

Sheffield Hallam University Evaluation Repository: Conducting Searches

There are four main ways of searching for evaluation outputs on the repository:

1. **Simple search** (see Figure 1): Enables users to enter one or more search terms in a single text box.
2. **Advanced search** (see Figure 2): Users can enter terms in multiple text boxes, such as title, authors, type of evidence, stage of the student lifecycle and key words.
3. **Browse**: Search records by one particular field, including: evaluation completion date (year); author(s); department, directorate or group involved in the evaluation; type of evaluation evidence; and stage of the student lifecycle.
4. **Recent items** (see Figure 3): View the last 20 evaluation records that have been accepted.

The **basic** and **advanced search** options should meet the needs of most users and help them to locate relevant evidence that is available in the repository.

Basic search

Users can conduct a simple search either on the evaluation repository home page (see Figure 1). In order to conduct effective searches with the basic search option, you will need to specify the key words, ideas and themes that reflect the topic you want to learn about. A good starting point is to think about the key ideas that relate to the context and question(s) that underpin your evaluation.

Guided example 1: Entering key words in the basic search

A user wants to find out if there is any existing evidence on the effectiveness of financial support schemes at university on students from under-represented groups while they are studying at university. Examples of relevant words that the user could search for are:

- **Financial support**
- **Outcomes**

These are the terms that the user should enter into the basic search (see Figure 1). If no relevant evaluation records appear, the user could consider alternative related terms to these initial key concepts as different words may be used that focus on the same idea. In this scenario, alternative terms could be **financial aid** or **evaluation**. Pressing the 'Search' button will lead to the search results appearing (see Figure 3).

Figure 1: Evaluation Repository home page

Sheffield Hallam University Evaluation Repository

Evaluation Repository

Browse

Search

Recent items

Statistics

Add your evaluation

Sheffield Hallam's Evaluation Repository showcases the evaluation activities that staff members and students carry out within the University and at partnership organisations. The purpose of the repository is to communicate unpublished evaluative outputs and raise awareness of practices and ideas that users can apply when designing and planning their own evaluations. Please visit the [About the repository](#) page to learn more about its features, which includes a [glossary page](#).

Basic search

[Advanced search](#)

The Simple Search feature is located on the evaluation repository 'home page'. It can also be accessed on the 'Search' page on the menu bar.

Advanced search

The advanced search is a way of customising searches on the repository using more specific queries. There are a greater number of fields that are provided on this page (see Figure 2). While the advanced search provides more search options, some of the terms used in the fields could be unfamiliar to users. We have attempted to use terms which are aligned with those used across the sector and readily understood by all audiences. Clicking the question symbol beside each field reveals a description.

A description of each field is shown in Table 1, while a [‘Glossary’ page](#) is present on the site to provide extra clarification:

Table 1: List of search fields on the Advanced Search page

Field	Description
Title of the evaluation	The title of the evaluation record assigned by the author(s).
Creators	The first name(s) and surname(s) of the author(s) who contributed to the evaluation.
Department, directorate, or group	The department, directorate or group of the author(s) who contributed to the evaluation.
Evaluation completion date	The completion date of the evaluation (a particular stage or the entire evaluation).
Stage of the student lifecycle	<p>Stage of the student lifecycle refers to individual stages of the student lifecycle, such as:</p> <p>Access and outreach: The first stage of the student lifecycle that focuses on activities that support individuals to access higher education.</p> <p>Success (e.g. retention and attainment): The second stage of the student lifecycle which focuses on activities that support students to continue and succeed in higher education.</p> <p>Progression into employment or further study: The third and final stage of the student lifecycle that focuses on activities that support students to progress from higher education into employment or further study.</p> <p>There is also the option of no stage being specified for an evaluation.</p>
Type of evaluation evidence	<p>This refers to the type of evaluation evidence and the claims that are being made in the evaluation. The type of evaluation evidence is aligned with the Office for Students’ types of evidence, which comprise of:</p> <p>Narrative: A type of impact evaluation that provides a narrative about why an activity is being carried out and why it might be effective. This is deemed to be the minimum requirement for all activities. It is anticipated that the evaluation will refer to existing evidence of impact, literature or practitioner reflections.</p>

	<p>Empirical: A type of impact evaluation where evidence has been collected which reports that there have been changes in outcomes for those receiving an activity. However, it does not establish any direct causal effect. For this evaluation, quantitative and/or qualitative evidence will need to be collected.</p> <p>Causal: A type of impact evaluation that seeks to provide evidence of a causal effect of an activity (i.e. that the impact can be directly attributed to the activity) through the use of a robust and appropriate evaluation design and a control or comparison group.</p>
Key words	Key words refer to the key ideas and themes that have been assigned to each evaluation record.

Guided example 2: Advanced search

Using the same example as the one shown in the basic search, the user can enter the same key word ('financial support') but criteria in other fields can be applied to narrow the search so that it is not scanning all records in the repository. In this case, it might be relevant for the user to apply more specific searches if they are interested in the evaluation of financial support schemes at a particular point of the student lifecycle:

- 'Success' could be ticked to limit the search results to those schemes that are focused on supporting students continue and succeed in higher education while they are studying on their course (see Figure 2).

Pressing the 'Search' button will lead to the search results appearing (see Figure 3).

Search results and individual record information

Following a basic or advanced search, the results of the search will appear. If there are no records, this indicates that there are no relevant evaluation records that are available on the repository. The user could consider entering alternative related terms (see guided example 1) or making the search terms broader. There are options at the top and bottom of the page to 'Refine search' or start a 'New search'. If a record does appear, the user can select an individual record to find out more information (see Figure 4), specifically:

- **Abstract**, which contains an overview of the evaluation purpose, methodology, findings and recommendations.
- **Authors** of the evaluation.
- **Department, directorate, or group** of the authors of the evaluation.
- **Type of evaluation evidence** (see Table 1 for a description).
- **Stage(s) of the student lifecycle** (see Table 1 for a description).
- **Key words** assigned to the record.

Figure 2: Advanced Search page

Evaluation Repository

Browse

Search

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About the evaluation repository

Glossary

About STEER

Contact us

Evaluation Repository Search

[Click here for a guidance on conducting searches.](#)
[Click here to learn more about the key terms used on this repository.](#)

Title:

all of

Creators:

all of

Evaluation complete date:

Stage of the Student Lifecycle:

☐ Access and outreach
☐ Success (e.g. retention and attainment)
☐ Progression into employment and further study
☐ No stage specified

Any of these

Type of evaluation evidence:

☐ Narrative: A narrative is provided about why an activity is being carried out and why it might be effective.
☐ Empirical: Evidence has been collected which reports that there have been changes in outcomes for those receiving an activity.
☐ Causal: Evidence has been collected which demonstrates evidence of a causal effect of an activity.

Departments, Directorates and Groups:

College of Business, Technology and Engineering
College Services
Department of Computing
Department of Engineering and Mathematics
Department of Finance, Accounting and Business Systems
Department of Management
Department of Service Sector Management

Figure 3: Search results

Sheffield Hallam University Evaluation Repository

Evaluation Repository

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Uncontrolled Keywords matches "financial support"

Displaying results 1 to 1 of 1.
[Refine search](#) | [New search](#) | [Save search](#)

Order the results: by title ▼ Reorder

Export 1 results as ASCII Citation ▼ Export
[Batch Edit](#)

1. DONNELLY, Alan (2021). *Evaluating the impact of higher education funding aimed to address student hardship: Survey findings.* [STEER Evaluation Collection]



+1 more...

Displaying results 1 to 1 of 1.
[Refine search](#) | [New search](#) | [Save search](#)

Order the results: by title ▼ Reorder


Selecting the record will load up another page which displays information about that specific evaluation.

Figure 4: Information about each evaluation record

Evaluating the impact of higher education funding aimed to address student hardship: Survey findings

Tools

DONNELLY, Alan (2021). *Evaluating the impact of higher education funding aimed to address student hardship: Survey findings*. [STEER Evaluation Collection]



PDF

Donnelly_2021_evaluating_the_higher_education_funding.pdf - Published Version

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Abstract

This report explores the findings of an evaluation conducted at Sheffield Hallam University to understand the impact of institutional financial support provided to students who are under-represented in higher education or who are facing hardship. This evaluation implemented the validated financial support evaluation toolkit, which is recommended by the Office for Students, as the framework for this data collection and analysis (McCaig et al., 2016). The survey tool, which was used in this current phase of the evaluation, contains closed and open-ended questions that explore what the funding has enabled its recipients to do and what might have not been possible otherwise. A total of 5,302 students received financial support from the University in 2020/21 and 347 of these responded to the survey, which is a response rate of 7%. The survey findings highlighted how respondents used other financial sources, aside from the hardship funding, to pay for their higher education, such as loans, overdrafts, earnings from work and money from friends or family. Without the financial support, its recipients reported that they would not only find it difficult to access the essential provisions of teaching and learning but also to be able to pay for basic living costs. Other key benefits reported by respondents were that the financial support enabled them to: concentrate on their university work, with the money helping many to pay for devices and IT equipment; continue with their studies; ease their anxieties and support their mental health. However, it is important to note that the low response rate limits the generalisations that can be made from the survey respondents to the wider population.

Item Type:

STEER Evaluation Collection

Type of evaluation evidence:

Empirical: Evidence has been collected which reports that there have been changes in outcomes for those receiving an activity.

Stage of the Student Lifecycle:

Stage of the Student Lifecycle

Success (e.g. retention and attainment)

Departments, Directorates and Groups:

Groups and Services > Student Experience, Teaching and Learning

Groups: Groups and Services > Student and Academic Services

Uncontrolled Keywords:

financial support, financial aid, hardship, survey, impact, evaluation