Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Evaluation Title:	Implementation Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme
Evaluation Number:	514
Evaluation Completion Date:	31 March 2016
Period of Evaluation:	2007/08-2012/13 Financial Years
Submitted:	24 June 2016 by Mike Leslie
Approved:	

Evaluation Details

Evaluation Title:	Implementation Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme
Evaluation Number:	514
Evaluation Completion Date:	31 March 2016
Created:	11 May 2016 by Mike Leslie
Submitted:	24 June 2016 by Mike Leslie
Approved:	
Period of Evaluation:	2007/08-2012/13 Financial Years
Known Cost:	R 3 222 650,00
Known Cost Type:	Referenced
Initiated By:	Department of Basic Education and Department of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation
Initiated By Internal:	Yes
Undertaken By:	JET Education Services
Undertaken By Internal:	No

Assessors

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Assessment Documents

Document Name:	Document Type:	Added By:	Added On:
Funza Lushaka Evaluation_Inception report_25 June 2014_final version.docx	An inception report	Mike Leslie	11 May 2016
DBE-FLBP - TOR for IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION of FLBP - FINAL 06-02-2014.pdf	Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation	Mike Leslie	11 May 2016
Final_FLBP Long report _18042016.docx	Evaluation report	Mike Leslie	11 May 2016
Final_FLBP Report Annexures 180416.docx	Any other relevant documentation pertaining to the evaluation process	Mike Leslie	11 May 2016
Final Version of FLBP Evaluation_1-5-25 report_14042016.docx	Evaluation report	Mike Leslie	11 May 2016
Funza Lushaka Evaluation_Technical Proposal_JET final.docx	The proposal selected to conduct the evaluation	Mike Leslie	11 May 2016
inception report presentation (June 30, 2014).pptx	Presentations of evaluation findings and recommendations	Mike Leslie	24 June 2016

Quality Assessment Summary

The evaluation scored 3.74 overall, indicating it to be an evaluation of adequate to good quality. The strength of the evaluation process started during the design and conceptualisation of the evaluation as there was strong stakeholder engagement and input into the drafting of the Terms of Reference. The service provider responded with a thorough proposal, and later an inception report, that was tailored to the well-structured and formulated Terms of Reference. The inception phase was also used to engage with the bursary database and to clarify the intended sampling approach. Overall, through a series of meetings, it was used to good effect and set the evaluation with a strong foundation from which to be implemented, scoring 4.16 for this phase.

The implementation phase of the evaluation scored 3.55 overall. Although good practice ethical protocols were observed, there was an absence of capacity building at this stage and some deviation in terms of the overall sampling approach from what was planned. This, combined with delays in feedback on interim product deliverables served to reduce the evaluation's score during this phase.

The reporting phase of the evaluation scored 3.82 overall on account of a thorough and well-structured evaluation report. The evaluation met a high standard in the way it set out its process, explained the methodological and analytical decisions taken, addressed potential areas of bias, and made appropriate use of annexures. The overall evaluation report was quite long (235 pages) but very concise in terms of its conclusions, and did not draw explicit reference back to theory of the change. This phase of the evaluation was judged to be of an adequate to good standard overall.

The follow-up, use and learning phase scored 3.33 and would have scored higher had it not been for the delays to the project completion, additional costs and the lack of any reflective engagement and discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation process overall. Otherwise, the evaluation was clearly of symbolic and conceptual value to DBE and a series of presentations on the results, beyond the scope of the evaluation work and prior to finalisation, were indicative of the value of the exercise and a concerted effort to disseminate the findings within the department.

In terms of the overarching considerations, capacity development scored lowest at 2.00 on account of the absence of a structured capacity building element that was incorporated into the evaluation despite the original intentions and the lack of concluding reflective process. The evaluation was considered to be of a good ethical standard overall (4.00), employed an effective and cooperative partnership approach (4.00) and was well-aligned in terms of policy and literature (4.00). The high point of the evaluation was in its quality control (4.02) which was considered to be of a good standard overall.
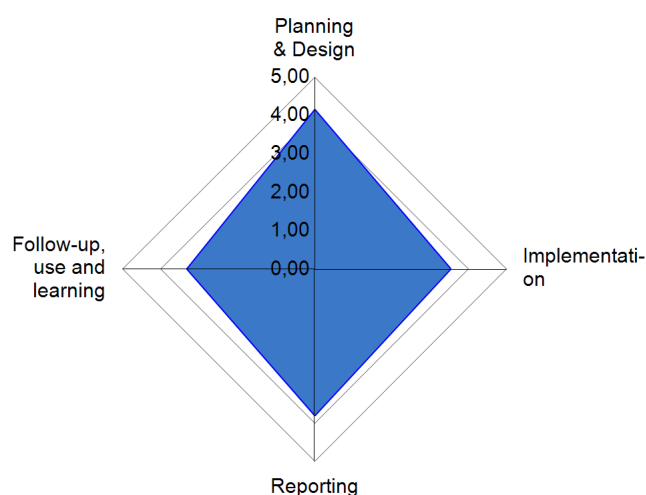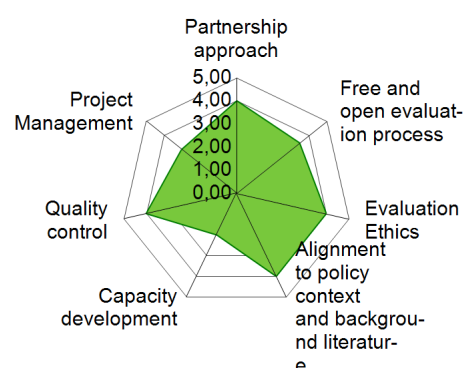3.34

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	4,16
Implementation	3,55
Reporting	3,82
Follow-up, use and learning	3,33
Total	3,74

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	4,00
Free and open evaluation process	3,50
Evaluation Ethics	4,00
Alignment to policy context and background literature	4,00
Capacity development	2,00
Quality control	4,02
Project Management	3,05
Total	3,74

Scores: Phases of Evaluation

Scores: Overarching Considerations

Phase of Evaluation	Area of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	Quality of the TOR	4,31
Planning & Design	Adequacy of resourcing	3,14
Planning & Design	Appropriateness of the evaluation design and methodology	4,64
Planning & Design	Project management (Planning phase)	4,00
Implementation	Evaluation ethics and independence	4,00
Implementation	Participation and M&E skills development	3,14
Implementation	Methodological integrity	3,79
Implementation	Project management (Implementation phase)	3,00
Reporting	Completeness of the evaluation report	4,00
Reporting	Accessibility of content	4,00
Reporting	Robustness of findings	4,00
Reporting	Strength of conclusions	3,00
Reporting	Suitability of recommendations	4,00
Reporting	Acknowledgement of ethical considerations	4,00
Follow-up, use and learning	Resource utilisation	2,00
Follow-up, use and learning	Evaluation use	3,67
Total	Total	3,74

Planning & Design

Quality of the TOR

Standard:	The evaluation was guided by a well-structured and complete TOR or a well-structured and complete internal evaluation proposal (e.g. Background, Purpose, Evaluation Questions, Design & Methodology, Deliverables & Timeframes, Resource requirements, Intended Audience & Utilisation, etc).
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation was guided by a well-structured and complete Terms of Reference (TOR) of a very good quality. It included all of the appropriate components of an evaluation TOR including the Background and Purpose of the evaluation which directly informed the Evaluation Questions. An Evaluation Design was set out in broad terms with a list of Activities aligned to Deliverables and Timeframes. It also included an indication of the intended users and their potential uses of the evaluation results. The TOR provided an indication of the requirements for the team leader, content experts and demonstration of the evaluation competencies required which informed the functional criteria for assessment of the proposal. Although the functional criteria were numerous and multi-pronged, the quality of the TOR was excellent overall.
Rating:	5: The evaluation was guided by a well-structured and complete TOR or internal evaluation proposal of exceptional quality, exhaustive and thorough in content
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	The approach and type of evaluation was suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal)
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation is identified as employing an utilisation-focused approach to "incorporate stakeholders' values" and enhance uptake and utilisation of the results. It is identified as an implementation evaluation but it also includes a clear design component which is clear in the overall statement of purpose (extended): "to evaluate the effectiveness of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme (FLBP). The results of the evaluation are to be assessed against its main intended outcomes. The evaluation must identify programme strengths and weaknesses, and to make recommendations to enhance the FLBP. This includes a) appropriateness of its current design, b) assessment of programme results to date, c) assessment of FLBP implementation, including its management and administrative systems, processes and procedures, d) assessment of FLBP sustainability, with an emphasis on programme sustainability, and e) make recommendations for programme improvement/enhancement, including those regarding the future measurable impact assessment of the FLBP." This approach and type was well-suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation which included programme performance over the period of 2007/08-2012/13 according to the TOR, if somewhat retrospective in scope.
Rating:	4: The approach and type of the evaluation was well-suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation TOR
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	The TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal) identified the intended users of the evaluation and their information needs
Comment and Analysis:	Section 2. "The focus of the evaluation" in the TOR sets out the intended users and stakeholders of the evaluation. This section presents a table identifying the following stakeholders: Department of Basic Education (DBE); Provincial Education Departments; Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET); Higher Education Institutions; National Financial Aid Scheme; and National Treasury. Within these stakeholders specific representatives or groupings are also identified, and an indication of their likely use of the evaluation results is provided. These are differentiated by stakeholder but fairly broad, without unpacking the information needs. The differentiation and specificity of intended users and their uses is considered to be of a good standard overall.
Rating:	4: The TOR identified the intended users of the evaluation and differentiated between their information needs well
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Key stakeholders were involved in the scoping of the TOR and choosing the purpose of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	A broad representation of stakeholders were involved in the scoping and planning of the TOR according to respondents. This included a prolonged conceptualisation phase and engagements that included inputs from HEIs and designated representatives. In this context, the range of stakeholders involved and said to have given meaningful input was of a good standard.
Rating:	4: A wider range of stakeholders (i.e. beyond government stakeholders) were meaningfully involved in the scoping of the TOR and choosing the purpose of the evaluation
Moderation:	Accepted

Adequacy of resourcing

Standard:	The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time and budget allocated
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation was inadequately resourced in terms of both the original budget allocation as well as the timing allocated to it. This was due in part to a budget ceiling which the service provider was requested to adjust their methodology to meet. Later, an extension of scope with a budget adjustment was necessary to complete the work after delays in feedback, particularly around the draft evaluation report.
Rating:	2: The evaluation was resourced with tight timeframes and budget which were challenging from the outset
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	The team conducting the evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets
Comment and Analysis:	The staffing and skills sets displayed by the evaluation team were very well-matched to the evaluation purpose and sector. JET has a long history of educational sector work and evaluation experience which was manifest in this project and this was recognised by respondents from both DPME and DBE. This included a substantial team with relevant post-graduate qualifications, evaluation experience and statistical expertise, amongst others.
Rating:	4: The evaluation was well resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets
Moderation:	Accepted

Appropriateness of the evaluation design and methodology

Standard:	There was explicit reference to the intervention logic or the theory of change of the evaluand in the planning of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The Theory of Change is explicitly mentioned in the TOR and addressed at length in the service providers proposal and Inception Report. This includes a draft visual of the Theory of Change based on the service provider's understanding of the brief. Furthermore, the documents set out the methodology applied in relation to the overall evaluation design and indicates how it will inform the unfolding methodology. This is an excellent example of the explicit use of the Theory of Change of the evaluand informing the planning of the evaluation.
Rating:	5: The intervention logic or theory of change of the evaluand was well integrated into the TOR and the Inception Report, including visual representations, and informed the design of the evaluation
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked
Comment and Analysis:	The planned methodology set out in the proposal and inception report was clearly aligned to each of the four overarching evaluation questions. In relation to each of these four questions, JET unpacked the 23 evaluation areas identified into the TOR as the framework for the evaluation. This translated into 55 evaluation sub-questions which JET aligned a set of evaluation methods to for each of the framing assessment areas.. These methods were further unpacked into the following list of evaluation activities: desktop review; programme theory of change; literature review; bursary benchmarking; stakeholder interviews; survey with bursary recipients; survey with bursar drop-outs; focus group with bursars; and quantitative analysis of secondary data. Overall, the planned methodology was creative, well-suited to the questions being asked and thoroughly aligned in relation to the overarching evaluation questions, assessment areas and sub-questions.
Rating:	5: The planned methodology was creative and very well suited to the questions being asked and should have generated the requisite data to answer the evaluation questions asked completely
Moderation:	Reconsider
Moderation Comment:	Rating is accepted, just proofread the section again.

Standard:	The sampling planned was appropriate and adequate given the focus and purpose of evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	Overall, the planned sampling was considered to be good given the focus and purpose of the evaluation. During the inception phase the service provider was able to review the beneficiary database and set out the total sampling frame of 23,303 recipients, which was then reduced to 19,932 once respondents without contact details and education phase allocations were removed. This sampling frame was then stratified based on the education phase which show a disproportionate allocation across strata. The power allocation rule was applied, a disproportionate allocation technique, to ensure that the as far as the overall sample size allows, that the sample sizes were large enough in all strata (education phases). Applying an anticipated 40% non-response rate, with the target of achieving a 95% confidence level and 4% confidence interval, a sample of 5,880 was planned in the Inception Report. The reality of executing the planned sample changed during implementation. However, as far as the sampling was planned, it was considered to be good in terms of the planned approach.
Rating:	4: The sampling planned was good given the focus, purpose and context of the evaluation
Moderation:	Accepted

Project management (Planning phase)

Standard:	The inception phase was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation would be implemented
Comment and Analysis:	Two project meetings were held with JET as part of the inception phase and this assisted in ensuring there was a common understanding as to how the evaluation would be approached and implemented by the service provider. Follow-up engagements and provision of relevant documentation allowed for the evaluation team to undertake an initial literature review, give an overview of relevant documentation and elaborate on the proposed approach set out in the ToR with the benefit for the bursary recipient database. The Inception Report was submitted on 25 June 2014 and presented at an Inception Meeting 30 June 2014. Overall, the inception phase was used to good effect.
Rating:	4: The inception phase was used to good effect to achieve a common agreement and understanding of how the evaluation would be implemented
Moderation:	Reconsider
Moderation Comment:	Rating is accepted, but change "for" to "of" at the end of the second sentence.

Implementation

Evaluation ethics and independence

Standard:	Where data was gathered in contexts where ethical sensitivity is high, informed consent, assurances of confidentiality and appropriate clearance were achieved; e.g. through an ethics review board, in evaluation involving minors, institutions where access usually requires ethical or bureacratic clearance
Comment and Analysis:	All data collection instruments included informed consent provisions and statements regarding confidentiality and informed consent and assurances of confidentiality were reportedly secured for all data collection for the project. All stakeholders indicated that ethical considerations were observed. Although it was deliberated at the conceptualisation stage, the steering committee chose not to proceed with a strict ethical review process as the application of standard protocols were considered sufficient and well-implemented by the evaluation team according to the programme and evaluation managers respectively.
Rating:	4: There was clear evidence that ethical protocols were observed for most data collection instances including: informed consent agreements; confidentiality; documenting and storing data notes, recordings or transcripts; Where data was gathered in contexts where ethical sensitivity is high, appropriate clearance was achieved through an ethics review board; e.g. in evaluation involving minors, institutions where access usually requires ethical or bureacratic clearance, and situations where assurances of confidentiality was offered to participants
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Where external, the evaluation team was able to work without significant interference and given access to existing data and information sources
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation team was able to work freely without any interference and was given access to all available data that it sought. The programme manager and evaluation manager indicated that they provided the appropriate support without interfering with the evaluation team and this was confirmed by the evaluation team. The only challenge experience was in the quality of data provided, but this was as a result of administrative challenges rather than anything arising from manipulation or interference on the part of evaluation stakeholders.
Rating:	4: The evaluation team was able to work freely without interference and was given access to all sought data and information sources
Moderation:	Accepted

Participation and M&E skills development

Standard:	Key stakeholders were involved in the evaluation through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement
Comment and Analysis:	Key stakeholders from across national and provincial government departments (e.g. DPME, DBE, DHET, etc), HEIs, NSFAS and others were involved in the evaluation from the conceptualisation stage and through the steering committee which participated at key stages including around the programme theory, validation workshop, etc. The only key stakeholders that were not directly represented were students themselves.
Rating:	4: Key stakeholders were regularly, actively involved in the evaluation and contributed through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement (e.g. a steering committee or reference group)
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Where appropriate, an element of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand and evaluators was incorporated into the evaluation process
Comment and Analysis:	An element of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand was planned for in the proposal and the evaluation team was open to this but in the end there was not a structured capacity building component employed in the implementation of the evaluation in part because the placement of interns from DPME did not occur. There is evidence that the approach and presentations given by the service provider had a capacity building slant and the service provider did include junior staff members and existing interns within their team which helped to build their experience.
Rating:	2: There was some evidence of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand or evaluators but this was either unstructured or incomplete
Moderation:	Accepted

Methodological integrity

Standard:	A literature review was developed which informed the analytical framework and findings of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	At the time of the Inception Report a preliminary literature review was undertaken providing an overview of the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) landscape. This looked at both demand and supply side issues with regards to teacher recruitment and training as well as the needs of the South African education system overall. A desktop review of local and international bursary schemes was also undertaken and used for comparative analysis. This original literature review was expanded upon and refined in the overall evaluation report and had a clear formative influence on the assessment framework.
Rating:	4: A good quality literature review was developed which was insightful in terms of the analytical framework and provided good context for the findings
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned and implemented adequately
Comment and Analysis:	The methods employed in the process of the evaluation entailed the following: • Desktop review of FLBP, DBE and related documents on the Programme design and implementation • Programme theory and logframe consultation, workshop and development • A literature review of the South African ITE context • A desktop-based review and benchmarking of comparative bursary programmes • Stakeholder interviews with key individuals as identified, covering all FLBP stakeholders • A telephonic survey with a representative sample of students who received bursaries during the period 2007 to 2012 • Focus groups with selected bursary recipients • Quantitative data analysis to find patterns in performance (HEMIS, NSFAS, FLBP, PERSAL and other data) All of the these methods were employed in relation to the overarching criteria and conceptual framework set out as intended. The only exception in terms of the methodology was the separate sampling of the bursar drop-outs, in part because the datasets were incomplete in this regard. Also, the sampling of bursary participants had to be expanded with oversamples of 1280 and 8000 in addition to the 3200 targeted. This led to 3,149 realised respondents, which was 51 shy of the stratified sample but close enough to deliver an appropriate degree of confidence in the representivity of the sample.
Rating:	4: The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned and implemented well (in terms of time, coverage, and content)
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	A pilot of basic data collection instrumentation occurred prior to undertaking data collection and it was used to inform the research process
Comment and Analysis:	The a short pilot study was undertaken to test and refine the research instruments. The qualitative instruments were tested on two individuals in similar roles and the survey was piloted with 15 individuals who were not part of the survey sample. The evaluation was of an adequate standard for the piloting of data collection instrumentation.
Rating:	3: A pilot of basic data collection instrumentation occurred prior to undertaking data collection and it was used to inform the research process
Moderation:	Reconsider
Moderation Comment:	The rating might be right, but it would be useful to indicate that you as reviewer are satisfied (through documentary or interview evidence) that pilot did in fact have an influence on the refinement of the instruments.

Correct the typo in first sentence. |

Standard:	Data was collected from key stakeholders (e.g. implementers, governance structures, indirectly affected stakeholders) as data sources
Comment and Analysis:	Data was collected from a range of key stakeholders in a systematic fashion consistent with the planned data sources. DBE officials, academic coordinators from HEIs, a sample of financial administrators, individuals from both recruitment and placement in provincial education departments, as well as stakeholders from NSFAS, SITA and Treasury were interviewed. In total, 73 interviews were conducted involving 112 individuals from across all key stakeholder groups. Nine student focus groups were also held with 47 students, in addition to the 3,149 students who
Rating:	4: Data was collected from the intended key stakeholder groupings in line with the envisioned range and type of stakeholders (approx. 80-89% of intended)
Moderation:	Reconsider
Moderation Comment:	The final sentence does not finish.

The rating seems appropriate although an evaluative statement on the representivity of the stakeholders (as opposed to only stressing the large quantity) would support this. |

Standard:	The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information
Comment and Analysis:	The methodology included engaging student bursary recipients (3,149) via a telephonic survey and through nine focus groups (47 students). It could have been improved with direct representation of student representatives on the steering committee and as key informants but overall serves as a good example of engaging beneficiaries meaningfully.
Rating:	4: The methodology included meaningfully engaging beneficiaries as a primary source of data and information (or if based on secondary data, includes data from beneficiaries and beneficaries consulted on emerging findings)
Moderation:	Accepted

Project management (Implementation phase)

Standard:	The steering committee, technical working group and service provider worked together adequately to facilitate achievement of the objectives of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The steering committee and service provider worked well together according to the respondents. Generally, each of the respective stakeholders was considered mutually responsive and accessible with regards to working together to facilitate achievement of the objectives of the evaluation. The only challenges experienced were linked to processing of feedback from the evaluation secretariat, addressed in the next standard.
Rating:	4: The steering committee, technical working group and service provider worked together in a flexible and constructive manner facilitating achievement of the objectives of the evaluation
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Support provided by the evaluation secretariat (e.g. the administrators responsible for the evaluation) facilitated achievement of the objectives of the evaluation (eg turnaround times, addressing problems, preparation for meetings etc)
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation secretariat did provide support necessary to facilitate the objectives of the evaluation but there were serious delays in terms of processing feedback that delayed the project. The most significant of which related to feedback on the draft evaluation report which included feedback from various preceding deliverables and culminated in an extension of scope to effect the requested changes, some of which the window for formative influence on the evaluation process had since past. As a result, the evaluation report was only finalised nearly a year after it was originally drafted and for this reason it receives an inadequate score against this standard.
Rating:	2: The support provided by the evaluation secretariat was inadequate with some challenges to the achievement of the objectives of the evaluation
Moderation:	Reconsider
Moderation Comment:	Rating is accepted. The second sentence needs some editing or breaking into two in order to make your meaning clearer.

Reporting

Completeness of the evaluation report

Standard:	The first draft evaluation report was of a sufficient quality to go to stakeholders and did not require major changes
Comment and Analysis:	The first draft of the evaluation report was of a sufficient quality to go to stakeholders and serve the purpose of engaging and refining recommendations. However, there were some significant changes between this draft and the final draft report that were issued, in part because of an accumulation of feedback from the preceding deliverables that was only provided at a later stage. Overall, the first draft could be considered to be an adequate quality to advance the process while noting that later changes were effected to the report as part of an extension of scope following delayed feedback.
Rating:	3: A first draft of the evaluation report was of a sufficient quality to go to stakeholders and did not require major changes prior to sharing
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	The final evaluation report is well-structured and complete in terms of the following: executive summary; context of the development evaluation; evaluation purpose, questions and scope; methodology; findings and analysis; conclusions and recommendations
Comment and Analysis:	The final evaluation report is excellent in terms of structure and completeness. It is a thorough evaluation report that includes: An executive summary; background and introduction; theory of change and logframe; literature review on ITE; evaluation approach and methodology; findings and analysis; conclusions and recommendations; and references. Further, a separate annexure report that includes the document review, interview schedule, report on the workshops, and evaluation matrix is included, in addition to the full data collection instruments. It is an excellent report in terms of structure and completeness.
Rating:	5: The final evaluation report structure is excellent, complete and makes exceptional use of the appendices to supplement the main report content structure
Moderation:	Accepted

Accessibility of content

Standard:	The final evaluation report is user-friendly, written in accessible language and adequate for publication (e.g. adequate layout and consistent formatting; complete sentences and no widespread grammatical or typographical errors; consistency of style and writing conventions; levels of formality; references complete and consistent with cited references in reference list and vice versa; etc.)
Comment and Analysis:	The final evaluation report is user-friendly, written in accessible language and generally adequate for publication. The report was generally free of errors with consistent referencing, although there were some minor formatting aesthetics that could have been slightly improved and some of the detail included in the final evaluation report could have potentially been included as an annexure. Overall, the evaluation report was of a good quality.
Rating:	4: The final report is well written, accessible to the common reader and ready for publication with only minor spelling, grammar or formatting mistakes
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Figures, tables and appropriate conventions are used in presentation of data (e.g. use of appropriate statistical language; reporting of p-values where appropriate; not reporting statistically insignificant findings as significant; clarifying disaggregation categories in constructing percentages; not using quantitative language in reporting qualitative data, etc.) and are readily discernible to a reader familiar with data presentation conventions
Comment and Analysis:	A variety of figures, tables and graphs are used and apply appropriate conventions throughout the evaluation report. The data presented is readily discernible to readers with varying degrees of understanding of the data presentation conventions and care is taken in the report to explain the complexities of the sampling process, sensitivity analysis across models and weighting. Overall, the evaluation report is of a good standard in this regard.
Rating:	4: Figures, tables and conventions are well used for a variety of types of data presentations and supporting explanations make them accessible to readers
Moderation:	Accepted

Robustness of findings

Standard:	Data analysis appears to have been executed to an adequate standard
Comment and Analysis:	The data analysis undertaken for the qualitative data, beneficiary survey and secondary datasets was thorough and executed to an exceptional standard, including the application of quality control standards. The methodology section provides considerable detail on the analysis undertaken for the respective methods and sets out clearly and concisely the challenges, limitations and how they were handled and mitigated. In the case of the survey, there is even an overview of the two data cleaning and statistical quality control exercises. Analysis appears to be robust across methods.
Rating:	5: Data analysis is thorough and well executed to an exceptional standard for all datasets
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Findings are supported by evidence which is sufficiently and appropriately analysed to support the argument, integrating sources of data
Comment and Analysis:	The findings are supported by evidence which is integrated from the varied and different sources of data obtained for the evaluation. Types of data are alternatively presented and triangulated insofar as possible based on the available information in relation to the overarching criteria and assessment areas for the evaluation. The evaluation generally steers clear of presenting data unrelated to the key finding.
Rating:	4: The evidence gathered is well analysed, integrated and supports the argument in key sections of the report, without presenting data which are not used in the argument
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	There is appropriate recognition and exploration of the possibility of alternative interpretations
Comment and Analysis:	There is a degree of recognition of alternative interpretations of the data but it is largely implicit and presented in terms of the different perspectives of key stakeholders rather than presenting potentially contrasting interpretations of the same data. The triangulation of data has gone some way to limiting the likelihood of competing explanations but the report could have done more to explicitly register alternative interpretations of data particularly with regards to bursary throughput at the respective universities, in addition to the respective programmes.
Rating:	3: There is appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	The report appears free of significant methodological and analytic flaws
Comment and Analysis:	The report appears free of significant methodological and analytic flaws. The detail provided in the methodology section and in particular the sensitivity analysis to detect potential bias went some way to systematically setting out the analysis to provide confidence it was devoid of significant methodological and analytic flaws.
Rating:	4: The report documents some of the methodological and analytical processes used to ensure that it is free of methodological and analytic flaws
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings are clearly articulated (e.g. limitations of scope or evaluation design, recommendation for additional research, data collection challenges, etc)
Comment and Analysis:	Limitations of the methodology, and particularly those arising from the incomplete data received, are acknowledged in the report, although in a distributed manner. Some of the limitations of the design of this evaluation and methodology are implicitly acknowledged through recommendations for future evaluation work and in particular in relation to the absence of key data, including from drop-outs of the programme.
Rating:	4: Limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings are clearly articulated and distinguish between different kinds of limitations
Moderation:	Accepted

Strength of conclusions

Standard:	Conclusions are derived from evidence
Comment and Analysis:	The conclusions represent a concise synthesis of the findings and analysis section which precedes it. Because these sections are structured as concise responses to the ovearching evaluation questions, they provide the first overarching synthesis of the respective criteria as aligned to the key evaluation questions. In this way they are the product of a thorough analysis which has utilised multiple sources of data to arrive at the conclusions and are therefore of a good standard.
Rating:	4: Conclusions are derived from evidence and well supported by multiple sources of data that has been well analysed
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Conclusions address the original evaluation purpose and questions
Comment and Analysis:	The conclusions are structured in relation to the overall evaluation questions and in that way are sure to address them. The original evaluation purpose is addressed implicitly rather than overtly and the conclusions could have benefited from a direct acknowledgement of the guiding purpose overall.
Rating:	3: Conclusions adequately address the original evaluation purpose and questions
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Conclusions are drawn with explicit reference to the intervention logic or theory of change
Comment and Analysis:	The conclusion affirms the current programme design and concludes that it is relevant and appropriate, and thereby implicitly affirms the intervention logic and theory of change. However, there is no explicit reference made to the programme theory in drawing the conclusions, although it has clearly informed the overall analysis. The conclusions would have benefited from an explicit reference to the programme theory, particularly as it relates to the threats to the intervention that the documented inefficiencies pose.
Rating:	2: Conclusions make implicit or indirect reference to the intervention logic or theory of change
Moderation:	Accepted

Suitability of recommendations

Standard:	Recommendations are made in consultation with relevant government officials, stakeholders and sectoral experts
Comment and Analysis:	Through the engagement with the evaluation steering committee and via the preliminary findings validation workshop, relevant government officials, stakeholders and sectoral experts were given the opportunity to engage with and shape the recommendations. This occurred and the evaluation produced 35 detailed recommendations as a result.
Rating:	4: Recommendations are made with relevant government officials, stakeholders including beneficiary representatives and sectoral experts beyond the project steering committee, making a significant contribution
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	Recommendations are useful- they are relevant, specific, feasible, affordable and acceptable
Comment and Analysis:	The recommendations are useful. They differentiate by users (although more detail could have been provided within the DBE) and they are sufficiently specific, feasible and acceptable. Whether they are all entirely affordable is another question, but the detail provided in each of the 35 recommendations formulated in relation to a key finding certainly provides a useful set of potential actions to follow from the evaluation's key findings.
Rating:	4: Recommendations are well-formulated for use- they begin to differentiate by user and are relevant to the current policy context, specifically targeted, feasible to implement, affordable and acceptable to key stakeholders
Moderation:	Accepted

Acknowledgement of ethical considerations

Standard:	The full report documents procedures intended to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent where necessary (in some cases this is not needed - e.g. evaluation synthesis - in which case N/A should be recorded)
Comment and Analysis:	The full report documents the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality and the annexures to the report provide informed consent statements and confidentiality explanations for each of the data collection instruments.
Rating:	4: The full report documents all procedures to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent and provides some examples in appendices
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	There are no risks to participants or institutions in disseminating the evaluation report on a public website
Comment and Analysis:	There are no discernible risks to participants or institutions in disseminating the original full evaluation report on a public website. Short of providing a notice that this has/will occur to all stakeholders after finalisation of the evaluation, this was executed to a good standard.
Rating:	4: There are no risks to participants or institutions in disseminating the original full evaluation report on a public website
Moderation:	Accepted

Follow-up, use and learning

Resource utilisation

Standard:	The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes and budget
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation was completed well outside of the planned timeframes and over budget, but with the approval and partially as a result of delayed feedback from DPME.
Rating:	2: The evaluation was completed outside of the planned timeframes and over budget, but with approval of the commissioning organisation
Moderation:	Accepted

Evaluation use

Standard:	Results of the evaluation have been presented to relevant stakeholders
Comment and Analysis:	The results of the evaluation were presented to relevant stakeholders both as part of the evaluation process and in addition to it, at the initiative of the DBE and with the support of the evaluation team. Additional presentations to DBE HeadCom and Senior Management reportedly occurred. Although the process would have potentially benefited from further presentations to additional stakeholders outside of government, this was outside the scope of the work and external stakeholders were accommodated via the steering committee.
Rating:	4: Results of the evaluation have been presented to all relevant stakeholders, inside and outside of government
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	A reflective process has been undertaken by the steering committee with the service provider (if no steering committee exists then by the evaluation management team or the involved department officials) to reflect on what could be done to strengthen future evaluations
Comment and Analysis:	The steering committee and service provider did not meet to reflect on the evaluation process and what could be strengthened in the future. However, the evaluation report itself makes recommendations for future evaluation work which in itself reflects on some of the limitations and challenges encountered in this process. A conscious reflection and discussion at the conclusion of the evaluation would have benefited the evaluation process as it shifts to utilisation and learning.
Rating:	2: The steering committee undertook a meeting in which some form of reflection occurred, but not in a clear, reflective process
Moderation:	Reconsider
Moderation Comment:	From your description, it seems that the service provider integrated reflections into the recommendations, but that no shared reflection process was undertaken involving at least some of the commissioners of the evaluation. This suggests that a 1 would be a more appropriate rating as the spirit of this standard was not met. It is nevertheless appropriate to express appreciation for the way the recommendations serve to somewhat fill the gap.

Standard:	The evaluation study is seen by interviewed stakeholders as having added significant symbolic value to the policy or programme (e.g. raised its profile)
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation was the first of its kind for ITE and the bursary programme and in that regard it certainly raised the profile of the project amongst DBE stakeholders. It introduced important programme design concepts and helped to clarify the previously implicit theory of change. The evaluation can therefore be said to have been of symbolic value to this particular initiative and reportedly enhanced the likelihood of the uptake and application of recommendations.
Rating:	4: The evaluation study is seen by interviewed stakeholders as being of substantial symbolic value to the policy or programme and has noticeably raised its profile amongst stakeholders
Moderation:	Accepted

Standard:	The evaluation study is of conceptual value in understanding what has happened and possibly in shaping future policy and practice
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation report was certainly of good conceptual value in setting out and clarifying the programme theory behind this bursary intervention and it has gone some way provide the different stakeholders with a common understanding. The engagement by DBE HeadCom and Senior Management, and the DHET staff, as well as HEIs bodes well for it to shape further policy and practice.
Rating:	4: The evaluation study is of conceptual value in understanding what has happened and some interviewed stakeholders indicated the likelihood of it constructively shaping policy and practice
Moderation:	Accepted

References

JET Education Services. 2014. Presentation: Inception Report on the Implementation Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. 30 June 2014.

DPME and DBE. 2014. Terms of Reference for the Implementation Evaluation of teh Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. Unpublished. 6 Februar 2014.

JET Education Services. 2016. Final Report: Implementation Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. 31 March 2016.

JET Education Services. 2016. 1-5-25 Summary Report: Implementation Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. 31 March 2016

JET Education Services. 2014. Inception Report: Implementation Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. 25 June 2014.

JET Education Services. 2016. Evaluation Report Annexures: Implementation Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. 31 March 2016.

JET Education Services. 2014. Proposal to the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency to conduct an Implementation Evaluation of the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. 7 March 2014.

List of Interviewees

Antonio Hercules, Evaluation Manager, DPME. Telephonic interview 11 May 2016.

Gerrit Coetzee, Director: Initial Teacher Education, DBE. Telephonic interview 26 May 2016.

Eleanor Hazell, Evaluator, JET Education Services. Telephonic interview 18 May 2016.