

Assessing the Quality of Co-production Tool

This tool has been co-produced by service staff, parents/ carers and young people from Voices United. It is for use by all participants in a project to help measure the quality of co-production they have experienced. This is to enable discussion throughout the project and improvement overall.

Some project groups might choose not to use the tool directly, but all project groups should have a stated method for measuring the co-production. Alternative templates for scoring and collating co-production data can be found within the toolkit.

Once the project is complete, the Project Lead can score and evidence the quality of co-production in the table. This should then be shared with participants and the Co-production Leads on sendco-productionteam@worcestershire.gov.uk.

There are simple scoring statements above each 'Cornerstone' table. A more detailed scoring framework can be found after the table in this document.

Welcome and Care statements (Scoring system: beginning, emerging, developing, mastering)

- Beginning: Power feels unfair. Expectations are unclear.
- Emerging: People are sometimes heard; safety and clarity are not regular.
- Developing: People contribute often; safety steps and clear expectations are in place.
- Mastering: All voices are respected; safe, clear, shared rules.

Indicators	Measures	How has this indicator been implemented within your project? (evidence towards indicator)	Overall Score Beginning, emerging, developing, mastering)	Reflections and next steps e.g. is there anything you could improve on for the next project?
Lived experience is heard, respected and valued	<i>All participants contribute to discussions in a way that is suitable and accessible for them and others. Participants include but is not limited to; children and young people, parents/carers/experts by experience, as well as service providers. Participants represent a range of roles within organisations e.g. not always senior managers. People's lived experiences are listened to, acknowledged and not dismissed.</i>			
Environments feel emotionally and physically safe and secure for all participants	<i>Service providers actively try to reduce power imbalances within meetings e.g. remove lanyard, equal access to drinks. All participants feel the group is supportive. All participants feel motivated to achieve shared goals of project. Participants are 'curious not furious' in their approach. Where possible given choice about venue/location.</i>			
Expectations are communicated early and with clarity	<i>Participants are provided with information on what they are contributing to and what they are not contributing to. A boundary is set outlining who has the final decision. Limitations are explained as to what can and cannot be coproduced.</i>			
Projects begin with an open mind	<i>Responses are considered and respected. All participants are open to hearing all experiences. Constructive challenge and compromise is encouraged. Strengths are celebrated whilst acknowledging areas of improvement.</i>			

Value and Include statements (Scoring system: beginning, emerging, developing, mastering)

- Beginning: Little thought about people’s needs.
- Emerging: Basic inclusion; thanks are informal.
- Developing: Inclusive methods are regular; flexibility improves.
- Mastering: Inclusion is excellent; creative methods; skills used elsewhere.

Indicators	Measures	How has this indicator been implemented within your project? (evidence towards indicator)	Overall Score Beginning, emerging, developing, mastering)	Reflections and next steps e.g. is there anything you could improve on for the next project?
Inclusive methods are used so everyone can take part	<i>Terms of reference for project created and shared with all participants. Everyone introduces themselves before the meeting begins. Participants have information of meeting notes and meeting agendas. Accessible timings and locations for participants. Hybrid meetings are offered. Reasonable adjustments are made where needed.</i>			
Recognition and appreciate of everyone’s involvement	<i>Previous experience is acknowledged and discussed and vulnerability is acknowledged. People are invited to and wish to be involved in future projects. Remuneration is discussed and agreed on.</i>			
Creative and flexible	<i>Responses to individual needs and changing circumstances are creative and flexible. Find innovative ways of genuinely involving as many participants to ensure a wider cohort is represented. There is support for those whose voice may not otherwise be heard and contributions are gathered in a range of ways to suit the needs of individuals and/or communities</i>			
Developing skills and confidence	<i>Participants are able to identify the gains they have made. Participants can reflect on and articulate their journey and how they have/or will apply their learning elsewhere. Participants feel the group builds confidence, well-being and self-esteem. All participants individually input into the meeting in a way that is suitable for them.</i>			

Communicate statements (Scoring system: beginning, emerging, developing, mastering)

0. Beginning: No accessible formats or feedback loop.
1. Emerging: Some plain words; feedback rarely closes the loop.
2. Developing: Clearer language; "you said, we did" starts.
3. Mastering: Inclusive communication is standard; feedback shapes decisions.

Indicators	Measures	How has this indicator been implemented within your project? (evidence towards indicator)	Overall Score Beginning, emerging, developing, mastering)	Reflections and next steps e.g. is there anything you could improve on for the next project?
Communication is inclusive	<i>Acronyms and jargon are limited or a glossary is provided to explain and support understanding. All communications are in accessible formats and accessible language.</i>			
Communication is accessible	<i>Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure the meeting and documents are accessible where appropriate, for example braille, sign language, assistive technology, interpreter</i>			
Feedback mechanisms are actively used e.g. you said, we did	<i>Clear feedback loop with all participants. The journey through the project is reflectively noted and shared, including progress indicators. There is a consistent reviewing process with participants.</i>			
Mutual Understanding	<i>All participants are open to hearing different views and perspectives and these are respected. There is an equal weighting to contributions. Strive to use positive and constructive language.</i>			

Work in Partnership (Scoring system: beginning, emerging, developing, mastering)

- Beginning: Very little participant involvement.
- Emerging: Some consultation; decisions unclear; limited support.
- Developing: Inputs sometimes shape decisions; better notice; some training.
- Mastering: Decisions are shared; timelines co-owned; strong accountability.

Indicators	Measures	How has this indicator been implemented within your project? (evidence towards indicator)	Overall Score Beginning, emerging, developing, mastering)	Reflections and next steps e.g. is there anything you could improve on for the next project?
Decisions are made collectively	<i>All contributions are valued. Contributions are recorded even when not used. Decision making is transparent and explained.</i>			
Reasonable notice is provided for all commitments	<i>Participants are given enough notice to attend workshops/meetings. Documents are shared in advance to allow time to process and review. Efficient time is planned for the process.</i>			
Support, learning and training	<i>Participants are given support and training to be able to fully participate where applicable. Participants are given enough information to have a clear understanding and insight into service provision.</i>			
Accountability	<i>There is accountability and commitment to continue moving forward. Decisions and actions are explained and the reasons behind them. All participants are reflective in their work, accepting mistakes can be made. Transparent about decisions and actions. Agreed actions are regularly reviewed and evaluated with all participants.</i>			

Co-Production Quality Framework – Detailed

How to use the 0–3 scale

- 0 – Beginning: No evidence in this area.
- 1 – Emerging: Early steps are visible, but influence and consistency are limited.
- 2 – Developing: Practice is regular; some decisions and actions show co-production.
- 3 – Mastering: Co-production is embedded and shaping decisions; people with lived experience are equal partners.

Welcome & Care

Indicators

- People’s experiences are listened to and respected.
- The space feels safe for everyone.
- Expectations are clear from the start.
- Projects start with an open mind.

Level	What this looks like	Evidence to look for	Example
0 – Beginning	People are not listened to. Power feels unfair. Expectations are unclear. Little room for different views.	No information before meetings; people do not speak; no boundaries; people look uncomfortable or leave.	Meeting held without asking people or checking safety.
1 – Emerging	People are sometimes listened to, but ideas rarely change decisions. Safety and clarity happen sometimes.	Notes mention input but no action; small gestures (like drinks); expectations shared late.	People are asked for views, but decisions stay the same.
2 – Developing	People often share ideas. The space feels safer. Expectations are explained. People can challenge ideas.	Agenda sent early; ground rules set; decision limits explained; more people take part.	People help make meeting ground rules.

3 – Mastering	Everyone is respected. Power is shared. Expectations are clear early. Rules are made together; decisions are shared.	Roles and boundaries written down; supportive practices used; notes show how lived experience shaped decisions.	Co-created meeting rules lead to shared decisions.
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Value & Include

Indicators

- Ways of working include everyone.
- Everyone’s time and effort are appreciated.
- We are flexible and creative.
- People build skills and confidence.

Level	What this looks like	Evidence to look for	Example
0 – Beginning	Little effort to include different people. Ideas are not recognised. Work is rigid. No focus on skills or confidence.	No terms of reference; times and places are hard to access; no adjustments; no pay or expenses discussed; no time to learn.	Meeting planned without thinking about access or inclusion.
1 – Emerging	Some inclusive actions happen, but not regularly. Thanks are informal. Flexibility is limited. Learning is rare.	Agendas or minutes shared sometimes; some hybrid access; ad-hoc adjustments; informal thanks; rare reflection.	Hybrid access offered, but few materials are shared.
2 – Developing	Inclusive methods are used often. Appreciation is shown. Flexibility improves. People notice new confidence or skills.	Terms of reference shared; notes shared regularly; adjustments recorded; pay/expenses discussed; people name what they learned.	People help design how the meeting runs.
3 – Mastering	Inclusion is part of everyday work. Creative methods bring in	Inclusion plan written together; assistive tech supported; learning logs kept; skills used beyond the project.	Participants lead an inclusion check that improves practice.

	under-represented voices. Skills grow and are used elsewhere.		
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Communicate

Indicators

- We use clear, inclusive language.
- Information is accessible to different needs.
- We listen and show what changed ("you said, we did").
- People understand each other.

Level	What this looks like	Evidence to look for	Example
0 – Beginning	Language is full of jargon and mostly one-way. No accessible formats. No feedback loop. Different views are dismissed.	No glossary; inaccessible documents; no adjustments; no "you said, we did"; little two-way talk.	A feedback form is used once, but results are not shared.
1 – Emerging	Some effort to use plain words. Accessibility happens sometimes. Feedback is collected but rarely closes the loop. Respect is not regular.	Glossary added sometimes; ad-hoc interpreter use; surveys without follow-up.	Occasional notes and ad-hoc interpreter use; informal thanks.
2 – Developing	Language is clearer. Accessibility needs are noticed and met. Feedback starts to cycle ("you said, we did"). Respect is encouraged.	Accessible formats used; adjustments recorded; sample "you said, we did" updates; meeting norms encourage kind, clear language.	Progress update shows actions taken on suggestions.
3 – Mastering	Plain, inclusive language is standard. Accessibility is planned.	Multiple accessible formats; interpreters and assistive tech used often; regular feedback reports or dashboards.	A shared dashboard tracks feedback themes and actions.

	The feedback loop is regular and shapes decisions.		
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Work in Partnership

Indicators

- Decisions are made together.
- People get fair notice for meetings and tasks.
- Support, learning and training are offered.
- We are accountable and review our actions.

Levels

Level	What this looks like	Evidence to look for	Example
0 – Beginning	Staff make decisions alone. Notice is short. Support or training is missing. No real accountability.	No clear decision records; last-minute invites; no pre-reads; no action tracking.	Staff decide without involving participants.
1 – Emerging	People are asked sometimes, but decisions are unclear. Notice sometimes improves. Support is limited. Accountability is informal.	Notes mention input without explaining decisions; occasional pre-reads; ad-hoc training; action logs are rare.	People share views, but decisions remain unclear.
2 – Developing	Contributions are recorded and sometimes change decisions. Notice is usually reasonable. Basic	Transparent minutes; documents shared in advance; introductory training; decision steps noted.	A workshop leads to a change recorded in the minutes.



	support and training are offered. Actions are reviewed.		
3 – Mastering	Decisions are made together. Timelines are agreed together. Support is tailored. Accountability is strong with shared evaluation.	Decision tools (like matrices); calendars agreed together; training plans; impact reviews with participants.	A participant-led group helps oversee decisions.

Scores by indicator:

Welcome and Care:

Value and Include:

Communicate:

Work in Partnership:

Total Score:

Average Score (Total Score/ 4):