



**MINUTES OF THE STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 21 MAY 2009 AT 2PM (UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER)**

ATTENDEES

Professor Geoffrey Elliott (Chair)	Director of Regional Engagement, University of Worcester
Mrs Debbie Lambert	Manager of the LLN for H&W
Mr Ian Peake	Principal, Herefordshire College of Technology
Mrs Gail Rothnie	Head of Outreach, University of Birmingham
Miss Donna Obrey (Secretary)	Project Officer for LLN for H&W

1. Apologies

Mr Chris Morecroft	Principal, Worcester College of Technology
Mr Mike Rookes	Director, Open University (West Midlands)

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

A written update on the matters arising was received and DL informed the Group that she had a further update on Item 5 - Market Needs Analysis for North Worcestershire Project. Kidderminster College have confirmed that they are happy with the suggestions made by NEW College.

3. Chair's Business

There was no chair's business.

4. Budget Update

The Group received the budget update and DO advised that there had not been any significant change in the budget since the previous meeting. A carry forward of £40,500 is currently being projected at the end of this financial year.

There is a balance of £57,775 remaining to fund capital items and £206,750 remaining to fund projects to the end of March 2010, this project funding has already been committed in the budget.

5. Projects

Projects Approved Since Previous Meeting

Since the previous meeting, 2 projects have been approved by chairs action:

Additional Funding for FD Social Care Bid (LLN & Others)

The additional funding requested for this project has been approved by Chairs Action and DL informed the Group that the national bid had been successful however the amount awarded for the national bid had been slightly reduced and therefore the LLN contribution had also reduced.

Development of a Specialist Online Mentoring System to Support Courses which require Employer Engagement & Industrial Links (Worcester College of Technology)

DL reported that clarification had been received in response to the questions raised at the previous meeting and this project was subsequently approved by Chairs Action.

Projects for Consideration/Approval

Developing a Mentoring Framework for Work Based Learning and the Third Sector (Herefordshire, Worcestershire & Shropshire Training Providers Association)

This project is looking at the role of the mentor in the work based learning and third sector fields in order to develop a specific resource. The Group felt that this was a good idea, however it was suggested that they speak to FE Colleges such as HCT, NEWC and WCT who have already done some work in this area.

On the condition that they work with the FE Colleges, this funding was approved.

Research towards the development of a Post-Graduate Certificate in Creative Therapies (University of Worcester)

Funding was requested to undertake research into a new course in Creative Therapies. DL advised the Group that she had already approached the Project Manager to seek clarification relating to how this differs from a previous project and informed the Group of the response received.

The Group were happy with the clarification and subsequently approved the project funding.

Development of a Foundation Degree in Entertainment Media Graphics (Worcester College of Technology)

WCT requested funding to convert an existing HND to a Foundation Degree. The Group discussed the reduction in applicants over the past few years and requested confirmation that this will be different to other similar courses provided locally.

The funding was not approved at this time.

Development of a Foundation Degree in Salon Practice (Hair, Beauty, Holistic and Spa Pathways) (Worcester College of Technology)

The Group acknowledged that they had approved a similar project at Gloucestershire College (GC) previously and suggested that WCT speak to GC to enquire about their recruitment on to this course.

The Group authorised £3,000 funding on the condition that they speak to GC regarding their student numbers on this course and to see what parts of their course they could use/adapt.

Development of a Foundation Degree in Applied Arts (Workshop Practice) (Worcester College of Technology)

As with the earlier project discussed above, which was looking at developing an FD in Entertainment Media Graphics, the Group requested confirmation that this course would be different to other similar courses provided locally.

The funding was not approved at this time.

Development of European MSc in Basketball Coaching (University of Worcester)

The Group discussed the project bid and noted that this would result in a new vocational MSc which would incorporate flexible delivery and also links with industry.

This project funding was approved.

Study Skills – Preparation for Higher Education (Evesham & Malvern Hills College)

DL advised that this project had been moved from the Big Projects section. It is study skills for those returning to study and NVQ students. The Group felt that resources should already be available online.

The Group agreed they would prefer the LLN to work with the colleges to see what is already available with a view to producing some generic materials for use by the FE colleges. This information could be made available on Wider Horizons and could also link to the materials offered by the University of Birmingham.

This project was not approved at this time.

FD Sport (Pershore College, part of Warwickshire College)

DL informed the Group that Pershore College have submitted this project bid form to request a change in the project that was originally looking to develop an FD in Sport. Warwickshire College are moving their Sport provision to another campus outside Herefordshire & Worcestershire, therefore Pershore College would like to change their project to focus on Horticulture.

The Steering Group were happy with this proposed change and approved the request.

Metamorphosis (Pershore College, part of Warwickshire College)

This project was also requesting a change to an existing project which was converting hard copy distance learning materials to electronic. DL advised that Pershore had bought the software package to do this but have discovered that it didn't work. They are proposing to use the remainder of the money to purchase equipment to assist students in collecting evidence of work based learning.

This amendment to the project was not approved.

Progression – Level 3 to Level 4 access in Landbased Vocational Study (Pershore College, part of Warwickshire College)

This project was requesting funding to develop transparent progression routes from Level 3 to 4 for Landbased courses.

As the Group felt that these pathways should already be known they were unable to approve the funding but suggested that the LLN talk to Pershore College about producing a progression agreement.

Action: LLN to contact Pershore College regarding setting up a progression agreement for Landbased courses

Supporting Revalidation of Animal Welfare & Veterinary Nursing Provision at Pershore College (Pershore College, part of Warwickshire College)

The Group were unable to discuss this project in detail as there was not sufficient information in the project bid form. The Chair advised the Group that the FD in Veterinary Nursing is currently under review with the University of Worcester, it was therefore agreed to defer this project until the outcome of the review was known.

It was requested that the information in this project form be expanded prior to resubmission.

HWLLN funding for Data Storage for Arts/Media Studies

Colin Wood has now spoken to the IT Managers and submitted a proposal to purchase 12 storage devices for the relevant FE Colleges.

The Group approved the proposal.

Action: CW to liaise with DO to arrange for purchase of 12 storage devices

Big Projects for Consideration/Approval

Prepare Materials and Support for Creative Based/Distant Learning AMSPAR Diploma in Primary Care Management Level 5 (Evesham & Malvern Hills College)

DL reminded the Group that they had previously awarded money to E&MHC to undertake some market research into delivering their AMSPAR course by distance learning. Based on the results of this market research they have decided this is feasible and currently have 30 people interested.

The Group requested that they are encouraged to look in to gaining accreditation for progression and questioned whether it could be a CertHE.

The Group authorised the funding on the condition that they investigate HE accreditation and HE routes.

Bringing HE Skills Closer to Home (The Hereford Academy)

The Group were unable to authorise this project as it was focussed at Level 3, the only link with HE was that the delivery would be made by a HE tutor.

It was agreed that they should be involved in the bridging project, being discussed later in the meeting, and they should also speak to Val Yates (Aimhigher).

Supporting Creative Arts Students in Transition from Vocational FE Courses to HE (Hereford College of Arts)

This project is looking at progression into HE through bridging and progression agreements, plus also looking at IAG.

This project was approved.

Promoting Entrepreneurship among Disabled People with Visual Impairment (Royal National College for the Blind)

DL summarised the project which is looking to develop a Level 4 training programme on entrepreneurship for people with a visual impairment.

The Group approved £13,000 plus £1,500 capital for this project on the condition that they attempt to validate or accredit the programme.

A Model for Enhancing and Embedding Employability and Supporting Progression in Curricula for the Humanities (University of Worcester)

This project is looking at developing employability training for creative arts students by working with employers to develop and deliver the programme. GR suggested that they may be interested in linking with Eluned Jones (Head of Careers and Employability) from the University of Birmingham.

The Group approved £13,000 to fund this project as they agreed that they could not provide funding to cover the 'Release from other duties for UW Employability Development Worker' or the '10% contingency'.

Development of three Foundation Degrees in Expressive Arts (North East Worcestershire College)

Funding was requested to work with employers to develop 3 Foundation Degrees in Expressive Arts.

The Group were happy to award this funding upon satisfactory clarification that this does not overlap with the provision at Kidderminster College and WCT.

My Learning Tube for HE in FE (Worcester College of Technology)

DL advised that this project is looking to develop something called 'mylearningtube' which will be an educational version of 'YouTube'. This would enable students to access lectures offsite and use video for assessment.

The Group thought this was an interesting project and approved the funding for both the project and the capital items requested.

HE Peer Connector: A Pilot Project (Kidderminster College)

This project is looking to use HND students to act as mentors to Level 3 students. The Group discussed how this was a similar idea to the Aimhigher Associates Scheme.

Although the Group agreed this was promising, the project could not be approved at this meeting as the Group felt it was important for this to link with Aimhigher. They requested that a joint proposal be submitted to the next meeting by Kidderminster College and Aimhigher.

Project Closure Forms

DL provided the Group with a brief verbal summary for each of the Project Closure Forms submitted to this meeting.

6. Tracking the Success of LLN Learners Research Report

Following a verbal summary of the findings, the Group discussed the research report looking at the success rates of students studying LLN funded/designated courses.

7. Report on Work in Progress

DL summarised her work in progress and also provided an additional update as there had been a number of developments since the papers had been circulated. She summarised that:

- The LLN is hoping to employ Joe Hodgson 2 days per week from July to assist the team.
- The recent phase of visits to the Colleges has now been completed, she has also met with the 3 Heads of Institute at UW.
- Viv Bell has been seconded for 12 months to work on a JISC project for 2 days per week.
- A lot of work has been undertaken looking at the possibility of extending the LLN after the life of the project which is due to complete in March 2010. DL explained that she is anticipating that a number of staff contracts will be extended to differing extents with the focus of the LLN moving to Work Based Learning, Improving Progression Retention & Collaboration and HE in Herefordshire. She advised the Group of the reasons for wanting to extend contracts for another academic year. The Group were happy with this proposal.

Bridging Project - The Group discussed a proposal submitted by DL looking at bridging across the two counties. DL informed the Group that Bob Parker had already commenced work on the 14 – 19 Diploma project. The LLN would like to employ a consultant, who has previously worked for Birmingham LLN, to work alongside BP on this together with the employer research in North Worcestershire and this local bridging project. DL requested an additional £11,000 to cover the cost of the bridging project which was approved by the Group.

8. Update on Progression Agreements

The Group noted the update on progression agreements.

9. Update on Aimhigher Activities

The Group received the update on Aimhigher Activities

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 30 June 2009 at 12pm (Room EE G050, University of Worcester)