



Quality Assurance Sheet

Title of document			
Author			
Due date		Tracker number	

Quality assurance	Name/Signature	Date
Peer reviewer The paper has been reviewed and meets the quality standards for advice (see below).		
Proof reader There are no spelling or grammatical errors, the paper is formatted correctly, and it meets MBIE's style guide.		
Technical review (as applicable) The paper has substantial technical elements that meet the required standards. <input type="checkbox"/> Legal <input type="checkbox"/> Data analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
Author I have incorporated the feedback, or agreed how it will be addressed with the peer reviewer and proof reader.		

Sign-off	Name/Signature	Date
Manager I am satisfied with the quality of this document, and it may be submitted to the Minister's office.		

Quality standards for advice

Context Explains why the decision-maker is getting this and where it fits	Analysis Is clear, logical and informed by evidence	Advice Engages the decision-maker and tells the full story	Action Identifies who is doing what next
<input type="checkbox"/> Purpose, context, priorities, and connections across government are clear <input type="checkbox"/> Outlines previous advice and history of the issue	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly defines the problem or opportunity, rationale for intervention, and policy objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Uses relevant analytical frameworks and methodologies <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporates Treaty and te ao Māori analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Is informed by relevant research and evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Assesses options to make impacts clear and reveal workable solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Makes any limitations of the analysis and advice clear <input type="checkbox"/> Reveals diverse views, experiences and insights and engagement approaches	<input type="checkbox"/> Enables a clear and informed decision or next steps <input type="checkbox"/> Is communicated in a clear, concise and compelling way <input type="checkbox"/> Is free and frank <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects diverse perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Outlines risks and mitigations <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipates decision-maker's needs, next steps, and is timely	<input type="checkbox"/> Enables effective implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Explains how the solution will be monitored and evaluated <i>More detailed guidance is available in the DPMC Policy Quality Framework on the Policy Place</i>

- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| ① Unacceptable
Does not meet the relevant quality standards in fundamental ways. | ② Poor
Does not meet the relevant quality standards in material ways. | ③ Acceptable
Meets the relevant quality standards overall, but with some shortfalls. | ④ Good
Meets all the relevant quality standards. | ⑤ Outstanding
Meets all the relevant quality standards and adds something extra. |
|--|---|--|--|--|

MBIE's performance standard is 3.3.

Please file this QA sheet in the relevant MAKO folder along with the paper that is signed out to the Minister's office.

Editing and reviewing papers

Key questions to ask

What's the elevator pitch?

- What is this all about?
- Can you explain the key points in three sentences?

Why is the Minister getting this?

- How does it fit with the Minister's priorities?
- Was there prior advice?
- Why should the Minister care?

Is the analysis clear and logical?

- Is the framework used clear?
- Is the analysis robust?
- Does the evidence support the analysis?

Does the advice stack up?

- Does the advice follow from the analysis?
- What does MBIE think?
- Is the paper easy to read?

Who's doing what next?

- Are the recommended actions clear?
- What MBIE will do?
- What are the follow-ups?

Are the basics right?

- Are all the hygiene factors attended to?

Does it help the Minister?

- Will it be useful to a busy Minister?
- Is it easy to grasp the key points?
- Does it provide everything the Minister needs?

Key things to do

- Imagine yourself orally briefing the Minister in a meeting – what would you say? That's the key message.
- Make the key messages clear and put them up front.
- Provide a strong, clear story.
- Keep it short – prune, and prune again.
- Annex non-essential material.
- Minimise noting recommendations.
- Keep the Executive Summary short – less than a page is ideal.
- The Executive Summary should cover: What's the problem? Why do we have to fix it? How will we fix it? What are the risks and what are we doing about them?
- Outline how the issue relates to the Minister's priorities or government strategy.
- Explain what's happened before – even if the Minister is familiar with the issue.
- Remind the Minister what has already been done or agreed.
- Refer to previous briefings and advice.
- Explain how attending a meeting or event can further the Minister's objectives.
- Explain why the Minister is getting the paper, and why now.
- Reflect the way you have thought about the issue in the logic and structure of the paper so the framework is clear.
- Structure the paper so the argument flows logically.
- Use tables, boxes and diagrams to illustrate key points.
- Ensure that the analysis is supported by sound evidence.
- If the evidence is inconclusive or the outcomes uncertain, say so.
- Make sure the advice follows logically from the analysis.
- Work with other teams to ensure advice is "joined up" across MBIE.
- Provide a clear MBIE view.
- Provide all the evidence and analysis needed to support the advice and permit an informed decision.
- Use narrative headings to "storyline" the paper and make the key messages clear.
- Use direct language to make clear action-oriented recommend actions.
- Identify what follow-up work is needed, who will do it and when.
- Make it clear what MBIE will do.
- If you have identified a risk explain how we will mitigate it.
- Use the right template.
- Make sure the information on the cover page is right.
- Use plain English and active voice.
- Use the QA process.
- Make sure there are no formatting, spelling or grammatical errors.
- Get robust peer review from an experienced person outside your team.
- Put yourself in the Minister's shoes.
- Think about how the Minister will use the advice in practice (eg in a meeting with stakeholders or to support Cabinet discussion) to help you structure the paper.
- Make talking points usable: short sentences, in the Minister's voice, on a separate page, and spaced to aid readability. Read them aloud.
- Set meeting agendas to reflect what the Minister wants from the meeting (not just what the stakeholders want).
- Provide all the collateral needed (eg draft letters) and anticipate what's needed next.



Peer Review Feedback Sheet

Title of briefing			
Author		Peer reviewer/date	

This sheet supports peer reviewers to provide effective feedback.

Before you start, be clear about the kind of help the author is seeking: the context for the paper, what kind of help they want (and any weak points they are worried about), and when and how the feedback is to be provided.

Then, read the paper through. Once you've read the paper, use the prompts on this sheet to ensure you consider all the matters that contribute to producing a quality paper. Address all of the relevant areas (eg a meeting briefing may not require analysis).

Consideration	Comments
Overall impression <i>What is most important for making this briefing better?</i>	
Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Purpose, context, priorities, and connections across government are clear <input type="checkbox"/> Outlines previous advice and history of the issue 	
Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly defines the problem or opportunity, rationale for intervention, and policy objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Uses relevant analytical frameworks and methodologies <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporates Treaty and te ao Māori analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Is informed by relevant research and evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Assesses options to make impacts clear and reveal workable solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Makes any limitations of the analysis and advice clear <input type="checkbox"/> Reveals diverse views, experiences and insights and engagement approaches 	
Advice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Enables a clear and informed decision or next steps <input type="checkbox"/> Is communicated in a clear, concise and compelling way <input type="checkbox"/> Is free and frank <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects diverse perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Outlines risks and mitigations <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipates decision-maker's needs, next steps, and is timely 	
Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Enables effective implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Explains how the solution will be monitored and evaluated 	

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④ Good
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Review and Revision Checklist

Questions to ask

Things to do

What's the elevator pitch?

- What is this all about?
- Can you explain the key points in three sentences?

- Imagine yourself briefing the Minister in a meeting – what would you say? These are the key points.
- Keep the paper short – prune, and prune again.
- Annex non-essential material.
- Keep the Executive Summary short – less than a page.

Context

Explains why the decision-maker is getting this and where it fits

- Is the purpose of the paper clear?
- Why is the Minister getting this advice and why now?
- How does it fit with the Minister's priorities?
- What previous advice has the Minister received?

- Explain why the Minister is getting the paper, and why now.
- Be clear about what action or decision is required.
- Outline how the issue relates to the Minister's priorities or Government strategy.
- Recap what's happened before – even if the Minister is familiar with the issue.
- Remind the Minister of what has already been done or agreed.

Analysis

Is clear, logical and informed by evidence

- Is the issue clearly defined?
- Are the policy objectives clear?
- Is there a clear rationale for government intervention?
- Are the analytical frameworks and methodologies clear?
- Is the analysis appropriate, robust and logical?
- Does the evidence support the analysis?
- Are Treaty and te ao Māori frameworks used in the analysis?
- Does the analysis reveal diverse views, experiences and insights?
- Are the options credible?

- Structure the paper so the argument flows logically.
- Make the analysis proportionate to the scale and importance of the issue.
- Identify who has a stake in the issue, and why.
- Document the engagement strategies used.
- Identify how the problem or opportunity and policy options could affect Māori, uphold the Treaty of Waitangi, and affect Māori Crown relationships.
- If the evidence is inconclusive or the outcomes uncertain, say so.
- Assess the options according to clearly stated criteria.
- Check that the options are workable, and test with end users if possible.

Advice

Engages the decision-maker and tells the full story

- Does the advice follow from the analysis?
- Is it clear what MBIE thinks?
- Is the advice free and frank?
- Will the advice help the Minister to act?
- Is the paper easy to read and free of errors?
- Does it reflect diverse perspectives?
- Does it identify risks and mitigations?

- Use narrative headings to storyline the paper and clarify key messages.
- Structure the paper so the argument flows logically.
- Use tables, boxes and diagrams to illustrate key points.
- Alert the Minister to the possible consequences of particular decisions (even if it challenges their opinions).
- Identify any differences in stakeholder views, and how to deal with them.

Action

Identifies who is doing what next

- Are the recommended actions clear?
- Is it clear what MBIE will do?
- Are the next steps and follow-up actions clear?
- Does it identify what needs to be implemented, by whom, when, where, and why?
- How will the policy be monitored and evaluated?

- Use direct language to make clear action-oriented recommendations (and avoid noting recommendations).
- Identify what follow-up work is needed, who will do it and when.
- Make it clear what MBIE will do.
- If you have identified a risk explain how we will mitigate it
- Explain how the policy will be monitored and evaluated.

Does it help the Minister?

- Will it be useful to a busy Minister?
- Is it easy to read and grasp the main points?
- Does it provide everything the Minister needs to make an informed decision or take action?

- Put yourself in the Minister's shoes.
- Think about how the Minister will use the advice in practice to help you structure the paper.
- Make talking points usable: short sentences, in the Minister's voice, on a separate page, and spaced to aid readability. Read them aloud to check them.
- Set meeting agendas to reflect what the Minister wants from the meeting (not just what the stakeholders want).
- Provide all the collateral needed (eg draft letters) and anticipate what's needed next.



MINISTERIAL BRIEFING QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECKLIST

To be used in addition to specific briefing material.

Minister		Writer	
Date Due		Tracking number	

Content QA

	Done
Content addresses the policy/issue/problem/priority/goal	
Content accurately captures policy (if relevant)	
Content accurately captures processes (if relevant)	
Content reflects key messages MBIE wants to convey (if relevant)	
Content does not assume previous knowledge	
Content does not refer to briefings or papers from the previous administration	
Content is tone appropriate	
Immediately following the Election and until notified otherwise, all Ministerial briefings will need to be reviewed by the relevant DCE, GM or their delegate before sending to a Minister.	

Consultation QA

	Done
Consultation complete with across MBIE business groups (if relevant)	
Consultation with external departments/agencies completed (if relevant)	

Proofreading QA

	Done
Correct portfolio	
Correct Minister, spelling and title (of/for) – check the list of Ministers on the DPMC website https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/cabinet/ministers/ministerial-list	
Tracking number requested and added or updated - email briefings@mbie.govt.nz for a briefing tracking number	
Correct date to send to Minister	
Correct security classification	
Correct priority	
MBIE contact updated with correct title and contact number	
Formatting aligns with that Minister's office preferences	
Abbreviations written in full, then abbreviated as appropriate e.g. MBIE	
Proof read	
Peer reviewed	

Ministerial Office Preferences: <http://thelink/how/Pages/Ministerial-office-preferences-for-information-and-paper-presentation.aspx> this will be updated as confirmed by individual portfolios.