



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

# **AHRC Evaluation Strategy**

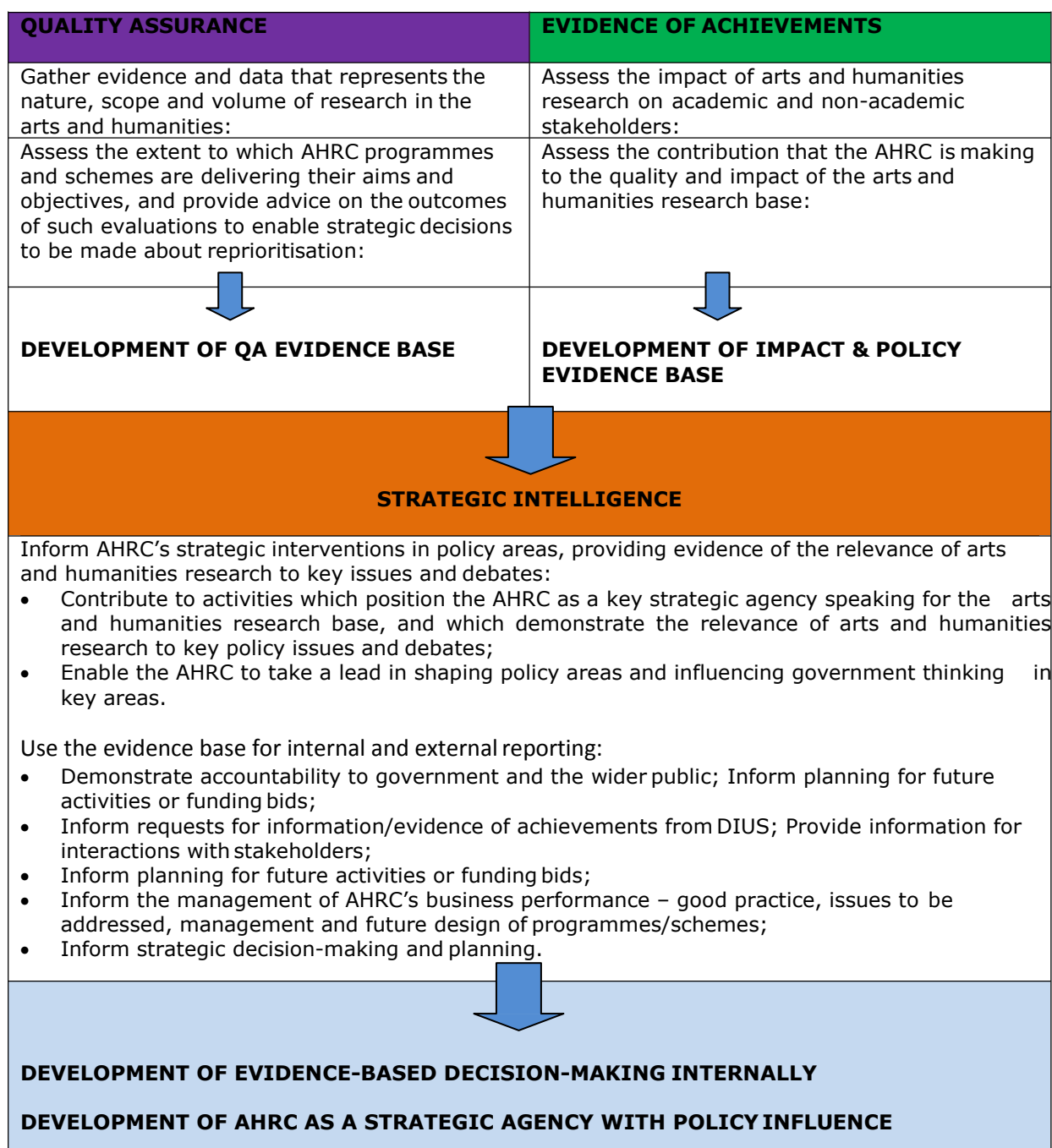
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## Summary

The Evaluation team provides evidence to address key questions posed by the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS): demonstrating the value of arts and humanities research, why it should be funded by the taxpayer, and what 'added value' the AHRC as an organisation delivers. The work of the Evaluation team also feeds into each of the four aims set out in the AHRC's Vision and Strategy 2007 – 2012.

Two key organisational changes have created new opportunities for the team to increase the strategic focus of their work: the creation of the Directorate of Policy and Public Affairs; and the relocation of responsibility for planning and performance management issues to the Evaluation Team. We intend to fully exploit these new opportunities, and also develop our existing activities to ensure that data and evidence is fully exploited to maximise its impact within the AHRC and externally with stakeholder audiences. To achieve this, the Evaluation Team will ensure a joined-up approach across activities undertaken within the three key areas of its remit: Quality Assurance, Evidence of Achievements, and Strategic Intelligence:



## Evaluation Delivery Plan

Activity	Success Indicators	Timescale
<b>QUALITY ASSURANCE</b>		
Scheme/programme reviews as detailed in Annex A	Reviews completed to schedule, demonstrating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the success of programmes/schemes in meeting their aims and objectives</li> <li>• lessons learned for future developments</li> <li>• impact from funded projects and 'added value' from programmes/schemes</li> </ul>	ONGOING 2009 - 2012
Monitoring and evaluation of Strategic Programmes (SPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPIs are set against aims and objectives</li> <li>• Suitable data is collected throughout the SPs</li> <li>• SP Directors are advised on data collection/ presentation in annual reports</li> <li>• Evaluation Team members attend steering group meetings to advise on evaluation/impact issues</li> </ul>	ONGOING
Work on Health of Disciplines report with PEG and RCUK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data and evidence is contextualised to accurately reflect the position of the arts and humanities</li> <li>• Findings from the report are analysed to examine the position of the arts and humanities in the wider landscape</li> <li>• Findings are fed back into AHRC planning and decision-making activities to ensure that endangered and emerging areas are protected</li> <li>• Findings are disseminated to stakeholders to ensure wider understanding of issues</li> </ul>	ANNUAL
Developing the evidence base on the quality and international standing of arts and humanities research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued work with agencies such as HESA to ensure the best possible data is provided within the constraints of the collection system</li> <li>• New potential sources are identified for data and evidence where appropriate/possible</li> <li>• Contacts with European and wider international agencies are developed to explore possibilities for benchmarking</li> </ul>	ONGOING

Activity	Success Indicators	Timescale
	activities	
Increasing the visibility of evaluation reviews internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff alerts for evaluation reports, along with 'headlines' and link to document</li> <li>Summary reports published on the AHRC website, permanently available</li> </ul>	ONGOING
<b>EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENTS</b>		
Delivering a report on the value and impact of arts and humanities research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report delivered that maps the full range of economic, social and cultural impacts produced by the range of disciplines within AHRC remit</li> <li>Report used for advocacy and formal reporting</li> </ul>	SPRING 2010
Continuing to develop evidence on Museums, Galleries and IRO status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of collaborative funding with British Museum completed on time, used for advocacy and formal reporting</li> <li>M&amp;G case studies demonstrate the range of economic, social and cultural impacts of collaborative research</li> </ul>	BM REVIEW COMPLETE JAN 2010, CASE STUDIES ONGOING TO 2012
Continuing to develop evidence on the impact of arts and humanities research on non-academic partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portfolio of case studies developed to demonstrate the impact of arts and humanities research</li> <li>Electronic folder of qualitative and quantitative evidence developed</li> </ul>	LAUNCH AUTUMN 2009, ONGOING UPDATES AND DEVELOPMENT
Developing the evidence base on economic impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic folder of qualitative and quantitative evidence developed across four key areas of economic impact</li> <li>Closer cross-divisional working to deliver evidence/potential case studies</li> <li>Better use of reports, papers and case studies; shorter versions produced for stakeholder audiences</li> </ul>	LAUNCH AUTUMN 2009, ONGOING UPDATES AND DEVELOPMENT
Develop the evidence base on policy impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic folder of qualitative and quantitative evidence developed across key areas of policy impact</li> <li>Intern employed to work on developing evidence base from existing research</li> </ul>	LAUNCH AUTUMN 2009, ONGOING UPDATES AND DEVELOPMENT
Developing new approaches to final reporting for award - holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AHRC directly involved in development of OPCS AHRC develops interim system to capture outputs and outcomes for up to five years after projects are completed</li> <li>Assessment of final reports takes place one year after project completion</li> </ul>	SCOPING PROJECT COMPLETED WINTER 2009, IMPLEMENTED 2010
Developing evaluation strategies for KT and international activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation strategies for KT and international activities are developed</li> </ul>	STRATEGY DELIVERED SPRING 2010

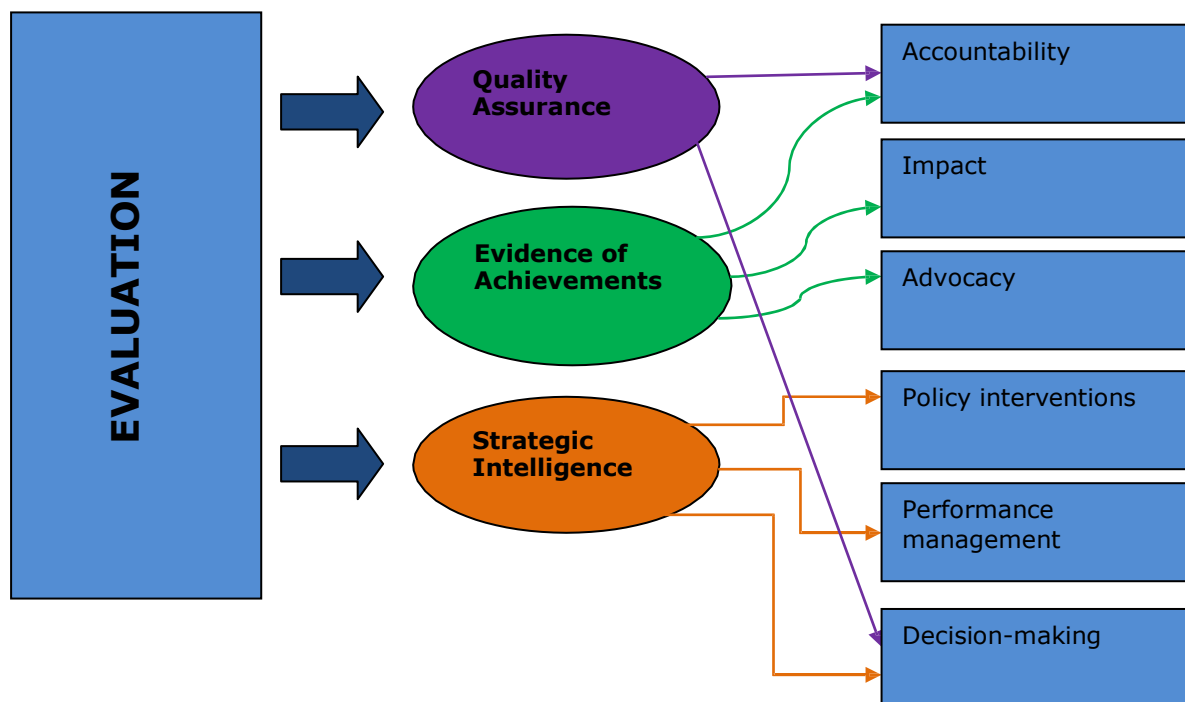
Activity	Success Indicators	Timescale
	<p>that take account of the importance of collaborative activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies are flexible enough to be applied across all schemes and programmes where these activities take place i.e. elements of the strategies can be used in 'traditional' evaluation reviews</li> </ul>	
Maximising the added value of Fellowships and Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of seminars and workshops are delivered, engaging with a range of stakeholders to address key issues</li> <li>• Findings are disseminated on AHRC website, and implemented/used by AHRC where possible</li> </ul>	FELLOWSHIP SEMINARS AUTUMN 2009, SPRING 2010. WORKSHOP EVENT WINTER 2009
Maximising possibilities for cross-Council approaches to impact assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHRC working closely with PEG and RCUK to develop approaches to impact, and ensuring comparability of data/evidence where appropriate</li> <li>• AHRC directly involved in new RCUK impact initiatives where appropriate</li> </ul>	ONGOING
Developing international connections and collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections and collaborations with international partners developed</li> <li>• Common approaches to impact assessment and benchmarking activities explored with a range of international partners</li> <li>• AHRC continues to develop its leadership role in providing support and advice to international colleagues in this area</li> </ul>	VISIT TO CANADA MAY 2009, ONGOING IN LIAISON WITH INTERNATIONAL TEAM
<b>STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE</b>		
Ensuring that Green Book and Cabinet guidelines are applied to planning, monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning templates created in line with Cabinet and Treasury guidelines are implemented and rolled out across the AHRC</li> <li>• All new policies, projects and programmes follow the new planning, monitoring and evaluation guidelines</li> </ul>	IMPLEMENTED AUTUMN 2009, ROLLED OUT IN 2010
Developing a timetable of reviews of policies, events and activities across AHRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All policies, events and activities are evaluated to deliver lessons learned for future development, following the Treasury ROAMEF guidelines</li> </ul>	ONGOING, LAUNCH IN SPRING 2010
Implementing a more joined- up approach to planning and performance management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more joined-up approach is taken to developing and delivering key reporting documents (Strategy, Delivery Plan, Scorecard, EIRF,</li> </ul>	IMPLEMENTED AUTUMN 2009, ROLLED OUT IN 2010

Activity	Success Indicators	Timescale
	Baseline) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team Business Plans feed into Delivery Plan and Scorecards</li> </ul>	
Developing a series of policy briefings for stakeholder audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy briefings produced and delivered to stakeholder audiences, engaging with key debates and emerging issues</li> <li>• Briefings raise the profile of arts and humanities research and the AHRC</li> </ul>	ONGOING 2009 - 2012
Developing a series of policy workshops and seminars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHRC plays a brokerage role in bringing researchers, policymakers and other stakeholders together to discuss issues, network and develop new strategic relationships</li> </ul>	ONGOING 2009 - 2012
Developing proactive and responsive approaches to developing policy interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHRC can respond to current and emerging policy issues and debates</li> <li>• AHRC takes the initiative in developing future interventions and policy influence in emerging areas</li> </ul>	ONGOING 2009 - 2012
Developing strategic partnerships to enhance AHRC reputation and influence in policy debates and issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHRC develops strategic partnerships with a range of departments, agencies and organisations to enhance our reputation and policy influence.</li> </ul>	ONGOING 2009 - 2012

## Evaluation at the AHRC

Evaluation provides evidence in a number of ways, and this evidence can have important uses for the AHRC. It can provide assurance on performance; objective evidence of achievements; strategic intelligence; and can feed into or facilitate a number of important processes or activities. Taken as a whole, the evidence and data generated by the Evaluation team can provide a strong evidence base that can be drawn on when needed – for example, in responding to urgent/unforeseen requests for evidence from policymakers.

The role of evaluation at the AHRC can be demonstrated as follows:



Traditionally, evaluation has been seen as something that happens at the end of a process, project or programme and has often been limited to simple accountability exercises. The diagram above illustrates the much wider remit of the Evaluation Team at the AHRC. Taking the Treasury's Green Book approach, evaluation at the AHRC is an important tool for business performance management. The Evaluation Team aims to provide key evidence to support strategic management and decision-making, to demonstrate accountability to government and the wider public, and to enable the AHRC to demonstrate its achievements.

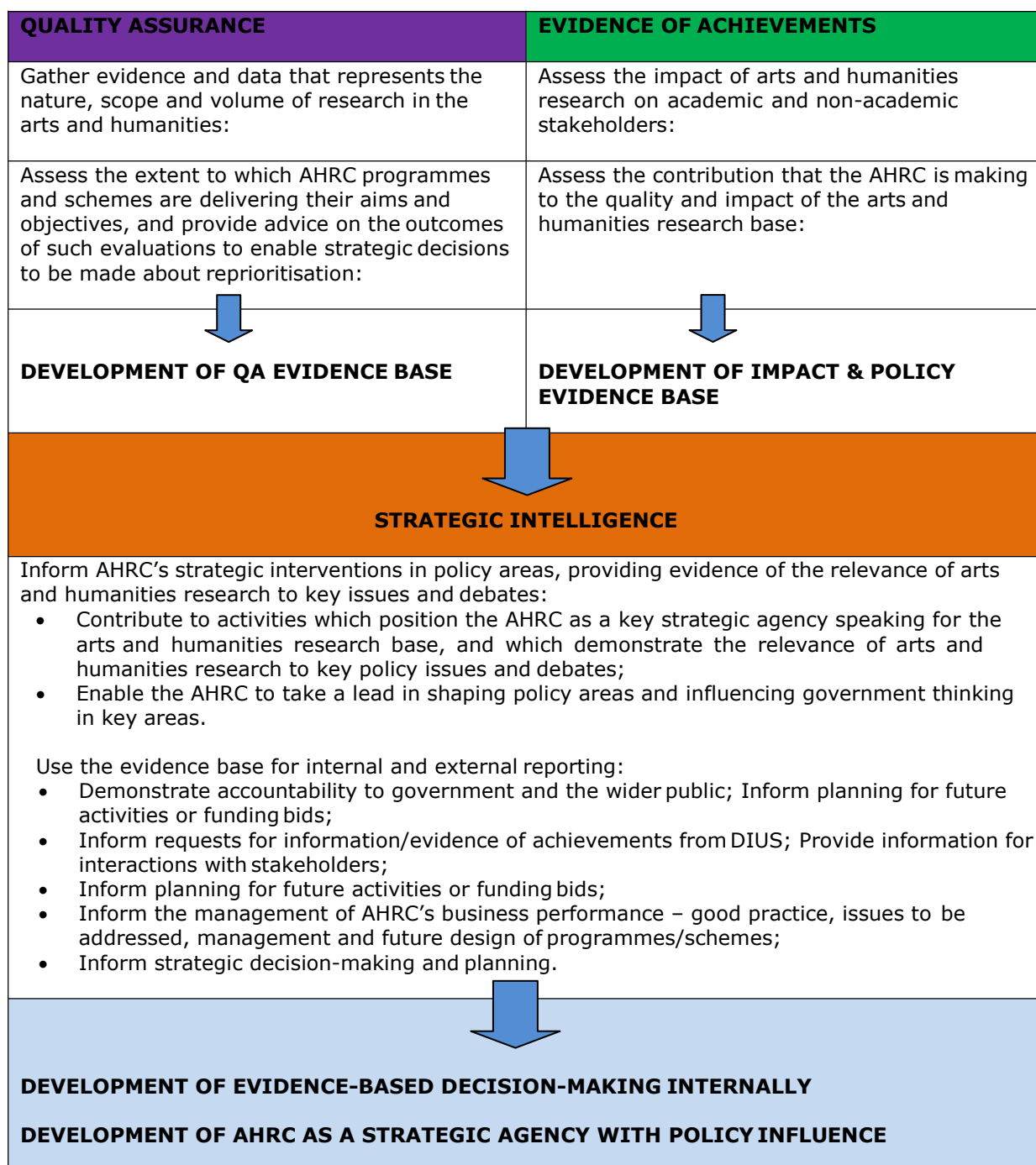
### *Future Directions for the Evaluation Team*

The Evaluation Team already provides data and evidence to meet these aims, but there are some key areas where more strategic interventions and activities could have a strong impact. Two key organisational changes have created new opportunities for the team to increase the strategic focus of their work: the creation of the Directorate of Policy and Public Affairs, which has enabled the team to extend its remit to include interventions in policy and advocacy work; and the relocation of responsibility for planning and performance management issues to the Evaluation Team, which has extended the possibilities for joined-up evidence-based decision making at the AHRC.

The Evaluation Team will fully exploit these new opportunities, and will also develop existing activities to ensure that data and evidence collected is fully exploited to maximise its impact within the AHRC and externally with stakeholder audiences. To achieve this, the Evaluation Team will ensure a joined up approach across activities undertaken within the three key areas of its remit:



Quality Assurance, Evidence of Achievements, and Strategic Intelligence. This approach is demonstrated in the logic model shown below:



## Quality Assurance

The Evaluation Team collects quality assurance evidence and data through two main mechanisms:

- **Scheme/programme evaluations** to assess the extent to which AHRC programmes and schemes are delivering their aims and objectives, and to provide advice to Council on the outcomes of these evaluations to enable strategic decisions to be made;
- **Data and metrics** that represent the nature, scope and volume of research in the arts and humanities.

### Data and metrics of quality

The Evaluation Team collects and analyses a range of data and evidence to demonstrate the position and quality of arts and humanities research generally, and AHRC-funded research more specifically, in the wider research landscape. This work is used to build an evidence base that is used in formal reports and papers for AHRC Council and committees; to inform Research Council UK (RCUK) requests for information and responses to Parliamentary Questions; and for formal reporting to DIUS.

Moving forward, the Evaluation Team aims to ensure that the data and evidence held is used more strategically by the AHRC. We will achieve this in the following ways:

#### **1. We will work with colleagues at RCUK and the Performance Evaluation Group (PEG) to ensure that the Health of Disciplines report provides an accurate picture across disciplines and is used more efficiently**

The Evaluation Team will work closely with colleagues to ensure that:

- Data and evidence collected by RCUK is contextualised to accurately reflect the position of the arts and humanities;
- Findings from the report are analysed to examine the position of the arts and humanities in relation to the wider landscape;
- Findings from the report are fed back into AHRC planning and decision-making activities to ensure that endangered and emerging areas are protected and nurtured;
- Findings are disseminated to stakeholders to ensure that there is a wider understanding of the issues facing the arts and humanities, and their position in relation to the wider landscape.

#### **2. We will work with colleagues in the Programmes Division to maximise the use of the Postgraduate Finishers Report**

The Evaluation Team will work closely with colleagues in the Programmes Division to identify ways in which the report can be used to maximise its impact. We will also consider ways of streamlining the processing of reports to avoid duplication between the two teams. Working together, the Evaluation Team and colleagues from Programmes will deliver the following changes to current processes:

- In final reports, the Programmes Division only need to know about the submission due date, which is a problem in a small proportion of cases. The Evaluation Team will therefore process all the forms, and flag those with problematic submission due dates. This will avoid duplication of activities across the two teams.
- The Evaluation Team will continue to produce a Postgraduate finishers report for the Advisory Board but will also produce a report for each HEI about their aggregate information, including comments to clarify particular issues. There has been a concern in the Programmes Division that this information is not fed back to HEIs, especially where there are recurrent issues. The new HEI reports will address this concern, as they will contain feedback for each institution, and give the opportunity to address issues raised. The new reports may have further significance for the new Block Grant Partnerships (BGPs), as they could feed into future assessment processes to ensure that institutions are addressing issues raised.
- The Evaluation Team will develop a strategy to deliver these changes. The new reports will link to the BGP Monitoring Strategy document.

#### **3. We will work with colleagues across the AHRC to ensure that the data and evidence we hold is used to maximise its impact**

- The Evaluation Team will work closely with colleagues in the Programmes Division, and with the Knowledge Transfer (KT) and International Affairs team, to ensure that we are collecting data and evidence that meets their needs;
- We will also ensure that colleagues in these teams are aware of the full range of evidence and data we already hold, and discuss ways in which it can be used by them to inform their future planning and decision-making activities;
- The Evaluation Team will also work with colleagues in the KT and International Affairs teams to identify key areas where data and evidence can be improved. We will work together in developing changes to application forms to ensure that data on international and non-academic partners is captured in a more routine and accessible manner.

**4. We will work to develop the evidence base to demonstrate the quality and international standing of arts and humanities research generally, and AHRC-funded research specifically**

- The Evaluation Team will continue to work with agencies such as HESA to ensure that we are receiving the best data available within the constraints of the collection system;
- We will continue to work on presenting existing data and evidence in a clear and accessible manner to inform internal and external reports and activities;
- We will continue to look for possible new sources of data and evidence to demonstrate the quality and international standing of arts and humanities research, and will consider ways of improving existing data where possible
- We will work with colleagues in the International Affairs team to develop strong contacts with European and wider international agencies to explore possibilities for benchmarking activities.

**Scheme evaluations**

The Evaluation Team conducts scheme/programme evaluations across the AHRC's portfolio to assess the extent to which they are delivering their aims and objectives, and to provide advice based on their findings to enable strategic decisions to be made in planning future projects and programmes.

The AHRC has clear evaluation procedures relating to both individual projects, which produce a final report that is subject to peer review, and schemes/programmes, which are subject to greater scrutiny. We apply a range of approaches to our scheme/programme evaluations, including: logic models, surveys, interviews, focus groups, peer review, economic impact assessment methods, and statistical techniques. The timetable for evaluations is scheduled in liaison with colleagues in the Programmes Division to ensure that reviews are conducted in a timely and strategic manner; for example, an evaluation review may be scheduled to precede considerations of potential changes to a scheme/programme.

Moving forward, the Evaluation Team aims to ensure that the outcomes of scheme/programme evaluations are used more strategically by the AHRC. We will achieve this in the following ways:

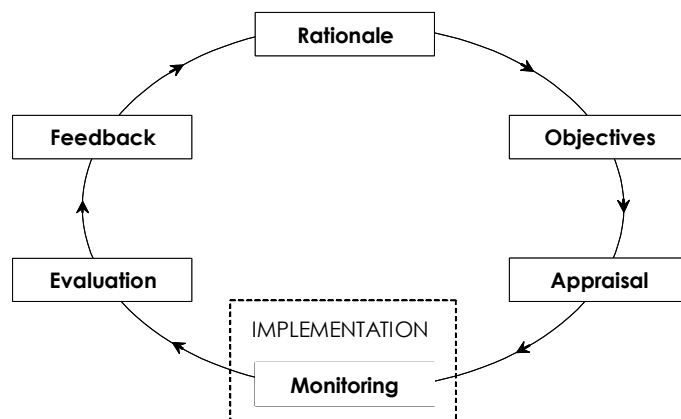
**1. We will work with colleagues across AHRC to ensure that the Treasury Green Book recommendations are applied to scheme/programme evaluations**

The Green Book states that 'when any policy, programme or project is completed or has advanced to a pre-determined degree, it should undergo a comprehensive evaluation'.<sup>1</sup> It further states that planning for evaluations should precede policy or programme intervention; and that evaluation outcomes should offer feedback on the success of the policy or programme, which can inform subsequent policy decisions and add to the knowledge base on what works and what does not.

The requirements set out in the Green Book can best be represented by the diagram below:

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<sup>1</sup>The Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government (HM Treasury 2003)



*Appraisal, monitoring and evaluation form stages of a broad policy cycle, often recognised under the acronym ROAMEF (Rationale, Objectives, Appraisal, Monitoring, Evaluation, Feedback). Scheme/programme evaluations feedback their outcomes to ensure that lessons are widely learned and communicated, and applied when planning new projects and programmes.*

To ensure that the AHRC follows these requirements, the Evaluation Team will work with colleagues in SMT to ensure that:

- Monitoring and evaluation activities are included within the planning process for all new policies and programmes;
- The outcomes of evaluations are widely learned and communicated within the AHRC, and fed back as 'lessons learned' in planning new policies and programmes;
- Evaluations are extended beyond schemes and programmes to include all policies and activities conducted by the AHRC (see also Strategic Intelligence).

**2. We will work closely with colleagues in the Programmes Division to ensure a more joined-up approach to planning, monitoring and evaluation, and to promote more cross-divisional work to achieve common goals**

The Evaluation Team has worked closely with colleagues in the Programmes Division to ensure that Performance Indicators have been set for the AHRC's Strategic Programmes, and that each Programme Director is aware of the information and evidence they need to collect for their final evaluation. The Evaluation Team is also involved in the Steering Group meetings for the programmes. This process has worked well, so the Evaluation Team is keen to develop cross-divisional working further.

To achieve this, the Evaluation Team will:

- Continue to work with colleagues in the Programmes Division on current and future Strategic Programmes, setting Performance Indicators and monitoring progress;
- Raise awareness in the Programmes Division of the work of the Evaluation Team;
- Explore possibilities for closer working between teams, including the possibility for greater involvement of Programmes team members in monitoring activities.

**3. We will review the timetable of planned scheme/programme evaluations to ensure that they remain timely and strategically focused**

- We will liaise with the Associate Directors of the Programmes Division to review the current timetable, and update it as appropriate (see also Strategic Intelligence).
- Following review, we will continue to deliver scheme/programme reviews to schedule to ensure that they remain timely and strategically focused.

**4. We will increase the visibility of evaluation reports across the AHRC, and will publish summary documents on the AHRC website for stakeholder audiences**

- We will alert all staff to future evaluation reports with a list of 'headline' outcomes, and provide links to the documents on Sharepoint;

- We will publish a summary document for all future evaluation reports on the relevant section of the AHRC website to demonstrate accountability to wider audiences. These summary reports will be permanently available on the relevant pages.

## Evidence of Achievements

The Evaluation Team works in two key areas to deliver evidence on the impact of arts and humanities research generally, and AHRC-funded research more specifically:

- **Building the evidence base** through a range of reviews, case studies and papers that demonstrate the economic impact of arts and humanities research in four key areas: providing benefits to business and the UK economy; providing a highly skilled labour force; improving public policy and public services; and improving quality of life in the UK.
- **Developing new approaches to impact assessment** across a range of activities to demonstrate the value and impact of arts and humanities research.

### Building the evidence base

The Evaluation Team collects and analyses a range of data and evidence to demonstrate the value and impact of arts and humanities research generally, and AHRC-funded research more specifically, in the wider research landscape. This work is used to build an evidence base that is used in formal reports and papers for AHRC Council and committees; to inform Research Council UK (RCUK) requests for information and responses to Parliamentary Questions; to engage with academic and non-academic stakeholders to demonstrate good practice and achievements; and for formal reporting to DIUS.

Moving forward, the Evaluation Team aims to develop the evidence base more strategically, and to ensure that it delivers its full impact for the AHRC. We will achieve this in the following ways:

#### **1. We will commission a report examining the value and impact of arts and humanities research for the UK**

- We have produced a range of case studies demonstrating the value and impact of arts and humanities research across a range of subjects and schemes. However, there are gaps in coverage of disciplines and impacts within these studies;
- We will work closely with consultants to produce a report which maps the full range of economic, social and cultural impacts produced by research from disciplines within our remit. The report will be used as an advocacy tool, but will also provide evidence for formal reporting to DIUS.

#### **2. We will continue to develop evidence to demonstrate the importance of arts and humanities research to the Museums and Galleries sector, and the significance of IRO status for a range of institutions**

- We are working with the British Museum to examine the added value and impact of collaborative research funded by the AHRC in three key areas: through the Museum's IRO status; through a range of collaborative awards with arts and humanities researchers; and through Collaborative Doctoral Awards. The report will be used as an advocacy tool, but will also provide evidence for formal reporting to DIUS;
- We are also working with the British Museum to identify opportunities for joint advocacy work. We plan to hold a breakfast meeting with policymakers to discuss the importance of collaborative research to underpin key exhibitions with international impact;
- We are developing a series of case studies to demonstrate the value and impact of our museums and galleries awards. These will act in place of a review, and will demonstrate the added value and impact of bringing arts and humanities research to these institutions.

#### **3. We will continue to develop evidence to demonstrate the impact of arts and humanities research on non-academic partners, particularly the creative and cultural industries**

- We will work with colleagues in the KT team to identify and deliver case studies in these areas;

- We will work with colleagues across the AHRC to build a stronger evidence base, creating an electronic folder of qualitative and quantitative data and evidence. This will include data on the number and types of awards made, case studies, key contacts and notes of meetings.

**4. We will work with colleagues across the AHRC to develop the evidence base on the economic impact of AHRC-funded projects**

- We will work with colleagues to develop the evidence base, creating electronic folders covering the four key areas of economic impact: providing benefits to business and the UK economy; providing a highly skilled labour force; improving public policy and public services; and improving quality of life in the UK.
- We will look to develop closer relationships with colleagues in the Programmes Division and aim to develop stronger cross-divisional working in identifying case studies and evidence of impact;
- We will work with colleagues within the Directorate of Policy and Public Affairs to ensure that reports, papers and case studies achieve their maximum impact.

**5. We will work with colleagues within the Directorate of Policy and Public Affairs to develop the evidence base on the policy impacts of AHRC-funded projects**

- We will work with colleagues across the Directorate to identify key areas where the arts and humanities can make a meaningful contribution to policy debates and issues;
- Once these areas have been identified, the Directorate will work together to set up electronic folders containing qualitative and quantitative data and evidence. These folders will include data on the number and types of awards made, project outlines, case studies, key contacts, notes of meetings, and copies of submissions/papers delivered to policymakers;
- We will employ an intern to work on developing the evidence base by scanning final reports for policy impacts and producing a database of contacts and evidence.

**6. We will work with colleagues in the Programmes Division to explore new approaches to the final reporting of projects, and ways of capturing longer-term impacts**

- We will continue to work with colleagues across the Research Councils on the Outputs and Outcomes Collections System (OOCs);
- This may take some time to implement, so in the interim we will work with colleagues in the Programmes Division to review our current system. We will explore with the ESRC the possibility of linking with their existing data collection system, and will also review our current final reporting mechanisms;
- We aim to develop a system that captures outputs, outcomes and impacts in a more comprehensive way across a five year period. We also aim to revise our final reporting to peer review *actual* outputs and outcomes by moving assessment to one year after project completion instead of the current three months. We will consider incentives for award-holders to continue updating their outputs and outcomes, including the possibility of linking this back into the application process.

**Developing new approaches to impact assessment**

The Evaluation Team works to ensure that it remains at the cutting edge of impact assessment. It does this by critically appraising new papers and approaches to impact assessment; attending the Evaluation Society UK conferences; commissioning work to explore new approaches; and by developing its own methodologies and approaches. The Evaluation Team has expertise in statistics, survey methods, qualitative approaches and basic economic impact methods. We strive to ensure that our expertise increases by exploring new possibilities: for example, by working with consultants to develop our economic impact methods, and purchasing statistical software packages to increase the range of data analysis we can undertake.

Moving forward, the Evaluation Team aims to ensure that the AHRC continues to develop its approaches to impact assessment to reflect its growing importance. We aim to develop the AHRC's international standing as leaders in the field for the arts and humanities:

**1. We will work with colleagues in KT and International Affairs to develop strategies for evaluating KT and international activities more effectively**

- For both KT and international activities, success indicators are different to those for more standard projects. In both activities, but in KT in particular, the process can be more significant than the project's aims or outputs: success may be evidenced by a strong collaborative partnership where tangible outputs are absent, where the project itself 'fails', but where partners gain from the collaboration in ways that may be immeasurable using standard evaluation techniques.
- We will work closely with colleagues in both the KT and International Affairs teams to develop strategies for evaluating these activities, not only in the bespoke schemes offered by the AHRC but also across the entire portfolio. As we embed these activities within all schemes and programmes, it will become more important to have an evaluation strategy in place to ensure that their full value and impact is measured.

**2. We will maximise the added value of our Impact Fellowships and Impact Workshops, and consider ways in which their findings can be used by the AHRC**

- We will support our Fellows and Workshop award-holders to deliver seminars and workshops that engage with a range of stakeholders to explore current issues in impact assessment;
- We will arrange meetings to bring our award-holders together to discuss key issues and findings, and to share good practice;
- We will publish outputs and findings from both schemes on our website for stakeholder audiences;
- We will work with award-holders to discuss ways in which the AHRC can use their findings to best effect, and implement new approaches where appropriate.

**3. We will continue to work with colleagues in PEG and RCUK to maximise the possibilities for cross-Council approaches to impact assessment, sharing good practice and lessons learned where relevant**

- We will continue to work closely with colleagues from other Research Councils to develop approaches to impact assessment, and will strive to ensure comparability of data where possible;
- We will continue to participate in meetings of PEG and RCUK groups to address key issues, and to provide advice and feedback for new initiatives where possible.

**4. We will continue to develop international connections and collaborations, in partnership with the International Affairs team and RCUK. We will develop our leadership role in providing support and advice to colleagues in overseas agencies.**

- We will work with colleagues in the International Affairs team to develop connections and collaborations with international partners;
- We will explore possibilities for international benchmarking activities, and common approaches to impact assessment;
- We are currently providing expert advice to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council in Canada on their evaluation activities, and we will continue to develop our leadership role in providing support and advice to colleagues in overseas agencies.

## **Strategic Intelligence**

The Evaluation Team works in two key areas to deliver strategic intelligence both internally and externally for the AHRC:

- **Developing evidence-based policy and decision-making internally;**
- **Informing the AHRC's strategic interventions in policy areas,** providing evidence of the relevance of arts and humanities research to key issues and debates.

### **Developing evidence-based policy and decision-making**

The Evaluation Team conducts scheme/programme evaluations across the AHRC's portfolio to assess the extent to which they are delivering their aims and objectives, and to provide advice based on their findings to enable strategic decisions to be made in planning future projects and programmes. Taking the Treasury's Green Book approach, more could be done by the Evaluation Team in terms of business performance management, strategic management and decision-making within the AHRC.

According to the Green Book, evidence-based policy making should follow the ROAMEF cycle: Rationale, Objectives, Appraisal, Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback. In using this approach for policy and decision-making, we can ensure that actions and activities maximise:

- **Effectiveness** – having the largest impact possible on the objectives set;
- **Efficiency** – achieving the best outcomes, or maximum output in relation to the resources used;
- **Economy** – ensuring that the resources used are of the best value.

Moving forward, the Evaluation Team aims to develop evidence-based policy and decision-making at the AHRC. We will achieve this in the following ways:

**1. We will work closely with the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Advisory Board to implement evidence-based policy and decision-making approaches to all new policies, procedures and programmes developed by the AHRC**

- We will discuss options with SMT to implement evidence-based policy and decision-making approaches to all new policies, procedures and programmes;
- We will work with SMT to ensure that the ROAMEF cycle is used as a key part of this process. More formal appraisals would provide greater clarity for the AHRC in implementing new policies, procedures and programmes in terms of their objectives, potential impact and resource implications, and would ensure that the most effective and best 'value for money' approach is taken. This approach is also recommended by the Green Book as it provides greater transparency and accountability in the decision-making process;
- We will work with SMT to develop a strategy for implementing this approach. It is recommended that appraisals are conducted by the Evaluation Team to demonstrate transparency and objectivity.

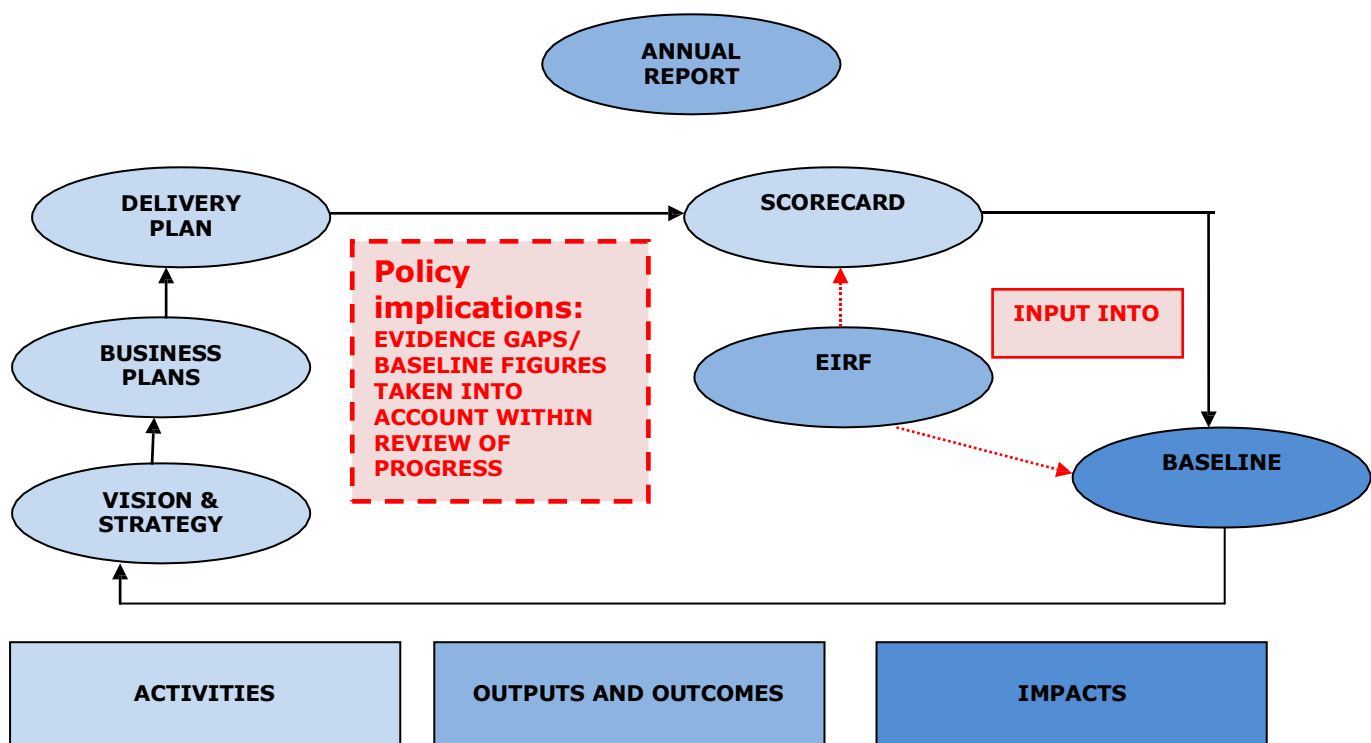
**2. We will work with colleagues across the AHRC to ensure that reviews are conducted of all activities, interventions and policies implemented or undertaken by the organisation**

- Introducing the ROAMEF cycle into policy and decision-making at the AHRC will be partially addressed by our first aim. To complete the cycle, we will need to introduce monitoring, evaluation and feedback into our activities. To achieve this, we will work with SMT to ensure that all activities, interventions and policies undertaken by the AHRC are reviewed on a regular basis, following the Green Book guidelines: *'when any policy, programme or project is completed or has advanced to a pre-determined degree, it should undergo a comprehensive evaluation.'*
- We will work with SMT to ensure that scheduling for reviews are included in the planning of all new activities, interventions and policies;
- We will also work with colleagues across the organisation, including the KT and International Affairs teams, to ensure that all new activities, interventions and policies across the organisation are reviewed at a suitable point in their lifespan.

**3. We will work with colleagues across the AHRC to ensure a more 'joined-up' approach to delivery of the Vision and Strategy, Delivery Plan, Economic Impact Reporting Framework (EIRF) and Economic Impact Baseline**

- We will work with colleagues across the AHRC to ensure that there is a stronger relationship between the key areas of planning and performance management. The Delivery Plan, Strategy and Vision, Scorecard, EIRF and Baseline should all interrelate to ensure that planning and performance match, and that our objectives and performance indicators deliver the evidence needed to demonstrate our success in reporting mechanisms such as the EIRF and Baseline;
- We also intend to ensure that all colleagues within the AHRC have a demonstrable stake in the development of these key documents. We will achieve this by ensuring that each team delivers an annual Business Plan, which will be used to set the Scorecard deliverables for each year and will feed directly into the Delivery Plan. We will ensure that the entire system is joined up, as follows:





- We will work with colleagues across the AHRC to deliver the key documents for formal reporting to DIUS in a timely manner, ensuring that a joined-up approach is taken in developing each document: Vision and Strategy, Delivery Plan and Scorecard, EIRF and Baseline.

### Informing strategic interventions in key policy areas

The Evaluation Team is working with colleagues across the Directorate of Policy and Public Affairs to develop the AHRC's role as a strategic agency with policy influence. This will be achieved in two key ways:

- By positioning the AHRC as a strategic agency, and building on its role in shaping and influencing policy debates;
- By providing evidence of the relevance of arts and humanities research to key policy issues and debates.

Moving forward, the Evaluation Team aims to develop the evidence base more strategically, and to develop the strategic role of the AHRC. We will achieve this in the following ways:

#### 1. **We will work with colleagues within the Directorate of Policy and Public Affairs to develop a series of policy briefings for stakeholder audiences**

- Working together, we have developed and delivered our first policy briefing, looking at innovation in the arts and humanities. We will deliver a series of policy briefings each year, engaging with key debates and emerging issues;
- These briefings will be delivered to stakeholder audiences to provoke discussion and debate, and to raise the profile of the arts and humanities with policymakers. The briefings will also raise the profile of the AHRC as a strategic body influencing policy issues and debates.

#### 2. **We will work with colleagues within the Directorate to deliver a series of policy seminars and workshops**

- The Directorate will work closely to identify key issues and debates where the arts and humanities can make a difference or have a strong influence;
- Once these areas have been identified, we will take a brokerage role in bringing key players together to discuss issues and network to form strategic relationships;

- Key outcomes and findings from these seminars and workshops will be disseminated to stakeholder audiences to maximise their impact.

**3. We will develop a stronger proactive and reactive approach to developing our evidence base for policy interventions, and in 'horizon scanning' for potential new areas of involvement**

- We will work with colleagues across the Directorate to ensure that the AHRC is able to intervene in current and emerging policy debates and issues;
- We will achieve this through a mix of proactive and responsive activities. We will ensure that we respond to requests for evidence, and are proactive in offering expertise in emerging issues and debates. We will also ensure that 'horizon scanning' takes place, so that we are in a position to take the initiative in developing future interventions and influence.

**4. We will work with colleagues across the AHRC to develop strategic partnerships to enhance our reputation and influence in key policy debates and issues**

- Working with colleagues across the AHRC, we will develop strategic partnerships that will enhance our reputation and influence in key policy areas. We will continue to identify and develop relationships with a range of departments, agencies and organisations as potential strategic partners.

## Annex A: Programme/Scheme evaluations 2010 - 2012

Activity	Key Information	Date of Evaluation	Evaluation Process	Lead
<b>BGP/Studentships</b>	First awards made 2009	<b>Winter 2009</b>	Light touch evaluation of processes to inform development, evidence impact of scheme and provide lessons learned	<b>PW</b>
<b>Knowledge Transfer Fellowships</b>	Scheme start date: 09 Nov 2006. Two closing dates/yr, award duration 4-36 months	<b>Spring 2010</b>	Light touch evaluation to inform development, collect case studies, evidence impact of scheme	<b>IPM</b>
<b>ICT</b>	2003 - 2008. Part of wider e- science initiatives to 2011	<b>Spring 2010</b>	small scale interim evaluation of ICT programme - in-house w/ panel and consultants	<b>EM</b>
<b>CDAs</b>	First awards made 2005	<b>Spring 2010</b>	Light touch evaluation to inform development, collect case studies, evidence impact of scheme	<b>IA</b>
<b>Research Grants</b>	started 2005/06. Covers standard, speculative, early career, practice-led/applied	<b>Autumn 2010</b>	Full scheme evaluation across all streams	<b>EM/HE</b>
<b>RNW</b>	Started August 2006. Changed to Research Networking scheme 01 Jan 2009	<b>Spring 2011</b>	Light touch evaluation to inform development, collect case studies, evidence impact of scheme	<b>IPM</b>
<b>DMI</b>	2005 -2009.	<b>Summer 2011</b>	Full evaluation of first AHRC strategic programmes - consultant- led with panel of academic experts	<b>EM/IPM</b>
<b>D21C</b>	2005 - 2009. Co-funded with EPSRC	<b>Winter 2011</b>	Collaboration with EPSRC on full evaluation - consultant-led with panel of academic experts	<b>EPSRC/EM</b>
<b>L&amp;E</b>	2005 - 2010	<b>Spring 2012</b>	Full evaluation of first AHRC strategic programmes - consultant- led with panel of academic experts	<b>EM/IPM</b>
<b>RC - Evolution of Cultural Diversity</b>	Phase II: 2006 - 2010	<b>Winter 2012</b>	Full evaluation of phase II centres - consultant-led with panel of academic experts	<b>EM/IPM</b>
<b>RC - Irish &amp; Scottish Studies</b>	Phase II: 2006 - 2010	<b>Winter 2012</b>	Full evaluation of phase II centres - consultant-led with panel of academic experts	<b>EM/IPM</b>
<b>Beyond Text</b>		<b>Beyond 2012 - TBC</b>		

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Key Information</b>	<b>Date of Evaluation</b>	<b>Evaluation Process</b>	<b>Lead</b>
<b>Religion and Society</b>		<b>Beyond 2012 - TBC</b>		
<b>Science and Heritage</b>		<b>Beyond 2012 - TBC</b>		
<b>RC - IP &amp; Technology Law</b>		<b>Beyond 2012 - TBC</b>		
<b>RC - Musical Performance as Creative Practice</b>		<b>Beyond 2012 - TBC</b>		