



When peer reviewing a paper in development, this electronically editable worksheet can help you assess how well it meets the four standards of quality policy advice. For practical steps to improve your policy writing, see the [Communication skill](#) in the Development Pathways Tool. For more help with developing communication products, see the Policy Project's [Writing for Ministers and Cabinet](#).

Name of paper: _____

Context – explains why the decision maker is getting this and where it fits

The paper:	Yes	No	N/A
• explains purpose and describes context			
• is clear about the priorities			
• outlines previous advice and history of the issue			
• sets out the connections across government.			
Comments:			

Analysis – is logical, clearly defined, and informed by evidence

The analysis:	Yes	No	N/A
• clearly defines the problem or opportunity			
• is clear about the rationale for intervention			
• is clear about the policy objectives			
• uses relevant analytical frameworks and methodologies			
• incorporates Treaty and Te Ao Māori analysis			
• assesses options to make impacts clear and reveal workable solutions			
• is informed by relevant research and evidence			
• makes the limitations of the analysis and advice clear			
• sets out the range of different views, experiences, and insights.			

Comments:

Advice – presents a clear position and makes a recommendation

The advice:	Yes	No	N/A
• presents a clear position			
• is communicated in a clear, concise, and compelling way			
• is free and frank			
• outlines risks and mitigations.			
Comments:			

Action – identifies next steps, implementation, and monitoring

The paper:	Yes	No	N/A
• sets out the next steps in the decision-making process			
• enables effective implementation and delivery			
• explains how the outcomes will be monitored and evaluated.			
Comments:			

Peer reviewer: _____

Date: _____

This version of the [Peer-review worksheet for policy papers](#) was updated in March 2026 by the Policy Project. For more detail about the standards of quality policy advice, see the [Policy Quality Framework](#).

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