



# Governance Evaluation System User Guide

An online approach to board assessment and development

Developed by [DirectorEvaluation.com](http://DirectorEvaluation.com) in association with [Applicable.co.nz](http://Applicable.co.nz)

# Governance Evaluation

Regular evaluation is now an accepted component of governance good practice. Assessment and ongoing development are standard elements of the modern organisation. Any board, paid or voluntary, will benefit from periodic reflection to check their focus is maintained in critical areas and on the right subject matter.

This system has been developed and refined over several years. It is easy to use, generates clear reports and plans and is secure and confidential.

## Elements of the system

### Assessment modules

- **The Framework Whole-of-Board**  
Examines the board's skills, behaviour, processes, and outputs as a team. This module allows for the optional input of a facilitator who will provide independent assistance and commentary.
- **Governance Mark**  
Uses the board's self-assessment in the Framework module together with an accredited assessor's audit of governance documents. Alignment against the Framework qualifies for the Governance Mark. Organisations interested in the Mark process please contact [governance@sportnz.org.nz](mailto:governance@sportnz.org.nz)
- **Chair**  
Assesses the chair's management of the board, working relationships and personal qualities.
- **Individual Director**  
Examines the individual directors' understanding of their role, abilities and performance in the boardroom and benchmarks this against their peers' perception
- **Management's Evaluation of the Board**  
The senior team's view of the value adding role of the board.
- **The Nine Quick Questions**  
A discussion framework across critical governance areas.
- **Custom questions**  
Ability to create your own custom question set

# Tools

- **Re-evaluations**  
All assessment modules (except the Nine Essential Questions module) have the facility to produce a question set based on the low scoring items from an earlier evaluation.
- **Online development planning**  
All assessment modules (except the Nine Essential Questions module) have the facility to generate development plans based on low scoring areas. Time frames, accountabilities, progress and any comments can all be updated on line
- **Multi-year reports**  
Up to five years of whole-of-board evaluations can be compared.  
**N.B.** The new Framework whole of board assessment cannot be compared with earlier versions.

## Using a third party

The system is easy and simple to use, but the assistance of a third-party consultant can be helpful. Any of the modules can involve a facilitator to help the board understand the results and work through subsequent development.

## How much time?

All question sets have been recently reviewed and tightened as much as possible.

Approximate time to complete for each module:

- Framework whole-of-board 30-40 minutes.
- Chair: 15-20 minutes
- Individual director: 10-15 minutes per director.
- Management's view of the board: 10-15 minutes
- Nine quick questions: 10-15 minutes

When boards begin using the system we recommend that they start with the whole-of-board evaluation. In the subsequent year, they can undertake the chair evaluation, and in the next year, the individual director evaluations. In this way, the board is not answering the same questions year on year and the time involved is modest.

## Free and frank

To maximise the benefit of the process directors need to be frank and honest in their ratings and comments.

The system produces anonymous reports and none of the ratings and comments are attributed to individuals.

When writing comments please use full clear sentences. The system prompts you for a comment if you enter a low score. Please be concise with your comments and make them as constructive as possible addressing issues not individuals. All reports are reviewed by the chair or another nominated person before distribution. They have the ability (if necessary) to alter comments that maybe phrased in an unconstructive manner

## Privacy and security

The system is housed on a secure third party server and the server's security is regularly updated. As a user, you will be asked to accept the terms and conditions of system use including privacy.

Relevant sections of the terms and conditions are set out below

10. Collection and storage of information will be in accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993. At any time, you may request a copy of the personal information that is held and you may make corrections to it at any time.

**B. Obligations and Acknowledgements of SNZ**

1. SNZ, in its Licence Agreement with ECCL to enable access by you to the GES:
  - a. has ensured and will continue to ensure that there are appropriate conditions of privacy and confidentiality in respect of all information supplied by you in relation to the operation and use of the GES;

The decision to publish and circulate any document is that of the organisation and you choose who can see the report. Sport New Zealand has no access to the reports unless a staff member is involved as a facilitator or you choose to forward the reports. Results of any assessment do not form any part of Sport New Zealand funding or performance decisions.

## Using the system

As a participant, you will receive a system generated email inviting you to undertake an evaluation. This will be triggered by the person undertaking the administration of the evaluation.

- Click on the link “Visit your Evaluation Dashboard”.
- The evaluation/s currently underway will be listed
- Complete the evaluation by the date specified. (maybe note in your calendar).
- The link takes you to this screen

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Participant Dashboard". At the top, it says "This is your participant dashboard for" followed by a dropdown menu showing "Applicable". Below this is a grey box with the text: "Did you know? You can visit [snz.directorevaluation.com](http://snz.directorevaluation.com) to access the system in future rather than clicking on the link in your invitation email." The dashboard is divided into three main sections, each with a dark header bar: 1. "Evaluations" with the sub-header "Your pending evaluations" and the message "No Pending evaluations. You have no new evaluations waiting to start." 2. "Existing Evaluations" with the sub-header "Your complete and in progress evaluations" and the message "No Evaluations in Progress. You have no evaluations in progress." 3. "System Feedback and Ask for Assistance" with the sub-header "Give feedback about this system or ask for assistance". This section includes a speech bubble icon and the text "Use the comment box below to send feedback or ask for assistance with your evaluation" above a large text input field. A "Give Feedback" button is located at the bottom right of the dashboard area.

- Click on **Start** you see a screen like this

The screenshot shows a dark sidebar on the left with the following categories: Clarity and cohesion (highlighted), Constitution or trust deed, People, Inside the boardroom, Relationship with the chief executive, Board meetings, Accountability and Ethics, and Reporting and monitoring.

The main content area displays three evaluation questions:

1. Strategic nature - The board understands that its role is primarily the long term interest of the organisation on behalf of its owners. This means having a future focus.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Don't Know
Strongly Disagree				Strongly agree			

 +Add comment
2. Outcomes - The organisation has an outcome based Statement of Strategic Direction (Strategic Plan)
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Don't Know
Strongly Disagree				Strongly agree			

 +Add comment
3. Ownership - The board owns the Statement of Strategic Direction
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Don't Know
Strongly Disagree				Strongly agree			

 +Add comment

- **Note** that you can save your work and **return later at any time.**

The screenshot shows a dark sidebar on the left, which is currently blank.

The main content area displays question 9: "Do you have any comments or observations to make with respect to this section?"

Below the question is a large text input field with a diagonal slash icon in the bottom right corner.

At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Save Progress and Finish this Evaluation later" and "Save and Submit".

## Use of the feedback

The board should review the reports and create a development plan based on the results. For all modules (except the Nine Essential Questions) the system automatically generates a development plan. If not already engaged in the process this is a good time to get a third-party consultant to assist with interpreting the report and guiding the development plan.

1. For the **Framework whole-of-board** evaluation the reports will be distributed to all members and time should be set aside in a regular board meeting to review the results and write up a set of development actions.
2. The system generates a plan based on scoring and the board can assign accountabilities and timeframes.
3. For **individual** evaluations, the chair holds separate meetings with each director discussing their performance and areas for development. Again a written development plan is an excellent idea for each director and can be done online with the assistance of your administrator.

4. For the **chair** evaluation, we suggest that the chair circulate his or her evaluation to some or all the board members then hold a meeting to discuss the feedback and draw up a development plan.

## **Development plan follow up**

The easiest way to keep governance development live is a standing agenda item. The on-line plans allow items to be checked off as completed. Once the development items have been completed the whole of board assessment can be rerun. This review the low scoring areas to check the board's updated understanding of those matters

## **Feedback and assistance**

If you require any assistance with any part of the evaluation or have any feedback on the system or on this manual, please email to Clint Cherrington: [Clint@applicable.co.nz](mailto:Clint@applicable.co.nz)

Thank you.