 Standards

Professional, contextual and cultural competence

Both evaluation commissioners and evaluators have appropriate professional, contextual and cultural competencies for their roles in evaluation.

Commissioners have knowledge, abilities, skills, experience and credibility appropriate to commissioning, contracting, managing and maximising use of evaluation in their context.

Evaluators have knowledge, abilities, skills, experience and credibility appropriate to the evaluation brief. These include evaluation and methodological expertise, project management skills, and context and cultural knowledge.

Independence-interdependence

The stance towards independence and the position of the evaluator is negotiated at the beginning of the evaluation between evaluators, commissioners and participants.

Evaluators' competence to make sense of their subjectivity and proximity to organisational and/or community contexts is considered and acknowledged. The interdependence (interconnectedness) of evaluators with their families, whānau, organisations and/or communities is recognised, as is their ability to simultaneously conduct valid, reliable and rigorous evaluation. This includes clarifying the insider-outsider roles of evaluators, and acknowledging and valuing the differing insights insider-outsider evaluators bring based on their knowledge, language and understanding of families, whānau, organisations and/or communities.

The final version of the findings, judgments and conclusions of an evaluation are the responsibility of the evaluators, and are not to be amended without their consent. This does not preclude the involvement of commissioners, participants, users and experts co-constructing the findings, judgments and/or conclusions with the evaluators.

Project management

Evaluation is effectively managed and delivered within the negotiated timeframe and resources.

Evaluation is carried out prudently, that is, efficiently and produces information of sufficient value for the resources allocated.

Evaluation is planned,
designed and
implemented to
ensure use, and
produces information
that is **useful**.

Usefulness

Evaluation is utilisation-focused. Evaluation enables both intended and other opportunities for use throughout the evaluation process, and where appropriate, contributes to building evaluative capacity.

The key evaluation questions are answered. The findings, judgments and conclusions [the results] address the purpose and use of an evaluation.

Commissioners and other users use the evaluation process and results to help inform decisions and actions that benefit participants, their families, whānau, organisations and communities.

The integrity of an evaluation is upheld during use and reporting the results.

Evaluation accountability

Evaluation commissioners and evaluators are responsible for ensuring evaluation is useful, high quality and valuable. These standards (and other applicable standards) are used to assess the quality of an evaluation, for example via internal or external meta-evaluation.

05

Applying the standards

5.1 When the standards apply

The standards apply across the range of evaluative activity involving the systematic determination of the quality, value and importance of something. This includes and is not limited to:

- discrete evaluation projects, for example, evaluations of pilot programmes, formative or summative evaluations
- ongoing evaluative activities, for example, evaluative monitoring, producing evaluative information and knowledge, facilitating evaluative learning.

The standards apply to evaluation where public, organisational or community resources are being used to meet human and/or environmental needs. This is illustrated in the following diagram.

Figure 5_ Evaluation is...



5.2 Who the standards apply to

The standards apply to all those involved in evaluative activity – commissioners, evaluators, participants and users.

Different standards will be more or less important to different people, depending on their role and the evaluation processes, practices and products they are involved in, or affected by.

The four evaluation roles listed above are not discrete. People often have more than one role in an evaluation, for example, those responsible for commissioning an evaluation, such as policy, programme and organisational managers are often key users of the evaluation's results. Staff members delivering a programme may be evaluation participants, users of information during the evaluation process, users of the evaluation results, as well as being affected by the evaluation results, and engage in evaluation capacity building. This example can equally apply to community members.

5.3 Standards in the evaluation journey

How best to enact the standards and assess quality throughout the evaluation journey, and in each evaluation setting, requires deliberation, responsiveness and judgment.

Commissioners of evaluations, evaluators conducting evaluation, participants within evaluation and users of evaluation outcomes must consider the use of the standards through all stages of an evaluation journey, as illustrated below.

TABLE 03

Standards in the evaluation journey

Commissioner Evaluator Participants Users	Respectful, meaningful relationships	Ethic of care	Responsive methodologies and trustworthy results	Competence and usefulness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships Involvement Communication Negotiated accountabilities, resources and governance Self-determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Respect Inclusion Protection Reciprocity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsive Systematic and robust Evaluative validity and reasoning Multicultural validity Transparent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional competence Independence and interdependence Project management Usefulness Evaluation accountability
Evaluation Journey: Manage, define, frame, describe, understand causes, synthesise, report and use				
Practices	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮
Processes	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮
Products	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

Following on from the development of the standards, the approach to practices, processes and products will be the focus of further work for both ANZEA and Superu. See resources at the end of this document for ideas on applying the standards.

Many factors will influence how best to apply the standards in different evaluation situations.

For example:

- the nature of the evaluation (e.g. a discrete formative or summative evaluation, ongoing evaluative monitoring)
- the nature, context and culture of the organisation commissioning the evaluation (e.g. government, iwi, business, philanthropic, community, voluntary, Māori or Pasifika organisation)
- the historical and contemporary context(s) in which the evaluation is occurring
- the day-to-day realities of the evaluation participants
- the role(s) of the people applying the standards (e.g. commissioner, evaluator, participant, user).

These factors will affect the emphasis, importance and balance given to the different principles and standards.

Applying the standards in conjunction with good practice and ethical conduct guidelines is strongly encouraged.

Resources

Good practice guidelines, ethical guidelines, evaluator competencies and other resources to assist with the application of the standards include:

Aotearoa New Zealand

- Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (ANZEA). (2011). *Evaluator Competencies*. http://www.anzea.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/110801_anzea_evaluator_competencies_final.pdf
- The Tāngata Whenua Community and Voluntary Sector Research Centre. (2007). *Code of practice for the tāngata whenua, community and voluntary sector research centre*. <http://www.communityresearch.org.nz/research/code-of-practice-for-the-tangata-whenua-community-and-voluntary-sector-research-centre/>
- Health Research Council. (2005). *Pacific health research guidelines*. <http://www.hrc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20on%20Pacific%20Health%20Research%202005.pdf>
- Health Research Council. (2014). *Pacific health research guidelines*. <http://www.hrc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Pacific%20Health%20Research%20Guidelines%202014.pdf>
- Rangahau. *Ethics*. <http://www.rangahau.co.nz/ethics/>
- Social Policy Evaluation and Research (SPEAR). (2008) Good practice guidelines. <http://www.spear.govt.nz/good-practice/index.html>

In particular applying the five principles of respect, integrity, responsiveness, competency and reciprocity to:

- Research and evaluation contracting
 - Research and evaluation ethics
 - Research and evaluation involving Pacific peoples
 - Research and evaluation involving Māori
- The Pūtaiora Writing Group, Health Research Council. (2010). *Te Ara Tika – guidelines for Māori research ethics: A framework for researchers and ethics committee members*. <http://www.hrc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Te%20Ara%20Tika%20Guidelines%20for%20Maori%20Research%20Ethics.pdf>

Australasian

- Australasian Evaluation Society. (2013). *AES code of ethics and professional practice: guidelines on ethical conduct of evaluation and code of ethics*. <http://www.aes.asn.au/component/content/article/15-public/about-aes/7-aes-codes-of-behaviour-ethics.html>

American

- American Evaluation Association. (2004). *American Evaluation Association guiding principles for evaluators*. <http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=51>
- American Evaluation Association. (2011). *The American Evaluation Association (AEA) public statement on cultural competence in evaluation*. <http://www.eval.org/ccstatement>
- Yarbrough, D.B., Shulha, L.M., Hopson, R.K., & Caruthers, F.A. (2011). *The program evaluation standards: A guide for evaluators and evaluation users*. (3rd ed.). Sage Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, California, United States of America.

International

- Better Evaluation <http://www.betterevaluation.org>



The Families Commission operates under the name Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (Superu)