

Project Name: Development of a Specialist on line Mentor system to support courses which require employer engagement and industrial links.

Amendment History:

Version No.	Date	Reason for Amendment
one	20/01/09	New Proposal

Name of Project Manager & Contact Details

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Document Distribution

<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Action/Information</i>
Debbie Lambert	LLN	Manager of the LLN	For information
Geoffrey Elliott	UW	Members of the Steering Group	To approve the proposal
Chris Morecroft	WCT		
Ian Peake	HCT		
Mike Rookes	OU		
Gail Rothnie	UoB		
Donna Obrey	LLN	Project Officer for the LLN	To track and monitor project

Background

Objectives of the Project

- To develop and trial a system of online specialist mentor support which would improve opportunities for employer engagement and aspects of work based learning.
- To engage with employers to ensure that the facility meets the needs of industry
- To develop an on line mentoring system that could be used by UW and other Institutions within LLN Herefordshire and Worcestershire, whose courses require active links with employers and industry.
- To develop a model of delivery which incorporates both full and part time opportunities widening access to the course and encouraging greater participation from a more diverse range of learners.

Project Approach

This project will be led by WCT but will be in collaboration with UW and HWLLN. Members of WCT staff would be bought out of teaching duties in order to develop an online specialist mentor support system ready for intake of students on the FD Fashion and Surface Pattern course for September 2009. The project approach will include employer engagement in content development, and the system will contain significant vocationally relevant elements.

The mentor role would be undertaken by professionals employed within the industry who had been appointed by the course team to oversee a discrete aspect of work based learning embedded within some of the modules. The mentees would be full and part time students who would be in contact with their appointed mentor for up to approximately 10 hours per year in an online capacity with the purpose of developing and verifying their work in line with industry procedures and standards.

Once in place the project would be sustained through annual review and evaluation, the mentors would be appointed from a pool of industry specialist and funded as an hourly paid post. We would envisage that the pool of industry specialist could develop from the students own work placement activities and contacts.

Scope:

A Key Products from the project

- Development of innovative and collaborative employer engagement.
- Online platform for online mentoring support
- Evaluative report on success of project
- Recommendations for use in other courses

B Out of Scope

The project will not cover the marketing of the course.

Constraints

- Staff availability and time
- Agreement between institutional bodies (UW and WCT)
- Involvement of industry representatives

Initial Project Case

The funding will be used to enable some release of teaching duties for key staff to carry out the networking, research and development of the system.

Benefits of the Project

To students –

- Development of new progression opportunities within vocationally based courses that require strong industry links.
- Access to specialist online mentors employed in the industry.
- To develop vocational and technical skills in communicating with industrial links
- To increase student employability by embedding relevant vocational language and procedures into their academic courses.

To employers -

- To develop strong links between the Industry and Higher Education
- To provide access to student work placements
- To develop new systems that are relevant to the needs of employers and the sector.

To UW and HWLNN–

- To continue to develop collaborative working with partner institutions across the counties.
- To support the increase of students numbers on vocational courses
- To support vocationally relevant training and opportunities for employer engagement

Key Assumptions

The availability of the key members of staff to complete the project on time
Support and approval from LNN

Timescale

To complete the project by May 2009

To pilot the project within the FD Fashion & Surface Pattern course from Sept 2009

Costs

Based on five days development time plus two days training for internal and external users.

Cover for teaching hours to allow staff to be trained on the system and to produce evaluative report. Also one computer (mac) and one laptop will need to be purchased to assist with training and development. Total estimated costs of £5000.

How will the project be evaluated?

Number of students accessing specialist online support from industry

Positive feedback from industry relating to students employability

Establish focus group with the learners to monitor access and relevance to course

Survey of online mentors to establish links between system and student work experience

Quantative measurement of online use through moodle tracking

How will the project be sustained?

WCT to continue to use and develop the facility once it has been developed.

Implications for Equality and Diversity

The project seeks to provide equality of access to industry based mentors for all students and thus address issues of inclusiveness and widening participation in Higher Education.

Initial Risk Log

The following table summarises the risks that have been identified that may prevent the project being completed to the required quality, budget and timescale. The probability and impact of each risk has been graded as low, medium or high to indicate the relative importance attached to each element of risk.

Risks	Probability	Impact	Containment Plan
The lack of time for key members of the team	low	high	Search for other staff to join the team
FD Fashion & Surface Pattern course not validated for 2009	med	high	Tie in development of online mentoring system with ongoing development of programme

Project Team

Peter Kilcoyne (Head of ILT WCT)

Margaret McDonough (PM for HE WCT)

Rachel Taylor (Industry Link)

Sue Taylor (Course Leader Fashion & Clothing WCT)

Maureen Gamble (Head of Creative and Digital Media UW)

Marc Bullock (ILT School of Art & Design WCT)