Data Capability application guidance

Introduction

This guidance summarises the process for collecting, collating and sending evidence for the data capability part of the accreditation of data processors under the Digital Economy Act. This guidance is split into the following sections.

Evidence collection folder structure

The collection of evidence for the data capability does not depart significantly from the security controls. The key changes are on how the evidence packs are coded and how to reference the evidence against the maturity criteria. Currently the control framework consists of 29 controls, each control is given a unique name stating with the letter C for capability and followed by the control area number and the control number separated with periods ".". For instance, control C.1.1. refers to the first control in the first control area(Research Governance).
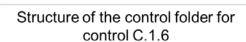
The first step for evidence collection is to create a folder structure consisting of 29 folders to reflect the numbering of each control, this folder will be referenced as the *control folder*. Under the new framework is control is assessed against the five criteria of the maturity assessment framework.

- Evidence assurance: provide all your evidence straight into the *control folder*
- Control testing: Inside the control folder create a folder by adding the *a* suffix at the name of the control folder e.g., C.2.1.a
- Use of Management Information: Inside the control folder create a folder by adding the *b* suffix at the name of the control folder e.g., C.2.1.b
- Embedded in Culture: Inside the control folder create a folder by adding the *c* suffix at the name of the control folder e.g., C.2.1.c
- Approach: Inside the control folder create a folder by adding the *d* suffix at the name of the control folder e.g., C.2.1.d

To assist you we have provided a standard folder structure for the evidence folder on the UK Statistics Authority website. If you cannot access this resource, please let us know at Research.Accreditation@statistics.gov.uk.

In Microsoft Windows the control folders will look like:

Name	Date modified	Type
C.1.1	22/08/2022 07:52	File folder
C.1.2	22/08/2022 07:52	File folder
C.1.3	22/08/2022 07:53	File folder
C.1.4	22/08/2022 07:53	File folder
C.1.5	22/08/2022 07:53	File folder
C.1.6	22/08/2022 07:53	File folder
C.2.1	22/08/2022 07:52	File folder
C.2.2	22/08/2022 07:53	File folder
C.2.3	22/08/2022 07:53	File folder
C.2.4	22/08/2022 07:53	File folder
C.2.5	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.2.6	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.2.7	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.2.8	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.2.9	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.2.10	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.3.1	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.4.1	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.4.2	22/08/2022 07:54	File folder
C.4.3	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.4.4	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.4.5	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.4.6	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.5.1	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.5.2	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.5.3	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.5.4	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.5.5	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder
C.5.6	22/08/2022 07:55	File folder

Structure of the evidence folder

Name	Date modified	Type
C.1.6.a	22/08/2022 07:51	File folder
C.1.6.b	22/08/2022 07:51	File folder
C.1.6.c	22/08/2022 07:51	File folder
C.1.6.d	22/08/2022 07:51	File folder

Structure of the control folder for control C.1.6

Data Capability evidence spreadsheet

The data capability evidence spreadsheet presents a simple way to provide an assurance statement against each evidence area and identify the evidence provided. The spreadsheet starts with the submission of some basic information:

- Name of the data processor applying for accreditation
- Name and email address of the main point of contact for the data capability accreditation
- Date that the evidence for data capability is submitted (as the evidence might be updated this date is expected to reflect the latest submission of evidence).
- Scope of the accreditation and the assessment (provision of data, preparation of data, or both).
- A list of functions that the data processor will be providing under the DEA. The form provides a list of functions, but data processors are advised to amend this as necessary.

The Data Capability Evidence form sheet, lists all controls in separate rows grouped under the five control areas. Controls which are optional are in italics. The spreadsheet also identifies if a control applies for the accreditation of data processors for the provision of data, preparation of data or both. Depending on the scope of accreditation each data processors is applying for selected in Scope of assessment dropdown in the Data Capability Accreditation sheet) the value in the column E (Control within accreditation scope) will be adjusted to state Yes (when in scope) and No (when out of scope) and the rows will be filled with a grey colour.

In case an optional control does not apply to the data processor's environment, e.g., no code repositories are available to researchers, the data processor must type N/A in the Evidence Statement column (column F) but provide a justification in the Evidence column (column G). This could be as simple as *this function is not provided in the data processor's environment under the Digital Economy Act 2017*.

You will be asked to prepare a statement to summarise the assurance you can provide against each control. You will need to provide the accrediting body with the evidence provided in the evidence folder in the next column. There is no need for coding the documents or the evidence for the data capability assessment, but the files names must match the file names in the evidence folder.

You will need to provide the name of the file and if the name is not clear a short description. For instance, we won't need any clarification for a policy or guidance document, but we might require some additional information on a file as an extract from an IT system or an ambiguously named document .

As an example, please check the evidence statement and evidence presented below:

Evidence Statement	
Evidence Statement	**Evidence**
Provide a summary of the evidence against this control. For optional controls, please type N/A	Provide link to any evidence in the evidence pack
We maintain detailed records on projects accredited under the DEA. When specific accreditation conditions apply, these are recorded along with the project application.	Project extract.xls - an extract from the project register with clear reference to the information captured. Accreditation conditions are included in column J.

Project register metadata.doc - a file that explains the columns in the project register file

Project administrator guidance.doc |

In addition to the evidence statement, we will require the same process to be followed for the maturity assessment criteria. Consequently, you will be required to provide sufficient evidence to help assessors evaluate the maturity level against each control by providing a short statement and the evidence in the relevant subfolders. inside the control folder. As before you don't need to include the file names against a particular control. It is important to note that some maturity assessment criteria don't apply to specific controls. For instance, none of the controls in the last control area expect data processors to demonstrate proactiveness in their approach. In practice you won't be required to fill out any cell that has a grey fill.

Sending us the evidence

Before sending the evidence, we will ask you to create a single compressed file (zip) to include all control folders. The file should be named as:

*Data processor acronym*_DEA_DC_evidence.zip

e.g.,

SRS_DEA_DC_evidence.zip

The UK Statistics Authority have identified that MoveIt is the preferred tool for secure file transfer. We understand that using MoveIt might not be the most accessible and easy-to-use tool, so we encourage you to contact us at Research.Accreditation@statistics.gov.uk if you require any assistance. We are determined on making the evidence collation and sending process as smooth as possible and will be exploring new methods to safely collate and transfer the evidence in the future.

Evidence file formats

There are no particular limitations in the file formats you submit evidence to us, however we won't be able to accommodate file formats supported by software not available in the UK Statistics Authority. This includes all Microsoft Office products. If you are unsure of the file formats of the evidence, please contact us so we can support you best.

Additionally, even if you are willing to provide us with credentials to access your systems (e.g., back-end of the data catalogue or project register) we won't be able to do so. Please identify alternative ways to submit such evidence or contact us to find an agreeable solution.

In case you wish to submit rich media files, as images, we would expect that these are at an appropriate resolution so that the evidence is legible.

In case you wish to provide a link to a website as evidence, please provide a link and not a saved webpage. If we cannot access the webpage due to our security policy, we will let you know, and will suggest a resolution.

Confidentiality of the information shared with us

We will use the evidence provided to us to provide recommendations regarding your accreditation and to produce metrics reported to the Research Accreditation Panel. We will hold the information securely on a SharePoint document library with restricted access to the UK Statistics Authority staff reviewing the evidence and supporting the Research Accreditation Panel. We will not share the evidence you provide with other organisations outside the UK Statistics Authority.

We will retain the evidence until the next full accreditation review is completed, nominally five years after the previous full accreditation review. This is to allow us to reference a full set of previously submitted evidence for the regular accreditation reviews.