

**Project Name: Supporting Creative Arts Students in Transition from Vocational FE courses to HE**

**Project Manager: Helen Vine**

**Document Version: 1**

**Document Distribution:**

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## **1 Background**

Over the past three years HCA has been developing strategies to encourage non traditional route students to progress into Higher Education in the Creative Arts. This has included development of progression agreements, pilot studies into bridging courses, increased IAG, collaborative working with schools, employers, national bodies and other HE and FE providers.

These strategies have been developed in response to research that shows that the Creative Industries are amongst the fastest growing employers but that a lack of information and little understanding of the process of studying at HE create barriers to progression for non traditional students in the sector. In addition the strategies recognise that there are significant differences in teaching and learning between Higher Education level and Further Education Level study and that students may need support in making the transition. Pilot studies at the University of the Arts London exploring the role and effectiveness of bridging courses have shown that bridging courses in the arts lead to an increase in confidence and capacity for vocational route students progressing to HE. Their study shows that non traditional route students who undertake additional student study support find it easier to study independently, have greater cultural capital and are more prepared to sustain the transition from FE to HE.

In addition, experience at HCA suggests that bridging courses that focus on study support in specialist areas; that puts subject specific learning into context; and that is delivered in conjunction with enhanced information advice and guidance about employment opportunities, contributes significantly to the successful progression of non traditional learners.

Across the region, HCA has sought to reduce the barriers to progression and to develop bilateral and regional agreements to enhance student study support and transition activities for students from vocational pathways building on progression agreements and institutional cooperation.

## 2 Objectives of the Project

This project will develop the opportunities for students to progress within the Arts, by implementing a multiple strand strategy of improved access for non-traditional vocational students, improved support for students, developing bridging courses, improving IAG, as well as developing institutional and regional frameworks for progression.

Specifically the project will seek:

- To develop and extend the scope of progression work in the region by developing a programme of Bridging courses and progression activities for vocational students.
- To make HE courses more accessible to a wider range of non traditional route students
- To develop a model of student study support for students progressing from new C & M Diploma into HE and map provision against level 3 multi disciplinary curriculum. To look at how curriculum interfaces with specific HE courses, and to contribute to proposed conference on 'Diplomas: Pathway to HE' at the end of the year. This would be of benefit to regional partners as well as HCA.
- To help meet targets in recruiting non traditional route students to HE
- To develop clear and achievable progression routes for schools and colleges to enhance current IAG regarding routes and careers into the Creative Industries
- To develop an innovative programme of bridging activities for students progressing from HE to FE and from FdA to Top up programmes in partner schools and colleges and at HCA
- To develop and implement opportunities for meaningful dialogue and articulation between FE and HE academic staff in partner schools and colleges and at HCA
- To develop progression routes and linkages for employers and explore the potential of P/T Bridging/access courses for employees
- To support recruitment and progression by providing information to support admissions process for progressing vocational students that demonstrates appropriate consistency, fairness and transparency.
- To explore the potential for validating learner/study support modules to incorporate into validated additional learning provision for Level 3 C & M Diploma.

### **3 Project Approach**

The project approach would be based on the secondment and funding of a member of staff to undertake the development and implementation of this strategy. Their role would be to develop all aspects of this strategy in parallel.

Project approach would expect to include:

- Negotiations for the enhancement of progression activities in Arts, Design and Media with regional schools and colleges, and the responsibility for developing a programme of student study support opportunities for regional colleges
- Research, discussions and interviews into existing student study support provision with Admissions and Specialist tutors in Partner colleges offering L3 Vocational pathways in particular: Evesham College, ( inc Malvern); Hereford Sixth Form College; Kidderminster College; Ludlow College; North East Worcestershire College ( Degree Academy); Worcester College of Technology; Worcester Sixth Form College
- Discussions with Connexions and other careers specialists including schools and colleges careers tutors in the region to inform and support development programme
- Development of a progression enhancement programme and exemplar support package of bridging and student support to underpin regional progression agreements to offer to HCA FE ND students and partner colleges.
- Focus groups with students from partner colleges for feedback and evaluation to inform development of appropriate Bridging courses

### **4 Scope:**

#### **A Key Products from the project**

Programme of progression activities with partner colleges for FE to HE and FdA to Top up students

Bridging programmes in Art & Design and Media Arts for ND students from Partner colleges to include careers and advice in the sector which could potentially be developed to be embedded into part of Level 3 curriculum delivery C & M Diploma

Teacher's Pack to include rationale, scheme of work and lesson plans to support programme of Bridging courses for dissemination in Art & Design, and Media Arts This pack could potentially be applicable and transferrable to other sectors with the development of other subject specific content.

Material to support guidance in the form of Bridging courses for regional FE colleges.

Study support transition provision and support for students progressing to Level 6 Top-up

Additional recruitment and improved progression to HE ( BA, FdA and Top-up) from Vocational Courses

Enhanced IAG and student study support for students undertaking student study support and bridging courses

Good practice information for fair admissions policy to support project

Documentation for Bridging course model available for use by regional LLN FE and HE partners

DVD documenting provision to add to Taster site on Wider Horizons Portal if additional funding can be sourced

Final report on Bridging project and activity for dissemination to partners

## **B Out of Scope**

The validation of any emerging Bridging modules

Marketing of Bridging courses

Delivery costs and travel costs incurred for transportation of students to delivery centres from participating colleges

Making of DVD, Additional funding will be sought to support this piece of work

## **5 Constraints**

Major constraint in development of this project will be down time in the academic year when students and FE staff will be on summer vacation. This time will be used to review and develop the progression activity plan and bridging models and admissions policy statement.

## **6 Initial Project Case**

Funding will enable time to be dedicated to further development of progression work across the region and the design and implementation of student support bridging initiatives for target group

## **7 Benefits of the Project**

### **Benefits to the students:**

Reduced barriers to progression for non-traditional students

Students will be given a better opportunity to take advantage of progression agreements

Greater understanding of teaching and learning methods at HE and enhanced student study support

Increased cultural capital and critical awareness in readiness for progression to studying at HE

Increased confidence in capacity to progress

Greater understanding of vocational pathways to careers in the Creative Industries

Improved experience to sustain progression into and through the HE levels for the student.

### **Benefits to the college:**

Development of new Bridging courses

Improved progression from regional colleges

Improved regional and local linkages with Schools, colleges and employers.

Increased retention rate of HE students from non traditional and vocational routes

### **Benefits to the LLN**

Contribution toward the achievement of targets for development of additional numbers of vocational route students into HE in Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Culture and Media

Supporting FE/HE progression by adding value to non traditional pathways.

Practical enhancement of and support for regional progression agreements

Identification of existing student study support at partner colleges

DVD and IAG material for Wider Horizons Portal subject to funding

## **8 Key Assumptions**

Availability of appropriate staff

Sufficient recruitment and support from regional institutions

Support to transport students across region to delivery centres

## **9 Costs (This should include the commitment of the organisation to pay 20% of the costs)**

*Double click on the table below to detail the costs of the project (to insert another row, highlight the row after where you would like the row to be inserted and go to 'Insert' & 'Rows')*

<b>Description of Costs</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Revenue Costs:</b>	
Staff appointment	15,000.00
Expenses travel, hospitality	1,800.00
on costs	3,000.00
facilities	750.00
academic staff time to support development	2,500.00
admin support	1,000.00
<b>Sub-Total of Revenue Costs</b>	<b>24,050.00</b>
<b>Sub-Total of Capital Costs</b>	<b>0.00</b>

## **10 Project Timescale**

June 2009:

Identification and appointment of appropriate member of staff to implement project  
Desk research into appropriate FE course provision at regional colleges  
Desk research into existing bridging programmes in Art & Design  
Review of research into barriers to HE for non-traditional students that have been identified to inform student support needs  
First stage contact with consultation partners where possible

June/July 2009 Identification of academic support staff to inform development and contribute to design of content

July/August 2009

Design and development of 2 bridging courses  
Planning of regional FE:HE articulation for event for October 2009  
Review and evaluate Admissions policy statement

September 2009

Visits to partner colleges  
Meet and discuss progression programme and activities with academic specialist staff

October/November: activities and initiatives go live

December/January : evaluation and final reporting

## **11 How will the project be evaluated?**

Student evaluation questionnaires and assessment measured against WP criteria and student satisfaction  
Feedback questionnaires to academic staff to evaluate impact on 2<sup>nd</sup> year Vocational students  
Ultimate success measured by proportion of progression and destination of students from Vocational pathways to HE

## **12 How will the project be sustained?**

Matched funding will be sought to sustain these WP initiatives through Aim Higher within timeframe of remaining guaranteed funding period and subsequently directly from HFCE

Partner colleges will be encouraged to commit to annual programme of student study support from WP allocation

Potential integration of programme of study support into C & M Diploma Level 3

## **13 Which aims, outcomes and/or targets will the project achieve for the HWLLN? Please also state which funding criteria this project meets and how.**

**Aims outcomes and targets for HWLLN**

Project will aim to increase numbers of students entering HE with vocational qualifications and help target group succeed at HE

Facilitate the enhancement of FE curriculum to meet student needs and improve learner support

Provide a bridge between FE and HE for students, staff and institutions.

To assist in provision of clear information and contribute to the network and infrastructure of communication

**Funding Criteria:**

The project aims to result in more students with vocational qualifications entering HE, by introducing new progression opportunities, evidenced by robust tracking student progression and destination information

The project will provide newly developed IAG material evidenced by material for partner colleges and for Wider Horizons IAG site

The project will enable joint working between partner institutions to further develop progression activity evidenced by proactive and effective progression agreements

By increasing student study support for the target group of students will have a greater chance of success in HE improving retention and achievement of qualification

**4 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
Identifying appropriate project manager	L	H	Advertise locally , offer as secondment opportunity across LLN
Under recruitment for Progression activities	M	M	Programme could be customised to meet individual partner college needs
Lack of engagement from Partner colleges	M	H	Offer bridging courses as HCA outreach opportunities if funding permits

## **15 Project Team**

Helen Vine HCA

Celia Johnson HCA

Academic HCA staff to be identified

Representatives from regional colleges confirmed

Worcester Sixth Form

Evesham and Malvern:

Awaiting confirmation from other potential contributors to consultation process

Advice and guidance in development of project: Val Yates, Aim Higher, UoW

**29/04/09 HV/LLN**