

## **HLTH 528**

## **Evaluating practice**

# 2011Course Outline Trimester 2

Teaching dates: 11 July to 14 October 2011

Mid-trimester break: 22 August to 4 September 2011

Study week: 17-21 October 2011

Examination/Assessment: 21 October – 12 November 2011

## Course coordinator: Dr Katherine Nelson



IMPORTANT NOTICE					
The Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health at Victoria University of Wellington, uses all reasonable skill and care in an effort to ensure the information and course content information contained in this outline is accurate at the time of going to print.					
Students should be aware, however, that in the event course timetables and venues need to be changed, all attempts will be made to notify the students.					
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#### **Section 1: Operational Information**

#### **COURSE CO-ORDINATORS & CONTACT DETAILS**

Katherine Nelson, Senior Lecturer

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Email: Kathy.nelson@vuw.ac.nz

#### POSTGRADUATE STUDENT ADMINISTRATOR

Abbey McDonald Ph: 04 463-6144

Email: abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz

#### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health Victoria University of Wellington P O Box 7625 Newtown Wellington 6242

#### **PHYSICAL ADDRESS**

Level 7, Clinical Services Block (CSB)
Wellington Regional Hospital
Riddiford St, Newtown
Wellington 6021

#### **OFFICE HOURS**

The Graduate School office will be open on Thursday 6 January 2011 and close on Thursday 22 December 2011 from 9.00am – 4.00pm weekdays.

In keeping with the practice of other years, academic staff will not be available on Fridays, except for the times they are involved in Schools. Please contact the course coordinator directly either by telephone or email should you wish to make an appointment or discuss course related issues.

#### **Section 2: Academic Information**

#### **COURSE AIM**

This course aims to introduce the student to the fundamentals of evaluation and to provide the student with the ability to undertake formal evaluations of their practice and to appraise evaluation reports and publications.

#### **COURSE CONTENT**

This course introduces the role and importance of evaluation at an individual, service and organisation level for informing service development and evaluating the impact of services. It provides an overview of forms and types of evaluations and uses a programme approach to cover three main forms – needs analysis, formative evaluation and outcome evaluation – that are important for evaluating practice. Theoretical and design considerations such as programme logic, ethics, stakeholders engagement, timing of the evaluation, insider outsider evaluators, methods and data sources are introduced in relation to planning and critiquing each of these forms of evaluation. Key evaluation skills such as audit and focus groups are practised. The course is suitable for all health care practitioners and will be useful for students who wish to provide rigorous evidence of the effectiveness of their practice or who are interested in taking on a managerial or policy role.

#### **STUDENT OUTCOMES**

Students learn how to apply new and existing skills and knowledge to evaluate their practice, to establish the need for a service and to determine the effectiveness of services provided.

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the theories and models of evaluation
- Evaluate the effectiveness and quality of health care interventions
- Critique evaluation reports and processes
- Identify and apply effective strategies for evaluating practice in health

## NURSING COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND NURSE PRACTITIONER COMPETENCIES THIS COURSE MEETS (NCNZ 2008)

- 1.2 Demonstrates accountability for practice in relation to the population/client group and the parameters of practice within health care settings.
- 2.5 Uses a formal approach to monitor and evaluate client responses to interventions.
- 3.3 Actively involved in quality assurance activities that monitor and improve the quality of health care and the effectiveness of own practice.

#### **EXPECTED WORKLOAD**

As a guide each 30-point course at the Graduate School requires students to allocate approximately 10 hours per point for self-directed study, research, assessments and attendance at Schools. Consequently 300 hours should be spread evenly over the 12 week trimester, break, study week and exam period.

#### WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at: http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawlsrefunds.aspx

#### **PRE-READINGS**

- Walsh, K., Duke, J., Foureur, M & MacDonald, L. (2007). Designing an effective evaluation plan: A tool for understanding and planning effective evaluations for complex nursing contexts. *Contemporary Nurse*, 25(1-2), 136-45.
- Wood, P.J., & Giddings, L.S. (2006). Improving health care through evaluation research: An interview with Katherine Nelson. *Nursing Praxis of New Zealand*, 22(3), 4-14.

#### **RECOMMENDED READING/TEXT**

- Alkin, M. C. (2011). Evaluation essentials from A to Z. New York: Guilford Press
- Bemelmans-Videc, M-L., Rist, R. C., & Vedung, E. (Eds). (1998). *Carrots, sticks, and sermons: Policy instruments and their evaluation*. New Brunswick, NJ. Transaction Publishers.
- Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2003). *The success case method: Find out quickly what's working and what's not*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). *Telling training's story : Evaluation made simple, credible, and effective*. San Francisco : Berrett-Koehler.

- Brophy, S., Snooks, H., & Griffiths, L. (2008). Small-scale evaluation in health: A practical guide. Los Angeles: SAGE
- Conley-Tyler, M. (2005). A fundamental choice: Internal or external evaluation? *Evaluation Journal of Australasia*, 4 (1&2), 3-11.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, P. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications
- Fetterman, D. M. & Wandersman, A. (Eds). (2005). *Empowerment evaluation principles in practice*. New York: Guilford Press.
- McEvoy, P. & Richards, D. (2003). Critical realism; A way forward for evaluation research in nursing? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 43(4), 411-420.
- Mertens, D. M. (2009). Transformative research and evaluation. New York: Guilford Press.
- Ministry of Health. (2007). How to Monitor for Population Health Outcomes: Guidelines for developing a monitoring framework. Occasional Bulletin No. 44. Wellington: Author.
- Owen, J. (2007). *Program evaluation: Forms and approaches*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). New York: Guilford Press.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Posavac, E. J. & Carey, R. G. (2011). *Program evaluation: Methods and case studies* (8<sup>th</sup> ed). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Smith, N. L. & Brandon, P. R. (Eds). (2008). *Fundamental issues in evaluation*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Stern, E. (Ed). (2005). Evaluation research methods (Vols 1-4). London: Sage Publications.
- Whitehead, D. (2003). Evaluating health promotion: A model for nursing practice. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 41 (5), 490-498.
- Wilson, V., & McCormack, B. (2006). Critical realism as emancipatory action: The case for realistic evaluation in practice development. *Nursing Philosophy*, 7, 45-57.

#### **ONLINE**

Australasian Evaluation Society - www.aes.asn.au

Centers for Disease control and prevention – http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework.htm

Community Tool Box – http://www.community.net.nz/how-toguides/community-research/

Evaluation Resources – http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/

Web Center for Social Research Methods – http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/intreval.php W.K.Kellogg Foundation – http://www.wkkf.org/default.aspx?

World Health Organisation – <a href="https://www.who.int/">www.who.int/</a> has a series of resources

#### **JOURNALS**

Action Research International

American Journal of evaluation

**Evaluation** 

**Evaluation and Program Planning** 

Evaluation & research in education

**Evaluation and the Health Professions** 

**Evaluation Journal of Australasia** 

**Evaluation Practice** 

**Evaluation Review** 

Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice

Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation

#### **COURSE TIMETABLE**

WEEK STARTING Monday	DATES	EVENT	ACTION
4 July			
11 July	Trimester 2 begins	Course begins	Commence reading
18 July		Introductions	Introduce self on Blackboard
25 July	27-29 July	1 <sup>st</sup> School	School participation
1 August			
8 August			
15 August	17 <sup>th</sup> Aug	1st assignment due	
22 August			
29 August			
5 September	8 <sup>th</sup> September	2 <sup>nd</sup> assignment due	
12 September	12-14 Sept	2 <sup>nd</sup> School	School participation
19 September			
26 September			
3 October			
10 October	12 October	3 <sup>rd</sup> assignment due	
17 October			
24 October	25 October	Labour Weekend	

#### **SCHOOL TIMETABLES**

#### 1<sup>ST</sup> SCHOOL

Dates: Wednesday 27, Thursday 28 & Friday 29 July 2011

Times: 9am -4.30pm

Venue: CS802, Level 8, Clinical Services Block, Wellington Hospital

Day 1 – Overview of common evaluation forms and types

Day 2 – Components of evaluation

Day 3 – Methods and issues in planning evaluation

#### 2<sup>ND</sup> SCHOOL

Dates: Monday 12, Tuesday 13 & Wednesday 14 September 2011

Times: 9am -4.30pm

Venue: CS802, Level 8, Clinical Services Block, Wellington Hospital

Day 1 – Methods and issues in undertaking evaluation

Day 2 – Other forms of evaluations

Day 3 - Evaluation reports

#### **BLACKBOARD INFORMATION**

Students enrolling for this course will need access to the VUW flexible learning system (Blackboard) via the Internet.

Blackboard is an online environment that supports teaching and learning at Victoria by making course information, materials and learning activities available online via the internet. Blackboard provides web-based access to course content, assessment, communication and collaboration tools. Instructions for using this will be provided as part of timetable during the 1<sup>st</sup> School. Students will need to be able to access the Internet on a regular basis.

The following software, which is necessary for using material on Blackboard, is freely available to download from the internet if you don't already have it:

- Netscape Communicator v 4.78 or higher (v. 7.1 recommended) OR
- Microsoft Internet Explorer v. 5.2.x or higher
- MS Windows 2000 or XP/ MacOS 9 or Mac OS X.2 or higher

Other software: Adobe Acrobat Reader - free download from <a href="http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/">http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/</a>

Microsoft Office or Microsoft Viewers. The viewers can be downloaded free of charge from: http://www.microsoft.com/office/000/viewers.asp

Computer skills required:

- Internet browsing skills
- Basic word processing skills

#### How to log onto Blackboard

- Open a web browser and go to myVictoria.ac.nz
- Enter your account username which you can find in your Confirmation of Study sheet
- It is usually made up of 6 letters of your last name and 4 letters of your first name
- Enter your password. If you have never used Victoria computer facilities you initial password is your student ID number
- Click on the Blackboard icon
- Alternatively, if you want to access Blackboard without going through the myVictoria portal, just log on at <a href="http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz">http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz</a>

#### **Off Campus access**

Blackboard is available from any location where you can access the Internet. This may be your home, work or an Internet café.

Problems with access? Contact ITS service desk 04 463 5050.

#### MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In order to successfully complete this course you are required to attend all Schools unless under special circumstances prior arrangements have been made with the course coordinator.

Students must complete all pieces of assessment to pass the course. Lectures, tutorials, electronic and other distance learning resources, practical and fieldwork may all be an integral part of the learning experience and participation in such activities is regarded as necessary.

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx.

#### **USE OF TURNITIN**

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine http://www.turnitin.com. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

#### WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except which available via the Calendar webpage qualification statutes, are at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about victoria/avcacademic

#### **Section 3: Assessment Information**

Learning objectives are assessed within the course assessment activities.

#### ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and professional practice. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair to students who do submit their work on time. It is expected therefore that you will complete and submit assignments not later than the due date if submitted on Blackboard and well before the due date if submitted by post. Assignments may only be submitted by email if organised with the course coordinator. Some courses require that you access Blackboard and submit all assignments only through this site. Identification of these courses and assignments will be outlined by your course coordinator at your first School.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal emergencies prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply to the course coordinator for an extension to the due date. Make sure that you keep a hard and/or electronic copy of your assignment until you have received feedback.

#### **Extensions**

An extension to a deadline will only be considered where there are extenuating circumstances. An application for an extension must be made by you in writing/e-mail to the course coordinator at least 24 hours before the due date. When communicating your request you must include the following information:

- Name, student number and contact details
- Course code
- Date of submission and request date for new submission
- Reason for extension request

Upon receipt of your request, course coordinators may grant an extension of up to 2 weeks. Any further request for an extension may require Head of School approval.

#### **Submission**

You must complete and submit your assignments by the due date and in the form specified by your course coordinator. In addition, check for the instructions for your particular assignment. If you are mailing your assignment it must be in the School no later than 5pm on the date of submission.

#### Late submission

Late assignments or assignments with extensions may be subject to delays in marking and may not receive comprehensive feedback.

A penalty will be incurred for late submission of work **where no prior arrangement** has been made as follows:

- Work submitted 7days after the due date without an extension will receive a 2 grade penalty. For example a B+ to a B-.
- Work submitted 8-14 days after the due date without an extension will receive a 4 grade penalty. For example a B+ to a C-.
- Work submitted more than 15 days (or more) late without an extension will not be marked and will receive an 'E' (fail) grade.

#### Other marking penalties

Assignments may also be penalised for poor presentation and for exceeding the word limit or for being seriously under length.

#### Feedback

Student coursework assignments submitted by the due date will normally be returned with feedback within four weeks of the due date.

#### Grading

Grading is according to the University standard as follows:

85% - 100%	A+	60% - 64%	B-
80% - 84%	Α	55% - 59%	C+
75% - 79%	A-	50% - 54%	С
70% - 74%	B+	40% - 49%	Fail D
65% - 69%	В	0 - 39%	Fail E

#### Receipt of assignments (hard copies)

Please ensure you complete an assignment cover sheet and attach it to the front of each assignment if you submit a hard copy assignment. Electronic copies do not require cover sheets. Assignment cover sheets will be available on the Blackboard site of your course under *Course Templates*. All hard copy assignments have to be sent to the course coordinator. If you want your assignment sent back to you in hard copy, complete a self addressed and stamped envelope and attach it to the front of your assignment.

#### ASSIGNMENT WRITING: GUIDELINES FOR PRESENTATION AND FORMATTING

#### Presentation

Unless otherwise instructed, use APA referencing and formatting. For support with APA style, please consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed). You may also refer to the *Referencing the APA Style: A Brief Guide* on <a href="http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st\_Services/slss/studyhub/reference/APA.pdf">http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st\_Services/slss/studyhub/reference/APA.pdf</a>.

Finally, you can check <a href="http://www.apastyle.org/">http://www.apastyle.org/</a> for other resources.

#### When submitting hard copy assignments:

- Fonts: Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri or Verdana only.
- Font size: 12.
- 1.5 line spacing.
- 2.5 cm margin all round.
- Assignments must be typed and printed clearly on one side of A4 size white paper only, with all pages fastened together by staple or secure clip.
- All pages should be numbered and should have a footer including the course code, assignment number and student ID number (left aligned), e.g. HLTH 512, Assignment 2, 300011122.
- Include a title page and an assignment cover sheet on top which is available on Blackboard under Course Templates.
- Appendices should only be included if these are indicated as acceptable in assignment
  instructions. These may include additional materials related to the text but not suitable for
  inclusion due to length or format. These are not marked or counted in the word limit, but
  should be clearly referred to as appropriate within the main text (e.g. see Appendix A).
- Do not use plastic sheets, clear files or folders, as these make it difficult for markers to handle.
- Please list the word count of your document.
- Ensure you keep a copy of your assignment for your records

#### When submitting assignments on Blackboard:

- Use MS Word for all electronic submissions.
- Name your file using the naming strategy LASTNAME-FIRST INITIAL\_COURSE
   CODE ASSIGNMENT NUMBER STUDENT NUMBER (Ex: PARONE-S HTLT501 2 300011122).
- All pages should be numbered and should have a footer including the course code, assignment number and student ID number (left aligned), e.g. HLTH 512, Assignment 2, 300011122.

- Fonts: Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri or Verdana only.
- Fonts size: 12.
- · Single spacing.
- Include a title page.
- Appendices should only be included if these are required by the lecturer. These may include additional materials related to the text but not suitable for inclusion due to length or format. These are not marked or counted in the word limit, but should be clearly referred to as appropriate within the main text (e.g. see Appendix A).
- Ensure you keep a copy of your assignment for your records.

#### ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The overall goal of the programmes in the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health (GSNMH) is to assist students to advance their knowledge and practice. As much of the content for the course revolves around clinical practice and clinical education it is important to maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries while undertaking study for this course.

#### Students are expected to ensure that:

- At all times they act within the boundaries of professional Codes of Conduct, professional standards, relevant legislative frameworks and the governance, rules and contracts of their employing organisation
- The work for this course does not constitute a formal research project and all information gathering must be clearly defined and remain within the student's professional boundaries
- They have regular contact with the course coordinator and raise any issues and concerns at the earliest possible time
- Where any particular person/patient/client is the subject of an assignment, verbal consent is obtained from the person/patient/client. If getting this consent is problematic, they discuss with the course coordinator how to proceed with the assignment
- Where any particular person/patient/client is the intended subject of an article or report, written consent is obtained from the person/patient/client. If getting this consent is problematic, they discuss with the course coordinator how to proceed with the article/report
- At no time in the course do they seek information from or apply interventions to patients/family/whanau that are beyond what is part of their scope and area of practice
- When recording practice-based information students maintain a high degree of ethical and moral comportment, with particular consideration of confidentiality and privacy issues when deciding what and how they record patient/ client information, and how they share practice experiences
- With regard to the confidentiality of practice-based information shared by peers within the context of the course, that they are guided by ethical considerations, their professional ethical Codes, and workplace and legislative requirements
- Colleagues and staff are treated with respect and consideration.

Should students have any concerns regarding their ability to fulfil requirements of the course assessments these must be discussed with the course coordinator. Similarly, if any issues arise in the context of completing course requirements these need to be discussed with the course coordinator.

Ethical approval from Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee has been obtained for courses at the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health.

For additional information contact Dr Katherine Nelson, Ethics Convenor, GSNMH, kathy.nelson@vuw.ac.nz ph: 04 463 6138.

#### **CONFERENCE & SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS**

Students of the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health are encouraged to present their work at professional conferences and as papers for publication. Students should discuss this with the course coordinator in the first instance. Dissemination of findings from academic work is a very important part of graduate education and assists clinical teams and professional groups to access up-to-date and new knowledge. Course coordinators will provide academic guidance in relation to the targeted activities, and also in relation to the proper academic processes of authorship and acknowledgement.

For all conference, professional and workplace presentations our VUW Power Point template should be used. You are also required to use this template for all school presentations as part of your assignment requirements. This template is available and can be accessed by those students using Blackboard or you can email: <a href="mailto:abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz">abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz</a> for a copy of the template to be sent to you.

As a general rule, presentations and papers should cite yourselves as post-graduate students, and name the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health as the organisation. In keeping with academic conventions course coordinators and for this paper academic advisors (the staff members who mark your work) who help with the ideas and preparation of the paper/presentation should be directly acknowledged or named as co-authors.

#### **ASSIGNMENT NUMBER ONE**

Assignment Name: Essay - Theory and practice in evaluation

Due Date: 17 Aug 2011

Word limit: 3000 words

This assignment is worth 40% of your final grade.

Please submit this assignment electronically on Blackboard

In light of the theoretical approaches to evaluation, identify three areas from your professional practice or work setting where you might undertake an evaluation. One area should be suitable for a needs analysis one for process evaluation and the third for an outcomes evaluation. Employing the practice and evaluation literature describe what might be gained in undertaking such evaluations in your chosen context.

#### **ASSIGNMENT NUMBER TWO**

Assignment Name: Evaluation proposal presentation

Due Date: 8 September 2011

Word limit: Powerpoint presentation of up to 12 slides

This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade.

Please submit a copy of your presentation via Blackboard

#### Presentation (10%)

You have been short listed to undertake an evaluation and the key stakeholders have asked all those on the short list for a 15 minute presentation outlining how they would undertake the evaluation. The budget for the evaluation is limited to \$100,000 plus GST. You may choose any evaluation scenario.

A presentation of your evaluation plan will be given to your classmates in the second school as if they were the stakeholders. The presentation should include:

- The subject of the evaluation
- Evaluation objectives
- Methods and data sources
- Processes
- Timeline

You can provide details of your plans on blackboard to establish their appropriateness.

#### **ASSIGNMENT NUMBER THREE**

Assignment Name: Evaluation proposal

Due Date: 12 October 2011

Word limit: 5000 words

This assignment is worth 50% of your final grade.

Please submit this assignment by blackboard

This proposal can be on the same proposal presented for Assignment 2 or can be of a different topic. The budget for the evaluation is limited to \$100,000 plus GST. You may choose any evaluation scenario.

#### Proposal on evaluation design considerations

Using the following <u>seven</u> headings write a proposal of a planned evaluation Headings

- 1. **Background** outline why an evaluation is needed
- 2. **Evaluation objectives** state the overall aim of the evaluation and the proposed objectives, and describe the program logic for these
- Methods, data sources and procedures outline what methods are to be used and why, including who and where you would get the data from and why. Summarise the type of data you expect to get. This section can also include why you discounted some other choices
- 4. **Timeline** provide a GANTT chart of the time line and write about the rationale for the time line
- 5. **Costings** generate a table of the budget and provide an explanation for costings
- 6. **Risk management plan** generate a risk table and provide an explanation of what you see are the main risks and how you will manage these
- 7. Ethical considerations identify ethical issues and how you will manage these

**Appendix** - **Curriculum Vitae** — to support your suitability as an evaluator (not included in word count).

Please note Evaluation proposals can include bullet points, tables and illustrations or graphs.