



**Agenda for LLN Steering Group meeting,
Thursday 14th December 2006 at 2.00pm,
Bredon Block BB202, University of Worcester**

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Approval of minutes from meeting of 29th August and Matters Arising
- 3 Chair's Business
- 4 Presentation on 'Wider Access' (Anne Hannaford and Andrew Rothery)
- 5 Report from Julie Balsom on proposed Masters Project
- 6 To receive draft monitoring and evaluation report for HEFCE
- 7 To approve revised targets for 2006/7
- 8 To consider revised strategy, structure and staffing
- 9 To receive revised Financial Profile (to be tabled)
- 10 To consider paper regarding logo for the network
- 11 To approve process for project approval
- 12 To receive the Joint Forum draft overarching principles and operational criteria for a common approach to credit
- 13 To receive feedback from networks attended :
 - Regional LLN Group
 - National practitioner Group
- 14 To discuss the Annual Conference
- 15 Any Other Business

Wider horizons: an open educational online environment

Providing the online environment for the implementation of the work of the Lifelong Learning Network

Introduction

This paper describes the framework for the development of the online environment required to support the LLN and deliver its online activities. It will provide information, communication channels, interactive services and links into the courses and colleges. It will be focussed on the individual learner and provide learners with personal tools and services which they can continue to use independently of the courses of study they undertake over the years.

We refer to the open educational online environment for the LLN as *Wider Horizons*.

The framework outlined here has been developed during 2006 by Anne Hannaford, Director of Information and Learning Services, Andrew Rothery, Director of E-Learning, Viv Bell, *WM-Share* Project Leader (Regional JISC-funded Project) in collaboration with Debbie Lambert, LLN Manager and Geoffrey Elliot, Director of Lifelong Learning.

We are proposing collaboration between LLN and ILS since after the three-year lifetime of the LLN project, we would expect the university and its partners to take over the continuing support and development of *Wider Horizons*.

Wider horizons and the LLN

Wider Horizons will provide learners with a personalised learning experience which will continue during their lifetime. The open online environment is essentially a portal where learners can register and log in to access the services and information. It will be available to students on the LLN courses but also available to any member of the public who is interested. Therefore, as well as having a role in supporting students taking courses and progressing from one to another, it will also have a role in attracting people into education and the courses on offer. It will also play a role in providing resources for staff within the network, in sharing good practice and aiding collaboration.

The following list gives some examples of the information, tools and services envisaged within *Wider Horizons* to support LLN:

- Information about colleges and courses
- Information about progression ladders
- Links with regional area prospectuses
- Online taster courses – either samples of actual courses, or self-contained mini-courses
- Online discussion areas

- Collaborative tools such as wikis to support the development of online communities around specific topics or themes
- Online access to the LLN learning brokers
- Access to information and resources, collections and repositories
- Links to the virtual learning environments of colleges providing courses
- Personal web space to enable learners to maintain portfolio and other information
- Personal communication tools for learners' use such as blogs
- Information and guidance on e learning and work-based learning for tutors

Please note that these services will complement and enhance the online learning provided by the colleges. They will not duplicate the e-learning activities which individual specific courses will provide for students who have registered. Access will be controlled to ensure that access to "paid" courses and resources is restricted to those entitled to use them. Wider Horizons will enable all learners in the region to interact with each other, to use open resources, and provide support as they move from one course to another.

Wider horizons – the future

Looking ahead to future development, Wider Horizons will of course be able to expand to include new courses and academic subjects which become added in to the LLN. But it will also serve a broader range of courses and community services. Examples include:

The new Worcester city library – it will combine the university library and public library therefore its resources will be open to students and the public alike. Wider Horizons provides an ideal method to give access to its online resources and services.

Worcester County Council - it, for example, has a number of services within different areas: Educational Services, Adult and Community Services, and Cultural Services. All these would be valuable additions to the Wider Horizons environment

The Chamber of Commerce – it has a number of public and subscribed services which again could be made available to the regional learning community through Wider Horizons.

In five years' time, Wider Horizons has the potential to grow to be the online environment which all learners across the region engage with to support them in their studies and help them find the correct route through educational provision. By being open to the public, it will draw in a wider community and help them make a new start in lifelong learning.

Authors: AH, AR, VB, DL and GE
This draft prepared by AR, 5 December 2006

Item 6: To receive draft monitoring and evaluation report for HEFCE

HEFCE require a short update after six months of funding, and a further, more substantial report at the end of the first year. They have provided headings for the year end report, which I have used below

Indicator	Comment
Progress made in relation to specific milestones and targets as set out in the original business case	Please see item 7 below
Evidence of full partner involvement and engagement	Membership of the Steering Group includes each HEI and an FEC representative. Presence of representative from Open University on interview panel for manager of the LLN, and Principal from Worcester College of Technology on panel for curriculum leads. Curriculum groups will include representatives from partners across the network. The network will also work with partners outside the network in e.g. curriculum groups, progression agreements and leading projects. We will hold an Annual Conference for partners across the network and region.
The progress made in establishing progression agreements that operate across the network, and making credit transfer a reality	Job description drawn up for role of Learner Support and Progression Co-ordinator. To be advertised in January 2007 for 3 year period. We have commitment to appropriate progression agreements from all partners. In Herefordshire, a memorandum of co-operation has been agreed which includes reference to progression, and a progression prospectus will be published in the spring.
Progress made in establishing appropriate information, advice and guidance systems, and any arrangements made for tracking and/or re-engaging learners	Job description drawn up for role of Learner Support and Progression Co-ordinator, plus the role of Project Officer to develop tracking mechanisms. To be advertised in January 2007 for 3 year period.
Details of curriculum developments that facilitate progression	Some curriculum developments are underway which are collaborative and/or facilitate progression, e.g top up in Leadership and Management for students with FDs, MA Marketing Management for students in the work place with professional qualifications, FD Payroll with WCT, top up for paramedic technicians with the ambulance Trust, FD for Assistant Practitioners, and FD in Complementary Therapies with GLOSCAT
Identification of the network 'learner constituency', and how the network reflects learner needs	The network is targeting potential students who have not been attracted by traditional routes and/or delivery. Job description drawn up for role of Learner Support and Progression Co-ordinator. To be advertised in January 2007 for 3 year period. Also role of 'learner coaches' been identified to be recruited in 2007/8
A budget summary and update on the use of ASNs	The budget has been re-profiled and will be tabled at the meeting. The ASN return has been made to HEFCE

Item 7: To approve revised targets for 2006/7

Key Work Area	Objectives	2006-07 Targets	Comment
<p>Credit and Progression Agreements</p> <p>Lead: Learner Support and Progression Co-ordinator</p> <p>Resources: LLN Manager, Project Officer, Curriculum Leads Credit and Progression Working Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a credit framework ▪ Agree currency of credits / exchange rates with other providers ▪ Develop Progression Agreements and Guarantees ▪ Provide Information for Learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Credit & Progression Officer appointed ▪ Data repository established - Map of existing courses and entry requirements, progressions, projected and optimum rates ▪ Barriers identified and fed to Learner Support Working Group ▪ Credit and Progression Framework agreed by the LLN (Stage One) ▪ Progression routes for health and care, leadership and management published within progression prospectus ▪ 1x awareness raising workshop/seminar ▪ 3x staff training days ▪ Draft progression agreements with providers in the network ▪ Draft progression agreements with providers outside LLN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advertise in Jan, in place by Easter ▪ Aim to establish repository April-June; aim to conduct research on progression rates to establish baseline March-June. Map of HE courses in Herefordshire completed ▪ Aim to conduct research project into barriers March-June ▪ Draw on national work, aim to complete by December 07 ▪ Publication of Progression Prospectus December 07 ▪ Publication of Herefordshire prospectus by March 07 • Workshop by November 07 • Staff training days November 07 • Drafts by December 07 • Draft progression agreements with providers outside LLN by March 08

Key Work Area	Objectives	2006-07 Targets	Comment
<p>Curriculum development</p> <p>Leads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health and Care Lead ▪ Leadership and Management Lead <p>Resources: LLN Manager, Health and Care Lead, Leadership and Management Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New curriculum development in management and leadership, health and care ▪ Pooled curriculum development capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appoint curriculum leads ▪ Map projected curriculum development, credits and pathways ▪ Barriers to delivery / take-up fed into Learner Support Working Group ▪ New curriculum modules and courses developed to provide 100 ASN split between 2 curriculum areas ▪ Validation timetable and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H &SC appointed, start in Feb 07. L&M advertise in Jan, start in April • Aim to complete by July 07 • Project identify barriers by September 07 • Some new courses starting Sept 07. Aim to achieve 40 ASNs in 2007/8, and 60 in 2008/9. • Timetable for 2007/8 to be

Project Officer H&C and L&M Working Groups, shared pedagogical development resources, Marketing resources, module validation resources		allocation of additional student numbers agreed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-agency curriculum development working groups meeting regularly to track progress (remotely and together) 	agreed by November 07 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one meeting of L&M group, and 2 of the H&SC group by July 07
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Key Work Area	Objectives	2006-07 Targets	Comment
Support For Learners Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learner Support and Progression Co-ordinator ▪ Learning Technology Co-ordinator Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Officer ▪ Learner Support Working Group Capital for laptops pcs, monitors and routers, software licensing, web development, PDP system resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide one-to-one support for vocational learners ▪ Provide flexible learning support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1x Learner Support Lead seconded ▪ 5x Learner Coaches and 1x Learner Broker recruited and trained ▪ Learning Technology Co-ordinator recruited ▪ Menu of support interventions developed and agreed ▪ ICT in place to deliver tracking and support including web development ▪ Development of indicators and baselines to measure ease and use of electronic access ▪ Data entry arrangements and data sharing protocols developed and agreed ▪ Staff training and CPD on ICT and support available in all provider centres ▪ Data monitoring and quarterly reporting arrangements in place ▪ 2x learner support networking events including employer support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advertise in January, start in April ▪ Recruit in 07/08 ▪ Advertise in January, start in April ▪ Menu of support interventions agreed by December 07 ▪ Tracking in place by July 06, initial web development by December 07 ▪ Development by December 07 ▪ Agreement by December 07 ▪ By December 07 ▪ First report by July 07 ▪ 1 learner support networking event by July 07, 1 by December 07

Key Work Area	Objectives	2006-07 Targets	
Partnership Development and Value Added Lead: LLN Manager Resources: Project Officer,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a pooled policy, research and evaluation facility ▪ Identify best practice and deliver organisational and partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governance arrangements and membership agreed for the LLN and its sub-groups ▪ Staff appointed and works commissioned to deliver LLN aims and objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be completed by May 07 ▪ To be completed by Easter for this academic year

Partnership Steering Group, Integrated Partnership	improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver shared services and capacity for staff development, consultation and community/ learner engagement, ▪ Provide a forum for collaboration and ▪ Manage sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreement of Delivery Plans ▪ Management of implementation and performance monitoring - working groups reporting quarterly ▪ Centralised mapping and research repository established ▪ LLN Partnership Office established ▪ LLN Steering Group and Integrated Partnership in place, ▪ Annual conference planned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be completed by May 06 ▪ To commence before July 06 ▪ To start at Easter ▪ Physical Office to be set up in January ▪ In place ▪ To be planned by May 06
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Item 8: To consider revised strategy, structure and staffing

Background

The LLN has the opportunity to fund work which will make a real difference to the progression opportunities for students on vocational qualifications and those in work within the region. In order to ensure the funding from HEFCE, we will need to conduct rigorous monitoring, and to demonstrate actual progress in a number of areas. We will need to demonstrate that we have developed new courses and recruited students to them.

Strategy

In developing the staffing plan, we have taken into account the following principles:

- To ensure that the LLN covers both counties
- To ensure that the LLN operates on behalf of each partner institution
- To limit the cost of a core team
- To fund a number of projects which may address particular concerns of one partner, but which can also assist the development of practice for all partners
- To embed the work within the partner institutions

We have taken the following actions to take into account each principle:

To ensure that the LLN covers both counties	The first curriculum theme lead has requested to be based in Hereford. We are therefore attempting to set up an LLN base in Hereford as well as Worcester.
To ensure that the LLN operates on behalf of each partner institution	I am setting up visits to each partner college to ascertain what they hope that the LLN will help them to achieve, and to identify how they would like to be involved. I will put the results of these visits to the next Steering Group, and will use them to inform future developments.
To limit the cost of a core team	We have reviewed the proposed staffing and combined the following posts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Learner Support and Credit and Progression posts have been combined, with some responsibility going to curriculum leads. This is in recognition that both roles are facilitative and developing what is already in place.• The researcher and administrator posts have initially been combined to reduce costs.• The Learning Broker post will not be advertised until we have clarified potential overlap with the LSC and Train to Gain
To fund a number of projects which may address particular concerns of one partner, but which can also assist the development of practice for all partners	The reduction in the core team will provide additional funding for short term work and projects. We have an initial list, but will seek out additional areas on visits to partner colleges. The funding of projects will be one way of transferring money around the network.
To embed the work within the partner institutions	The first practical step is to attend the joint Marketing Group.

Proposed Staffing Structure for 2006/7

- 1 Manager: Debbie Lambert, in post from 1st November, based at UW
- 2 Curriculum Theme Lead for Health and Social Care to lead on mapping and curriculum development across the partnership, working with sector skills councils and looking at delivery formats: Liz Davies-Ward, in post from February, based in Hereford
- 3 Curriculum Theme Lead for Leadership and Management to lead on mapping and curriculum development across the partnership, working with sector skills councils and looking at delivery formats: Re-advertise in January, offering as full time or two half time posts (one covering each county). Interview end of January/start of February, hope to start April
- 4 LLN Learner Support and Progression Co-ordinator to lead on information, advice and guidance, support mechanisms, credit framework and progression agreements, and work-based learning: Advertise in January, interview end of January/start of February, hope to start April
- 5 LLN Learning Technology Co-ordinator to lead on the development of e learning across the region, and the development of an open online educational environment for the LLN: Advertise in January, interview end of January/start of February, hope to start April
- 6 LLN Project Officer to lead on monitoring the project, research, and communication: Advertise in January, interview end of January/start of February, hope to start April

The need for the following posts will be reviewed in May/ June and may be advertised for 2007/8:

- 7 Learning Broker to facilitate links with employers
- 8 Learning Coaches to support students within HE
- 9 Content Developer to assist staff to create e learning materials
- 10 Additional Curriculum theme leads as project develops

Given the delay in the appointment of the curriculum lead posts, and the necessity to show that the LLN has contributed to attracting new students, the following secondments have been made for a period of three months each to focus on provision providing progression and /or collaborative provision:

- Tim Maxfield (0.5) Business School developing curriculum around Leadership and Management
- Jan Quallington (0.5), Institute of Health developing curriculum around Health and Social Care
- Gareth Jones (0.2) School of Sport developing curriculum around Sports Management and Rehabilitation.

It is expected that similar appointments involving staff from the partners will be made over the next two years.

Item 10: To consider paper regarding logo for the network

1 Aim

It would be useful to have a logo for the network which could be used on anything produced in association with the network. This would help to provide a brand and assist in promotion of the LLN's activities.

2 Proposal

It is proposed that a competition be held for students based in Herefordshire and Worcestershire to design an appropriate logo. This would have the benefit of raising awareness amongst the staff and student bodies.

3 Method

If agreed, I propose to develop a poster and leaflet advertising the competition, giving some information about the LLN, and providing rules for the competition (the technical aspects to be written by UW ILS Service). These posters and leaflets to be distributed to each FE College in Herefordshire and Worcestershire as well as UW. I suggest that the prize should be 1000 pounds, and that the judges be the Steering Group, supplemented with someone from UW ILS to ensure that the logo can be used without difficulty. The timescale would be publication by end of January, with closing date end of February.

Item 11: To approve process for project approval

Background:

As stated above, it is the intention of the network to commission a number of projects. We will need a process to manage these projects involving the following stages:

- 1 Defining the project
- 2 Approving the project
- 3 Monitoring the project
- 4 Evaluating the success of the project

It is proposed that we use standard project template for all projects which would be presented to the Steering Group for approval.

For approval

The Steering Group is asked to approve the use of a standard project proforma for all LLN projects. An example is attached

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT

To define the project, to form the basis for its management and to help with the assessment of the project's overall success. The two primary uses of the document are:

- To ensure that the project has a sound basis before asking the Steering Group to make any major commitment to the project.
- To provide a baseline document against which the Steering Group and LLN Manager can assess progress, issues and on-going viability.

This document has been produced to capture and record the basic information needed to correctly direct and manage the project. It addresses the following fundamental aspects of the project:

- *What is the project aiming to achieve*
- *Why it is important to achieve the stated aims*
- *Who will be involved in managing the project and what are their roles and responsibilities*
- *How and when will the arrangements be put into effect.*

HEADINGS

Project Name:

Amendment History:

Version No.	Date	Reason for Amendment
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Project Manager

Document Distribution

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

Objectives of the Project

Project Approach

Scope:

A Key Products from the project

B Out of Scope

Constraints

Initial Project Case

Benefits of the Project

Key Assumptions

Costs

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