

## 4. An overview of the evaluation process

Most evaluations that incorporate both formative (i.e. 'during') and summative (i.e. 'after') evaluation have the following steps, although the order in which they are undertaken may vary. There may also be some retracing of steps – e.g. during planning (at Step 3), the evaluation team may feel it necessary to revisit Steps 1 and 2, revising the evaluation objectives.

Figure 4.2: The evaluation process

Steps in the process	Decision making
1. Specify, select, refine, or modify project goals and evaluation objectives. (See Fig. 2.1 'Project evaluation framework')	What is the general focus of the evaluation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is to be evaluated?</li> <li>• Why – what are the purposes?</li> <li>• Who is the evaluation for?</li> </ul>
2. Establish standards/criteria (performance measures) where appropriate	What benchmarks or measures will be used to evaluate the success of the project?
3. Plan appropriate evaluation design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key questions that need answering?</li> <li>• What is feasible in terms of budget, time, available resources and expertise?</li> </ul>
4. Select and/or develop data gathering methods	What information will be gathered? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From whom?</li> <li>• By whom?</li> <li>• How will the information be gathered?</li> </ul>
5. Collect relevant data	
6. Process, summarise, analyse relevant data	How will the information be analysed and interpreted, and by whom? (Criteria for judging will relate to Step 2.)
7 Contrast data with evaluation standards/criteria	
8. Report and feedback results	How will the results be communicated? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To whom?</li> <li>• By when?</li> </ul>
9. Assess cost-benefit/effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the benefits?</li> <li>• Was the investment worth it?</li> <li>• Who will make such judgements?</li> </ul>
10. Reflect (evaluate) the evaluation	How will the evaluation itself be evaluated? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will the design be evaluated?</li> <li>• How will you know if the evaluation is proceeding according to plan (a management issue)?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How will the overall evaluation effort be judged?</li></ul>
Throughout Steps 1-10	How will the evaluation be managed – in terms of identifying, allocating tasks, resources, personnel etc.?

[Adapted from Payne, D. A. (1994). *Designing Educational Project and Program Evaluations: A Practical Overview Based on Research and Experience*. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Boston. (page 13.)

University of Tasmania  
Last updated: 30/11/02