Once you have finished …

The data collection process is not an end in itself: the culminating activities of evaluation are analysis, interpretation, and the presentation of findings.

The analysis and the interpretation of your evaluation data should start during the process of data collection. The approach to data analysis depends on what methods were used (e.g. interviews, questionnaires) and the types of data collected (e.g. quantitative or qualitative). However, in general there are three steps to follow when analysing data:

- **Noticing and collecting.** The first stage of analysis may involve: filling in gaps in field and/or observation notes; following up any vague or cryptic comments received; downloading recordings; typing up transcripts; labeling the data collected; conducting debriefing meetings with team.
- **Sorting and thinking.** This stage of analysis may involve: listening to any recordings; reading field and/or observation notes; reading transcripts; inputting any quantitative data into spreadsheets and/or databases.
- **Critical analysis and interpretation.** The final stage of analysis may involve: comparing and contrasting results by individual questionnaires, interviews, observations and/or focus groups; exploring emerging themes from your data; producing tables, charts and/or graphs to illustrate your findings; describing the findings thematically; using quotes to illustrate the findings; examination of a topic from many different angles.

Data collection, analysis and interpretation is an iterative process, moving back and forth within these three stages.

The majority of the methods documented within this guide will generate qualitative data. The literature on social research methodologies and analysis, indicates that when analysing qualitative data (such as that collected from interviews, diaries, focus groups and observations) it is important to consider:

- Words i.e. the choice and meaning of words that people use.
- Context i.e. exploring the context in which responses were generated.
- Internal consistency i.e. examine any shifts or differences in opinion.
- Frequency and intensity of comments i.e. people may talk about a subject regularly, or with particular depth and feeling.
- Specificity i.e. responses based on personal experiences and reflections.
- The key trends and themes i.e. finding the key trends and themes within the data.

It is important to feed the findings of your evaluation back to the people who provided the information. This will show that you have used the information as you intended, as well as sharing your findings.

The most common way to share the findings of your evaluation is through a report, produced at the end of the project. The presentation of the report can vary in style, but usually details: an introduction (including aims and objectives of the project), a background to the project (e.g. what happened), the evaluation methodology undertaken, the key findings, and recommendations for future activities.

Some examples of completed UCL public engagement project evaluation reports can be found here: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/research/CaseStudies