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# National Schools Programme Evaluation Framework Taskforce

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## Purpose and Remit

1. The National Schools Programme (NSP) Evaluation Framework Taskforce (hereafter referred to as 'the Taskforce') will be a collaborative, short-life working group, responsible for developing and proposing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework for the NSP. The development of this framework responds to [Recommendation 8 from the 2024 NSP Review](#), and is anticipated to be implemented by NSP partners from 2026-27.
  - Recommendation 8b: Better measure, monitor, and report on SFC's investment and the outputs and impact of the programme.
2. The Taskforce will be led by SFC staff and will prepare and provide progress reports and proposals to the SFC NSP Coordinator and the NSP Strategic Advisory Group for feedback and guidance.
3. The Taskforce will undertake engagement, where appropriate, with external stakeholders, including NSP delivery partners.
4. The Taskforce Chair is responsible for leading the meeting to reach decisions. Decisions of the Taskforce will normally be made on the basis of agreement by consensus, but where the Taskforce Chair believes it to be in the interest of the progress of a debate, or where it is proposed and seconded by two members present, a vote may be recorded by show of hands. Should a vote be required, this will be via a simple majority, with the Taskforce Chair having the deciding vote if an even number of members are present.

## Meeting Frequency

5. The Taskforce will meet approximately once every two months, or as appropriate to fulfil their objectives.
6. Meetings will be held in person at the SFC offices in Edinburgh or, on a case-by-case basis at another location determined by the Taskforce, or virtually. In some cases, a hybrid option may be available, but members should be prepared to travel to in person workshops when necessary. SFC will reimburse the cost of travel in such cases.

## Reporting

7. The Taskforce will report to the NSP coordinator and the NSP Strategic Advisory Group.

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## Quorum

8. The quorum for a meeting will be one more than half the members. At least 50% of the quorum should consist of external members for a Taskforce meeting to proceed. However, when not quorate, the members present may decide to proceed with a meeting at which items on the agenda are considered and any recommendations reached are put to the next meeting for decision, if time allows.

## Membership

9. The Taskforce will be composed of up to 10 members from SFC and external partners. Members of the Taskforce are not appointed as representatives of individual organisations. The role of each will be confirmed at the first meeting of the taskforce.
  - SFC member – NSP Evaluation and Impact Officer
  - External member – NSP partner representative (SHEP)
  - External member – NSP partner representative (AHDP – Reach)
  - External member – NSP partner representative (AHDP – ACES)
  - External member – Active researcher in widening access or disadvantage in Scotland, typically with publications or funded research in the field
  - External member – Member with expertise of evaluation in a widening access context
  - SFC member – Evaluation Specialist
  - SFC member – NSP Coordinator
  - SFC member – Secretariat
10. In addition, other members of SFC's staff may attend meetings as required for agenda items for which they are presenting information, to be available to respond to questions on matters arising from papers, to hear the debate where the Group's discussion will inform their work, or as part of their on-going professional development.
11. The Taskforce will provide updates for, and consult with, all NSP Partners throughout the framework co-development process.
12. The Taskforce may invite SFC or external members to attend meetings as required for agenda items for which they are presenting information, or to provide feedback or expert advice.

## Duration

13. The anticipated duration of the Taskforce is one year, with the potential for extension should the Strategic Advisory Group or NSP Coordinator identify further objectives in line with responding to the recommendations of the 2024 NSP Review.

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## Agenda and Papers

14. Agenda and papers, where relevant, will be circulated at least a week in advance of meetings. Members who are unable to attend may submit written feedback in advance to be raised by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

## Outputs

15. The final output of this project will be a proposed Evaluation and Monitoring Framework and supporting resources to be shared with the NSP Strategic Advisory Group for comment, and the SFC NSP team for final approval. It is anticipated that an Evaluation and Monitoring Framework will be implemented for Academic Year 2026-27 as a pilot year.
16. The final format of the Framework will be developed by the project lead and Taskforce in accordance with evaluation best practice and in alignment with SFC's process. The Framework will include elements such as:
  - A Theory of Change model for the NSP and its objectives, inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.
  - An agreed upon and consistent data collection methodology and reporting process, including establishing metrics and indicators of success for reporting annual activity and assessing impact.
  - An agreed upon and consistent pre- and post-intervention tool for use with NSP participants.
17. Through developing the Framework, the project lead and Taskforce should also consider and recommend any potential solutions to identified data challenges or gaps, including data sharing agreements or ways of working to support effective operations or evaluation.

The Taskforce will report progress to the Strategic Advisory Group through interim deliverables as elements of the Framework are developed. They may also be called to attend Strategic Advisory Group meetings to present and discuss progress.

## Contact Information

For any queries regarding this document or the work of the Taskforce, please contact:

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This Terms of Reference has been reviewed and approved by the above representatives.

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