



Government
Communication
Service

Updating the GCS Evaluation Framework

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About GCS

- The Government Communication Service (GCS) is the professional body for more than 7,000 public service communicators working in government departments, agencies and arm's length bodies. **Communication is one of the four main levers government has to affect change, alongside legislation, regulation and taxation.**
- **The goals of GCS Strategy (2022-2025) are to:**
 - ◆ improve the ability of government communications to work together to tackle the biggest challenges the country faces
 - ◆ harness rapid technological changes in communications for the public good
 - ◆ deliver a more efficient and effective GCS
 - ◆ build public trust in government communications
 - ◆ retain, attract and develop the best communications talent
- More details on <https://strategy.gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/>





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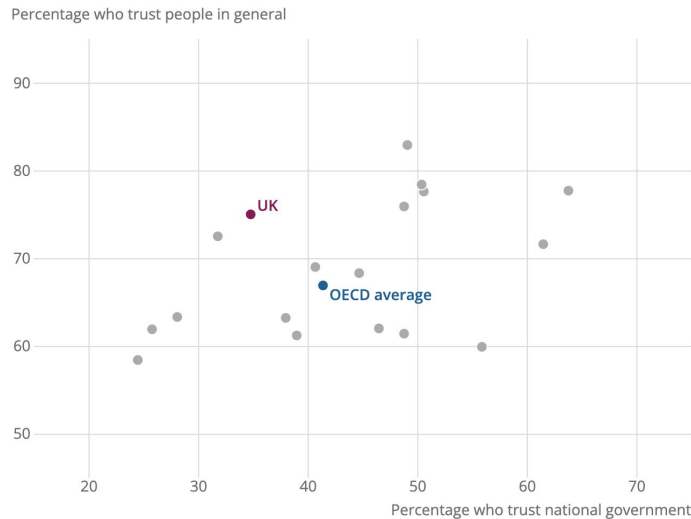
GREAT
BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND



Global Challenges for Public Communications: Trust and Value for Money

Figure 1: UK people are more trusting of other people than of the government, relative to other OECD countries

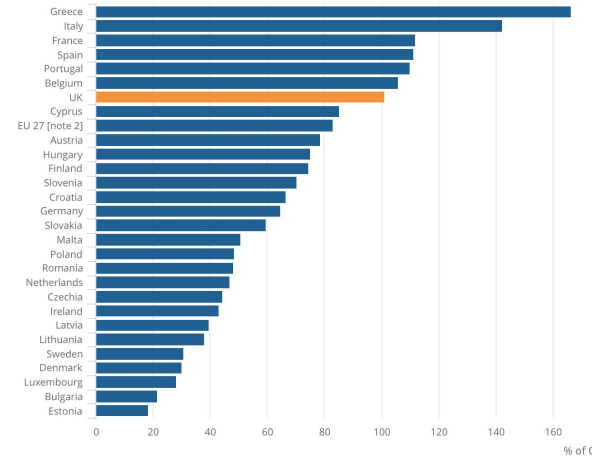
International comparison of the levels of trust in people and governments, OECD countries, 2021 to 2022



<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/trustinggovernmentuk/2022>

Figure 2: At 101.2% of GDP, UK general government gross debt at the end of Quarter 2 2023 was 18.1 percentage points above the EU average

General government gross debt as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), UK and EU member states, at the end of Quarter 2 (June) 2023

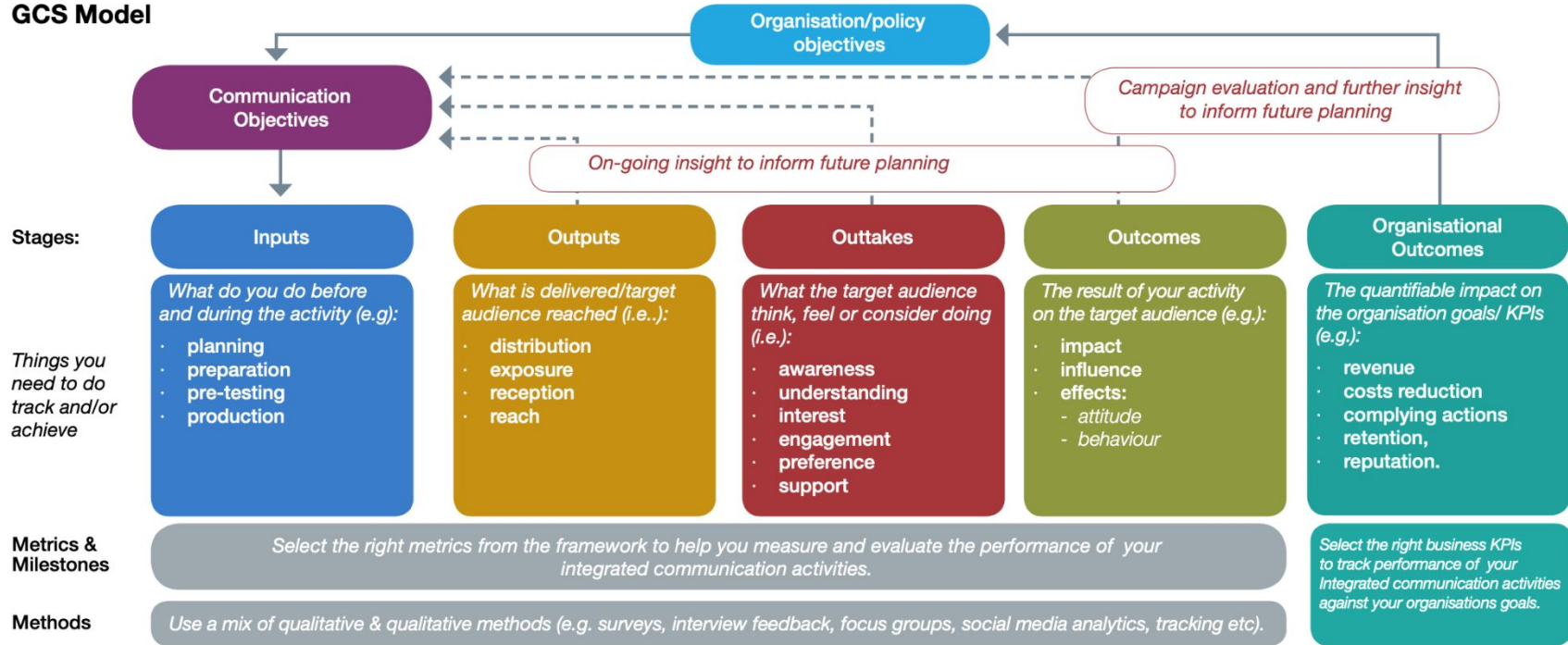


<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/governmentpublicsectorandtaxes/publicsectordebtanddeficitforeurostatmaast/june2023>



Our existing GCS Evaluation Framework 2.0 (2018+)

GCS Model





Henley
Business School

- Worked with our partners at Henley Business School to conduct an independent review of current evaluation practices within GCS and across government
- 28 interviews with internal and external communication and evaluation experts and reviewed documentation and data
- The findings inform our way forward with the next iteration of the GCS Evaluation Framework (3.0)
- Report and new GCS Evaluation Framework in response in the new year
 - ◆ But, I'm going to give you a preview.....



Strengths and weaknesses: What did the review find?

The need for evaluation is well established and embedded in GCS and across government but practices are variable across organisations.

- **Continuous learning** - move from a culture of 'justification' to a culture of learning and adapting from what does or doesn't work.
- **'Real-time' evaluation** - Enhancing digital capabilities and collecting data in real time to optimise frequency.
- **Inclusivity** - Better understanding and targeting of difficult to reach audiences in line with our Equalities and Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
- **Broader application** - Easier application to other communication and engagement activities (such as low/no cost).
- **Integration** - Evaluation needs to be more 'built in' rather than 'bolt on' with closer links to OASIS (planning framework) and COM-B (behavioural framework).



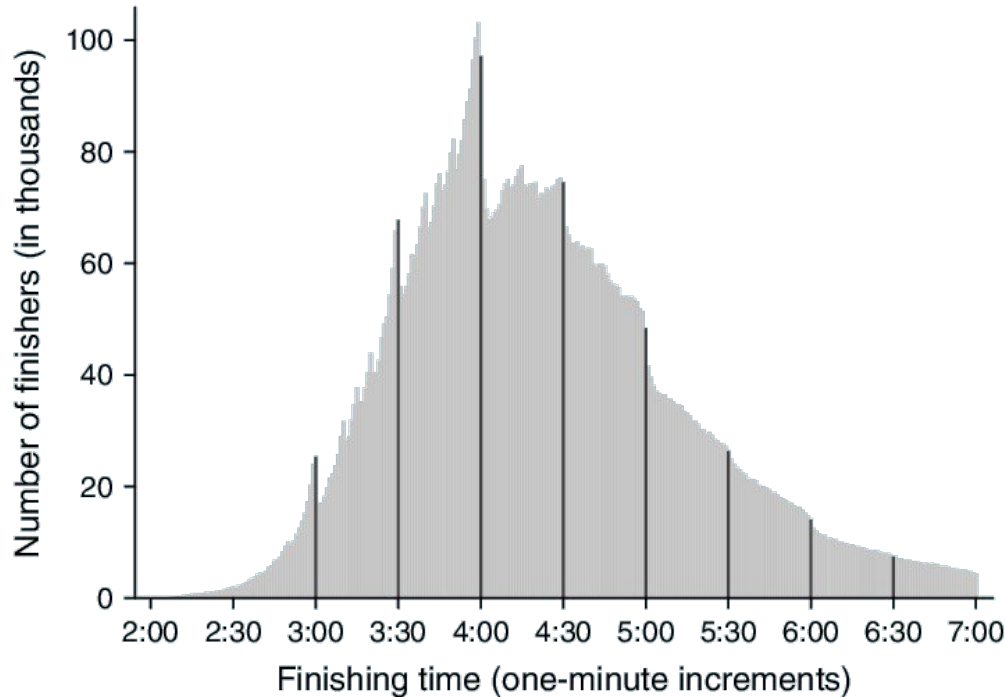
What will be different about GCS Evaluation Framework 3.0?

It will be an evolution of the existing framework and not one-size-fits all

- **Shift in behaviour**: Using the framework to support continuous learning and improvement in what works (and what doesn't)
- **Shift in focus**: Building on our data and insights to drive creative and bold innovation, make new discoveries and drive ourselves to exceed current performance
- **Shift in culture**: Encouraging greater sharing of data and insights across GCS, learning more about audiences and how our communications works in greater detail



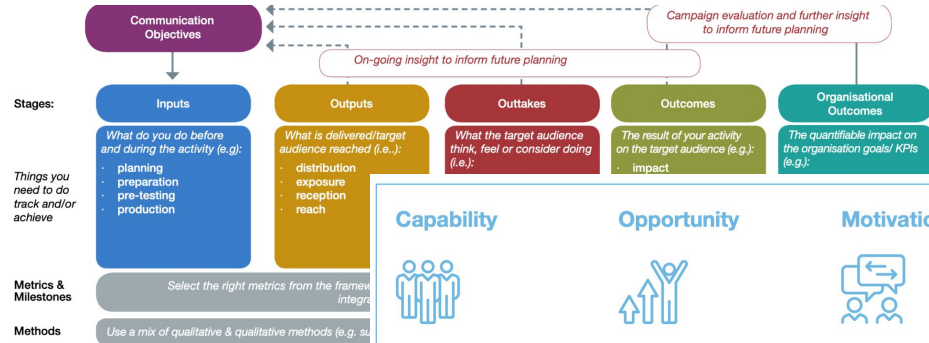
We will also help challenge benchmarks and targets



Allen, Eric & Dechow, Patricia & Pope, Devin & Wu, George. (2016). Reference-Dependent Preferences: Evidence from Marathon Runners. *Management Science*. 63. 10.1287/mnsc.2015.2417. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Distribution-of-Marathon-Finishing-Times-n-9-789-093_fig2_301571201



The new GCS Evaluation Framework will help bring together our guidance, supported by our GCS training offer to members



Capability



Does your target audience:

Have the right knowledge and skills?

Have the physical and mental ability to carry out the behaviour?

Know how to do it?

Opportunity



Does your target audience:

Have the resources to undertake the behaviour?

Have the right systems, processes and environment around them?

Have people around them who will help or hinder them to carry it out?

Motivation



Does your target audience:

Want to carry out the behaviour?

Believe that they should?

Have the right habits in place to do so?

Objectives

Audience Insight

Strategy/Idea

Review and refresh the approach after each phase of the campaign

Government Communication Service

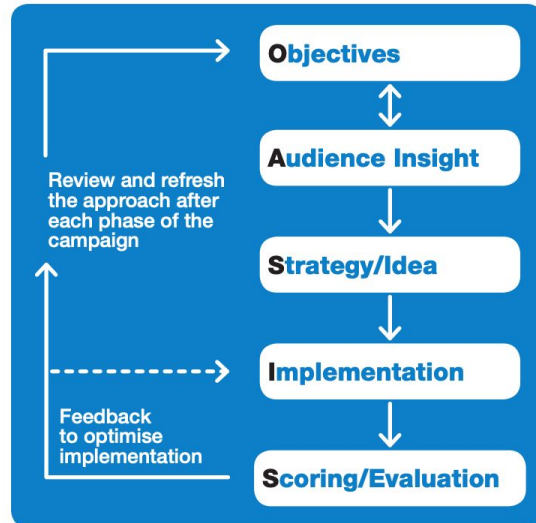
Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

A diverse GCS communicating brilliantly with all communities



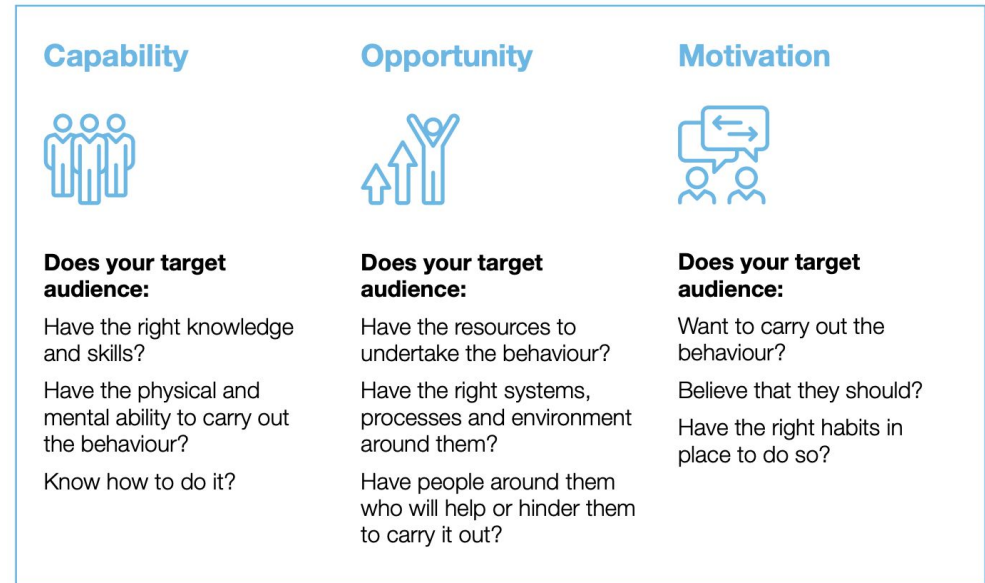
OASIS

OASIS is a series of steps that can help bring order and clarity to planning campaigns. The aim is to help make the planning process rigorous and consistent.



<https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/marketing/delivering-government-campaigns/guide-to-campaign-planning-oasis/>

The **COM-B model** helps you identify barriers in a systematic and effective way. It says that there are three conditions that need to be met before behaviour takes place. The barriers to overcome are anything that prevents those conditions being met.



<https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Strategic-Communications-a-behavioural-approach.pdf>



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Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

A diverse GCS communicating
brilliantly with all communities



To support GCS to continuously improve in ensuring that communications are audience led and accessible we will:

- establish a clear and consistent approach to evaluating EDI within campaigns and communications announcements
- improve understanding of our audiences through insight and the experiences of our GCS members, using our channels to share and learn from what works well
- promote and integrate the latest research and guidance on accessible communications and inclusive language into our communications to better connect with our audiences

p.8

<https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/about-us/diversity-and-inclusion/our-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan>



- The Home Office’s ‘ENOUGH.’ campaign (launched 2022) to tackle violence against women and girls has a clear message: we all have a role to play in stopping violence against women and girls,
- The team carried out extensive engagement with over 40 stakeholders and looked at robust audience insight and behavioural science, and identified a lack of awareness of the different ways people can intervene if they see violence against women and girls.
- They focused on placing adverts in environments where violent behaviours against women and girls are most normalised: branded beer mats in pubs, text adverts on public transport, and social media takeovers aligned to the Football World Cup. They also worked with Hollyoaks to include campaign branding in a special episode called, ‘The Long Walk Home’, watched by 1 million viewers. **This partnership helped drive a 90% increase in website traffic, with social media content reaching 5.4 million people, with 2.2 million interactions.**
- **Evaluation shows that the campaign is successfully starting to shift attitudes** towards violence against women and girls and prompting people to change their behaviour

<https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/about-us/diversity-and-inclusion/our-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan>



Next steps

We will be engaging across GCS and elsewhere

- **Behaviour**: Henley Report and new GCS Evaluation Framework 3.0 to be published in the new year, accompanied by training and support to shift current behaviours.
- **Focus**: Highlighting the impact of innovations and continuous measurement and improvements, showing the value of sharing data and insights and shifting strategies to capitalise on success. Push ourselves to improve our marathon times not settle on our personal bests.
- **Culture**: We are building a new network of Data and Insight professionals across GCS to help share ideas, data and insights. As part of this we are very open to sharing ideas from outside GCS, so if you want to be involved let me know.