

Hereford and Worcestershire Lifelong Learning Network (LLN)

*The overall objective for all Lifelong Learning Networks (LLNs) is:
to improve the coherence, clarity and certainty of progression opportunities for
vocational learners into and through higher education.(HEFCE)*

The H&W Lifelong Learning Network exists to create new opportunities for vocational learners in Herefordshire and Worcestershire to achieve and progress in higher education.

Its aims are:

- To help learners to move on from vocational learning to higher education by providing clear advice and learning support where necessary.
- To work together to produce new programmes to increase the choice of available courses.
- To help vocational and work-based learners get onto appropriate courses by guaranteeing places and recognising the value of their learning
- To support the development of a high quality flexible vocational curriculum, including enhancement modules, generic modules, and CPD routes.
- To strengthen collaboration between partners to help us each work better

So that we can measure the LLNs achievements we would be grateful if you could answer a few questions as fully as you can.

Summary of 25 Responses (25/6/07)

Q1 Do you think that the aims of the LLN are appropriate? If not, what should the LLN aim to do?

Responses

Generally YES. Consistent with other LLNs and Aim Higher. Maybe too ambitious. LLN could develop progression pathways including 1)Taster, 2)Bite Size, leading to 3)Modular learning

Does Aim 1 need to be more specific about the possibility of a number of steps for a learner moving from vocational learning/non-learning to HE?

Q2 From your own point of view, what outcomes do you hope that the LLN can deliver in the first one to two years?

Responses

- Increase HE numbers
- Raise profile of vocational courses
- Outcomes 1 & 4
- Mutual trust/understanding between providers
- Appraise/map existing course
- Progression agreements/routes
- Greater student focus
- Honest, open IAG
- Development activity for key staff

Q3 Do you think that there any barriers to the LLN achieving its aims? If so what are they?

Responses

- Lack of awareness of LLN
- Absence of Credit Transfer arrangements
- Initiative overload
- Lack of funding especially for courses
- Funding for suitable Access course
- Unwillingness/difficulty in working with HEIs, FE colleges & employers
- Lack of commitment/time/ understanding

Q4 What is the one thing that the LLN must achieve if it is to be successful?

Responses

Inclusiveness/ impartiality/ collaboration/ engagement of stakeholders/ increase HE rates/ alignment with existing provision/ change in aspirations for vocational learners and non-learners/ to be seen as working on behalf of partners and stakeholders to help them achieve their own objectives/

Q5 What is the one thing the LLN must avoid doing?

Responses

Alienation of stakeholders including students	Favouritism of organisations or progression routes
Working in isolation	Doing nothing that makes a difference
Bureaucracy	Ducking difficult issues
Duplication or competition	

Q6 What incentives might encourage partners to engage with the LLN?

Responses

Financial incentives for employers resulting from Leitch report	Clear processes of alignment rather than layers of new activity
Clear understanding of remit	Potential for increased numbers
Funding to support initiatives	Involvement in decision making
Simplicity	Sense of ownership & involvement

Q7 What do you think your organisation hopes to get from its engagement with the LLN?

Responses

Engagement of non-traditional learners (widening participation)
Better outcomes for students
Better use and /or mix-and-match of existing portfolios of courses in the region
Provision of progression opportunities and engagement with particular subject area
Promotion and development of work-based learning
Involve other IAG organisations like NextStep.
Demographic changes could potentially mean more adult learners

Q8 Do you want to suggest any improvements to the structure and organisation of the LLN?

Responses

Generally no; so far; so good. Team seem to be communicating well and addressing previous reputation within key stakeholders for non-co-operation.
Is there need for someone working with adults to be on steering committee?
Could a video link provide opportunities to share good practice?

Q9 Are there any ways the LLN can a)improve or b) widen stakeholder engagement?

Responses

Engagement with employers; make clear benefits for employers in engagement
Raise awareness of opportunities with employers
Involvement with SSCs and 14-19 consortium/specialist diplomas
"Quick Wins". Ensure organisations see benefits for involvement
Capitalise on current large base of stakeholders
Stakeholder mapping indicating level of interest
Open communication