

# Quality of Evidence, Uncertainty and Risk

Research and evidence are critical components of the decision-making process across all parts of the Civil Service, not just the policy profession. Civil servants have access to so many sources of information that knowing which ones are most useful and reliable can prove tricky. As we find ourselves surrounded by data, being able to apply a critical eye to its real value is becoming increasingly important. After all, the quality of data which underpins a decision or policy recommendation can be a significant consideration when assessing the risks associated with it.

## Description

This topic is designed to help build your confidence in assessing, compiling, assimilating, distributing, interpreting and presenting a strong evidence base. In practice, this means everything from choosing the most appropriate type of research method through to communicating the results in the most accessible form.

You'll learn how not all evidence is valuable and will appreciate the damage which can be caused by ambiguous or misleading evidence. As well as being introduced to tools and techniques for generating and presenting data, you'll understand the implication that your own personal bias can have on the results.

This topic is primarily aimed at policy professionals but is also applicable to any civil servant who wishes to understand how evidence is analysed and used to support better decision-making.

## What does it involve?

After a short introductory video on the importance of evidence based policy-making, this topic is delivered via an interactive workshop (or workshops, depending on delivery). This will focus on how best to use the 4 primary sources of information; practitioner expertise, evidence

from the local context, the best available research evidence and the perspectives of those most affected by a decision. You'll also find out more about effective research methods, ranging from surveys through to randomised controlled trials (RCTs).

After the workshop, you will have a 90 minute task to complete back in the workplace. This will involve discussing a policy briefing or drafting requirement with your manager and then identifying the sources of evidence which are needed to support it.

## What's the outcome?

By completing this topic, you'll understand the value in judiciously and conscientiously using the best available evidence to inform public policy. By making use of valuable and reliable data, you can help support better decision making – meaning that time, money and effort won't be wasted on policies or programmes that don't, or won't work. In particular, this can be applied to learning the lessons of previous successful and unsuccessful policy or programme initiatives.

## Learning activities




Online  
resources



Workshop

### Delivery method:

F2F 

VLE 

### Estimated learning time:

7 hours 30 minutes

## How to book

[bookings.governmentcampus.co.uk](https://bookings.governmentcampus.co.uk)

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