

Initial issues with project management were resolved following an MHCLG visit.

A change request was submitted due to the withdrawal of the Open University from the project. Although the project value significantly reduced, outputs remained the same offering improved value for money.

Finance claims remained behind schedule due to the withdrawal of approval of the PCR (not received). This summative assessment has thus been based upon the most recently prepared claim (Q1 2019); not yet submitted. It can be assumed that project spend will be achieved in profile by the end of August 2019 based upon progress to

Good progress has been made to date towards the C1 target and it seems reasonable to assume that this target will be achieved, and possibly exceeded by the completion of the project.

The ICT Escalator project is on course to achieve its financial and output goals by the 31 August 2019. Initial project management issues have been successfully addressed (reflected in the approved PCR). The University has put in place remedial actions to bring the project back on track despite the loss of the delivery partner, and has demonstrated systems

Project Name	h v]À œ•]šÇ }({ }œ •Z]œ [•
ERDF project number	31R15P00147
Fund	EuropearRegional Development Fund (ERDF
Priority Axis	Priority Axis
ERDF Contribution	£669,023
Match Funding	£739.456
Total project eligible cost	£1,408,479
Intervention rate	47.5%
Project start date	1 September 2016
Project completion date	31 August 2019

In accordance with the objectives set out in the ERDF Full Application (Application request) the evaluation sought to establish:

- x Whether the project objectives and focus as set out in the full application documents are still relevant to the strategic context of the ERDF (need for CE • Z]CE [•
- x The progress the project has made towards achieving its objectives as set out in the full application
- x Progress towards achieving programme indicators (outputs and results) including examination of issues in relation to targets and deliverability
- x Quality and effectiveness of project implementation and management including identification of weaknesses in systems/processes

The evaluation took place over a period of 12 weeks (see Appendix B). The final evaluation report will be presented to internal stakeholders.

It was agreed that the approach to the project evaluation would be a simplified one, respecting the limited budget available. The evaluation would focus upon

1. The achievement of project outcomes: did the project achieve its targets with regard to clients supported and outcomes achieved
2. Were financial targets met?
3. Were changes to the project successfully implemented?
- 4.

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- x raise awareness of existing and new possibilities in ICT to every SME engaged by demonstrating the different models of ecommerce and how different sectors can use them
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University direct marketing (a)	40	
University event	10	
University social media	15	
Partner referral	25	SEMLEP Growth Hub (Velocity) and Wenta (Enterprise Age)

be realistically extrapolated as an average across all participants. If this simplistic methodology was applied to the total number for clients however, it would indicate that in excess of 10m of turnover increase could be attributed to the projects interventions. Further evidence of this would be highly

- o almost certainly increase the return of feedback to the summative assessment, giving enhanced intelligence to inform and improve future project, and other delivery, to SME clients
- x that the focus of the project, and marketing, were appropriate for the intended client group
- x The considerable resource the University employed to develop case studies for successful projects has been well used. The resultant case studies have proven to be successful internally with academic staff and students (illustrating opportunities for demonstrating the range and variety of support services and collaborative opportunities available.

In May 2018 a compliance visit by MHCLG identified issues relating to the quality, level of detail of defrayal evidence provided by the University. A subsequent meeting in June 2018 clarified the required improvements to compliance which were subsequently addressed, resulting in the reinstatement of claim payments.

The issue, whilst now resolved, did build in subsequent delays in claims submitted and payments made, which are now back on schedule. This also delayed the submission and (awaited) approval of the change request.

The University recognised the need for increased and improved internal resources applied to the project, as some continuity from previous projects had been lost due to staff changes. The current (experienced) Project Manager has successfully brought the project back on track.

As a summative assessment has to be completed in advance of completion of the project, final performance can only be extrapolated from existing data. The evidence of spend up to the Q1 claim (to be submitted) it can be assumed that project spend will be achieved in line with the profile by the end of August 2019. It should be noted that to date claims have not been paid up until Q1 2018, due to the extended period of waiting for the Agreement to be signed to reflect the revisions to the project in the PCR.

This section of the interim evaluation report offers an analysis of indicators and indicator profile up to the end of March 2019. This analysis is based on claims submitted to the University but not yet submitted.

The indicator targets for the project originally, final project targets following the February 2018 PCR and progress to date are shown below.

A large grey rectangular area representing a redacted table. The table is intended to show indicator targets and progress to date, but the content is obscured.

Further work seems necessary to capture outputs achieved in order to succeed on the target, though it is likely that most, if not all, grant recipients will be able to provide evidence of C29 outputs

The ICT Escalator project is on course to achieve its financial and output goals by the August 2019. Initial project management issues have been successfully addressed (reflected in the approved PCR). The University has put in place remedial actions to bring the project back on track despite the loss of the delivery partner, and has demonstrated systems and processes in place to successfully deliver the project.

For the Managing Authority/SEMLEP;

Delivery partners, whilst useful for widening the geographic (and possibly sectoral) spread of the project and adding specialist expertise, be valuable, but require significant management resource, and in this instance have been the main cause behind the Project Change Request. Other University partners are not necessarily as competent in running successful projects as UoB.

MHCLG response times will cause issues for cash flowing projects, and the ability to proceed as quickly as intended.

The strict timescales applied to projects do not allow budget to be spent on longitudinal follow up which, from the evidence would provide greatly increased success.



ERDF Summative Assessment Plan Form

ESIF-Form-1-012

Part 1 Project Summary

1.1 Applicant Details	
Applicant Organisation	University of Bedfordshire
Project Name	ICT Escalator ±31R15P00318
Programme Priority Axis	Priority Access 2: Enhancing Access To and Use and Quality of Information and Communications Technology
Name of ERDF Investment Priority	Technical Assistance
LEP Area (s) covered	South East Midlands
Total Project Value (£)	£2,718,269
Total ERDF sought (£)	£1,358,724
ESIF Category of Region	<input type="checkbox"/> Less Developed <input type="checkbox"/> More Developed





2.1 Statement of Objectives (max 500 words)

Please provide your objectives (i.e. a clear description of what you are hoping the project will achieve). Objectives should focus



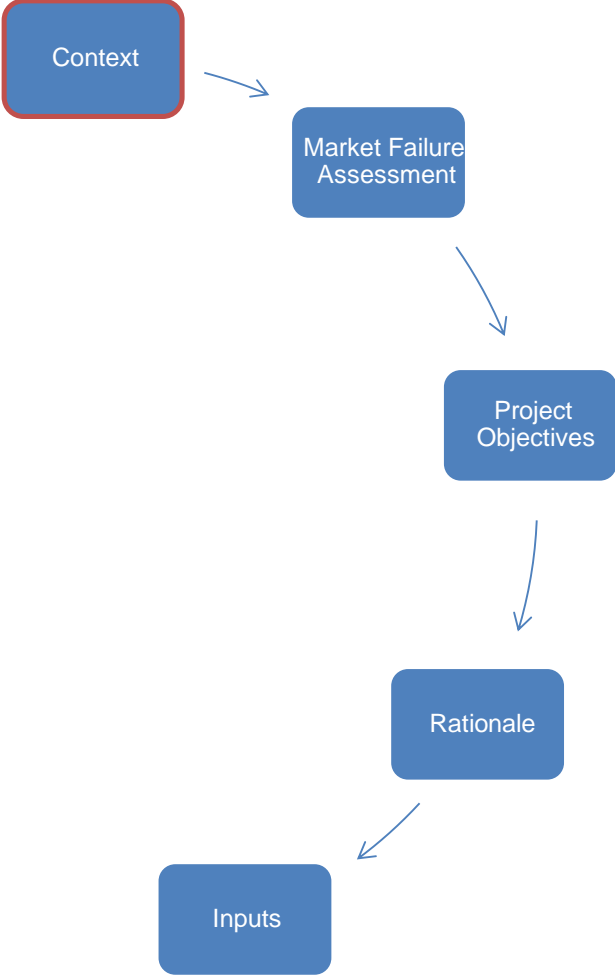
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2.3 Approach, Methods and Tasks (max 500 words)

Referring back to the objectives of the summative assessment, please outline the methods that will be used to deliver the insights. The consideration of methods (see Appendix C of the summative assessment appendices) needs to encompass the progress, process and impact focused elements of the summative assessment.

Primary and Secondary evidence will be considered to establish if project outcomes were met, and to what extent. This will be gathered through-

1. Each quarter, the project will be internally evaluated by the project board, comprising representatives of the 11 SEMLEP area councils, business network leaders and the project director.
2. Desk-based analysis of the project tracker and relevant documentary evidence of activities and



Logic Model Text Values

Values are stored in this table to facilitate later import into the IT system. Once you have recorded your value, use the link to see the text within the logic model

Name	Value	Return	Character Length
Context	Although British e-commerce offers such great opportunities for growth (10% last year), many companies in the UK have yet to take advantage. Just 33% of small to medium-sized companies have a digital presence and when we include voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs) this figure rises to 50% - and only 14% sell their products online, yet research suggests that if UK SMEs fully		

