

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION STANDARDS

Presented by the German Evaluation Society (DeGEval-Standards)

The following Evaluation Standards were ratified by the general assembly of the German Evaluation Society (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Evaluation – DeGEval) on October 4th, 2001. They are the result of a two-year discussion and preparation process which included a membership survey, an appointed Standards Committee, and a review process.

■ The twenty-five DeGEval-Standards are organized in four groups. This structure as well as many Standards, including titles and descriptive statements, were stimulated by the „Program Evaluation Standards“ of the US-American „Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation“ and adapted to the requirements of evaluation in Germany and Austria. The DeGEval-Standards were also inspired by the Swiss adaptation of the Joint Committee Standards which provides a generalization of these standards from educational to more diverse settings.

■ In its German original, this short version of the DeGEval-Standards is accompanied by a 30-page document which includes a clarification of the aims and the scope of the Standards, definitions of evaluation and other key concepts, an overview of different approaches to evaluation, comments on the application of the Standards, and a description of the development of the document itself as well as the review process.

■ By the end of 2004, the DeGEval-Standards will have been subjected to a second review process which will include research societies as well as professional associations.

For more information, please see <http://www.degeval.de> or contact Wolfgang Beywl (wolfgang.beywl@univention.org), former Chair of the Standards Committee and board member of the German Evaluation Society.

Evaluations should feature four basic attributes:

Utility – Feasibility – Propriety – Accuracy.

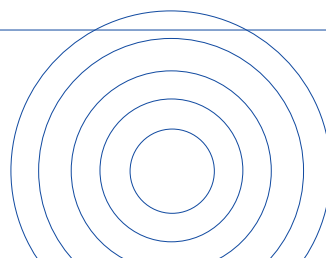
UTILITY **U** The Utility Standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation is guided by both the clarified purposes of the evaluation and the information needs of its intended users.

U1 Stakeholder Identification

Persons or groups involved in or affected by the evaluand should be identified, so that their interests can be clarified and taken into consideration when designing the evaluation.

U2 Clarification of the Purposes of the Evaluation

The purposes of the evaluation should be stated clearly, so that the stakeholders can provide relevant comments on these purposes, and so that the evaluation team knows exactly what it is expected to do.



U3 Evaluator Credibility and Competence

The persons conducting an evaluation should be trustworthy as well as methodologically and professionally competent, so that the evaluation findings achieve maximum credibility and acceptance.

U4 Information Scope and Selection

The scope and selection of the collected information should make it possible to answer relevant questions about the evaluand and, at the same time, consider the information needs of the client and other stakeholders.

U5 Transparency of Values

The perspectives and assumptions of the stakeholders that serve as a basis for the evaluation and the interpretation of the evaluation findings should be described in a way that clarifies their underlying values.

U6 Report Comprehensiveness and Clarity

Evaluation reports should provide all relevant information and be easily comprehensible.

U7 Evaluation Timeliness

The evaluation should be initiated and completed in a timely fashion, so that its findings can inform pending decision and improvement processes.

U8 Evaluation Utilization and Use

The evaluation should be planned, conducted, and reported in ways that encourage attentive follow-through by stakeholders and utilization of the evaluation findings.

FEASIBILITY **F** The Feasibility Standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation is planned and conducted in a realistic, thoughtful, diplomatic, and cost-effective manner.

F1 Appropriate Procedures

Evaluation procedures, including information collection procedures, should be chosen so that the burden placed on the evaluand or the stakeholders is appropriate in comparison to the expected benefits of the evaluation.

F2 Diplomatic Conduct

The evaluation should be planned and conducted so that it achieves maximal acceptance by the different stakeholders with regard to evaluation process and findings.

F3 Evaluation Efficiency

The relation between cost and benefit of the evaluation should be appropriate.

PROPRIETY **P** The Propriety Standards are intended to ensure that in the course of the evaluation all stakeholders are treated with respect and fairness.

P1 Formal Agreement

Obligations of the formal parties to an evaluation (what is to be done, how, by whom, when) should be agreed to in writing, so that these parties are obligated to adhere to all conditions of the agreement or to renegotiate it.

P2 Protection of Individual Rights

The evaluation should be designed and conducted in a way that protects the welfare, dignity, and rights of all stakeholders.

P3 Complete and Fair Investigation

The evaluation should undertake a complete and fair examination and description of strengths and weaknesses of the evaluand, so that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed.

P4 Unbiased Conduct and Reporting

The evaluation should take into account the different views of the stakeholders concerning the evaluand and the evaluation findings. Similar to the entire evaluation process, the evaluation report should evidence the impartial position of the evaluation team. Value judgments should be made as unemotionally as possible.

P5 Disclosure of Findings

To the extent possible, all stakeholders should have access to the evaluation findings.

ACCURACY **A** The Accuracy Standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation produces and discloses valid and useful information and findings pertaining to the evaluation questions.

A1 Description of the Evaluand

The evaluand should be described and documented clearly and accurately, so that it can be unequivocally identified.

A2 Context Analysis

The context of the evaluand should be examined and analyzed in enough detail.

A3 Described Purposes and Procedures

Object, purposes, questions, and procedures of an evaluation, including the applied methods, should be accurately documented and described, so that they can be identified and assessed.

A4 Disclosure of Information Sources

The information sources used in the course of the evaluation should be documented in appropriate detail, so that the reliability and adequacy of the information can be assessed.

A5 Valid and Reliable Information

The data collection procedures should be chosen or developed and then applied in a way that ensures the reliability and validity of the data with regard to answering the evaluation questions.

A6 Systematic Data Review

The data collected, analyzed, and presented in the course of the evaluation should be systematically examined for possible errors.

A7 Analysis of Qualitative and Quantitative Information

Qualitative and quantitative information should be analyzed in an appropriate, systematic way, so that the evaluation questions can be effectively answered.

A8 Justified Conclusions

The conclusions reached in the evaluation should be explicitly justified, so that the audiences can assess them.

A9 Meta-Evaluation

The evaluation should be documented and archived appropriately, so that a Meta-Evaluation can be undertaken.

