

PROJECT TITLE	Evaluation of International School Exchange programme
DEVELOPER (INSTITUTION)	The British Council
EVALUATOR (INSTITUTION)	Kantar Public Division
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)	Alex Thornton
EVALUATION PLAN AUTHOR(S)	Emma Mckay, Rosie Giles
PUPIL AGE RANGE AND KEY STAGE	11-19, KS3 and KS4
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS/ SETTINGS	140 (expected)
NUMBER OF PUPILS	1400 (expected)

Evaluation plan version history

VERSION	DATE	REASON FOR REVISION
1.0	09.09.19	N/A

Intervention

Effective school exchange programmes are thought to have the potential to boost pupil's confidence, their engagement with the curriculum, and to expand their intercultural awareness. There is a concern that fewer schools are participating in exchanges, reflecting a general decline in foreign language study, concerns from families about safeguarding risks, and financial and practical barriers affecting schools' ability to offer exchanges.

With this in mind, the Department for Education (DfE) has allocated £2.5 million to a programme that aims to enable disadvantaged secondary school pupils in England aged 11-19 to take part in an international school exchange. The British Council, which is delivering the programme, commenced recruitment for participating schools in early 2019, with 140-200 schools expected to run international exchanges between May 2019 and May 2020.

The programme is open to state schools or colleges in England which can demonstrate that:

- The exchange will benefit disadvantaged pupils
- The English state schools or colleges have a partner school abroad confirmed to visit
- They have the support of the school Headteacher

Grants of up to £15,000 are available for each school or college. Grants can cover international travel for pupils and accompanying teachers, accommodation and subsistence, local transport and administration costs. Further information on what costs are eligible can be found in the British Council Programme Guidance¹. Priority is given to applications that show the school, or the group of students involved in the visit, have significant levels of disadvantage (e.g. Pupil Premium, Opportunity Area, Index of Multiple Deprivation, Additional Needs etc). However, not all the pupils travelling must be eligible for Pupil Premium. The grants given through this programme should enable the students on Pupil Premium to participate without being asked to pay. Independent schools are not eligible to apply.

Visits can be to any country (Europe or wider) and must be for a minimum of four nights. British Council will run overseas seminars, taking place in October and November 2019, to connect schools that wish to participate but do not yet have an international partner with partner schools abroad.

Overall, the programme should enable disadvantaged young people, who would otherwise not go, to go on an international visit. It is intended to lead to several outcomes, in particular:

For participating pupils

- Increased intercultural outlook
- Improved interest in and understanding of relevant curriculum area including but not limited to modern foreign languages (MFL) or history
- Improved resilience and/or confidence / tolerance with other cultures

For others

- School leaders and teachers think that school exchanges are valuable and easy to arrange, and have the resources and capabilities to repeat exchanges
- Teachers and students are interested in pursuing future international experiences

The Department for Education (DfE) is funding the programme and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is funding the evaluation of the programme, to be conducted by Kantar Public Division. The evaluation will cover international visits taking place between July 2019 and April 2020. The evaluation will assess the extent the potential to which it may enable secondary-school pupils in England, particularly the most disadvantaged, to take part in an international school exchange.

¹ The protocol can be found on British Council's website https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/international_school_exchanges_programme_guidelines_july.pdf

The overall objective of the process evaluation is to answer the question:

Is the DfE-funded programme a viable way of enabling secondary-school pupils in England, particularly the most disadvantaged, to have an international experience by taking part in a school exchange with partner schools around the world?

The underlying research questions behind this are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Research questions

Pilot evaluation criteria	Research questions
Promise	<p>RQ1. What are pupil and teacher attitudes towards the curriculum area of focus on their exchange, their confidence in a new context, their global outlook and perceptions of ease/value of exchanges before and after the exchange?</p> <p>RQ2. How does the programme differentiate/add value over and above support already available to in-scope schools?</p>
Feasibility	<p>RQ3. What are the barriers and facilitators school and pupil experience in the programme, at the application, pre-exchange and post-exchange stages?</p> <p>RQ4. Did the programme deliver the desired output: inclusion of schools that would not otherwise run an exchange and/or do not have an international partner school?</p> <p>RQ5. Did the programme deliver the desired output: Inclusion of disadvantaged pupils?</p>
Scalability	<p>RQ6. What are the principles and features that support uptake and effective delivery of international exchanges and who is best placed to take these forward (DfE, British Council, Teachers etc)?</p> <p>RQ7. How likely are schools to conduct exchanges in the future and what information, resources and support do they need for sustainability?</p> <p>RQ8. How, if at all, are schools learning from their experience and sharing that within and beyond their school?</p>

Table 2. Methods overview

Research methods	Data collection methods	Participants/ data sources (type, number)	Data analysis methods	Research questions addressed
Management information (British Council)	Self-completed pro-formas (data provided by BC)	Lead teachers (up to 140 invited)	Descriptive statistics	RQ5
Lead teacher surveys (pre/ post)	Self-completion questionnaires	Lead teachers (up to 140 invited)	Frequency counts; descriptive statistics	RQ1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Pupil surveys (pre/ post)	Online questionnaires	Pupils who have participated in an exchange (up to 140 schools – estimated up to c.3,000 invited)	Frequency counts; descriptive statistics	RQ1, 3
Scoping interviews	Depth interviews (phone and face to face)	Key stakeholders at DfE and British Council	thematic analysis	RQ2, 3, 6
Case studies (20 schools pre visit; 12 schools post visit)	Depth interviews (pre-visit, phone)	Lead teachers (up to 20)	inductive coding; thematic analysis	RQ1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
	Depth interviews (post-visit, face to face)	Teachers involved in school exchange (up to 24 = 2 per 12 schools)	inductive coding; thematic analysis	RQ1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
	Focus groups (face to face)	Pupils who have participated in an exchange (up to 24 groups of 4-6 pupils = 2 per 12 schools)	inductive coding; thematic analysis	RQ1, 3

Methods

Recruitment

We will develop the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which participating schools will be asked to sign, by way of agreement to take part in the evaluation and to consent to relevant data sharing requirements between themselves, Kantar and British Council. This will be sent to schools by British Council along with additional information to explain more about the evaluation, including a school 'information sheet' and a privacy notice.

A broad range of schools will be invited to take part in a case study to ensure the findings reflect the experiences of a range of schools, including by the following criteria:

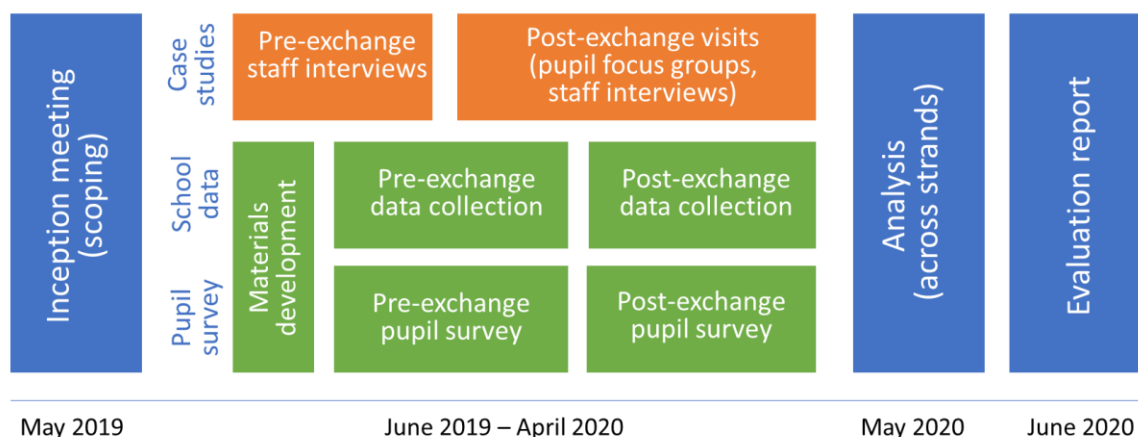
- Delivery variations
 - Type of visit (seminar / exchange, and with / without home stay)
 - Destination (Europe / further)
 - Duration of visit (longer / shorter than 1 week)
 - Year group (e.g. above / below 16)
 - Primary curriculum purpose (e.g. language, history)
- School variations
 - Proportion of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium
 - History of exchanges
 - Location (geographical spread, urban / rural split)

All pupils going on the exchange will be asked by their school to complete an online survey, with parents informed. In schools selected for case study research, pupils will be recruited through their schools, by the lead teacher. Kantar will support the school to send parents/guardians of pupils under 16 years an opt in consent form; pupils aged 16 or older will sign their own paper consent forms.

Data collection

The schematic below outlines the different data collection methods and when they will be used throughout the evaluation. Timings will need to be flexible depending on school availability but pre-exchange data collection will typically be in the four weeks before the start of the exchange and post exchange will be two to three months after the end of the exchange.

Research will be carried out in waves, with evaluation packs issued to schools at the start of the term in which the school exchanges is planned (e.g. in September for any exchanges taking place in the first term of 2019/20.² Further details of the data collection methods are given in the project contract.

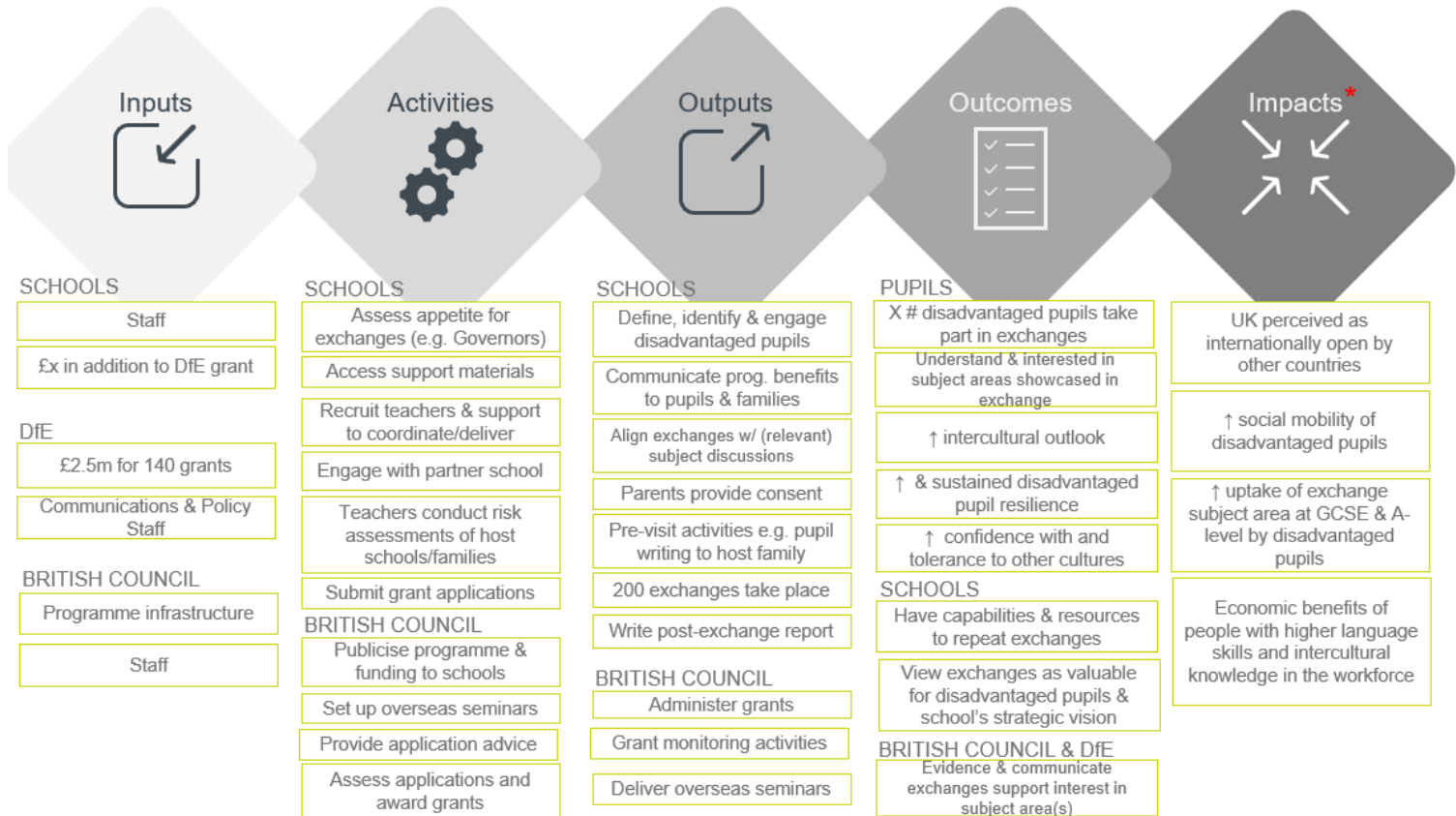


² With up to three waves – reflected in the project timeline.

Logic Model

Building on British Council's theory of change, background research and the research team's knowledge of the sector, we developed a draft programme logic model. We then held an Intervention Delivery and Evaluation Analysis (IDEA) workshop with DfE and British Council to refine the logic model to accurately depict the aims, processes, assumptions and outcomes/impacts. We also used scoping interviews to clarify gaps in the model and refine it further. A visual representation of the model is copied below. We will continue to update it throughout the evaluation.

All research tools (questionnaires and topic guides) will inform participants of the independent nature



of Kantar, the purpose of data collection, how their information will be used and reported, and confirm that all their views will be anonymised and are confidential. No one outside of the research team will know who has said what. British Council will be collecting some management information as part of the application process, including information on the objectives of the exchange, links to curriculum areas, the number and age of participating pupils, location and date of the exchange, and the number of disadvantaged pupils. This will be shared with Kantar at regular intervals (subject to a data sharing agreement).

Data analysis

Qualitative analysis – For the case study data, we will use a content analysis method known as framework analysis – a highly-respected analytical process that is both flexible and systematic. It will involve constructing a framework of themes based on patterns that emerge across the pre- and post-exchange depth interviews with teachers and focus groups with pupils. Data will be mapped against the research questions to identify defining features of school exchange experiences and we will create typologies based on these. Our analysis process is iterative, involving all members of the core project team. This will allow us to develop, test and refine hypotheses as the project progresses, by drawing on insight from each strand of the evaluation as it happens. By triangulating the data – speaking to different parties involved (stakeholders, teachers and pupils) – we will be able to build a holistic picture to minimise bias.

Quantitative analysis – The analysis will mainly consist of descriptive statistics, frequency counts and wave on wave comparisons (with associated significance testing). Where possible we will use

bivariate analysis to explore differences in experiences and perceptions by school and pupil characteristics. The exact scope of analysis for the teacher and pupil surveys will be agreed once the number of participating schools and pupils is known. Where feasible we will look at differences in outcomes by school characteristics such as proportion of pupils receiving Pupil Premium, location and history of exchanges; and visit characteristics such as destination (Europe/further), home stay, length of trip and year group/key stage.³

Ethics

Kantar is an independent research agency. Participation in evaluation activities is entirely voluntary and confidential, and participants may withdraw from any or all parts at any time. The evaluation itself will contribute to maximising the benefit for future individuals that engage with the programme.

Data protection

We have carried out a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this project. This was carried out using Kantar's standard DIPA process, identifying the type of data that will be collected, from whom and by what method and the extent this will include personal data. It also assesses how project deliverables (including data where applicable) will be shared with clients. It also confirms arrangements for data processing and erasure. Most importantly it includes an assessment of the key risks associated with data collection, processing and storage.

Our approach is underpinned by adhering to the following standards and accreditations:

- MRS and ESOMAR professional codes of conduct, including voluntary basis of participation, anonymity and confidentiality
- ISO 20252 – International market research quality standard.
- ISO 9001 – International standard for quality management systems.
- ISO 27001 – International standard for information security management systems.
- The UK Data Protection Act 2018.

We have a dedicated Quality and Information Security team who continuously improve systems and procedures. We have a fully defined and documented project process, which includes all key activities, checks and senior sign-off points. Staff are trained in the systems processes and quality standards.

All outputs are reviewed iteratively and signed off, with specified seniority levels for sign off on key deliverables. The Project Director (Alex Thornton) has ultimate accountability for quality sign off for deliverables.

We have excellent security controls that integrate data and network security policies and procedures with the requirements of our clients. We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to store and secure personal and client information from unauthorised access and use. All our projects operate within GDPR legislation and our staff have completed mandatory GDPR training.

Our legal bases for processing data from all surveys and focus groups is consent. For focus groups of pupils, we will be seeking verbal consent from participants prior to commencing the interviews. We will not be collecting personally identifiable information from pupils as part of the surveys avoiding the need for opt in consent from parents (we will be offering parents/guardians the option to withdraw their child from participation in the surveys).

³ Subject to the total number of participating schools and the base sizes for sub-groups of interest.

Personnel

Delivery team:

- Susie Nicodemi, British Council, delivery project manager
- Shannon West, British Council, delivery project associate
- Vicky Gough, British Council, delivery project lead

Evaluation team:

- Rosie Giles, Kantar, evaluation project manager and qualitative lead
- Alex Thornton, Kantar, evaluation project director
- Emma Mckay, Kantar, evaluation quantitative lead
- Sheyi Ogunshakin, Kantar, evaluation qualitative researcher

Risks

Risk description	Mitigation strategy
Lack of clarity/understanding about project objectives from any party engaged in the evaluation	Revisit and agree with EEF, British Council and the Department for Education key project aims and objectives, and how research design will meet these, at project start up meeting. Regular communication and documentation of decisions throughout the project to ensure that work reflects aims and objectives throughout.
Research does not meet the project requirements / does not provide relevant policy insights for all clients involved.	We will employ a number of measures to ensure that findings are relevant and of strategic use to DfE and British Council, including: Reviewing the aims, objectives and specific information needs with them on commissioning and designing the research in line with these, liaising with DfE and British Council throughout to ensure that our approach is meeting their needs, responding flexibly to changing/emerging priorities and new information requirements, engaging with key stakeholders, drawing on existing evidence and our own experience and feeding this into our approach.
Research design is unable to respond to changing research priorities	We will review project progress with DfE and British Council and be flexible to accommodate any changes in fieldwork requirements (where possible). We have rigorous project management systems and sufficient organisational capacity to meet all requirements and where possible will adapt the design to meet the needs of the school exchange programme.
Change in project team / Extended leave or absence	Project team meet weekly to ensure all team members are aware of the current status of the project. Kantar has a team of 70 researchers - we are able to move resources within this team to ensure that quality standards are maintained even if members of the core team are not available. In the event of a staff member leaving or being on long-term sick leave, we have sufficient capacity across the wider team to ensure that project staff are replaced with similarly experienced staff with a similar grade.
Data security issues and/or ethical breach of conduct.	A commitment to high standards of quality, ethics and information security, underpinned by accreditations to ISO 9001, ISO 20252 and ISO 27001. Kantar was one of the first UK research organisations to be formally audited and accredited to the full ISO 27001 information security management standard. We follow clear ethical procedures relating to confidentiality and anonymity. Full consent gained from respondents. All interviewers CRB checked.
Disasters – such as floods and power cut	Kantar has a business continuity plan that defines the minimum planning requirements for management and staff to respond to, continue critical services during, and recover from, an incident. Our plan outlines the critical resources (people, facilities, technology, suppliers and essential information) required to restore the critical services provided by them. Additionally, ISO 27001 assets are risk assessed in accordance with the Information Security Management System requirements. We have password-protected systems with full back-up in place to ensure there is no problems with data loss

Pupil engagement during focus groups is low/pupil participation is low	Group composition/sampling will be determined by the number of applications received. This means that Kantar will need to keep DfE and British Council informed about fieldwork progress and the profile of who has been included. Teachers in case study schools will be briefed by Kantar on the requirements for group composition. Researchers will be flexible and work in accordance with school/pupil's schedules. Our researchers are trained to work with children and young people and will employ a range of methods to encourage pupil engagement
Pupils disclose information that causes the researcher to become concerned for their safety	In the event that pupils disclose information that makes researchers concerned for their safety or the safety of others they will follow a safeguarding plan. This will involve making the student aware that they have disclosed information that has concerned the researcher who is now obliged to inform the safeguarding officer in their school/a teacher. Researchers will ensure that pupils are made aware of this ahead before the interview begins
Consent to audio record	Researchers will ensure that participants are fully aware of what is expected in the session and that Kantar have their informed consent. Researchers will remind participants before fieldwork begins that their participation is voluntary and they can opt to leave the research at any time. Kantar will obtain parental and school consent as well as verbal consent from participants. KP to ensure that participants understand how their data will be used
Audio recorder lost or stolen	Kantar has a dedicated IT infrastructure and data security team. All data is stored on secure servers with formal back-up and recovery processes. Our data storage processes and infrastructure are compliant with the 1998 Data Protection Act, and GDPR
Interviews not recorded and analysed in a rigorous, systematic, and secure way, using appropriate systems to manage, analyse and store data	Our ISO 27001 accredited information systems and processes means all data is collected, transferred, and stored securely at all times and information security incidents are managed. Use of structured and tested analysis methods to ensure consistency and to fully capture the nuance and detail of respondents' views. Iterative analysis and discussion among the team to ensure we learn as we go and have transparency around the analysis
Errors in data or delayed reports delivered to British Council, the Department for Education, EEF	We have comprehensive quality assurance processes in place for checking all outputs. All deliverables are reviewed and signed-off by the Project Director (Alex Thornton). The timescales for each delivery are designed to allow sufficient time to fully quality assure all of the outputs. However, Kantar will need to liaise with clients if flexibility for delivering outputs is needed

Timeline

Dates	Activity	Staff responsible/leading
Set-up meetings		
09/05/19	Set up meeting #1	BC/EEF/DfE/Kantar
29/05/19	Set up meeting #2	BC/EEF/DfE/Kantar
04/06/19 – 14/06/19	Recruitment for stakeholder interviews	Kantar (field)
Stakeholder interviews		
10/06/19	Fieldwork: stakeholder interviews	Kantar

21/06/19	Finalised information sheets, MOU and privacy policy	BC/DfE/Kantar
Set-up for quantitative element		
17/06/19 – 01/08/19	Draft data collection (teacher survey) and survey questions (questionnaires for pupils and teachers) and sign off	BC//DfE/Kantar
Fieldwork for quantitative element		
September 2019	Batch 1: Survey sent to schools for completion pre exchange (recommended 4 weeks before exchange)	Kantar
January 2020	Batch 1: Survey sent to schools for completion post exchange (recommended 2-3 months after exchange)	Kantar
January 2020	Batch 2: Survey sent to schools for completion pre exchange (recommended 4 weeks before exchange)	Kantar
May 2020	Batch 2: Survey sent to schools for completion post exchange (recommended 2-3 months after exchange)	Kantar
June - July 2020	Batch 3: Survey sent to schools for completion pre exchange (recommended 4 weeks before exchange)	Kantar
June – July 2020	Batch 3: Survey sent to schools for completion post exchange (recommended 2-3 months after exchange)	Kantar
Set-up for qualitative element		
01/07/19 – 23/07/19	Draft topic guide for pre-exchange interview and sign off	BC/DfE/Kantar
12/08/19 – 30/08/19	Draft topic guide for schools that expressed interest but did not apply for funding	BC/DfE/Kantar
19/08/19 – 13/09/19	Recruitment for schools that expressed interest but did not apply for funding	Kantar (Field)
01/09/19 – 30/09/19	Fieldwork: telephone interviews with teacher who did not apply for funding	Kantar
05/08/19 - 09/08/19	Draft criteria for school recruitment	Kantar
01/08/19 – 30/04/20	School sample sent to Kantar (every 2 weeks)	BC
31/07/19 - 30/04/20	School sample recruitment (ongoing)	Kantar, Kantar (Field)
Fieldwork for qualitative element		
02/09/19 – 17/10/19	Batch 1: Evaluation packs sent to schools	Kantar
09/09/19 - 24/10/19	Pre-exchange tele-depth with schools	Kantar
01/10/19 – 30/11/19	Overseas seminars	BC
25/11/19 – 05/12/19	Fieldwork: Case studies (Oct half term)	Kantar
12/01/19 – 17/01/19	Batch 2: Evaluation packs sent to schools	Kantar
20/01/20 – 07/02/20	Pre-exchange tele-depth with schools	Kantar
09/03/20 – 20/03/20	Fieldwork: Case studies (Feb half term)	Kantar
24/02/20 – 06/03/20	Batch 3: Evaluation packs sent to schools	Kantar
16/03/20 – 27/03/20	Pre-exchange tele-depth with schools	Kantar
04/05/20 – 15/05/20	Fieldwork: Case studies (Easter)	Kantar
Reporting		

01/07/19 – 24/05/20	Ongoing analysis	Kantar
06/01/19 – 10/01/19	Submission of brief interim report to EEF	Kantar
01/04/20 – 30/04/20	Agree date and attendees for presentation	BC/EEF/DfE/Kantar
01/06/20 – 30/06/20	Emerging findings presentation	Kantar
04/09/20	First draft of final report	Kantar