

This project is looking to undertake research to see what new sports provision is needed. It links with employers and would result in a new FD in sport (Tennis & Football).

The funding was approved on the normal condition that the curriculum development is shared with partners of the Network.

Cert Ed/CertDip: Well-Being and the Environment (University of Worcester)

This is looking to develop a new Cert HE/Dip HE with named pathways to reach people who are not currently in HE at the moment, with the course being delivered in the community. The Steering Group felt that this needed to be more specific and questioned where the qualification would progress to and what would be the benefits of doing this.

The Group liked the project but requested that more work be undertaken on the form as more detail is required in relation to progression in to and out of the course and specific feeder routes. It was felt that it should also think about progression into the voluntary sector (e.g. National Trust, University of the Third Age). More clarification of the course was also required.

Promoting the 14-19 Engineering Diplomas to Employers, Potential Students and Parents

This project idea has been developed as a result of the Engineering Group which is attended by WCT, HCT, NEWC and H&WGTA. It is looking at promoting the 14 – 19 Engineering Diplomas by explaining the progression routes to potential students, employers and parents.

The funding was approved up to £8,500 however a more detailed costing was requested.

Action: DL to request a more detailed costing

Developing Levels 4 and 5 Curriculum in Engineering

This project bid has also been developed through the Engineering Group with the idea of HCT, NEWC and H&WGTA working to together to share the development of an FD in Engineering. IP clarified that the FD would be around Maintenance Engineering which is not a course offered by WCT. It was noted that UW would be unable to validate this course, they were therefore looking to work with Wolverhampton University on this.

The funding was approved up to £8,000 however a more detailed costing was requested.

Action: DL to request a more detailed costing

Work Placements for Undergraduates with a Visual Impairment: inclusive of the range of disabilities presented by VI learners (Royal National College for the Blind)

DL informed the Group that this was a scaled down version of one of the Big Projects submitted for consideration at the previous meeting. In response to the Steering Group's comments, the project has been broadened to students with disabilities rather than just those students with visual impairment.

Although it was noted that this was a lot of money to invest in 6 learners, it was acknowledged that it would result in the production of detailed guidelines that could be accessed by other partners of the Network. The Steering Group asked that they involve

students from different institutions around the region rather than concentrating solely on RNCB students. The Group agreed that this was a good project in terms of the work that needs to be done.

GE advised that it would be useful for RNCB to access a project that was undertaken by Val Chapman (Director of Centre for Inclusive Learning Support, University of Worcester) which was looking at QAA subject benchmarks to see how they should be adapted and what tutors needed to do to deliver these to people with different disabilities. It was felt that as well as this having some useful conclusions, it would also have some useful methodology.

The project was approved.

Exploring the Partner College Student Experience: Achieving an Outstanding Student Experience (University of Worcester with Herefordshire College of Technology, Worcester College of Technology & Stourbridge College)

The Institute of Sport & Exercise Science requested £1,000 from the LLN to add to the £2,000 that they have already secured towards this project. The project is looking to explore the student experience of those students on jointly taught courses.

The Group felt that this was an interesting and useful project and subsequently approved the funding subject to the submission of the final report to EPPSC.

Scoping Transition to HE and/or Employment in Creative Sector (Hereford College of Arts)

DL advised that this was a re-submission of a Big Project discussed at the last meeting which has now been scaled down. The project is based around working with employers to identify which transferable skills are needed in the Arts area in order to inform curriculum development.

GE advised that similar work had been undertaken nationally by bodies such as the Council for Industry & Higher Education and Learning Through Experience. The Group agreed that they would like to see some reference to existing work in this area in terms of national and regional arts. There were concerns that the project may be undertaking work that has already been done nationally, however it was clarified that this was looking at what hard skills are needed by local/regional employers to help HCA be employer ready.

It was suggested that HCA could work with WCT and UW on this project. Once HCA have responded to the queries raised, the Group were happy for the project to be approved by Chairs Action.

Action: DL to seek clarification from HCA to the queries raised

Data Storage for Art & Media

This funding request came from an Arts Providers Meeting held in December which was attended by representatives from the various colleges. It was apparent that there was an issue in all colleges with regard to electronic storage space for students. As a result of this they submitted a bid for data storage which could either be a physical or virtual server.

The Group were unable to approve this without some additional information and requested that the maintenance and ongoing costs associated with a server be included together with the actual cost of the server.

Action: CW to submit a revised project bid form for consideration at the next meeting.

Early Years FDA Pathway (Ludlow College)

In response to feedback from the last Steering Group meeting, DL advised that Ludlow College had submitted another Big Project. The project is looking at researching the need for Early Years in the local area by involving local employers and developing materials/resources for the course.

The Steering Group authorised £5,000 for staffing and requested an itemised costing of the resources requested as Capital items before this additional Capital expenditure could be considered. The Group were keen that this did not just take learners from Hereford but attracted new learners to give a better geographical spread.

Web 2.0 e-Learning for HE (Worcester College of Technology)

This big project has been adapted following feedback from the previous Steering Group meeting. DL informed the Group that the project has now been expanded to include HCT & KC. It is working with employers, staff and students to share both content and what they have learnt.

The Group agreed that this was a well written proposal and authorised the funding of £14,400.

e-Learning - e-Portfolios for HE in FE (Worcester College of Technology)

This project has been submitted as an alternative to the e-books project declined at the previous Steering Group meeting. It is looking to work with HE teams to understand how to use an e-Portfolio. DL advised the Group that this would test the e-Portfolio system for the LLN which would then feed into Wider Horizons.

The Steering Group authorised the funding but requested that WCT publish the timetable of staff development events to other Colleges, as well as providing dissemination and training at the end.

Progression to HE from the 14 – 19 Diploma (Worcestershire County Council & LLN)

This project is looking across the 14 strands of the Advanced Diplomas to identify what options are appropriate to take if you want to move into HE. The project would be led by Worcestershire County Council and Consortium Leads and would continue from the project undertaken by Stephen Cooke.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Group requested that the project be made more wide ranging. They requested the engagement of UW, partners of the Network and the LLN taking a lead role in this whilst also linking with Aimhigher. It was decided that this project needs to be undertaken on a much larger scale, and must include both counties.

The project was not approved in its current form.

Project Closure Forms

The Steering Group received Project Closure Forms for the following projects:

Market research for FD Entrepreneurship in Hereford

This market research was undertaken to see if people wanted an FD in Entrepreneurship. DL advised that the findings of this research have gone to the Leadership & Management Advisory Group.

Development of an MSC in Outdoor Education with UW and HCT

It was suggested that the 'Lessons Learned' and 'Recommendations' sections of the Project Closure Form be circulated to those who are currently developing courses.

Action: DO to manage dissemination

Tracking Project Report

This report was tabled at the meeting, it was agreed that this should be shared with the learner support contacts in all of the colleges. It was felt that this was a very under researched area of work and recommended that Bob Parker ask each of the Learner Support contacts what the LLN should be doing in this area.

Action: BP to contact the Learner Support at the colleges to investigate what work the LLN should be undertaking in this area

Update on Projects not yet Completed

The Group received the updates from projects within Sport, Tourism, Heritage, Culture & Media and e-Learning/ICT. DL advised the Group that the updates from Health & Social Care, Leadership & Management and Progression & Learner Support will be circulated at the next Steering Group meeting.

6. Detailed Proposals regarding Engaging with Employers

DL presented a brief summary about Engaging with Employers at the previous meeting and highlighted the main areas of the detailed plan presented for consideration at this meeting. DL advised that this proposal has been sent to the operational groups, who will be overseeing the work, and a number of consultants have shown an interest in this.

The Group were happy to support the funding for this, subject to ensuring that the OU and HE providers be included.

7. Feedback from HEFCE and HWLLN response to it

The Group received:

- the Analysis of 2008 Monitoring Reports from HEFCE together with this LLN's brief response
- detailed feedback from HEFCE in response to the HWLLN's individual report together with this LLN's response

The Group were please to note that the HWLLN had been used as a case study within the overall analysis report with regards to curriculum development and employer engagement.

When discussing the feedback to the individual report, it was acknowledged that the LLN had made good progress and have a high level of project activity. The Steering Group discussed the feedback on Equality and Diversity and decided to add a section on the project bid form entitled 'Implications for Equality & Diversity'.

The Steering Group thanked Debbie and the Team on getting a glowing reference in the national report and on the positive feedback received from HEFCE.

Action: DO to add a section on the project bid form under 'Implications for Equality & Diversity'

8. Delivery Plan with Targets Achieved in 2008

The Group received the updated Delivery Plan which now shows the achievements against targets for 2008. DL highlighted the few areas where targets had not been achieved.

9. Update on Aimhigher Activities

There was no update received on Aimhigher Activities.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

IP thanked DL and DO for the very well informed meeting and paperwork.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 17 March 2009 at 10am (Room PL G11, University of Worcester)