SELF-ASSESSEMENT GUIDANCE

"The purpose of the self-assessment is… to encourage the Agency to set out a considered view of how well it thinks it is doing and what it sees as the main areas that need further attention."

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CONTENTS

SECTION 1 – THE SELF-ASSESSMENT

Aims and Objectives

Self-assessment plays a key role in the work that Criminal Justice Inspection (*CJI*) undertakes with the agencies it inspects. It is a tool designed to help identify areas of strength and areas for improvement, in order that management effort can be targeted where it is most needed.

As part of this inspection, you have been invited to undertake a self-assessment based on CJI's Inspection framework. You are requested to identify your main strengths and areas for improvement (AFIs), and provide brief evidence in each case. Guidance on how to address these areas is outlined in Section 2. It is important to note however, that this is your self-assessment and how it is conducted and presented is up to you.

A good self-assessment will be of benefit to you as well as to CJI's Inspectors. It should be a key input to business planning and be an honest assessment of strengths and AFIs. Inspectors regard self-assessment as a critical element of learning.

The Inspection framework and Self-Assessment

The framework is similar to other models such as the European Foundation Quality Model (EFQM™) that are used by organisations to self-assess. CJI will apply the framework below to each inspection that it conducts. This framework will be incorporated into CJI's inspection management processes which will include a review of its effectiveness. There are three main elements to the inspection framework;

 ➢ Strategy and Governance;
 ➢ Delivery; and
 ➢ Outcomes.

Constants in each of these areas and throughout each inspection are equality and fairness, together with standards and best practice. As part of the inspection process CJI will identify standards and best practice (where they are known to exist) that are applicable to the inspected organisation or inspection theme and will embed these in each element of the framework. Similarly, equality and fairness will form an integral part of any inspection undertaken by CJI.

CJI Inspection framework
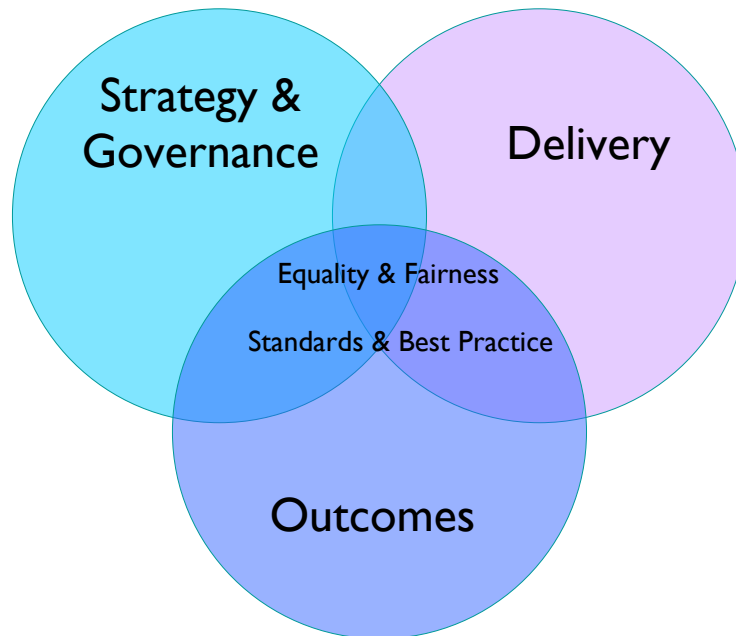
A common feature of such assessment models is that they encourage self-assessment as a critical step to excellence. Many organisations in Northern Ireland use self-assessment as a means to:

- Focus on the Customer

- Deliver results that outperform peers and delight stakeholders

- Constantly innovate

- Have people who feel valued

- Develop partnerships that deliver win-win relationships

- Take a responsible attitude towards its role in the wider community

- Have the ability to sense and respond to the external environment and adapt rapidly to changing circumstances

How to undertake a Self-Assessment

Each organisation should spend some time identifying questions relevant to their own agency and the inspection topic from the three framework areas; *Strategy and Governance; Delivery; Outcomes;* as the first step in the self-assessment process.

These questions should be based on the final **terms of reference** document agreed with the inspected agency as well as those generic issues outlined as part of CJI's framework in the tables below. Issues identified in the framework are not meant to be exhaustive and as an inspection terms of reference is drafted, finalised and agreed between agencies and CJI other issues may be identified from appropriate standards, existing recommendations and/or best practice that may be applied as part of the inspection process.

Framework Area	Possible Evidence
Strategy and Governance Inspectors will be looking for: - evidence of good governance; - how strategy sets the direction of the organisation; - how leadership supports and promotes strategy ; - how shared understanding is created and maintained	▪ Governance is based on recognised and appropriate standards and principles ▪ Governance is based on clear and transparent processes and structures ▪ Compliance with governance arrangements is monitored and reported on ▪ Structures are integral to the overall strategy in support of the mission, vision and values ▪ Strategy provides a medium to long term organisational focus and sets out clear unambiguous targets ▪ Long term developments that may impact on strategy are anticipated and planned for ▪ Strategy is developed and updated based on meaningful consultation with all relevant stakeholders ▪ Strategy is monitored and updated to take account of change ▪ At all levels managers/leaders are role models and promote high standards of behaviour, fairness and equality ▪ Managers/leaders recognise achievements and take appropriate action when behaviour falls below standards

	▪ Finances are appropriately managed in support of the overall strategy
	▪ Business planning supports the organisational strategy
	▪ The planning process reflects the overall strategy and priorities of the Criminal Justice System (Justice and policing department)

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	overall strategy and priorities of the Criminal Justice System (Justice and policing department)

Framework Area	**Possible Evidence**
<u>Outcomes</u> Inspectors will be looking for: quantitative data to support assertions of outcomes; Evidence of managing performance to deliver objectives and targets	▪ Outcomes are measured and evaluated against objectives and targets ▪ Measurement of outcomes integrates diversity issues to ensure fairness and equality ▪ Customers' perceptions of organisational performance are measured ▪ Performance indicators are monitored and used to understand, predict and improve outcomes ▪ Feedback from stakeholders, partners, and staff is used to improve outcomes ▪ Performance indicators are monitored and used to monitor, understand, predict and improve staff performance ▪ Performance measurement is analysed and used to improve strategy and policy ▪ Performance is benchmarked against appropriate organisations ▪ Results are published, made freely and widely accessible and actively communicated to stakeholders

How a self-assessment is to be conducted is a matter for the organisation. Some organisations use assessments based on the input of SMTs alone; others approach self-assessment holistically and include all levels of the organisation in the process. Generally the most successful self-assessments CJI have received to date have involved small internal teams dedicated to collecting evidence for each identified question area at different levels of agencies. Experience suggests that teams need to be empowered to undertake such a task so that any internal reluctance to engage with the process may be negated. The end product should be a document that sets out strengths and AFIs linked to sound evidence.

Evidence of good performance in particular question areas may be voluminous, therefore how evidence is presented is a matter for the agency as the document should primarily be for internal use. However, if evidence is to be made available before inspection fieldwork it may be useful to do so by supplying electronic copies of documents. Alternatively, with agreement some evidence may be made available to Inspectors at the time of fieldwork. The document produced by a self-assessment should be one that will be used by the organisation itself to improve and not just given to Inspectors to inform the inspection process and thereafter left to gather dust.

The section that follows may be used as a self-assessment template based on the CJI Inspection framework. In each of the three main areas of assessment we have provided some example questions.

SECTION 2 – SUGGESTED EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

SELF-ASSESSMENT   [DATE] 2009

CATEGORY: *STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE*

EXAMPLE   *Is Governance is based on recognised and appropriate standards and principles?*

QUESTION:

STRENGTHS	EVIDENCE
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	

Notes:

SELF-ASSESSMENT [DATE] 2009

CATEGORY: *STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE*

EXAMPLE *Is Governance based on clear and transparent processes and structures?*

QUESTION:

STRENGTHS	EVIDENCE
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	

Notes:

SELF-ASSESSMENT   [DATE] 2009

CATEGORY: *STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE*

EXAMPLE   *Is compliance with governance arrangements monitored and reported on?*

QUESTION:

STRENGTHS	EVIDENCE
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	

Notes:

SELF-ASSESSMENT   [DATE] 2009

CATEGORY: *STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE*

EXAMPLE   *Are managers/leaders at all levels role models and do they promote high standards of behaviour, fairness and equality?*

QUESTION:

STRENGTHS	EVIDENCE
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▪	▪
	▪
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	

Notes:

SELF-ASSESSMENT   [DATE] 2009

CATEGORY: *STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE*

EXAMPLE   *Is strategy developed and updated based on meaningful consultation with*
QUESTION: *all relevant stakeholders?*

STRENGTHS	EVIDENCE
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
▪	▪ ▪
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	

Notes:

SELF-ASSESSMENT [DATE] 2009

CATEGORY:

EXAMPLE *Please add additional relevant questions*

QUESTION:

STRENGTHS	EVIDENCE
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▪	▪ ▪
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AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	

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SELF-ASSESSMENT [DATE] 2009

CATEGORY:

EXAMPLE *Please add additional relevant questions*

QUESTION:

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CATEGORY:

EXAMPLE *Please add additional relevant questions*

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EXAMPLE   *Please add additional relevant questions*

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