

DCMS College of Experts

Terms of Reference

The DCMS College of Experts will provide independent expert advice to the Department to inform DCMS officials. The college will act as a source of scientific and technical input focusing on providing evidence and knowledge of research to inform policy developed by the Department.

The DCMS College of Experts is devised as a flexible resource, enabling the department to obtain the expert input it needs in a timely manner, drawing on a range of perspectives and disciplines. An important principle governs its function: the separation of the provision of scientific and technical input from delivery and policy creation by the Department.

The DCMS College of Experts is intended to:

- Provide expert input in developing new broad strategies and policies;
- Provide expert input on specific issues with a particular emphasis on emerging strategic issues for the Department;
- Provide input into explorations into the consequences and challenges arising from emerging technologies and novel policies;
- Provide a means of two-way dialogue with the research and scientific communities on topical issues central to the department's remit.

Members

Members are drawn from academic and industrial expert communities. They are expected to bring a broad interdisciplinary view to bear and to act both as 'generous generalists' providing input to inform the Department's research strategy and focused expert input on detailed challenges facing departmental teams. Members are not required to act as representatives of their own organisation, research area or sector.

Members are required to declare any personal, private or commercial interests that might conceivably conflict with the interests of the department, and must withdraw from any discussion of topics in which they have such an interest.

The names of all College members together with a register of potential conflicts of interest will be published internally.

Members of the College will be reviewed yearly according to DCMS priorities and new research/expertise prominence.

Recruitment

Initially we issued an open call for applications via the Civil Service Jobs website and also invited nominations from key groups based on DCMS directorate suggestions and insight. Based on the competencies and characteristics required for the vacancies, the Department identified those who it wished to appoint. The CSA, Director of Analysis as well as key representatives from across the Department reviewed the list of proposed experts. This committee considered and reviewed the Department's proposals and the rationale for these recommendations, challenging as appropriate.

DCMS is committed to having a diverse panel of experts and will regularly review recruitment processes to achieve this goal.

Expectations

It is expected that experts will voluntarily commit approximately 5 days per year to supporting DCMS policymaking with their expertise and research. The DCMS CSA team will have oversight of this, but experts will be required to raise any concerns regarding time commitment.

The Department will endeavour to:

- Identify expert work streams ahead of need, providing sufficient notice to enable planning arrangements including diary management;
- Provide a clear specification for each expert work stream;
- Provide the appropriate information so that College members are adequately briefed and able to contribute meaningfully;
- Provide an appropriate forum and tools for members to provide appropriate, high-quality expert input;
- Maintain members' knowledge of all College activities and of the Department's strategic thinking and direction. This will be done through regular information flows and through at least two annual meetings of the whole College;
- Be clear about the information College members can share more widely and that which is provided in confidence;
- Inform members about how the expert input will be used;
- Make the notes of work stream meetings public.

The Members of the College of Experts will endeavour to:

- Act within the '[Seven Principles of Public Life](#)', in particular to provide independent, informed expert input avoiding actual or perceived conflicts of interest and taking a collegiate approach;
- Challenge constructively and/or validate the Department's perspectives drawing on the available evidence and their own experiences and research;
- Take individual and collective ownership of the expert input they provide whilst recognising the separation of that advice from responsibility for the decisions made, which rests with the Department;
- Make themselves available to participate in College work streams, subject to sufficient notice;
- Respond to requests to participate in pre-activity briefings where their expertise can add value;
- Use their profile as College members in order to improve two-way communications within their respective stakeholder communities
- When representing DCMS as an adviser, experts will be expected to refrain from discussing sensitive Government information that is not already in the public domain
- On social media outlets, experts should think carefully when publishing content that links to DCMS and its policies- they should seek advice from the CSA team if they are unsure of social media guidance.