

05 July 2019

All our evaluation reports go through several feedback and revision stages, including technical review by the EEF, external peer review and feedback from the intervention delivery team. Following the EEF technical review, a revised version of the report is reviewed by two independent peer reviewers, who return their feedback to the EEF (rather than directly to the evaluator) in order to remain anonymous. The EEF collates and moderates the feedback (ensuring it is in line with our guidance and accessibility standards), then shares it with the evaluation team anonymously. A further revision is completed before the report is shared with the intervention delivery team (if applicable), for further feedback.

The EEF will contact peer reviewers to check availability and agree a date when the review is expected. We aim to give peer reviewers as much notice as possible. However, on some occasions we will need reviews to be rescheduled and ask for reviewers to be as flexible as possible. Unless otherwise agreed, the EEF will expect to receive **comments within two weeks**, although this may be subject to change depending upon the desired reporting date and reviewers' availability. Advance notice will be given if delays were expected.

Peer reviewers providing feedback on EEF reports are asked to:

- submit their review summary form (Appendix 1) and annotated report within the timeline agreed with the EEF; please inform the EEF as soon as possible if any delays are envisaged¹.
- familiarise themselves, and keep up-to-date, with the current EEF [statistical analysis guidance](#), [implementation and process evaluation guidance](#), [cost evaluation guidance](#) and [guidance on classifying the security of our findings](#);
- compare the report with the project documents² and relevant EEF guidance; comment on any discrepancies that have not been justified in the report (satisfactorily);
- add comments directly into the report document; keep any suggested edits in tracked changes;
- use the Peer Review Key Questions in Appendix 2 to assist them in completing the review;
- submit the completed security rating, including a justification for the rating, using the form in Appendix 3 (not applicable for pilots);
- keep their work on the report absolutely confidential³.

In our experience, the most helpful reviews are those that:

- provide clear actionable comments that will improve the quality and accessibility of the report;
- maintain a courteous, constructive tone;
- cover all the sections of the report;
- focus primarily on substantive and methodological comments, rather than editing, proofreading or reformatting (the EEF arranges these prior to publication; please also note the executive summary is rewritten by the EEF, therefore a light review of it is sufficient).

¹ Delays should be avoided, if at all possible, as they have knock-on effects on the work of several teams at all subsequent stages.

² Project documents (published on the EEF project webpage and/ or shared by the EEF when organising peer review):

- for trials: latest evaluation protocol and statistical analysis plan
- for pilots: latest evaluation/ study plan
- for other evaluations: as agreed with the EEF

³ If we invite you to review a report, please do not disclose any information related to the report, in any medium, regardless of whether or not you carry out the review.

APPENDIX 1: PEER REVIEW SUMMARY FORM

Title of report reviewed:

Type of evaluation (trial/ pilot/ other):

Name of peer reviewer:

Date report received from the EEF:

Date review submitted:

Overall comments:

Security rating (not applicable for pilots):

Peer review checklist (Please tick ✓ to confirm before submitting.)

	I have used the Peer Review Key Questions in Appendix 2 to guide my review.
	I have reviewed the report against the project documents and relevant EEF guidance.
	I have included my feedback directly in the document as comments and tracked changes.
	I have completed the security rating using the template in Appendix 3 and provided a rationale for my rating (not applicable for pilots).
	I have sent/ am sending the EEF:
	- a copy of the report with my comments in the margin and any suggested edits in tracked changes
	- my completed summary form
	- one security rating per intervention arm and primary outcome (not applicable for pilots)

Signed

Date

APPENDIX 2: PEER REVIEW KEY QUESTIONS

TRIALS

Overall

- Is the interpretation of the results (both impact and process evaluation) clear and justified?
- Are causal claims adequately supported by the methods and analysis?
- Are the research questions clearly stated and adequately addressed throughout the report?
- Have there been any changes to planned design, analysis and/or outcomes measures specified in the published protocol and/ or statistical analysis plan? If so, have the authors justified the changes satisfactorily? Are the implications of these changes discussed adequately?

Introduction

- Is the description of what is being tested adequate and clear?
- Is the description of the design and methods transparent and adequate? Is a clear rationale provided for the research design?

Impact evaluation

- Is the analysis appropriate given the design used? Are there any omissions, lack of clarity, or possible errors in the analysis? Does it follow EEF guidance?
- Have the authors used appropriate methods to assess balance? Is this reported clearly?
- Have the authors used the appropriate analysis to answer the stated research question(s) following the protocol agreed in advance?
- Is the reporting of attrition at different stages of the evaluation clear?
- Have the reasons for missing data been explored and any sensitivity analysis reported?
- Is compliance analysis reported adequately?
- Do you have any concerns about the analysis?

Cost

- Are the costs clear and easy to understand? Can it help schools decide whether to invest in this intervention outside of the evaluation?
- Does the cost evaluation follow EEF guidance (e.g., are costs reported per pupil, over a 3-year period)?

Implementation and process evaluation

- Are the methods and analyses clearly described and justified? Is the number of participants/ data sources per method clear?
- Is the reporting of the results drawn from the implementation and process evaluation clear and interpreted without bias?
- Have the evaluators presented data on baseline equivalence and/or control group activity in a way that allows the reader to understand how the intervention may have changed behaviour in the treatment arm(s)? Are these conclusions appropriate?

Conclusions

- Have the results of the process evaluation been adequately linked to those of the impact evaluation?
- Are the authors' conclusions consistent with the results presented in the report?
- Are the results discussed in relation to the theory of change/ logic model and prior evidence?
- Are limitations and threats to validity acknowledged and discussed appropriately?

PILOTS

Overall

- Are results presented clearly?
- Is the interpretation of the results clear, unbiased and justified?
- Are claims adequately supported by the methods and analysis?
- Are the research questions clearly stated and adequately addressed throughout the report?
- Have there been any changes to planned design or analysis specified in the published evaluation plan? If so, have the authors justified the changes satisfactorily? Are the implications of these changes discussed adequately?

Introduction

- Is the description of what is being piloted adequate and clear?
- Is the description of the methods transparent and adequate?

Analysis and findings

- Are the methods and analyses clearly described and justified?
- Is the number of participants/ data sources per method clear?
- Have the authors used appropriate methods to answer the stated research question(s)? Is it clear which method(s) helped answer which research question(s)?

Conclusions

- Are the conclusions well founded and based on the evidence from the evaluation?
- Are the conclusions consistent with the results presented in the report?
- Have the authors appropriately discussed the limitations of the evaluation?

APPENDIX 3: SECURITY RATING TEMPLATE

OUTCOME: *ADD NAME OF THE PRIMARY OUTCOME*

Please use this template to assign a separate security rating for each primary outcome.

Rating	Criteria for rating	Initial score	Adjust	Final score
	Design	MDES	Attrition	
5	Randomised design	<= 0.2	0-10%	
4	Design for comparison that considers some type of selection on unobservable characteristics (e.g. RDD, Diff-in-Diffs, Matched Diff-in-Diffs)	0.21 - 0.29	11-20%	
3	Design for comparison that considers selection on all relevant observable confounders (e.g. Matching or Regression Analysis with variables descriptive of the selection mechanism)	0.30 - 0.39	21-30%	
2	Design for comparison that considers selection only on some relevant confounders	0.40 - 0.49	31-40%	
1	Design for comparison that does not consider selection on any relevant confounders	0.50 - 0.59	41-50%	
0	No comparator	>=0.6	>50%	

Adjustment for threats to internal validity [X]

Threats to validity	Risk rating	Comments
Threat 1: Confounding	Low/Moderate/High	Add relevant comments based on signalling questions and criteria
Threat 2: Concurrent Interventions		
Threat 3: Experimental effects		
Threat 4: Implementation fidelity		
Threat 5: Missing Data		
Threat 6: Measurement of Outcomes		
Threat 7: Selective reporting		

- **Initial padlock score:** [NUMBER] Padlocks - Insert Description
- **Reason for adjustment for threats to validity:** [NUMBER] Padlocks - Insert Description
- **Final padlock score:** initial score adjusted for threats to validity = [NUMBER] Padlocks