



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities

Request for Proposals; Summative Evaluation of the PEBL Programme

Introduction and purpose of the evaluation

The Partnership for Enhanced and Blended Learning (PEBL) project started in September 2017 with funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID)'s Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR) programme and led by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU).

PEBL supports the educational development capacity of academics by providing training on pedagogy, quality assurance and technological platforms. PEBL also enhances regional collaboration and teaching quality by enabling the sharing of quality-assured, credit-bearing blended modules between universities across the region. By participating in PEBL, East African universities expand the range of courses offered to students enrolled in taught undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes.

In order to deliver the intended project outcome, PEBL works toward delivering five outputs, each of which are supported by a set of activities. Following are the outputs and their definitions:

Output 1: Improved network of partner and participant universities in East Africa for sharing degree courses through blended learning

Output 2: Online platform (OER Africa) and Individual Learning Management Systems used across partner and participant universities in East Africa.

Output 3: Increased capacity of partner and participant universities in East Africa to support pedagogical approaches for blended learning.

Output 4: Strengthened Quality Assurance systems for blended learning courses across partner and participant universities in East Africa.

Output 5: High quality, credit-bearing blended learning courses included within

The central purpose of the PEBL summative evaluation is to find out to what extent the intended outcome "*Increased flexibility in East African Higher Education systems to expand capacity to meet increasing graduate learning demands without eroding quality*" has been achieved. It is important to note that PEBL is a pilot project and as such lessons coming out from this evaluation will be relevant for similar projects and/or scaling-up in future. The PEBL project will end in July 2021, this evaluation will cover the period comprising September 2017 to April 2021. The primary recipient of the evaluation report will be the PEBL Partnership. Users of the evaluation findings will be ACU, PEBL partner and participant universities, SPHEIR Fund Management Team, DFID and other external stakeholders.

There will be seven main dimensions that the evaluation will look at, these are project effectiveness, changes on institutionalisation of policies and practices, changes to capacity building, quality of blended learning, sustainability, value-for-money and overall lessons learned as a result of the project. Evidence from these dimensions will be the basis for the analysis and the main findings.

Scope

The evaluation will focus on four countries-Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. There are two target groups in the PEBL project, these are partner universities (6 universities) and participant universities (18 universities). When the project was designed there was a clear difference between the two groups on the basis of their roles (development and users of courses' content, respectively), however, after the first year of implementation, partners universities became developers and users, and a group of 3-4 participant universities started designing courses, in addition to using them. This is a significant feature in the life of PEBL and evidence of the evolving nature of the project.

Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders and sources of primary data in this evaluation are:

- PEBL Management team
- Partner Universities
- Participant Universities
- Technical Partners
- Higher Education Commissions (HEC)
- Students in partner and participant universities
- Teachers, Lecturers and Course Developers in partner and participant universities

Specific objectives of the summative evaluation

1. To assess achievement of the project toward meeting expected results, based on TOC
2. To identify extent to which the project contributed to enhancing capacity of the network of universities to use blended learning courses
3. To validate the relevance, appropriateness and sustainability of the project interventions
4. To assess the effectiveness, strength and weakness of the implementation process in the 4 target countries and whether this project has been implemented in accordance with the expectations and met targeted outcomes fully
5. To evaluate the impact/change in partner and participant universities and how the project has contributed to these changes (development of policies, institutionalization of capacity building activities, etc.)
6. To validate achievement of intended results as described in the log frame
7. To draw lessons that inform to future programming and assess accountability status for further learning

Schedule, budget, logistics and deliverables

The evaluation process will be undertaken in line with the local context and will encourage active participation of people in selected universities. The inception phase is expected to start in October 2020 and end by December 2020. Feedback on the inception report will be provided by January 2021. Final evaluation is expected to start on February 2021 and end by May 2021.

The total budget available for the evaluation is £80,000 (bids exceeding this amount will not be considered). Following the selection process, details of the work plan are to be submitted by the consultant and approved in consultation with PEBL staff.

Evaluation deliverables

1. An inception report following project set-up.
2. A comprehensive final evaluation report that puts forward the evaluator's findings, recommendations and lessons learned that inform.

How to apply

If you are interested in carrying out this final evaluation, please send company profile indicating your previous experience in relation to evaluation work done for reputable entities and a tender including the following elements:

- Organisational profile (including detail of evaluations completed in the past) and CV's (max 2 pages) of proposed project team
- Technical proposal_(5 pages maximum) including proposed evaluation questions, methodology and delivery plan including Covid-19 contingency
- Full budget_presenting the costs for consultant allowance and any other direct costs (travel, etc.)
- A sample report from a previous project evaluation (DFID-funded projects preferred)

Evaluation criteria for applications

1. Experience evaluating DFID-funded projects
2. Strength of Evaluation Methodology
3. Value for Money
4. Experience evaluating education projects
5. Clear identification of evaluation questions
6. Adequate planning for risks associated with Covid-19

We will only accept applications from registered organisations.

The closing date for applications is on September 15th, 2020.

Applications should be sent to fiona.khandoker@acu.ac.uk