



Application to the Big Projects Fund

Project Name: Development of Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services

Project Manager: Ben Dodd – Head of Service Industries, NEW College

Document Version:

Document Distribution:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Action/Information</i>
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1 Background

North East Worcestershire College have been offering Beauty Therapy qualifications for over twenty five years and Public Services qualifications since the early 1990's. In accordance with the College's HE Strategy 2008-11, it is now appropriate to undertake planning and development of Foundation Degrees in both Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services to enable wider participation in Higher Education. It is intended to research and design new Foundation Degrees in these two areas to allow the current cohort of Level 3 students, and students that choose to study the Advanced Diploma in both areas progression opportunities that currently do not exist. The vocational nature of both subject areas suggests that the development of Foundation Degrees in these areas will better match the needs of both employers and students in preparing them for employment and career progression. Both areas are nationally under represented in terms of Higher Education progression, and NEW Colleges Higher Education strategy will ensure greater choice and higher quality Higher Education provision in the future.

On a local level, the development of Foundation Degrees within the county will allow the College to support the economic strategy for the region, which states *"In ten years time, Worcestershire will be an economic driver for the region – with a prosperous and sustainable economy, driven by technology-led enterprises, offering well paid and highly skilled jobs and a high quality of life for its residents"*

A barrier to achievement of this goal is *"the loss of skilled young people from the County, through lack of Higher Education and job opportunities"*

To deliver the vision, the county will need to:-

1. *Develop a knowledge-driven economy*
 - a. seeking to develop established industries towards higher skills
2. Improving the Skills base

- a. We will ensure that the skills base is in position to enable the knowledge driven economy to grow, and ensure that the people of Worcestershire have the right skills to access those jobs. We will develop and retain the skills of the County's young people, as well as improving the skills of the existing workforce. At the same time we will work to improve the quality of training provision, with improved facilities, and much greater flexibility to meet employer and learners needs. Our three priorities will be:
 - Developing and retaining the skills of the County's young people
 - Improving the skill levels of the workforce
 - Improving the quality of the training infrastructure
3. Developing the Infrastructure
4. Ensuring access to the economic benefits

The Sector Skills Council for Public Services, Government Skills, states "*Our goal is to improve the delivery of public services to customers, by building the skills of people working in government departments, non-departmental public bodies and the Armed Forces across the United Kingdom*" they go on to say "*Britain needs a skilled workforce at every level if it is to compete and succeed in a dynamic world economy. In the race to be competitive, skills will play a vital role in enabling the UK economy to meet the demands of the global marketplace*"

HABIA, the Sector Skills Council for the Hair and Beauty Sector states in the recently published sector review that there are a number of skills gaps within the Beauty and Spa industries that relate directly to management training. It also shows skills gaps within the industry of technical subjects that are covered within the Foundation Degree, for example, laser hair removal, and stone therapy.

In-County production of highly qualified, employable citizens is an essential ingredient for success. It supports employment, career progression and job creation; it impacts directly on the local economy and generates income; it provides products and services for the local economy but also for export; it stimulates creative activity; and it helps to promote the identity of Worcestershire. By providing progression opportunities for students to Foundation Degree Level will effectively meet the needs and aspirations of students, who currently are able to progress no further than Level 3. In the current economic climate, the employers needs will also be met. By creating opportunities for a more skilled and more qualified workforce, employers will be able to better meet the needs of their customers

Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services would collaborate with employers in the designing and delivery of a robust curriculum to meet their needs within the industry as identified above. It would provide a clear progression route from the Advanced Diplomas in Hair and Beauty and Public Services being delivered in partnership with local schools, and offer Level 3 students the opportunity for further, higher level, education and training

The Foundation Degree programme would equip students with the technical, academic and transferable skills, knowledge and understanding that employers are increasingly seeking. Foundation Degrees are valued qualifications in their own right as well as meeting the lifelong learning agenda through providing a route to an honours degree and further professional qualifications. The Foundation Degree would also contribute to widening participation by promoting a route into Higher Education for those who are not initially confident about tackling a three-year full degree programme or who are unable to travel far because of other commitments. It will also create more part-time opportunities for people already in employment.

Fundamental to the approach taken on the Foundation Degree will be the creation of strong employer partnerships: for the co-funding of projects, and in the

commissioning and development of projects. The approach will enable students to benefit from new ways of course delivery through work experience. North East Worcestershire College has been developing links with employers throughout the West Midlands. The College also has well-established links with numerous high profile hairdressing and beauty salons, and spa's in the local area. We also have very strong links with the uniformed and non uniformed services within the region.

2 Objectives of the Project

- To review the requirements for a Foundation Degree in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services
- To identify specific higher level knowledge and skills that local employers within the vocational areas would want to be included within a Foundation Degree in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services
- To identify and work with local employers in designing and delivering the Foundation Degree in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services
- To develop criteria for part time modes of study for people in employment to participate in the Foundation Degree in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services
- To identify a formal progression opportunity to the Foundation Degree in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services from our current Level 3 provision and the Advanced Diplomas
- To research relevant higher education providers with whom to develop the Foundation Degree and who would provide validation and a formal progression opportunity to Honours Degree

3 Project Approach

Structured interviews will be arranged and conducted with a significant number of local employers within the vocational areas. The objective of the interviews is to gather information on the specific higher level knowledge and skills that local employers require within the beauty and spa industries and public services, and to gauge the demand for a new Foundation Degree in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services.

Structured visits will be arranged to meet with relevant higher education providers with whom to develop the Foundation Degrees and who would provide validation.

Using the research findings, the programme development team will prepare initial ideas on curriculum content and delivery modes, and produce a draft programme specification for the new Foundation Degrees

A meeting will be held to review the proposed programme specification and aspects of the curriculum with local employers and the validating university. Following this meeting interested employers will be invited to join an 'Employer Advisory Board'.

Using employer and university feedback, the programme development teams will finalise the programme specification for the new Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services

4 Scope:

A Key Products from the project

- Newly designed Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services offering a range of vocationally relevant pathways, supported by a programme of visiting lecturers and student projects based on practical and theoretical work with a wide range of employer engagement in a variety of ways. This will also include work placements within the sectors, and liaison with schools, education authorities and other organisations
- A model for employer involvement in the design of Foundation Degrees, which can be used to inform other similar initiatives elsewhere within and beyond the Lifelong Learning Network
- Recruitment of an 'Employer Advisory Boards' to support future development and sustainability of the Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services
- The development of part time modes of study for people in employment to participate in the Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services
- The development of a formal progression opportunity to the Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services from our current Level 3 provision within the areas, and progression opportunities for students undertaking the new Diplomas at Advanced Level
- The development of a formal progression opportunity to Honours Degree

B Out of Scope

- The later stages of the Foundation Degree programme development process are beyond the scope of this project, for example; the use of blended learning to enhance access.

5 Constraints

- As many local employers within the service industries sector are small scale businesses there could be reluctance from them to engage with this project. Historical practices within the beauty sector need to be addressed. Many salon managers are qualified to Level 3, and whilst training did not have access to HE provision. There is a need to address the culture within the sector to ensure the success of the Foundation Degree.
- In Public Services, we already have an established Level 3 provision that provides entry to employment. Again, we will need to ensure that the aspirations of students change to include the willingness to participate in HE

6 Initial Project Case

- The design of a 'demand led' Foundation Degree which will offer opportunities to increase and widen participation in Higher Education locally through vocational progression
- A collaborative project involving a university, a further education college and a range of local employers

- To develop progression from current Level 3 provision in Beauty Therapy and Public Services
- To develop progression opportunities for learners who undertake the Advanced Diploma

7 Benefits of the Project

Key benefits to the learners:

- *This project will develop opportunities for students by providing a sustainable and responsive progression route from Level 3 programmes, including the new Advanced Diploma in Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy being delivered in partnership with local schools from September 2009, and Advanced Diploma in Public Services which will be offered from 2010*
- *Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services will equip learners with a combination of technical and vocational skills, academic knowledge and transferable skills that are valued, and highly sought by local employers.*
- *Foundation Degree in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services will equip learners with the intellectual independence to acquire their own critical vocabulary with which to develop as creative practitioners and valued employees*

Key benefits to employers:

- *Availability of Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services that have been designed to develop the skills and knowledge of the local and national workforces*
- *An increase in the number of part time students entering higher education whilst continuing employment through a flexible curriculum design and programme specification*
- *To involve employers in the development, design and delivery of the curriculum of Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services to support employability of students in the sectors*

Key benefits to North East Worcestershire College:

- *Collaborative involvement with employers to build on the College's long term employer engagement strategy*
- *Increased enrolments on to Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services from existing Level 3 programmes*
- *Improved progression opportunities for Advanced Diploma students*
- *A crucial contribution to the College's three-year Higher Education strategy*

8 Key Assumptions

- The availability of key members of the project team and their associated release from other duties by the College.

- A significant number of local employers will engage effectively with the project.
- University partnership.

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

- Staff secondment for Project Leader and other Project Team members: 2 days per week @ £210 per day, over 34 weeks = £14,280
- Travel and other expenses = £3,720

Total costs estimated at £18,000 (to include the College's commitment of 20% of total costs)

It should be noted that project funding will contribute to the costs of developing the Foundation degree pathways only, it will not cover validation costs.

Description of Costs	£
Revenue Costs:	
Sub-Total of Revenue Costs	0.00
Capital Costs:	
Sub-Total of Capital Costs	0.00
Total Cost	0.00

10 Project Timescale

One year.

11 How will the project be evaluated?

The success of this project will be evaluated by measurement against outcomes identified as 'key products' from the project; measures will include:

- Comparison of curriculum content and delivery models between the existing Level 3 programmes of study and the proposed single Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services, with a focus on increased employer involvement
- Comparison with student destinations data from current Level 3 programmes of study and the proposed single Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services

- Comparison of value added data with regards to employment options available for current level 3 students, and those students undertaking a Foundation Degree
- In consultation with employers, assessment of career progression opportunities and potential for promotion to management positions for learners who study a Foundation Degree
- Monitoring and review of the activities/outcomes achieved by the Employer Advisory Board in relation to the newly designed Foundation Degree in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services
- A model for employer involvement in the design of Foundation Degrees formulated, articulated and available for dissemination via academic journals, good practice events and exhibitions

12 How will the project be sustained?

If successful this project could also be used to encourage other departments within the College to set Higher Education aspirations for Level 3 learners. By engaging with employers throughout, this will ensure that their requirements are fully integrated into the project.

The establishment of an Employer Advisory Board will be the mechanism which ensures that local employers will remain actively involved in the future development of the Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services

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.

- To increase the numbers of students entering higher education with vocational qualifications by completing a Foundation Degree
- To increase the number of part time students entering higher education whilst continuing employment within the Beauty Therapy and Public Services sectors
- To help the target groups of students succeed in higher education within the Beauty Therapy and Public Services sectors
- To involve employers in the development, design and delivery of curriculum of Foundation Degrees in Beauty and Spa Management and Public Services
- To provide a bridge between FE and HE for students, staff, employers, institutions within the Beauty Therapy and Public Services Sectors

14 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
Release of staff to	Low	High	Rationalisation of project

implement the project			objectives and key stages to match staff availability
Lack of sufficient employer involvement	Medium	High	Involvement of relevant Sector Skills Councils and Chambers of Commerce to assist in recruitment of suitable employers
Sustainability via Employer Advisory Board	Medium	Medium	Other employer engagement methods would be pursued if the Employer Advisory Board failed – e.g. employer satisfaction surveys
Identifying partner institution collaboration	Low	High	Preliminary visits to relevant HEIs

15 Project Team

Ben Dodd (Project Leader), Head of Department, Service Industries, NEW College
Charlotte Swain, Programme Area Manager, Hospitality, Sports Science and Uniformed Services, NEW College

Lesley Baker, Programme Area Manager, Hairdressing, Beauty and Holistic Therapies, NEW College

Shelley Phelan, Head of Quality & Professional Development, NEW College

Susan Smith, Course Leader, Level 3 & Diplomas in Uniformed Services, NEW College

Stephen Hay, Course Leader, National Diploma in Uniformed Services, NEW College

Caroline Dyer, Senior Teacher & Level 3 Beauty Therapy Lecturer NEW College

Carron Tipper, Course Leader, Level 3 Beauty Therapy, NEW College

Pauline Coyle, Subject Lecturer, Level 3 Beauty Therapy, NEW College

Marie Fattorini, Course Leader, Beauty and Holistic Therapies, NEW College