

Completed reports should be returned by **31 December 2010** to ecif@hefce.ac.uk
We suggest that the completed report should run to no more than 10 pages in length.
If your project supported placement / internship activity **only**, please just answer questions two to five.

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1. Details of ECIF supported activities

- Report briefly on the **activities** and **outputs achieved** during the ECIF project – this should cross refer to the proposed activities detailed in the original bid and provide information on the number and type of beneficiaries (i.e. individuals who were unemployed or at risk of redundancy, recent graduates and businesses such as SME, third sector organisations etc) supported. What were the impact and outcomes?

The West Yorkshire Lifelong learning Network (WYLLN) ECIF Project has met and exceeded the objectives as set out in the original proposal.

WYLLN's ECIF project proposed to respond to the recession by increasing the skills and employability of individuals; providing support for those suffering from, or at risk of suffering from the impact of the economic downturn in West Yorkshire. WYLLN's ECIF project offered access to Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG and enhanced IAG) and to relevant and innovative accredited and non-accredited training/development programmes. The project was divided into three Elements:

1. Information, Advice and Guidance
2. Enhanced Information, Advice and Guidance including Access to resources, Psychometric Testing and Job Search
3. Learning – accredited and non-accredited at level 4 and above
 - a. Long Courses (Full Programme 120 credit courses)
 - b. Medium Courses (up to 90 credit courses)
 - c. Short Courses (up to 30 credit courses)

The WYLLN ECIF project offered a wide range of supported learning opportunities aimed at providing a rapid and flexible response to individual and business need. A unique delivery partnership of 6 Colleges and 5 Universities ensured that provision was available right across the sub-region, with delivery options ranging from campus based, residential and facilitated in-house to off-site.

The Delivery Partnership of 6 Colleges and 5 Universities were supported by the Central WYLLN Team with a dedicated Project Manager and Administrator. Access to WYLLN's established administrative systems, finance, marketing and event organisation expertise was made available and provided branding, infrastructure and a marketing strategy in line with the family of WYLLN services. The WYLLN Management Information System (MIS) – IAGNOW was extended to include a full MIS for ECIF with a range of reports to provide a comprehensive monitoring tool and up to date management information. With the support and agreement of the ECIF

Steering Group, IAGNOW has been used as the primary source of ECIF data since March 30th 2010.

Partners submitted bids for delivery of one, two or all three of the Elements and were contracted to deliver them within a clearly profiled time period. It was agreed by the Steering Group that the Project Manager would have the authority to re-profile the project in real time to ensure that the targets were achieved. The willingness of the partners to be flexible in their approach and their ability to deliver programmes quickly and responsively is the key factor in the successful outcomes achieved.

- [Project evolve and what other outputs have been achieved?](#)

The WYLLN ECIF project was contracted to deliver to 1,000 beneficiaries across the three elements, with a 65% positive outcome into employment, further learning or safeguarding of employment. Targets have been met or exceeded, with delivery to an additional 251 learners across the region.

Table 1 below details the number of learners that have benefitted from each element of the provision compared to the target required.

Table 1. Actual against Targets

	Element 1 learners	Element 2 learners	Element 3 Short Course Learners	Element 3 Medium Course Learners	Element 3 Long Course Learners	Element 3 Total Learners	Total number of Individual learners
Full year plan target	504	564	542	312	65	820	
HEFCE Target	500	500	500	213	65	778	1000
Actuals	1158	858	625	283	65	973	1251

Beneficiaries were able to access all three elements of the provision if required, with over 90% accessing one to one advice and guidance with an Adviser and a third supported through psychometric testing to aid decision making.

The ECIF Project has demonstrated that multiple partners can work well together under the banner of WYLLN to deliver a range of interventions quickly and flexibly. The project has provided a valuable insight into joint working and partners agree that the relationships brokered between institutions should be nurtured and built upon.

- Reference any ongoing activity beyond December (as per our letter dated 2 June 2010).

There is no ongoing ECIF activity beyond December 2010.

- If you have undertaken a project evaluation or any measures of impact on individuals/businesses supported by ECIF, please provide key information or attach relevant documents to this report in an annex.

All partners have worked hard to ensure the learners were tracked and have succeeded in providing a very positive outcome of 76% (953) of the 1,251 beneficiaries identified into a known destination. The three categories of positive ECIF destination account for 824 beneficiaries which represents 66% of the 1,251 total, meeting the target set.

Table 2 and 3 below compares the entry status with the learner's destination at the end of the course of IAG intervention.

Table 2 Beneficiary Entry Status

Entry Status	Unemployed	At Risk of Redundancy	Employed in High Risk Industry	Under Notice
	339	258	601	53

Table 3 Destination Status

Destination Status	Gained Employment	Safeguarded	Progressed to Further Learning	Unemployed	Unknown
	109	447	268	129	298

The number of beneficiaries recorded unemployed has reduced by 210 (62%), with 109 of the learners gaining employment. Although this cannot absolutely be attributed to the ECIF project, it is clear that the project has had an impact. The positive progression from the project demonstrates the effectiveness of timely IAG and appropriate learning provision.

The 268 progressing to further learning represents 21% of the total number of learners, and 27% of those who completed element 3 (979), demonstrating a significant proportion sustaining their commitment to higher level learning.

2. Financial information

Provide a short statement summarising:

- The final position against the budget as in your original bid to HEFCE.

The table below details the project budget by budget heading from the original bid, the actual expenditure recorded against those budget headings and a variance analysis:

Budget Heading	Original Budget as per Bid £	Actual Expenditure Recorded £	Variance (Over) / Under Spend £
Finance Administration	45,252	24,467	20,785
Marketing	20,000	4,990	15,010
Element 1: Next Step Enhanced Provision	27,358	62,660	(35,302)
Element 2: Individualised Career Package	206,181	220,620	(14,439)
Element 3			
• Short Ed & Training : 0-30 Credits	407,633	572,288	(164,655)
• Medium Programme : <120 Credits	868,257	797,308	70,949
• Long Programme : 120 Credits	423,938	390,000	33,938
Total	1,998,619	2,072,333	(73,714)
Funding			
HEFCE ECIF grant	999,309	999,309	0
Matched funding	999,309	1,058,915	(59,606)
Non-fundable learning	0	14,109	(14,109)

The project has over spent by **£73,714** against the combined grant of **£1,998,619** shown in the original budget profile. The variance analysis shows the areas of over and under spend. The over spend has occurred because partner institutions have delivered to a greater number of learners than they were contracted to through over recruitment of learners. Payments to partners were based on a 40% enrollment, 40% completion and a 20% 2 month follow up structure. Learner retention on the project was difficult to predict because of the type of learner the project tried to engage. Therefore, institutions over recruited to maximize their 40% completion payments and 20% follow up payments.

The majority of the over spend, **£59,606** can be accounted for where partners provided an excess of match funding. Match funding was accounted for by partner institutions through the identification of learners that were eligible as ECIF beneficiaries but had secured funding from other sources. In valuing courses under element 3 WYLLN determined a £50 per credit tariff rate for learners funded using the HEFCE ECIF grant. So for a 60 credit programme for example, WYLLN would pay an institution £3,000 for the delivery to that ECIF beneficiary. A learner qualifying as an ECIF beneficiary but also eligible for Train 2 Gain funding may have earned the partner institution £4,000 through Train 2 Gain for the same 60 credit delivery. An excess of match of £1,000 is delivered against this Train 2 Gain learner.

The **£14,109** shown in the table above as Non-fundable learning represents the over recruitment of ECIF beneficiaries previously mentioned. Partner institutions were awarded contracts with fixed beneficiary targets and fixed funding amounts subject to the payment structure of 40% on enrollment, 40% on completion and a 20% 2 month follow up payment. To ensure full delivery of those contracts and maximise ECIF funding available partner institutions recruited an excess of learners.

- The actual position against matched funding, to include the sources of matched funding and the amount of matched funding **not** achieved, if applicable.

The total match required for this ECIF project was **£999,309**. The total match recorded for this project is **£1,058,915**. The table below shows the sources of that match funding.

Source of Match Funding	Total Amount
Yorkshire Forward	£350,000
Individual Contribution	£115,525
Employer Contribution	£124,107
Train 2 Gain Enhancement Fund	£32,200
HEFCE Core Grant	£189,022
Other inc LSE Non-prescribed HE	£248,061
Total	£1,058,915

- Provide actual figures for underspend, including underspend that is **not** committed for ongoing activity (as per our letter dated 2 June 2010)

Non-applicable

3. Case study examples

Provide three or four successful and interesting case study examples of activity implemented with ECIF support that we may cite in public. One paragraph on each is sufficient, detailing the activity and how it benefited the individual and/or business.

The project has generated a number of case studies from participants on all three elements. The purpose of the case study is to provide information on the different types of activity individuals accessed through ECIF support. Showing how the IAG support and/or courses taken have had a positive impact.

The following are examples of each.

Element 3 Case Study

- Client S was employed as a skilled mechanic in a local garage but his job was under threat due to the economic recession. He was referred through the Colleges information and guidance services and was supported to complete an introduction to teaching and learning qualification enabling S to transfer to a new career area if he was made redundant from his existing position.

Outcome - The ECIF intervention has given client S the skills and training to take up a post in teaching and learning in the future giving him more flexible employment options. At present S has been able to retain his position in the motor vehicle sector.

Element 1/2 Case Studies

- Client C self referred after picking up the ECIF leaflet in a local school. He had suffered from ill health since being made redundant from his construction related job. Client C accessed the full range of ECIF IAG and support services: IAG, CV preparation, job search, application and letter writing skills, telephone skills, mock interviews, confidence building and motivational skills. As a result of the support received, he decided that he no longer wanted to work in construction, and made a clear decision to change focus. Related administration jobs were his chosen career path. A range of different jobs and opportunities were investigated, with client C applying for a number of jobs. Client C found employment in a non-construction related field and is enjoying it very much. The customer has been back since, to say that he is glad that he was able to access the service; it made him think about what he really wanted to do.

Outcome: Career change – found part time none construction related work and lifestyle change

- Mr. C was made redundant from his senior management job last December. He was referred to the ECIF support team at Leeds College of Building (LCB) through Job Centre Plus who recognized that LCB was best placed to support someone with his skills and experience. The team at LCB provided an initial IAG session, followed by several enhanced sessions during which his CV was rewritten, job search activities undertaken and an interview for a Facilities Management job at Leeds United football ground was brokered. His application was successful and he was employed and promoted within 6 months. The facilities management job which he had initially filled was passed back to the team at LCB who successfully filled it again with another ECIF applicant. In Mr. C's case, the timeframe from referral to interview was about 15 days.

Employer Involvement Case Studies

- Through Yorkshire Forward Task Forces, working with businesses important to the Yorkshire and Humber economy; Corus, a key steel company, facing major changes to their plants in the region was put in touch with the WYLLN. ECIF partners were approached to provide careers packages to middle and senior managers facing redundancy. The uniqueness of this element of our ECIF provision is the delivery of psychometric testing not available from the

Executive Packages offered through Job Centre Plus. The careers services of Bradford, Huddersfield and Leeds Universities worked collectively to provide a package of guidance interviews, psychometric testing and workshops for Corus employees, some of whom have registered onto new learning and development programmes.

- Provident Financial is a Bradford-based leading UK supplier of personal credit products, serving over two million customers. Whilst committed proud of its reputation for staff development, the company was forced to announce 180 redundancies in early 2010. With many long service employees this was a particularly difficult period for both employers and staff. ECIF enabled the University of Bradford to work with Provident, in collaboration with colleagues from the FE and IAG sectors, to offer a comprehensive package of redundancy advice, support and access to new opportunities. This collaborative approach meant that employees at all levels and in all roles were able to benefit. ECIF element 1 service was delivered on site, enabling staff and their supervisors to be involved. Element 2 appointments were arranged on the spot, ensuring a positive and action-oriented approach. Provident Financial were both impressed and relieved that the University were able to offer such a swift turnaround which inspired and motivated staff at a very difficult time.

Outcomes: Firstly 25 staff benefitted from a higher level skills intervention which included careers advice, academic guidance and job search strategies. Secondly the relationship building and HE profile raising with a prominent local employer. The credibility gained through ECIF will enable the University of Bradford, on behalf of WYLLN partners, to build this employer relationship in readiness for the economic upturn.

4. Further information

Provide information on:

- [Aspects of activities that were particularly challenging to implement.](#)

In the bid submitted to HEFCE it was stated that many of the resources were already in place and that delivery would commence within one month of the funding being guaranteed. There were a number of connected issues that impacted on project initiation.

Match Funding Challenges

The initial feedback from HEFCE that the WYLLN proposal was unsuccessful was reported to partners and provisional plans for initiating the project abandoned. The partnership was disbanded and Yorkshire Forward were informed that the match funding they had committed was not required. The partnership subsequently received information that an error had been made and that the proposal had been successful. At this point the plans were re-instated; however, there were funding implications that had an impact on timescales for delivery.

The delay in receiving approval meant the funds committed by Yorkshire Forward to provide the match had been fully utilized elsewhere. Additional funding was identified to be drawn down, which would not be available until August 2009. WYLLN re-negotiated the match funding position with Yorkshire Forward, who was able to provide 19% of the match required – this match could support only Element 3 delivery.

The remaining 31% of match was then required from the Partner institutions in the form of employer contributions, fees, non-prescribed and HEFCE core grant. To complicate the match funding position further the Enhancement Fund ring-fenced an “ECIF” fund and WYLLN encouraged partners to bid for this, creating another layer of paperwork, monitoring and reporting. The confusing match landscape led to a number of partners misunderstanding what was actually required from them. The Project Team simplified the process and worked very closely with the Partners to identify and then capture the match.

The consequence of these connected issues was that partner institutions felt there was a high risk to claw back if the matched funding could not be guaranteed and therefore institutions were not willing to make a major commitment to delivering the project outcomes. Initial communications with HEFCE confirmed that there could be no immunity from claw back. However following attendance of HEFCE and Yorkshire Forward at a WYLLN Board meeting, where these issues were discussed, HEFCE came back confirming a level of immunity against claw back. This information was received in July, by which time some activity had commenced, but considerably behind the original timescales.

Full Course Delivery Challenges

A lot of work was carried out to initiate the project and to ensure that the systems in place were sufficient to manage the project and provide the returns necessary. In the bid it was stated that activity would reach a maximum during the 2009/10 academic year and this statement remained true

The only major concern was the target for full year courses (120 credit courses), where the time delays had impacted on recruitment, which was to be completed by early October 2009 at the latest. All 65 learners were recruited by the October deadline and the remaining outputs were profiled for delivery over the course of the remaining 11 months.

Management Information

The delivery model adopted by WYLLN's ECIF was one of credits and monetary values allocated per credit. Where delivery was behind profile, the Project Manager reallocated numbers for Element 1 and 2 and credits for Element 3 in order to ensure that the targets were met. This meant that management information had to be current and immediately available and that partners had to be responsible for ensuring the veracity of the data. Key to achieving this was the need for partners to accept ownership of their targets and to commit to updating the relevant systems and records. The Project Management Team worked very closely with delivery partners'

operational staff to motivate the partnership and develop relationships based on mutual trust and common purpose, which proved to be very successful.

- Unintended consequences from the ECIF support, both positive and negative.

A key outcome of the ECIF Project is the evidence it has provided that multiple partners can work well together in a flexible and responsive manner. Building on the success of the ECIF project WYLLN is now coordinating and promoting a new business focused offer on behalf of the ECIF partners. The business offer, described as the "Learning List" is a mix of CPD and short courses aimed at the regional business community. The Learning List has been issued as a print document and a pdf on the WYLLN website detailing courses both prescribed and bespoke and offering them at full cost.

WYLLN is brokering the Learning List and has marketing it through the WYLLN website, the Higher Level Skills Coordinators, Business Link Advisors, the WYLLN Sector Officers, Leeds City Region, and the Chambers of Commerce etc. The registration mechanism is managed through the WYLLN website and the WYLLN team initiate and monitor the referral process. The Learning List in the first instance has been issued for courses which will run between September and December 2010. An employer engagement and delivery group has been convened and had its first meeting. Partners were very positive with regard to progressing the Learning List and committed to supporting the development of employer higher level CPD/workforce development needs in order to support business growth in the region. A second edition of the Learning List will be issued in the first quarter of 2011 following a review. The longer term viability of the Learning List will be reviewed during summer of 2011.

- Any activity initiated through ECIF that may be developed in the future (such as new relationships with businesses that may lead to further work).

Through the delivery of short courses developed specifically through ECIF Bradford College has embarked on a new relationship with Milner Build, providing more structured programmes of learning for the company.

- Any wider issues for HEFCE to consider should this or similar initiatives be repeated in future years, bearing in mind that ECIF was designed to facilitate the swift development of course and support packages.
- Is the institution in receipt of HEFCE employer engagement capacity development funding?

The University and WYLLN are not in receipt of this funding.

- Is the institution delivering HEFCE co-funded student numbers?

Yes