

Project Name: Herefordshire and Worcestershire Short Course Market Research Proposal

Amendment History:

Version No.	Date	Reason for Amendment
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Project Manager

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Business Partnerships Office

Document Distribution

<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Action/Information</i>
Debbie Lambert			

Background

Purpose

This research proposal seeks to understand the need, demand and value-adding potential for a programme of higher level short courses to be provided by the University of Worcester to the Herefordshire and Worcestershire sub-region.

Background

Delivering a programme of Continuing Professional Development and short courses are specific development objectives as stated through:

- Lifelong Learning Network for Herefordshire and Worcestershire
- UW Strategic Plan
- UW City Campus development
- UW Strategic Course Offer Review
- AWM Regional Skills Partnership

Objectives of the Project

Research Outcomes

- Understand the marketing mix (product, price, distribution and promotion) required to launch, sustain and grow a short course income stream at UW.
- Segment, target and position to serve attractive customers.
- Quantification of demand in target sectors.

Outputs

Plan for a pilot suite of 5 full cost short courses recruiting 20 learners each, running from June to September 2007

Project Approach

Key Products from the project

Research Questions

- Who are our potential customers?
- What do they want to buy now and in the future?
- Who are our competitors?
- How are we different in the eyes of the customer?
- What value proposition is required by our chosen customers?
- How do we secure a customer for life?
- Who are the key purchasing decision makers?
- What service levels will identify us as market leaders?

Sample

We will approach 500 organisations anticipating a 20% response rate. The sample will be representative of the sub-region based on reaching larger sectors and size distribution. Private sector organisations will be identified using *Financial Analysis Made Easy*, a financial database of major public and private British companies administered by Bureau van Dijk Electronic Publishing. Public sector organisations will be identified through the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Economic Assessment.

	Herefordshire	Worcestershire	TOTAL
Public Sector (Health)	2	5	7
Public Sector (Local Government)	2	5	7
Micro businesses (<10)	15	55	70
Small (11-49)	2	6	8
Medium (50-249)	1	3	4
Large (250+)	1	3	4
TOTAL	23	77	100

This sample is representative of the employment base profile of both counties.

Questionnaire

1. Respondent description (organisation, position, age, profession, highest academic achievement) and contact details with a request for permission to contact them.
2. What would be your main motivator for undertaking a short course? (increased job satisfaction, increased professional standing, promotion opportunities, personal fulfilment, update skills)
3. Career aspirations (happy and performing strongly in my job, underperforming, working towards a promotion, looking to change employers but remain in the same field, looking for a career change)

4. When do you expect the next change in your employment/career to take place? (6 months, 1 year, 3 years, 5 years)
5. When in the year would you prefer to go on short courses (summer, Easter, winter)
6. When during the week would you prefer to go on short courses (Saturday, Sunday, weekday evenings, weekday daytime)
7. How long would you expect a short course to last (1 day, 1 week intensive, 4 months part time, all year)
8. Where would you expect the majority of the learning contact to take place (at UW, at your employer's premises, online, a combination of all three)
9. Would you want your short course to lead to a recognised academic award? (yes - immediately, yes – longer term, not necessarily)
10. What next after your short course? (continue with short courses where my interest lies, collect short courses to build a bespoke larger qualification, progress into a formal academic programme)
11. If you want to build up towards a formal academic qualification, how far would you want to go? (Foundation Degree, Certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate Degree, Post Graduate Degree) – answers include description of different levels.
12. If your desired course is intended to enhance your career, what is the anticipated salary increase you would expect to receive over the next 12 months? (£1-3K, £3-5K, £5-7K, £7-10K)
13. How would you best like to inquire, book and pay for the course? (all online, by 'phone, face-to-face)
14. Who will pay for the course? (you, your employer, other sponsorship, joint)
15. Please indicate which of the following short courses might interest you (child care, child development, child health, coaching, communication skills, community development, counselling, customer service, design, digital media, entrepreneurship, exercise, family health, fitness, hospitality, information systems management, innovation, leadership, management skills, mental health, nutrition, parenting, people management, problem solving, project management, psychology, rehabilitation, social care, team working, tourism, young people's services)
16. Which other University services would you use? (facilities hire, professional coaching, consultancy, research and development support, developing a new product, developing a new business idea)
17. How do you know about UW? (press/PR, advertising, as a student, through friends relatives, previously unknown)
18. Would UW be your first choice for career development and short course programmes (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
19. What other short course providers would you use? (Chamber of Commerce, FE College, private provider, professional body, trade body)

Timing

- Approval of research proposal – September 2006
- Agree questions and response options with UW – September 2006
- Internal questionnaire pilot – October 2006
- Contact desired respondents by telephone to gain permission/agreement and email questionnaire URL – November 2006
- Complete data gather – December 2006
- Analyse results – January 2007
- Report to audience – February 2007

Data Analysis and Reporting

Andrew Corcoran

Scope

What products are we marketing?

- Integrated Children's Agenda
- Leadership and Management
- Health, Wellbeing and Biomedical Sciences
- Culture, Media, Sport and Tourism

What are our target sectors?

High employment growth sectors that match our current and developing capabilities:

	Employees	
	Number	% of Sub-Region
Public administration, education and health	91,200	26%
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	76,288	22%
Manufacturing	65,758	19%
Banking, finance and insurance	36,677	10%

Constraints

Ready access only to 881 Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce members who have previously given permission to be approached for market research purposes.

Initial Project Case

Gaps in Current Research

Economic demand studies published by the Regional Skills Partnership and the Regional Observatory, and by the report to HEFCE by SQW Ltd, *Options for Higher Education in Herefordshire, Powys and Shropshire*, have the following gaps:

- No focus on Worcestershire which makes up 76% of the sub-region by population
- No review of the needs of micro organisations (<10 employees) which make up 93% of the sub-regional business base
- No review of the needs of Public Sector employers which account for 17% of the active sub-regional workforce

Benefits of the Project

Generating more income by reaching new markets* by using existing intellectual and physical assets.

*30% of respondents in Worcestershire who were willing but unable to attend a learning opportunity in the previous year, believed further learning (training, education, study, personal development) would take up too much of their time (source: *Worcestershire County Economic Assessment 2005-2006*).

Key Assumptions

None

Costs

£10 amazon.co.uk voucher for first 100 respondents	= £1,000.00
Payment of CP@W for facilitation of online questionnaire	= £750.00
TOTAL	= £1,750.00

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

Project Team

Andrew Corcoran – Acting Head of Knowledge Transfer and Business Partnerships Office, University of Worcester

Catherine Steele – Centre for People at Work, Worcester Business School, University of Worcester