



UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS
SCHOOL OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (SADS)
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES

MDP 515: PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION

DATE: 30TH JULY 2026

DURATION: 3 HOURS

MAXIMUM MARKS: 60

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write your registration number on the answer booklet.
2. **DO NOT** write on this question paper.
3. This paper contains **FOUR (4)** questions.
4. Question **ONE is compulsory**.
5. Answer any other **TWO** questions.
6. Question **ONE** carries **30 MARKS** and the rest carry **15 MARKS** each.
7. **Write all your answers in the Examination answer booklet provided**

QUESTION ONE

Read the Case Study below carefully and answer the questions that follow:

ESKOM HOLDINGS SOC LTD

Project monitoring and evaluation play a critical role in ensuring that projects achieve their intended objectives, remain accountable to stakeholders, and generate sustainable value. In South Africa, Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd provides a compelling real-world case for examining project monitoring and evaluation, particularly through its large-scale power generation projects. Eskom, the state-owned electricity utility, is responsible for generating, transmitting, and distributing electricity across the country. Due to aging infrastructure, rising demand, and energy security concerns, Eskom embarked on several mega-projects aimed at expanding generation capacity, among them the Medupi Power Station project. The scale, complexity, and public importance of this project made effective monitoring and evaluation essential.

The Medupi Power Station project was initiated to add significant baseload capacity to South Africa's national grid through the construction of a coal-fired power plant in Limpopo Province. From the outset, the project involved multiple contractors, international suppliers, government oversight bodies, and affected communities. Eskom established project monitoring mechanisms to track progress against scope, schedule, cost, and quality benchmarks. Regular progress reports, milestone reviews, and performance dashboards were used to provide management and government stakeholders with visibility on project status. These monitoring tools were intended to support early identification of deviations and enable corrective action.

As implementation progressed, monitoring revealed persistent schedule delays and cost overruns. Evaluation of progress data highlighted weaknesses in contractor coordination, design changes, and skills shortages. Eskom's monitoring systems captured these issues, but the effectiveness of response actions varied over time. In some phases, delayed decision-making and insufficient escalation limited the impact of monitoring information. This demonstrated that monitoring alone is insufficient unless accompanied by timely management action and accountability. Periodic evaluations conducted by internal audit teams, external consultants, and parliamentary committees provided deeper analysis of underlying causes and assessed whether project objectives remained achievable.

Project evaluation at Eskom extended beyond technical performance to include governance, risk management, and socio-economic impacts. Independent reviews assessed compliance with procurement regulations, contract management practices, and environmental standards. These evaluations revealed gaps in risk identification and mitigation, particularly in relation to contractor performance and labor relations. Lessons from these evaluations informed changes in Eskom's project governance framework, including stronger controls, revised reporting lines, and enhanced oversight of major capital projects.

Monitoring and evaluation also played a role in stakeholder communication and public accountability. Given the project's national importance and funding through public resources, Eskom was required to report progress to government departments, regulators, and the public. Evaluation findings were used to justify project restructuring decisions, revised completion timelines, and cost recovery mechanisms. This transparency, although sometimes exposing shortcomings, reinforced the role of monitoring and evaluation as tools for learning and institutional improvement rather than merely compliance.

Over time, Eskom applied lessons from the Medupi project to improve monitoring and evaluation practices across its project portfolio. Greater emphasis was placed on performance indicators linked to outcomes rather than activities, stronger integration of risk management into monitoring systems, and clearer accountability for acting on evaluation findings. The case illustrates that in large, complex projects, monitoring and evaluation are not one-off activities but continuous processes that support informed decision-making, adaptive management, and long-term organizational learning.

Required:

- a) Using the Eskom Medupi Power Station case, analyze the project logic by clearly linking the project inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and long-term impacts.

(5 Marks)

- b) Critically evaluate how project evaluation was used in the Medupi project to assess effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance to support corrective actions and strategic decisions.

(5 Marks)

- c) Examine the effectiveness of monitoring and control mechanisms as applied during the Medupi project to identify deviations in scope, cost, and schedule for project performance.

(10 Marks)

- d) Analyze the role of project reporting and auditing in promoting transparency and accountability in the Medupi project.

(5 Marks)

- e) Assess how change management was handled during the Medupi project in response to design changes, contractor issues, and external pressures. **(5 Marks)**

QUESTION TWO

- a) Critically evaluate the importance of applying evaluation standards in assessing public or organizational projects.

(10 Marks)

- b) Assess the role of evaluation management in ensuring that evaluation findings are credible, timely, and useful for decision-making in projects or programmes.

(5 Marks)

QUESTION THREE

- a) Explain how effective project communication supports coordination and performance during project implementation. Use practical examples from a project environment to support your answer.

(5 Marks)

- b) Critically assess how effective project change management contributes to project success in dynamic project environments.

(5 Marks)

- c) Apply project reporting practices to address performance challenges and strengthen accountability during project implementation.

(5 Marks)

QUESTION FOUR

- a) Assess how proper termination practices contribute to organizational learning, accountability, and long-term project success.

(5 Marks)

- b) Apply project monitoring and control tools to a complex project scenario and evaluate how these tools can enhance performance tracking, risk management, and timely decision-making.

(5 Marks)

- c) Critically apply the steps of the project control cycle to a complex project scenario

(5 Marks)