



**VAL.U.E. C.H.A.IN. Competitiveness**  
VALidating & Upskilling Employees  
Competences Hence Accruing INdustry  
competitiveness  
EaSI Progress – VS/2020/0158



**VAL.U.E. C.H.A.IN. Competitiveness**

# **VALidating & Upskilling Employees Competences Hence Accruing INdustry competitiveness**

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## **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**

**(WP 7 – D 7.3)**



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## General Introduction

The present document describes the whole of the monitoring and evaluation actions designed for the project Value Chain Competitiveness to ensure the aims and outcomes achievement, consistently with the work programme approved and to support, if the case, the re-planning of the implementing process, with respect to *in itinere* decisions, occurrences, obligations and requirements.

Further, it is to be highlighted that the monitoring process is meant to supply the evaluation of interim and final project results by the side of both the partnership members and the European Commission, providing the quantitative and qualitative data and information necessary for the interim and final assessment procedure and for the decision-making process.

## 2. Value Chain Competitiveness project overview

### 2.1 The reason why

VAL.U.E. C.H.A.IN. Competitiveness foresees a training action focused on the development of basic skills, with a specific but not exclusive attention to the digital ones. Training interventions will be delivered with a modular and flexible approach, customizing the offer according to the specific upskilling / reskilling needs of each beneficiary. The beneficiaries of the project are low-skilled workers with a low level of basic digital skills.

During the first phase of the project will be provided skills assessment tools, subsequently will be selected the enterprises and workers beneficiaries (mainly: over 50, manufacturing and services sector, low skilled and low qualified with a lack of basic digital skills). The experimental phase of the project consists in training provision in order to improve basic digital skills.

### 2.2 Value Chain Goal and specific objectives

VAL.U.E. C.H.A.IN. Competitiveness project foresees:

- the upskilling and reskilling of workers – in particular those over 50 years of age but more generally of adult workers with a weak digital skill/qualification level – who are facing digital transformation paths in their organizational contexts;



- the design and delivery of personalized training paths aimed at increasing their knowledge and the acquisition of basic and transversal digital skills;
- the delivery of training pathways built upon the results of skills assessment processes and on the identification of individual objectives: skills assessment procedures and tools are themselves innovative outputs of the project;
- the development of processes and devices of validation and recognition of the acquired skills, in close cooperation with the Regions and Social Partners and in full compliance with the current legislation: this allows to assign a value of use and exchange to the certifications and to match the internal and external labour market needs. In addition, both the assessment processes and the content of the training supply will be based on DG Comp 2.1 standards to ensure established and shared references in the validation and recognition of skills;
- full consideration of the outcome of the institutional and scientific debate on the subject in the EU, through the continuous exchange and synergy with existing networks, such as those of the National Co-ordinators of the European Adult Learning Agenda, the Experts who are part of the WG ET2020 A.L., the other projects funded by the current Call and the two previous ones, the Ambassadors of the EPALE Platform and major international organizations such as EAEA and EBSN;
- the raising of greater awareness and knowledge about the long-term benefits for the system of companies and their main stakeholders (representative associations, trade unions, inter-professional funds, public administrations) when investing on upskilling and reskilling adult workers and in particular those aged over 50.

## **2.3 The characteristics of the consortium**

VAL.U.E. C.H.A.IN. competitiveness è un progetto promosso da un consorzio composto da INAPP, ANPAL, cinque Regioni (Lombardia, Lazio, Toscana, Sardegna e Provincia Autonoma di Trento-Agenzia del Lavoro), cinque Agenzie formative e il CE.RE.Q. (FR).

Il partenariato comprende, in qualità di Istituzioni e organizzazioni associate: il Ministero del lavoro e delle politiche sociali, l'OBR Fondimpresa Lombardia, divisione territoriale di Fondimpresa, For.te, il Fondo interprofessionale congiunto delle imprese e delle imprese del settore dei servizi e Assolombarda, la più grande associazione dell'intero sistema Confindustria.

## **2.4 Structure of the Workprogramme approved**

**The Work Breakdown Structure foresees 9 WPs:**



<p>WP1: Skills identification, validation and recognition procedures and tools Duration from M1 to M6.</p> <p>Activities: to process and share with the Regions the operational model (processes, tools, human resources involved) for identifying basic skills arising from experiences acquired in NFIL contexts</p>
<p>WP2: Learning outcomes definition for basic skills Duration from M2 to M6.</p> <p>Activities: definition of LO (digital skills) and related didactical Units from DIGICOMP 2.1 European Framework</p>
<p>WP3: Involvement and selection of enterprises and workers Duration from M3 to M9.</p> <p>Activities: selection of potential enterprises to involve, co-operation agreement signature, Training needs analysis, first selection of workers</p>
<p>WP4: Definition of model and format for Skills Transparency Certificate from M5 to M9. ANPAL</p> <p>Activities: composition of a skills transparency certificate giving evidence of prior learning, with particular reference to digital skills, and to the expected learning outcomes</p>
<p>WP5: Deployment of personalized upskilling/reskilling pathways for workers Duration from M9 to M20.</p> <p>Activities: skills assessment of selected workers; recognition/validation of prior learning; definition of personalized training paths according to individual skills gap and newly standardized skills requirements; definition (where possible) of homogeneous training class-groups; upskilling/reskilling pathways delivery</p>
<p>WP6: Processes of recognition/certification of acquired skills by trained workers</p> <p>Duration from M21 to M23. Activities: assessment testing to validate the LO of trained workers; delivery of the skills transparency certificate</p>
<p>WP7: Programme management and governance Duration from M1 to M24.</p> <p>Activities: administrative MGT, development of guidelines for project mgt and internal communication tools, internal evaluation, risk mgt, drafting progress and final Reports</p>
<p>WP8: Dissemination of project outputs, outcomes and results. Duration: from M1 to M24.</p> <p>Activities: Organisation of dissemination activities, development of info materials and tools (such as final report, guidance notes, communication material, website/portal)</p>
<p>WP9: Upskilling/reskilling integrated pathways for workers on digital basic skills: a benchmark exercise with France deployment experiences Duration: from M3 to M18.</p> <p>Activities: in-depth analysis of the data from the DEFIS national survey, with particular reference to the professional development of those workers having benefited by CVET pathways on basic</p>



digital skills

### **3. Structure and principles of Value Chain Competitiveness Monitoring plan**

Value Chain monitoring action goals are:

- ⇒ to ensure the conformity and regularity of project activities;
- ⇒ to verify the achievement of interim and final goals and outcomes expected;
- ⇒ to highlight the possible divergences between what has been planned and what has been realized;
- ⇒ to support the identification and adoption of solutions which can properly guarantee the achievement of fixed project objectives.

The presentation of the Value Chain Monitoring Plan has been articulated in the following areas and topics:

- ⇒ Methodological framework of the E.QU.A.L. monitoring action
- ⇒ Monitoring tools
- ⇒ Value Chain Monitoring program
- ⇒

#### **3.1. Methodological framework of the Value Chain monitoring action**

The methodology chosen refers, first of all, to the EaSI Programme features, to be considered as a general background (particularly: partnership, innovation, sustainability, policy relevance). Within this framework, the project must be necessarily approached as a “whole” and, by consequence, the monitoring action must control and follow the entire project life-cycle, by taking into account the connections between the different components which are activated during its implementation.

Up to the purpose, the partnership decided to focus on the topic of quality and the possible application of quality issues to training/transfer processes, since an expected result can be achieved with greater effectiveness if the related resources and activities are managed as a process.

As a matter of fact, a project can be considered as a place where processes are activated, where “processes” mean the whole of related or interacting activities which turn incoming elements in outgoing elements.

Therefore, a project can be managed and controlled according to a Quality Management System (QMS – see figure 2 below), that is, it can be thought as a place where quality is developed and so it produces phenomena which can be subject to quality control.

The QMS model is based on four main pillars:

1. Management responsibility;
2. Resource management;
3. Product realisation;
4. Measurement, analysis and improvement.

By consequence, the model proposed in the following pages, implies the realisation of several actions (to which are related specific expected outcomes) as for example:

- ⇒ scheduled monitoring surveys on specific themes or components of the Project, by using questionnaires sent via e-mail;
- ⇒ iterative activities of systematisation of data and information concerning the project;
- ⇒ drafting of analysis synthetically describing the progress of each project WP;
- ⇒ elaboration of fiches describing the products/results realised and achieved in general of with respect to each project WP;
- ⇒ producing of yearly reports.

As already mentioned, the desk analysis is the main – but not the only - method that will be applied through the work out and use of questionnaires (semi-structured grids) focused on some relevant issues:

- ⇒ Project redefinition or adjustments
- ⇒ Partnership management
- ⇒ Administrative management
- ⇒ Objectives achievement/Products implementation
- ⇒ Self-evaluation/Quality Control
- ⇒ Dissemination.

In terms of outputs, further to a statistical analysis of the collected data, 2 monitoring reports (Interim - Month 12 and Final – Month 24) will be produced which will represent, with an additional chapter containing a synoptic and synthetic analysis of the results, the source-base for the final internal evaluation report.

### 3.1.1 Typologies of Project Monitoring

In applying the model proposed, have been considered also the different typologies of monitoring implied, since it is necessary to control and check the different dimensions which describe the progress of an intervention. The Plan here proposed answer to the necessity of implementing (see figure 3 below):

1. Physical monitoring
2. Financial monitoring
3. Process monitoring

**Figure 3 - Typologies of monitoring**

<b>“Physical” Monitoring</b>	<p>Even if may be difficult to state what <b>“physical data”</b> actually consist of, given the peculiar features of projects, it is possible to say that they are basically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• those concerning the <b>Co-ordinator</b> and the <b>partnership members</b> (name, typology of organisation, dimensions of the organisation, country and region, sector of intervention, number of partners and of involved countries);</li> <li>• those concerning the <b>financial resources</b> by project phase and budget heading, on the whole project and in the breakdown per partner as established in the contracts;</li> <li>• those concerning the <b>products</b> (product typology, medium typology, target typology, language, dimensions).</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Monitoring</b>	<p>Referring to the QMS model above mentioned, the financial monitoring is generally implemented in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• verify the correct fulfilment of contractual obligations;</li> <li>• support the European Commission decision making as for requests of amendment to the agreement;</li> <li>• supply with an exhaustive picture on how partnerships ensure an effective management of financial, temporal, human and infrastructural resources;</li> <li>• highlight the different coordination styles and communication practices the project management has recourse to in order to support the decision making process.</li> </ul> <p>Financial monitoring supports the check of project <i>progress</i> focusing the attention on basic events such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>agreement deadlines</b> (signature of contracts, submission of Interim and Final Report);</li> <li>• <b>financial flows</b> (between the EC and the Co-ordinator – by checking the reception of the grant instalment – and between the Co-ordinator and its partners -beneficiaries);</li> <li>• potential <b>in itinere changes</b> (budget redefinition by cost heading, redistribution of funds within the partnership).</li> </ul>



<p><b>Process Monitoring</b></p>	<p>Value Chain will be implemented within the framework of EaSI Programme. This process is grounded on the implementation of actions which necessarily ask for the integration and comparison of the different national, regional and sectoral contexts represented by the (transnational) consortium. Therefore, the attention need to be focused on partnership members' common working paths, which represent the starting point to make the analysis on the qualitative aspects of the project implemented process. In this frame, to monitor the process of the project gives the opportunity to enrich the understanding of project activities with information concerning, for instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the relationships, decision making and communication modalities within the partnership;</li> <li>• the partnership capabilities expressed in terms of organisation, identification and solution of problems;</li> <li>• the strategies and channels used to disseminate results;</li> <li>• the evaluation methods.</li> </ul> <p>In this case, the related actions must not be limited to verify the variance between planned and realised activities, but they must be based on a participated and active observation of the project processes and of its results (for instance, during the partnership meetings). Such an approach implies the integration of "direct" and "indirect" observation modalities of project processes, aimed at collecting data and information through an analysis of interim and final products/results.</p> <p><u>Direct observation will be implemented through:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the analysis of partnership project meetings;</li> <li>• the synthesis of all information shared through partnership communication modalities (telephone calls, e-mails, interim or bilateral meetings);</li> <li>• the use of tools aimed at reviewing or re-planning some specific aspects of the project life-cycle, through the iterative and scheduled delivery of questionnaires,</li> </ul> <p><u>while on the other, indirect observation will be aimed at codifying and organising the information concerning the outcomes and outputs related to each workpackage and sub-activity.</u></p>
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### 3.2 Monitoring Tools

Tools to be used to collect information must necessarily be of different kind, not only because of the nature of the phenomena investigated, but also to answer the need of carrying out specific analysis at different stages of the project implementation. These tools should be "user friendly" and adjustable in itinere, they must integrate closed structures - to verify what exists in terms of presence/absence and quantity - and open structures, aimed at highlighting the qualitative/descriptive elements of the process and the possible weaknesses and criticalities encountered.

Further, monitoring tools must be articulated in order to meet the complexity of the project and the plurality of elements which needs investigation, but nevertheless they must also be light and easy to be delivered.

**Figure 4**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Sampling criteria WHEN</b>	<b>Quality control area WHAT</b>	<b>Observation</b>
Project Quality Plan	-	Management Production Evaluation	Indirect
Structured questionnaires	periodically	Management Production Evaluation	by e-mail
Protocol for carrying out semi-structured face-to-face interviews	-	Management Resources Management Production Evaluation	Direct To be defined, if the case
Financial monitoring questionnaires (Excel sheet)	periodically	Resources management Management	by e-mail
Grid for meetings observation	To be adopted during meetings planned	Management Resources management	Direct
Fiche describing project process	All project's components two times during the lifecycle of the project	Management Resources Management	Indirect



		Production	
		Evaluation	

### 3.3 Value Chain Monitoring Programme

The Monitoring action – implying specific activities and tools - is strictly related to the implementation of a Quality Management System that is requested to be applied to each project approved and that implies the adoption of a range of solutions aimed at ensuring:

- ⇒ Process transparency
- ⇒ Sharing of general and specific goals among the actors involved and definition of specific roles and tasks
- ⇒ Outcomes measurability
- ⇒ Prevention of non-conformity risks
- ⇒ Management of variables.

In this frame, the Monitoring Plan is a tool applied within working teams and partnerships with the aim of:

- ⇒ creating the conditions to continuously verify the project work in progress and the achievement of expected interim and final outcomes, so as:
  - to highlight the possible divergences between what has been planned and actually realised;
  - to identify the risk areas;
  - to adopt the proper measures apt to ensure the achievement of goals defined.
- ⇒ following and supporting the operative and strategic management of the project itself, in order to make the partnership able to:
- ⇒ control and evaluate the project quality;
- ⇒ make eventual changes or adjustments in itinere;



⇒ report to the European Commission (contents and financial issues).

At this purpose, the Plan has been structured so as to implement the regular check of the activities planned – at least the most important ones – and related expenses implied. The macro-areas that will be under control, during the whole life cycle of the project, are:

- A. Actions and products realised with respect to the ones planned
- B. Actual implementation timings, with respect to the ones expected
- C. Financial resources actually spent (cash flows), with respect to the ones available (budget) or foreseen
- D. Goals and outcomes actually achieved

### **3.3.1 Areas/documents of reference**

To work out and implement a Monitoring plan apt to control the conformity between planned and realised, it is first of all necessary to identify both the specific areas and the documents on which this conformity is grounded.

In particular, areas of reference are:

- A. Budget;
- B. Timetable;
- C. Production Process,

and, by consequence, the documents that the partnership must know, take into account and share all along the project life cycle are:

- ⇒ the proposal approved, where are indicated the general and final goals of the project, direct and indirect beneficiaries, final and interim outcomes and outputs foreseen;
- ⇒ the project workplan approved, where are provided all detailed information related the actual implementation of the project, step by step;
- ⇒ the project total budget;
- ⇒ the detailed budget for each partner involved;

- ⇒ the Agreement with the Authority financing the intervention (European Commission)
- ⇒ the Agreements between project Co-ordinator and all Partners (Beneficiaries);
- ⇒ the administrative and financial procedure ruled by the Programme/Authority financing the intervention, concerning the financial accounting, the activities reporting, the in itinere monitoring and evaluation, etc.

### 3.3.2 Project monitoring process

The Monitoring action is implemented through (see figure 5 following) :

- ⇒ Periodical Desk analysis (activities and financial resources)
- ⇒ Interviews to main actors of implementation process (if necessary, to complete or deepen desk analysis results)
- ⇒ periodical reports on monitoring results
- ⇒ yearly reports

**Fig.5**

METHODS	AIM	TOOLS	HOW AND WHEN
<b>Desk analysis</b>	<i>To Monitor workplan activities and related outputs work in progress</i>	<b>Questionnaires</b>	<i>Delivering by e-mail every 6 months</i>
<b>Interviews to main actors of implementation process</b>	<i>To complete or deepen desk analysis results</i>	<b>Interview grids</b>	<i>Direct or Indirect, if necessary and when necessary</i>
<b>Budget flow analysis</b>	<i>To monitor project expenses (cash flow)</i>	<b>Format tool designed with reference to the formats provided by the European Commission</b>	<i>Delivering by e-mail every 4 months</i>

#### 3.3.2.1 Areas under monitoring

The main areas to be periodically checked are:



- ⇒ Activities planned for each Work Package of the Workprogramme approved
- ⇒ Outputs production and planning
- ⇒ Dissemination and valorisation of outcomes/outputs
- ⇒ Timings and deadlines
- ⇒ Human and financial resources implied
- ⇒ External evaluation (project beneficiaries' feedback)

All these aspects must be monitored using specific tools and respecting fixed timings.

### **3.3.2.2 Contents**

As above mentioned, the monitoring will be realised mainly through a desk analysis action, using semi-structured grids that will be sent to all partners, by e-mail. All partners will be requested to fill in the grid and send it back respecting the deadlines provided. In particular, the aim will be the one of detecting the work in progress of:

- ⇒ Specific activities or actions;
- ⇒ Outputs realisation;
- ⇒ Dissemination outputs and outcomes;
- ⇒ Timings foreseen;
- ⇒ Budget spent.

Every grid sent will refer to a specific Work package of the project workprogramme and the information requested would concern one or more activity included in the work package concerned. In the same grid the partners will be also asked to provide some analytical and quality information, in order to provide a kind of self- evaluation of the work done or of the situation approached.

As an example, the main K-questions would be:

- ⇒ Description of activities realised: information on process adopted, methodology used, subjects involved;
- ⇒ Description of possible divergences/difficulties encountered, with respect to planned and realised activities, and reasons related;



- ⇒ Recovery actions or solutions adopted;
- ⇒ Outputs realised or in progress.

### **3.3.2.3 Formats**

Formats to be used and filled in will be articulated as follows:

1. Partnership meetings Minute Format
2. Report on activities
3. Report on Dissemination Activities
4. Report on beneficiaries evaluation (feedback) of project activities (transfer and dissemination)
5. Financial cash flow

All data requested will be necessary also to report on the project work in progress to the EC (Interim and Final Report). Interim and Final Reports, in fact, imply - with respect to the project workprogramme approved - detailed info on:

- ⇒ project activities realised;
- ⇒ project outputs;
- ⇒ project outcomes (quantitative/qualitative impact on targeted national contexts involved in the transfer action);
- ⇒ dissemination activities realised (implying quantitative/qualitative info on project beneficiaries; typology of tools/actions, samples of tools/materials);
- ⇒ financial resources spent (detailed info on budget cash flow, consistently with financial and administrative rules of EaSI Programme).

### **3.3.2.4 The Actors**

Referring to the Value Chain proposal and workprogramme approved and in particular the Work package 7 focusing on management issues, the partner responsible for the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation activities is INAPP. The action planned is to be meant as "internal" to the



partnership and so, the whole of activities and outputs planned will be realised through personnel involved with respect to competences, tasks and responsibilities of each partner.

INAPP will have to indicate one Staff member, that will be in charge of:

- A. providing a detailed programme (deadlines) of the monitoring procedure, consistently with the project workprogramme re-planning;
- B. providing the formats of all tools necessary to implement the monitoring actions planned (questionnaires and grids);
- C. delivering the monitoring tools to all partners consistently with the monitoring deadlines planned;
- D. analysing the monitoring outcomes and reporting on the results to the project Coordinator.

On the other side, all project partners (promoter included) will be in charge of:

- ⇒ identifying a contact person responsible of communicating all data and information requested;
- ⇒ using the formats (questionnaires) provided by the external expert;
- ⇒ providing accurate information;
- ⇒ filling all sections foreseen in the formats following the indications provided;
- ⇒ respecting timings and deadlines provided.

## **4. Structure and principles of Value Chain Evaluation plan**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of the Evaluation is to deliver clarification and guidance to procedures and criteria used to quantify and qualify the project as a whole and the work packages' efficiency separately.

The monitoring and evaluation are tools for partnership support and quality assurance. The philosophy of evaluation is participatory, seeking the active involvement of all stakeholders. The evaluation aims to give guidance to the project partners for possible adjustments in the implementation of tasks.



## 4.2 Summative evaluation (internal audit)

Previous to the presentation of the interim and final report, an internal audit will check if the main results, recommendations and statistical data obtained during the project, and the main administrative and financial details on the projects' progress agree with the project requirements.

The output of the summative evaluation is used for Interim reporting to the European Commission and used therefore as guide for final Report.

The aim of internal assessment is to provide the partnership with internal evaluation tools of its activities and facilitate the partners in controlling and monitoring each step of the project.

Each partner has to fulfill and deliver the following reports, at the end of every trimester. All the documents have to be delivered the Project coordinator.

The reports are:

- ⇒ **Valorisation activity report** deals with all valorisation activities e.g.: presentation, conference, publication, information about the project on website, meetings, and others.
- ⇒ **Progress report** summarizing the activities carried out by each organization, referring the monitored period.

## 4.3 Evaluation Methods

In the evaluation a mixed method of combining quantitative and qualitative data is used.

Methods are:

<i>Evaluation method / tool</i>	<i>When/where</i>
Interviews (in-depth; and by telephone)	during project meetings
Desk analysis	project reports, minutes, brochure, e-communication between partners, deliverables
Observation	during project meetings, Workshops/Conferences
Statistics like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of stakeholder groups per country?</li> <li>- How many persons applied to attend the</li> </ul>	



training? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How many persons participated?</li><li>- How many persons took part in the national stakeholders meeting?</li><li>- Target respondents: partners, participants.</li></ul>	
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In terms of action, it is expected:

### **Development plan monitoring and evaluation**

The Plan includes project milestones and associated deliverables. To apply the internal control compliance implementation in progress, in addition to indicating procedures, instruments and specific deadlines are shown documents which partners should refer to 24 months (eg project work plan, budget, timetable and organization, etc.).

### **Preparation format detection and quantitative data.**

The comparability of data is essential for the efficient communication between the partners and the sharing of work in progress. Therefore expected: format grids and reports / records (measurements of only partner, sharing evaluative information and agreements made); evaluation questionnaires / observation indoor / outdoor (beneficiaries and staff involved); format for detection of periodic cash flows of the project.

Administration partners to semi-structured grids, to obtain information on specific areas of control: activities carried out, was ongoing activities and timing, results, problems encountered and corrective actions taken. In this way, you can monitor compliance and implementation regularity, and obtain information critical analysis and evaluation.

### **Detection of periodic financial resources**

The cash flow is an important aspect to be kept under constant control as it relates to operations and production. The survey is useful for identifying potential losses or reserves which, if not corrected, could adversely affect compliance with the programmed. This recognition is also needed to comply with the financial monitoring procedures required by the same National Agency.

### **Development of two reports (interim and final)**

where there is evidence of the progress of the project, to be shown any adjustments to be made to the work plan and analyzed in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and relevance, intermediate results and impact (sustainability and transferability) product with respect to the contexts / groups target. The reports include an updated Risk Assessment Chart, to check: budget and products for business or WP, timetable for implementation. The report will be relevant to draft and submit interim and final reports under the Programme.



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Other criteria used are the descriptions of the aims and the deliverables as described in the project plan.