
Guidance for communicating value and impact outputs

Introduction

This guidance note has been produced as part of the Value and Impact Skills Materials project commissioned by AMOSSHE to support Student Services managers in implementing the value and impact approach.

The planning stage

How value and impact outputs will be communicated and presented should be considered at the very early stages of planning a value and impact evaluation and this point is covered in question 12 of Template 1, *Steps to take in the process of planning an evaluation*.

Identifying the key stakeholders and their needs at this early stage will inform the choice of format and medium of communication of outputs at the conclusion of the evaluation study.

Presenting the outputs

Key points to consider when determining how to present the outputs to each stakeholder group include:

- The particular interests of the stakeholder group in the outputs of value and impact (i.e. which parts of the evaluation study are most pertinent to them).
- How much information the stakeholder group needs (for example, a summary may be more appropriate for students whereas university committees may need a more detailed report).
- How to provide additional information for those who wish to have more information or who may have queries about the outputs.
- What format/style of report is most appropriate to the stakeholder group (for example financial 'bottom line' information would be given higher profile in a report for finance colleagues).
- Making links where relevant to key stakeholder issues (for example, to NSS data when communicating outputs to students, student unions; to strategic objectives when communicating outputs to the university's senior leadership team etc.).

Communicating the outputs

Key points to consider when determining how to communicate the outputs include:

- The medium (or range of media) that works best in communicating with each stakeholder group.
- The timing of the communication (for example, term times, exam periods, timing of other Student Services or university-wide communications).
- The length of the communication.

Other generic points to consider when reporting value and impact outputs

- Being mindful of the fact that many outputs cannot be solely attributed to Student Services interventions, and where relevant ensuring that acknowledgement is made of the contribution other areas make to the overall student experience when reporting evaluation outputs (for example, Students' Union, academic departments etc.).
- How to manage expectations about how much the outputs will tell stakeholders (i.e. providing clarity about this at the outset).
- How to report and communicate the outputs with participants in evaluation studies (as a courtesy communication separate to any they may receive as a member of an identified stakeholder group).
- Acknowledging the contribution of students, staff and other participants to evaluation studies.
- How you could use the outputs in other settings, for example Open Days, marketing information, website.
- How the outputs could be used as evidence in a business case for additional resource to implement changes recommended as a result of the evaluation study.
- How you can share the outputs and learning derived from an evaluation study with other areas of the institution, with the AMOSSHE community and more widely in the sector.