[Introducing the Government Data Maturity Model](#)

Following the publication of the [National Data Strategy](#) in 2020, the Government Data Quality Hub (DQHub) have been busy working alongside colleagues in the Data Standards Authority (DSA) to build a single data maturity model for government. Next month (December 2021), a pilot programme will begin rolling out across volunteer government departments.

But what is data maturity? How can it help improve data usage across government? And why is it relevant to you?

What is data maturity?

All organisations produce, process and use data in some shape or form. But the presence of data does not necessarily mean that it is being used effectively. Measuring your data maturity is a way of identifying how set up your organisation is to make the best use of its data. Many different elements can contribute to data maturity and building capability in each of these areas can strengthen the overall capability of your organisation.

Data maturity is fluid and can vary substantially over time, for example as a result of changes in data availability, analytical capability or even leadership. Commitment to continuous improvement is crucial to maximising data value.

Why data maturity?

Data maturity can be viewed through many different lenses to help you better understand some of the many different themes that contribute to it, for example:

- **Uses** — How do you get value out of data?

- **Leadership** — How much is data regarded as a major organisational priority?

- **Culture** — What are the attitudes to data in your organisation?

- **Skills** — How data literate are your staff?

This multi-dimensional approach allows you to consider if you and your users are benefitting as much as possible from the data you have.

How can I assess data maturity?

It is important to be aware of your own organisation's current level of data maturity. Otherwise, it can be difficult to identify potential areas for improvement. Developing data maturity doesn't need to be expensive — there are often small steps that can be taken to build it over time. However, identifying these areas for improvement can sometimes be daunting, and you might not know where to start.

This is why we are developing a single data maturity model for government, designed for assessing and optimising your organisation's data maturity. The Government Data Maturity Model is a tool that you can use to identify goals to help you achieve your target data maturity level.

Assessing data maturity can help you make best use of resources

Prioritising your data improvements can lead to increased savings and productivity across your organisation. As well as diagnosing your current level of data maturity, you can set aspirational targets, to be monitored and met in subsequent iterations of the model assessment. This is a convenient way to monitor and communicate progress for a diverse range of purposes, helping you to get more from your data.

The model can only reveal what needs to be done, rather than how to achieve it. Continuous monitoring and improvement are critical to getting the most value from your data. The data environment is by nature fast moving and ever-advancing — no fix will last indefinitely!

Establishing a consistent approach to evaluating data maturity can enable useful comparisons and facilitate the sharing of best practice, putting data at the centre of decision making. Following the pilot starting next month, the Government Data Maturity Model will be made available to all areas of government working with data. Please get in touch if you are interested in finding out more.

DQHub is involved in a wide range of projects aimed at improving data quality and usage across government. We also offer tailored advice and support, and you can contact us by emailing DQHub@ons.gov.uk.