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BUSINESS CASE

MAY 2006

Southampton Solent University
University of Southampton
University of Portsmouth
University of Winchester
University of Chichester



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Executive Summary

Over the next three years, the partners in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Lifelong Learning Network (LLN) aim to break down barriers to progression to higher education and enhance progression for work-based, non-traditional, vocational learners in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The overall vision of the partners is to maximise progression opportunities for work-based, non-traditional vocational learners by offering enhanced, flexible, work-related educational opportunities, with benefits for learners, employers and the regional and national economy. To achieve this the partners shall seek to exploit the strengths of their partner institutions and build robust partnerships with their stakeholders in order to initiate a process of culture change in the way that learning is provided, embedding new practices that ultimately ensure diverse and responsive provision for vocational learners.

The work of the LLN in the three chosen pilot areas of Health and Social Care, Creative Industries and Business and Management has been informed by market research and consultation work with employers, employees, sector skills councils and FE colleges undertaken from May 2005 onwards as part of the HEFCE funded 'intensive development and initial delivery stage' (IDIDS). This will ensure that the fully developed LLN responds effectively to the evidential needs of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight community and the sub-regional economy.

The LLN will create new capacity, new relationships and structures that will provide progression for learners on vocational programmes that will be as clear, consistent and available within the sub-region as the more traditional 'A level route'. The assumption that post-16 education should be chiefly delivered via 'A' levels followed by a 3 year full-time degree still remains. The LLN will challenge this logic directly through a flexible, demand led approach based on a thoroughgoing assessment of learner need and employer demand. The LLN therefore aims to initiate a process of culture change in the way that learning is provided, embedding new practices that ensure diverse and responsive provision for vocational learners. To achieve this requires a 'network' approach, not simply the cementing of existing bi-lateral arrangements between colleges and universities for example. This approach will depend upon robust partnership working between providers, universities, colleges, training organisations and other stakeholders including: sector skills councils, employer organisations and local authorities.

The LLN will service demand for learning provision in key skill areas by being proactive in establishing the needs of learners and employers. This will extend to analysis of demand that considers current and future skill needs and shortages. This will entail building capacity for ongoing dialogue with key agencies and employers and appropriate mechanisms for ensuring that the 'voice of the learner' is elicited and given due consideration.

The overall vision can only be achieved by co-ordinated and sustained effort over a number of years by the LLN partners. In order for the creation of new capacity and substantial work to develop new practices and modalities this requires additional



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resources. To effect this change, £3.244m is sought from HEFCE from August 2006 to July 2009.

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight full LLN is conceived of as a three year project to develop new relationships and capacities, courses and networks that will be sustainable beyond the period funded by SDF. The IDID stage has provided a great deal of new information regarding course provision and barriers to learner progression. It has also developed new models of collaborative working that can be extended and refined in a fully funded project.

There has been a great deal of constructive work to realise the potential for collaborative provision of vocational learning, including work to ensure that Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning (APEL) is utilised more widely to recognise, support and re-engage learners.

The IDID stage outcomes detailed in this business case demonstrate that significant progress has been made in the key areas of progression and credit management. The partnership has created two first stage progression agreements between colleges and universities that will be operable from September 2006. These will guarantee progression routes to degree level study and have the potential to be rolled out to other institutions.

The experience gained from the IDIDS has been invaluable in identifying the key issues in the sub-region that can be addressed collaboratively and in laying the foundation for a robust and effective approach to partnership delivery of these programmes before applying for full funding which is required to deliver on the potential that has been identified in the IDIDS.

The LLN will be a key driver for bringing together regional economic actors and learning providers to address strategic and developmental issues relating to skills and the broader knowledge economy. To this end, and in order to facilitate progression for vocational learners, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight LLN partnership has set three broad aims:

1. To develop and deliver high quality vocationally – focused, flexible learning that is responsive and accessible;
2. To address key learning needs with respect to skill area, mode of delivery, level of learning required and accessibility;
3. To ensure that effective structures for communication exist between learners, providers, employers and other relevant agencies in order that demand can be identified and information, advice and guidance delivered where appropriate.



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To achieve these aims, five core objectives are proposed in support of seven discipline areas (Business & Management, Creative Industries, Health & Social Care, plus Construction, Engineering, Retail, and Childhood, Youth & Community Studies):

1. To enhance progression and curriculum development through coordinated curriculum planning
2. To deliver flexible and effective progression routes in identified subject areas
3. To enhance capacity and information sharing through staff development
4. To strengthen communication for and between learners, employers and providers, and to promote learning and progression opportunities through the provision of effective advice and guidance provision
5. To ensure the effective dissemination of information and to promote learning between the partners through the development of meaningful tracking, evaluation and dissemination systems

It is envisaged that these will lead to a number of concrete outcomes by 2009, including:

- ▶ New learners engaged in programmes of study that are vocationally relevant via a **series of progression agreements** that guarantee progression to higher level study in core subjects within these skill areas
- ▶ A **standardised procedure** for creating and implementing progression agreements that operates from an agreed LLN credit framework.
- ▶ A number of interlocking networks providing information and facilitating collaboration to deliver to the future needs of vocational learners.
- ▶ A comprehensive and easily updatable **map of curricula and progression routes** in key subjects.
- ▶ **New opportunities for the disengaged** to access learning that is appropriate to their needs.
- ▶ An **Employers' Forum**, with seven sector sub – groups, that will enable informed planning and more effective delivery of Continuing Professional Development to learners across the sub-region.
- ▶ Extensive **staff development**, both discipline based and with a strong focus on provision of advice and guidance to potential learners.
- ▶ A focus on ensuring that existing methods of accreditation, such as APEL, are more effectively utilised to progress learners (this will largely be linked to staff development & advice and guidance)
- ▶ **Tracking** of those who benefit from engagement with the network.
- ▶ Independent **evaluation** of the success of the LLN in achieving the proposed objectives and outcomes.



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List of Acronyms

APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
BM	Business & Management
CATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CCD	Co-ordinated Curriculum Development
CETL	Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
CI	Creative Industries
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
HSC	Health & Social Care
IAG	Information, Advice & Guidance
IDIDS	Intensive Development and Initial Delivery Stage
IOW	Isle of Wight
LLN	Lifelong Learning Network
SC	Sparsholt College
SSU	Southampton Solent University
UoC	University of Chichester
UoP	University of Portsmouth
UoS	University of Southampton
UoW	University of Winchester



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List of participating institutions in the Intensive Development and Initial

Delivery Stage (IDIDS)

Business & Management:

- University of Southampton
- University of Portsmouth
- Southampton Solent University
- University of Winchester
- Sparsholt College (Lead Institution)
- Brockenhurst College
- Basingstoke College of Technology
- Southampton City College

Creative Industries - First sub-strand, Popular Music:

- Southampton Solent University
- University of Chichester
- Taunton's College
- Fareham College
- St Vincent College
- South Downs College (awaiting confirmation)

In addition, the following attended the 1st Stakeholder event in Sept 05:

- The Isle of Wight College
- Havant College
- Barton Peveril College
- Peter Symonds College



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- Alton College
- Eastleigh College
- Totton College
- Cricklade College
- Farnborough College of Technology



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1. Introduction

This first section gives an overview of the Hampshire & IOW LLN. It begins with a presentation of the LLN vision and states the objectives needed to achieve this vision. The LLN is also considered in terms of its beneficiaries and shows the potential benefits for the learner, for employers and for providers. Finally a pictorial representation demonstrates what the LLN might mean in practice for the learner.

1.1 The Hampshire and Isle of Wight LLN Vision

Our Vision:

To maximise progression opportunities for work-based, non traditional vocational learners by offering enhanced, flexible, work-related educational opportunities, with benefits for learners, employers and the regional and national economy. To achieve this we shall exploit the strengths of our partner institutions and build robust partnerships with our stakeholders in order to initiate a process of culture change in the way that learning is provided, embedding new practices that ultimately ensure diverse and responsive provision for vocational learners

To achieve this vision, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight LLN will:

- provide new opportunities for learners to choose, undertake and progress in vocational learning programmes;
- develop, through partnership, a framework for progression in key subject areas that service essential skill needs in the sub-region and the south-east generally;
- raise awareness and aspirations and support the re-engagement of learners in career-oriented subjects, with a particular focus on those from non-traditional backgrounds;
- fully explore the possibilities for flexible learning that exploits the resources and expertise of the entire partnership and utilises modes that suit learner and employer needs;
- embed a range of practices that further facilitate learner progression through credit transfer creating, in core programme areas, a 'flexible LLN offer'.

In order to facilitate progression for vocational learners the Hampshire and Isle of Wight LLN aims:

- 1 to develop and deliver high quality vocationally – focused, flexible learning that is responsive and accessible;
- 2 to address key learning needs with respect to skill area, mode of delivery, level of learning required and accessibility;
- 3 to ensure that effective structures for communication exist between learners, providers, employers and other relevant agencies in order that demand can be identified and information, advice and guidance delivered where appropriate.



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1.2 LLN Objectives

The specific objectives designed to achieve the vision and aims are set out below:

1. To enhance progression and curriculum development through coordinated curriculum planning
2. To deliver flexible and effective progression routes in identified subject areas
3. To enhance capacity and information sharing through staff development
4. To strengthen communication, for and between learners, employers and providers, and to promote learning and progression opportunities through the provision of effective advice and guidance
5. To ensure the effective dissemination of information and to promote learning between the partners through the development of meaningful tracking, evaluation and dissemination systems



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1.2 The Beneficiaries

The LLN will produce positive benefits for its three major stakeholders: learners, employers and providers.

The LLN will help *learners* to:

- Gain a clear view of accredited learning opportunities within the Hampshire and Isle of Wight region
- Recognise a diverse range of non-traditional vocational progression routes
- Move towards and between innovative and relevant qualifications
- Aspire to career paths and qualifications that they might not otherwise have considered
- Move between providers in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight region
- Develop individualised learning plans that maximise their potential for skills and knowledge development and transfer
- Gain considerable flexibility in their approach to learning
- Have a greater choice of options available to them
- Access guidance and advice on the range of learning opportunities and progression routes available to them

The LLN will provide *employers* with:

- The opportunity to contribute to and influence programme design and student learning
- A flexible system that will enable learning to be better tailored to employer needs
- Clearer links and coherence between existing qualifications and training programmes
- Access to a wealth of information shared between HE providers and other stakeholders
- Clarity about vocational qualifications and progression routes
- A better understanding of publicly-funded learning provision
- Potential access to a local workforce with relevant skills and experience, thereby helping them to fill skills shortages and gaps, and making them more competitive
- Support to carry out their training needs analyses and to develop and articulate their 'in-house' Continuing Professional Development programmes with Higher Education

For *providers* the LLN will:

- Offer a partnership approach to programme planning, design and delivery, thereby enabling the sharing of good practice
- Increase the attractiveness of courses as they map out clear progression routes that are relevant to learner needs
- Reduce the adverse affects of duplication
- Create staff development opportunities
- Enable individual institutions to develop and strengthen their areas of comparative expertise
- Provide strength through partnership and an image that is recognised throughout the region



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1.3 The Hampshire and IOW LLN Model

One of the key objectives of the LLN is to ‘*deliver flexible and effective progression routes in identified subject areas*’ (Objective 2). In this section we consider how this might look like for the learner.

1.3.1 A pictorial representation of the LLN model is set out over the page and illustrates five Learner Progression Routes for five different students. The key to the diagram is presented below. To determine possible providers of courses, all learners would have access to Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) either at the LLN centre, or at any of the participating Further Education Colleges or Outreach Centres (e.g. mobile services on industrial parks or in community settings).

1.3.3 What might this mean for the learner in a specific curriculum area? Figure 2 illustrates three possible progression routes to five different Honours Degrees in music related subjects. All of these routes enable the learner to remain within the Hampshire and IOW LLN area.

Key to Fig 1 Examples of Learner Progression Routes

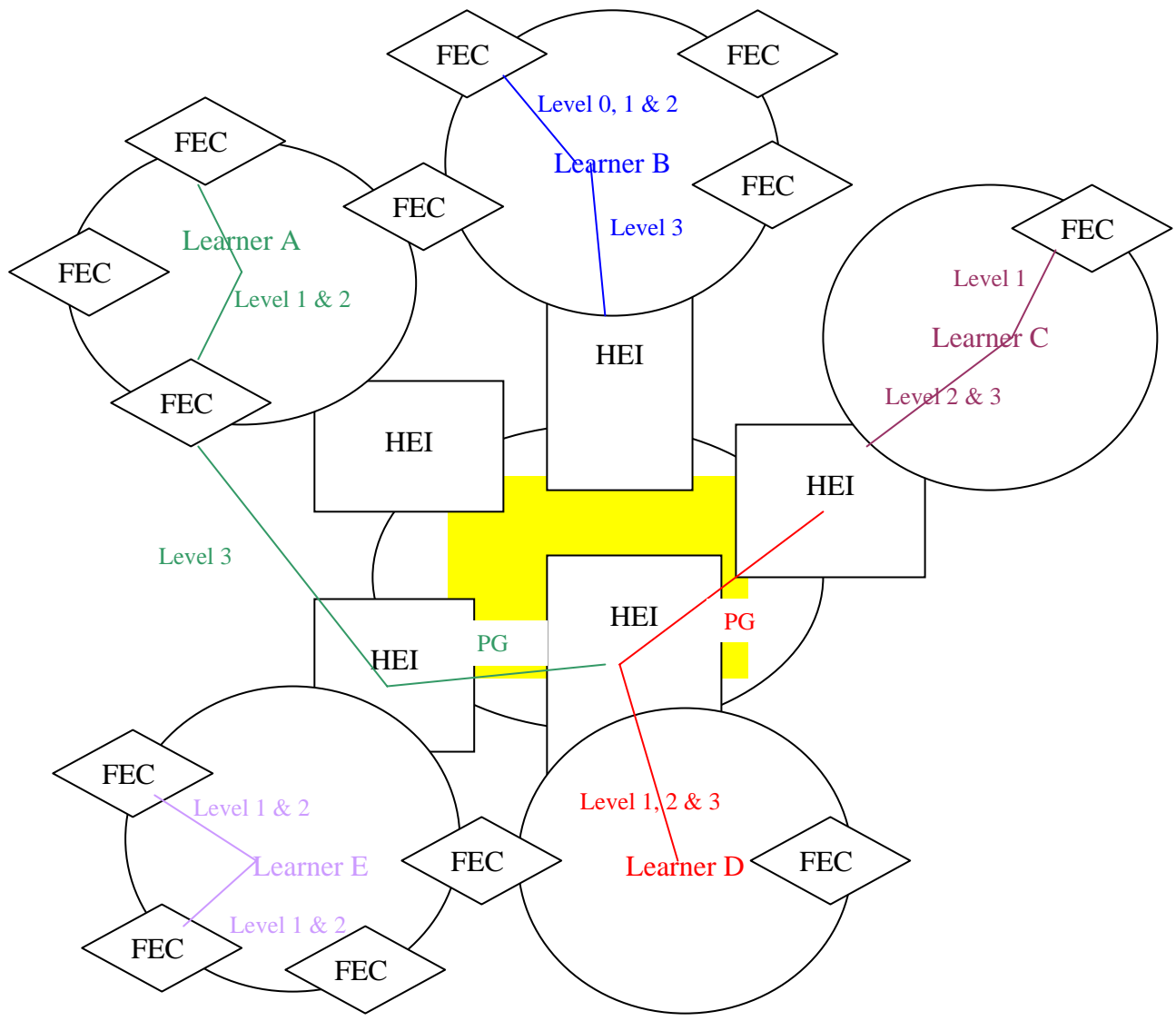
HE Level	Learner A	Learner B	Learner C	Learner D	Learner E
0		In FEC in local area			
1	Level 1 in FEC in local area	Continues at same FEC	At FEC in local area	At FEC in local area	Modules in 2 FECs in local area
2	Level 2 at another local FEC	Continues at same FEC	At HEI in local area	Continues at same FEC	Modules in same 2 FECs in local area
3	At HEI in another part of Hants	At HEI in local area	Continues at HEI in local area	Continues at same FEC	
Post-grad	At HEI in another part of Hants			At HEI in another part of Hants	



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Fig1 Examples of Learner Progression Routes

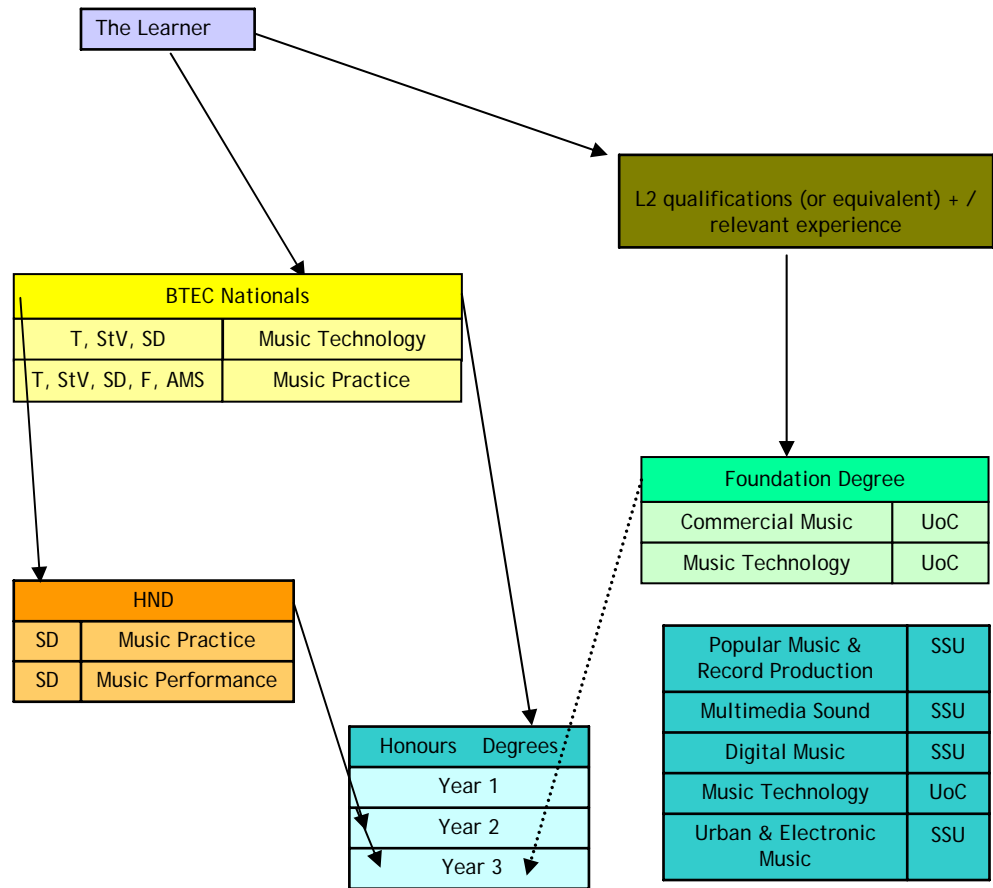




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Fig 2: Progression Routes for Music



Key	The following entry requirements have been agreed.
Progression routes:	
————> Agreed	
.....> Subject to further clarification	
SSU Southampton Solent University	<i>For entry onto BA Popular Music and Record Production</i>
UoC University of Chichester	Year 1: 180 UCAS points (160 from 6 or 12 unit awards)
SD South Downs College (tbc)	Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profile under discussion)
F Fareham College	Successful completion of FdA Commercial Music, Music Technology (subject to discussion)
StV St Vincent College	<i>For entry onto BA Multimedia Sound</i>
AMS The Academy of Music and Sound	Year 1: 120 UCAS points (from 6 unit awards)
T Taunton's College	Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profiles under discussion)
	Successful completion of FdA Commercial Music, Music Technology (subject to discussion)
	<i>For entry onto BA Digital Music</i>
	Year 1: 120 UCAS points in relevant subjects / portfolio
	Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profiles under discussion)
	Successful completion of FdA Commercial Music, Music Technology (subject to discussion)
	<i>For entry onto BA Music Technology (Joint Honours)</i>
	Year 1: 160 UCAS points + audition
	Year 3: Subject to discussion
	<i>For entry onto BA Urban and Electronic Music</i>
	Year 1: 180 UCAS points (160 from 6 or 12 unit awards)
	Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profile under discussion)
	<i>For entry onto FdA Commercial Music / Music Technology</i>
	L2 qualifications (or equivalent) + relevant experience



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2. Context of the LLN

In this section the socio-economic and education and skills profiles of Hampshire and the IOW are analysed to determine the key problems and issues facing the region, and to establish the implications for the LLN. The headline data is presented in boxes 1 and 2, and the key implications set out below. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is presented at the end of this section to summarise the key issues for the LLN.

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight cover an area of more than 4100km² representing almost 22% of the South East Region, and have a combined population of 1.8m (Informing our Future (2004)). It is an area characterised by contrasts, both geographically, with densely populated areas contrasting with tracts of sparsely populated countryside; economically, with growth rates for Hampshire and Portsmouth exceeding the national average, and Southampton falling below the regional and the IOW the national average; and in terms of education, with year 11 achievement above the national average in Hampshire, and well below the national average in Southampton and Portsmouth.

Fig. 3 The Hampshire and IOW LLN, showing Colleges of Further Education offering Higher Education courses



Source: www.aimhigher.ac.uk



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2.1 Key Issues for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

2.1.2 Availability of skills and qualifications is essential to the economy because they are key drivers of competitiveness. A shortage of skills is a major constraint on economic growth.

2.1.3 In Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, the combination of skills gaps, skills shortages and pockets of educational under-achievement coupled with a higher than average economic growth rate suggest that the workforce is not keeping pace with the skills needs of employers, and this could have significant implications for the continued development of the local economy. The high growth rate also implies that future skills requirements will increase, further exacerbating the situation.

2.1.4 The combination of educational underachievement and high employment implies a number of problems for both businesses and employees. If individuals remain trapped in low skilled jobs with little effective training and development, the effect could be lower economic productivity, limiting growth in the region. While there is a clear incentive for individual firms to invest in their human capital through training, this also implies that individuals will need to take personal responsibility for ongoing skills development to avoid limited career progression. This will be particularly important for those working for small firms, since the amount of training offered by an employer is usually related to a firm's size, hence the larger the firm, the more training tends to be offered: in East Hampshire, IOW and the New Forest small firms are the dominant employment providers, with more than 60% of employment providers having less than 50 employees.

- 2.1.5 For the Hampshire and IOW LLN there will be a number of implications:
- i. The diverse nature of the Hampshire and IOW socio-economic and educational profile implies the need for **geographic focus** in order to meet the needs of those learners living in the pockets of education, skills and training deprivation.
 - ii. Learning provision will need to cater for the whole spectrum of qualifications from level 2 to level 4 and above, but there will need to be a particular **emphasis on key curriculum areas**, such as business and management
 - iii. Many of those who will benefit most from learning will be in work and so **flexible programmes** that allow learners to combine work with study will be essential. Opportunities for re-engagement and progression will take account of the wide range of vocational education, including modern apprenticeships.
 - iv. Many of those trapped in jobs with little prospect of career progression need to be made aware of the opportunities available to them, and this will imply advice and guidance, as well as focussed **marketing and promotion**, and will require a **strategic information communication plan**
 - v. The lack of motivation to learn by those holding few or no qualifications means that **aspiration building** will be essential. In this way, the LLN will need to complement the activities of Aimhigher Hampshire and IOW.



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- vi. Frustration by employers at the lack of relevant training courses implies that **employers will need to be fully engaged in curriculum development** and other aspects of information sharing and pathway development
- vii. Similarly the LLN will need to ensure that through networking and a coherent communication strategy and marketing campaign there is **greater awareness by employees and employers** alike as to the courses and progression routes available
- viii. Given the number of stakeholders which need to be involved the LLN **partnership will need to be robust**. A key tool for success will be collaboration (see box 3 *Strength in Collaboration* for examples of where the LLN has been particularly successful in achieving objectives through collaboration).

BOX 1

Socio-economic Profile of Hampshire and the IOW

High growth; low unemployment At 84%, economic activity rates in Hampshire and IoW are well above the national average of 78% and growth is higher than any other LSC area in the South East. Unemployment for the area is consistently below the national average (1.5% compared to 2.5%) although the Isle of Wight has a higher unemployment rate (3.2%) with much of employment being seasonal in nature.

Pockets of deprivation vs. high GVA Although Gross Value Added per person (GVA, the new measure for Gross Domestic Product) is relatively high in mid and north Hampshire, it is widely recognised that the South East has some pockets of significant deprivation: 119 wards in the South East are in the 20% most deprived in the country (HEFCE Regional Perspective of South East of England, 2004, Richard Blackwell). Many of these deprived wards are located around Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, with significant pockets of education, skills and training deprivation in Basingstoke, Andover and East Hampshire.

Dominance of service sector Like the rest of the UK, employment is largely service sector based, with more than 80% of employment being in the service sectors, nearly a quarter of which are in the public sector. The largest employment sectors are Wholesale and Retail, and Business Services and Manufacturing, with Public Administration and Education having employment rates well above the national average. However, an important feature is the rural economy including the land based sector and tourism which are important to the New Forest and the Isle of Wight.

Sub-regional differences In mid and north Hampshire the proportion of those working in 'degree' level occupations is above average. For example, more than one third are employed in the three highest paid and highest value added occupational groups (managers, and senior officials, professional and associate professional and technical occupations). This sub-region also demonstrates relatively strong employment in administrative and secretarial, and skilled trade occupations, including manufacturing and construction.

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Box 1 Cont...

Skills shortages The employers' survey undertaken as part of the research into Demand for Higher Skills and Provision (funded as part of the IDID stage), January 2006, indicated that 18% of employers face serious skills shortages. Amongst these, the vast majority face job-specific skills shortages (i.e. not related to IT, leadership, project management, communication etc.). However, 47.5% of employers have a need for their staff to be up-skilled. Of these, 25% of employers require upskilling of managers, 17.5% in professional staff and 17.5% in technical staff.

Skills gaps The Employers National Employers Skill Survey 2003 shows that employers are also experiencing skills *gaps* in many sectors of the South East's economy, with 48% of vacancies in Hampshire identified as 'hard to fill' compared to 40% nationally.

Dependency about training opportunities This same survey showed that about one third of all firms claimed to use colleges for their training and development needs. However the survey also identified a degree of discontent at the lack communication between training providers and employers: 85% of respondents said that their views had not been sought about future curriculum development, thus training was unlikely to be focussed on employer needs. Survey respondents also made it clear that the main reason why they had not provided as much training as they would have liked was uncertainty whether courses and training were suitable and lack of knowledge about what was suitable.

BOX 2

Education profile of Hampshire and the IOW

Diversity in qualifications held There is significant diversity across Hampshire and the IOW in terms of qualifications held, as illustrated below. In comparison to the South East as a whole, Hampshire and the IOW performs well, with more than 27% holding degree qualifications or above, compared to a regional average of 28%. However, almost a third of working age residents do not hold a level 2 qualification, deemed by the government to be the 'minimum level of qualification needed to be an effective member of today's demanding workplace'. (Informing our Future (2004))

Percentage of working age population by highest qualification held

	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	< level 2	No qualifications
Hampshire	29	29	22	29	9
Southampton	23	22	20	22	12
Portsmouth	22	21	23	23	12
IOW	20	20	24	25	11
LSC area	27	21	22	21	10
South East	28	20	22	20	11

Source: Informing our Future 2004

It is this latter group that would benefit most from some form of learning. However, the South East Skills Report 2004 found that in Hampshire and the IOW, whilst 56% of those with level 4 qualifications have engaged in learning in the last 3 years, 46% of those with no qualifications stated that '*learning is something I am just not interested in*'. (Informing our Future (2004))

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BOX 2 CONT

Diversity in attainment As a whole, Hampshire and the IOW demonstrate educational attainment levels of school leavers that is slightly higher than the national average. Year 11 school pupil attainment levels show that 55.7% achieve five or more GCSEs grades A*-C, compared with the national average of 52.9% (DfES 2003). However attainment varies significantly within the area, with Portsmouth (44.5%), Southampton (44.3%) and the Isle of Wight (44.3%) well below the national average for year 11 attainment. This means that a higher than average proportion of students in Hampshire who do progress in post-16 education take vocational rather than academic routes.

Participation in Further Education Data for post-16 education illustrates similar patterns, with lower percentages of year 11 school leavers progressing to further full time education in Portsmouth and Southampton. In contrast, continuation into further education is higher than the average for the area in the Isle of Wight. This is possibly due to a combination of high unemployment, low skill level seasonal employment and a 13-18 High School System.

Area	Continuing in Education - 2002
England	72.1%*
Hampshire and Isle of Wight LSC Area	73.6%
Hampshire LEA	75.6%
Southampton LEA	67.3%
Portsmouth LEA	65.3%
Isle of Wight LEA	76.5%

Source: Aimhigher Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Plan, sourced from LSC and DfES and Southern Careers Ltd data

* figure shown from 2000

Participation in Higher Education The POLAR data sets (HEFCE 2002) provide detailed geographical analysis of participation in higher education and school attainment. This data too shows Portsmouth and Southampton to represent clusters of underachievement, with other pockets located in north and northeast Hampshire. The Isle of Wight however demonstrates relatively high levels of participation in higher education

Underrepresentation in HE The HE Demand Assessment Exercise (2000) conducted by KPMG also concludes that there is a significant under-representation of higher education students from semi-skilled and unskilled manual backgrounds (Aimhigher Stratgic Plan, 2004-6). However, the authors of the report project a likely general rise in demand from all social classes during 2001-2010, many of whom are likely to choose to remain in the Area for their higher education. Whilst demand from professional and intermediate non-manual classes is projected to remain higher than other groups, KPMG still expect an increase in demand from semi-skilled (24-24%) and unskilled manual groups (18-30%).



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BOX 3

Strength in Collaboration

The Hampshire and IOW LLN partners have already achieved some significant educational developments and in particular have demonstrated their strong ability to collaborate successfully. Examples of successful collaboration include:

- ♦ The APEL Co-ordinators' Group: University of Southampton, Southampton Solent University, University of Portsmouth, University of Winchester, University of Chichester, has been particularly constructive in reviewing APEL policies and systems in order to establish commonalities, improve transparency and aid learner progression. As well as agreeing to develop and implement common APEL staff development activities across the core partners, the Group recommended the creation of an LLN APEL advisory service to work closely with employers to identify how work-based learning could be used more effectively to gain entry onto higher education courses. The group also recommended working with employers to look at their 'in house' programmes and how they could be accredited by HEIs. Both of these aspects would support employers' CPD programmes. This approach is particularly appropriate for addressing the low skill/full employment dynamic found in some pockets of the area (e.g. Andover)
- ♦ Effective collaboration between the University of Chichester, Southampton Solent University, Tauntons College, St Vincent College, Fareham College led to the Development of the first stage Music Progression Agreement
- ♦ Sparsholt College, University of Southampton, University of Portsmouth, Southampton Solent University, University of Winchester, Southampton City College, Brockenhurst College and Basingstoke College of Technology have worked together effectively, developing the first stage Business & Management Progression Agreement
- ♦ The LLN Co-ordination Group has been set up to oversee the day to day implementation of LLN work
- ♦ Four of the LLN partners are also been actively been involved in Aimhigher Hampshire and IOW. Since its inception in 2004 Aimhigher has developed an extensive programme of widening participation activities, working with schools, colleges and HE students and practitioners across the area. A total of Ten action Programmes have been developed to address the key priorities of Aimhigher, including aspiration raising, the development of improved admission and progression opportunities and the provision of advice and guidance.



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2.2 Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective collaboration between LLN partners, between FEIs and HEIs has already led to a number of encouraging developments in curriculum development (see box 3) • Strong support for collaborative working from a range of stakeholders including local government, local employers and sector skills councils • A commitment by all partners to the principles of lifelong learning and widening participation • Support for collaborative approaches to education development is evident in numerous area strategic documents such as the Strategic Area Review (StAR) • Large number of FEIs offering a wide range of courses already • Partners committed to sustained engagement with local employers and stakeholders • Strong collaborative links between FECs eg 2006 ESF Co-financing bid for employer engagement • Hampshire and IOW has three Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning • Sparsholt College, an FE College, is lead partner for the Business and Management Progression Agreement and is a CoVE in Business & Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant pockets of deprivation in the area • Skills shortages and skills gaps • Despondency by local employers about relevance of courses offered at local institutions • The large number of SMEs in some local areas means it may be difficult to engage them in learning opportunities due to their capacity constraints • Continued perception among employers, providers, and learners that academic qualifications are of greater value than vocational qualifications • Number and range of courses and qualifications remains large and therefore is confusing for learners, employers and providers
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the already excellent work developed by Aimhigher Hampshire & IOW • Growth of the local economy • Influence the cultural perception of vocational routes to learning • Network of CoVEs being established in Hampshire and IOW • Network of FECs gaining Action for Business status • Active involvement of private training providers in Aimhigher activity and growing links between them and HEIs • TU Learning Reps active in local organisations • Collaboration with two further CETLs (ExPERT Centre Portsmouth, Foundation Direct, Portsmouth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High and rising business costs lead to lack of interest in training and curriculum development opportunities by employers • Potential disillusionment of FE partners as result of failed ESF co-financing bid for employer engagement • External factors (national and international) lead to a downturn in business activities



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3. Learning From Experience

In this section some of the key outcomes of the Intensive Development and Initial Delivery Stage (IDIDS) are presented.

3.1 Achievements to date

Meeting the dual goals of addressing skill shortages and widening participation in higher education requires a high level of institutional collaboration to make a significant impact in the sub-region. The IDIDS phase has provided data on the following areas that will inform a strategic approach to co-ordinated curriculum development:

- Curriculum auditing (initially in the 3 designated subject areas)
- Progression mapping and identification of 'gaps'
- Demand studies (with a focus on learner and employer demand)
- Flexible learning needs in the target group
- Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) requirements for the effective engagement of employers and new learners
- An assessment of APEL processes across the university partners and how these might more effectively serve the needs of learners and employers.

Annex 1 shows achievement against IDIDS outcomes and linkage through to proposed outcomes in a fully funded LLN. A summary of the achievements is set out below, and boxes 4 and 5 provide a more detailed examination of some of the outcomes and findings.

First Stage Progression Agreements

3.1.1 First stage progression agreements have been agreed in the following areas:

- i. Creative Industries (specifically, popular music)
- ii. Business and Management

A third agreement, relating to health and social care is currently under review (see below).

The partners have undertaken significant work on curriculum provision in the three subject areas. This has included an assessment of current provision from level 3 and an identification of 'breaks' in progression. This mapping work is also linked to demand studies conducted with employers, householders and providers contained for example, in the DTZ report for mid and north Hampshire. The demand studies showed that 40% of employers contacted have a current need for staff with HND / degree / post graduate qualifications. Employers particularly sought high quality, bespoke training which was offered locally. The main barriers to employers facilitating their employees participation in HE were the cost of courses, the cost of



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staff away from work and the times courses were offered. These findings support the need for learning delivered flexibly in the work place which will help to reduce the barriers of cost and time.

i. First stage Progression Agreement 1: Popular Music

A progression agreement has been signed between Taunton's College, St Vincent College, Fareham College, The Academy of Music and Sound, the University of Chichester and Southampton Solent University for progression from level 3/4 courses in popular music to degree level study in popular and/or commercial music. South Downs College are also expected to sign the agreement in the very near future.

The Agreement guarantees progression routes to either university based on successful completion of the prior award. As with all progression agreements that are facilitated by the LLN, this is a networked agreement and there is potential to extend the number of partner institutions, where they have relevant provision. In due course, there is no reason why such an agreement could not be extended beyond the sub-region.

Box 4, below, provides a more detailed example of the developmental process.



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Box 4

Development of the Hampshire & IOW LLN Music Progression Agreement

A new LLN progression agreement for popular music has been developed. This progression agreement has established clarity and coherence of routes for vocational learners in a subject area where previously there was no tradition of collaboration between LLN partners. Collaboration between partners at senior management level has been led by Professor Van Gore (Chair, LLN Steering Group). Senior managers have endorsed the progression agreement, committing their respective institutions to providing vocational routes into studying popular music courses at higher education.

Running in parallel to this senior management level commitment, new inter-partner relationships have also been created at curriculum staff level. Curriculum staff from partner institutions have been brought together to examine curriculum content in detail. Articulation between courses has been determined and entry requirements identified. Partners are continuing to work together to identify the content required for a software specific 'bridging course' to enable smooth transition between HNDs and BAs as well as the requirements for a 'Top Up Year integration product'.

Development of the music progression agreement continues to be a dynamic process. Currently two higher education institutions, one private training provider, one sixth Form College and three further education colleges are party to the agreement which includes learner progression from BTEC HNDs to Honours Degrees, BTEC Nationals to Honours Degrees and progression from Foundation Degrees to Honours Degrees. Potential progression from HNDs to an existing Joint Honours Degree is also being explored.

Participating institutions are:

The Academy of Music and Sound
Tauntons College
Fareham College
St Vincent College

South Downs College (tbc)
Southampton Solent University
University of Chichester

Popular music courses covered are:

BTEC National Diploma in Music Technology
BTEC National Diploma in Music Practice
BTEC HND in Music Performance
BTEC HND in Music Production
FdA Commercial Music (particularly designed for IOW learners)
FdA Music Technology
BA Popular Music and Record Production
BA Multimedia Sound
BA Digital Music
BA Music Technology (Joint Honours)
BA Urban and Electronic Music

For entry onto BA Popular Music and Record Production

Year 1: 180 UCAS points (160 from 6 or 12 unit awards)

Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profile under discussion)
Successful completion of FdA Commercial Music, Music Technology (subject to discussion)

For entry onto BA Multimedia Sound

Year 1: 120 UCAS points (from 6 unit awards)

Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profiles under discussion)

For entry onto BA Digital Music

Year 1: 120 UCAS points in relevant subjects / portfolio

Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profiles under discussion)
Successful completion of FdA Commercial Music, Music Technology (subject to discussion)

For entry onto BA Music Technology (Joint Honours)

Year 1: 160 UCAS points + audition

Year 3: Subject to discussion

For entry onto BA Urban and Electronic Music

Year 1: 180 UCAS points (160 from 6 or 12 unit awards)

Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profile under discussion)

For entry onto FdA Commercial Music / Music Technology

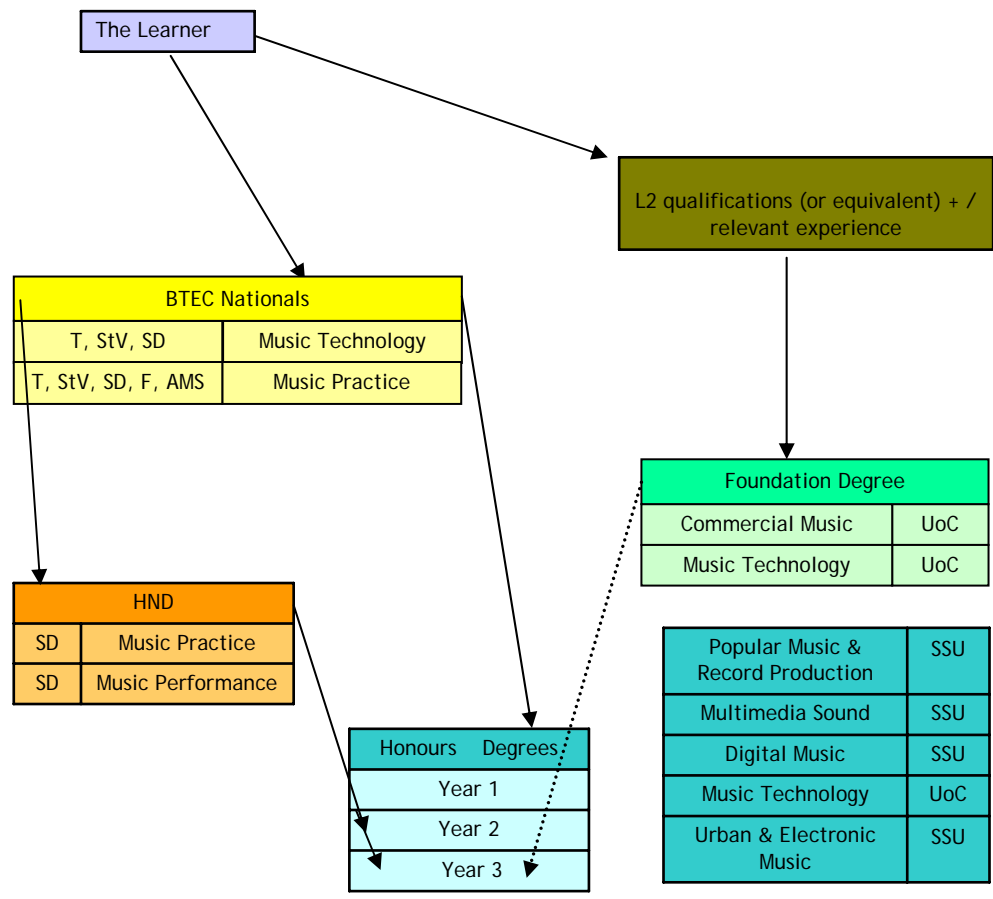
L2 qualifications (or equivalent) + relevant experience



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Music Progression in Hampshire & IOW LLN



Key	The following entry requirements have been agreed.
Progression routes: —————> Agreed> Subject to further clarification	<i>For entry onto BA Popular Music and Record Production</i> Year 1: 180 UCAS points (160 from 6 or 12 unit awards) Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profile under discussion) Successful completion of FdA Commercial Music, Music Technology (subject to discussion)
	<i>For entry onto BA Multimedia Sound</i> Year 1: 120 UCAS points (from 6 unit awards) Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profiles under discussion)
	<i>For entry onto BA Digital Music</i> Year 1: 120 UCAS points in relevant subjects / portfolio Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profiles under discussion) Successful completion of FdA Commercial Music, Music Technology (subject to discussion)
	<i>For entry onto BA Music Technology (Joint Honours)</i> Year 1: 160 UCAS points + audition Year 3: Subject to discussion
	<i>For entry onto BA Urban and Electronic Music</i> Year 1: 180 UCAS points (160 from 6 or 12 unit awards) Year 3: Successful completion of HND Music Performance / Production (achievement profile under discussion)
	<i>For entry onto FdA Commercial Music / Music Technology</i> L2 qualifications (or equivalent) + relevant experience



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ii. First Stage Progression Agreement 2: Business and Management

A progression agreement has been signed between Sparsholt College, University of Southampton, University of Portsmouth, Brockenhurst College, University of Winchester, Southampton Solent University, Basingstoke College of Technology and Southampton City College. This agreement will operate from September 2006.

The University of Southampton School of Management has already committed to offering all learners completing suitable undergraduate programmes in the LLN area an interview for the School of Management's postgraduate provision.

Further development will involve all partners in exploring enhanced progression arrangements, with the expectation that this will link with other LLN work, in particular that relating to Accreditation of Prior Learning.

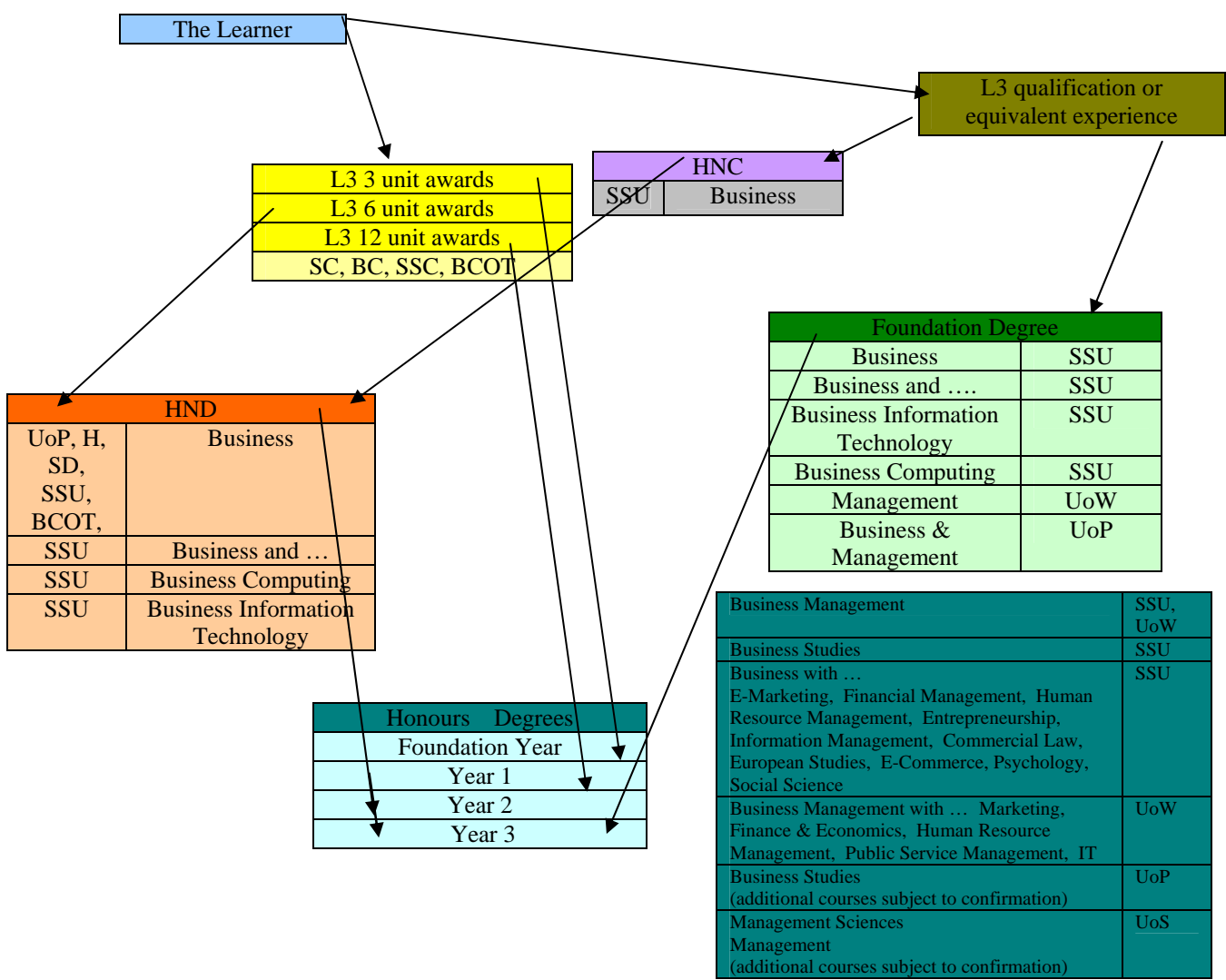


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Fig 4: Business and Management Progression in Hampshire & IOW LLN



Key		The following entry requirements have been agreed
BCOT	Basingstoke College of Technology	<i>Honours degrees UoW, SSU:</i> 200 UCAS points from 12 unit L3 awards <i>Honours degrees UoS:</i> A Level profile AAB (340 UCAS points tbc) <i>Honours degree UoP:</i> 240 UCAS points from a maximum of 3 A Levels or equivalent <i>All listed HNDs + HNC:</i> 80 UCAS points including a 6 unit L3 award or equivalent experience <i>Foundation Degrees UoW, SSU:</i> 80 UCAS points or equivalent experience <i>Foundation Degree UoP:</i> 60 UCAS points from one A2, a vocational A Level, NVQ L3, professional qualifications or equivalent <i>FoundationYear:</i> 40 UCAS points including a 3 unit L3 award or equivalent experience
BC	Brookenhurst College	
SCC	Southampton City College	
SC	Sparsholt College	
SD	South Downs College (tbc)	
SSU	Southampton Solent University	
UoP	University of Portsmouth	
UoS	University of Southampton	
UoW	University of Winchester	



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iii. Health and Social Care.

Findings by the Health Care Innovation Unit, University of Southampton suggest that there are a number of barriers to progression. In particular, progression is limited by a system of commissioned places and regulation by the Workforce Development Directorate, which is contracted by the Strategic Health Authority to work with universities to deliver a range of programmes leading to professionally regulated awards.

Despite this the LLN sees the opportunity to take a more creative and flexible approach to the provision of progression opportunities. The opportunities for part-time study for example are very limited and current provision does not necessarily address the widest possible target population (key finding, Health Care Innovation Unit Final Report see Box 5, page 31). Similarly there is a role for the LLN in negotiating partial placements and/or study time allocations to allow more people to take part.

Partnership

3.1.2 Cross-sector working groups have been established in the Creative Industries, Health and Social Care and Business and Management. These groups include staff from Further Education Colleges, Training Providers and Higher Education Institutions, with representation from Sector Skills Councils and local employers. Detailed work on progression mapping has been carried out in the pilot subject areas. This has been linked with demand analyses.

3.1.3 Demand for further developments at postgraduate level including CPD has also been investigated to ensure that appropriate progression routes within HE are available to employers and the local community. The main focus for the LLN intensive development stage has been on the Creative Industries, Health and Social Care and Business and Management sectors. Box 5 provides some details of some of the research findings.

3.1.4 There has been a strong emphasis on staff development within and between the partner organisations throughout the intensive development stages. In particular, there has been extensive communication about plans, activities and outcomes, full engagement of relevant staff in specific projects such as the development of progression agreement and effective sharing of good practice in learning and teaching of non-traditional learners.

3.1.5 The focus of the completed engagement and development stage has been on developing a shared vision and commitment across HE partners and bringing a wider range of stakeholders into developmental discussions. These developmental discussions have included liaison with FE colleges in Hampshire and IoW, with SEEDA, Aimhigher and employer organisations. Discussions have also been held with Foundation Degree Forward, who are supportive of this bid and will be involved in implementation activities. Initial contact has also been made with two Sector Skills Councils – SEMTA (SSC for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies), and Skillsforhealth.



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3.1.6 Having built this common core of commitment, the intensive development and initial delivery stage has focused on building active involvement in the Lifelong Learning Network by this range of key stakeholders. The communications strategy of the intensive development stage has involved targeted activities focused on different stakeholders. These included arrangements for an LLN strategic board and management team. Two major stakeholder consultation conferences were planned during this intensive development stage. The first, held summer 2005, shared information about the LLN development overall and enabled initial discussion about the intensive development phase, this has then be followed up by specific project teams and working groups. A further consultation conference on 7th June 2006 will focus on developing common ownership and reviewing the proposals in the full LLN bid to HEFCE.



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Research Outcomes from the Initial Delivery Stage

Box 5 below, sets out a summary of key findings in the Intensive Development and Initial Delivery Stage.

Box 5

Curriculum Audit, and Demand Study for Health and Social Care:

Curriculum Audit Key findings:

- Information on Health and Social Care related courses and qualifications is disparate and dispersed. It needs collating, updating and sharing on a regular basis
- More detailed research is required to fully map provision and to determine the relevance of provision to local needs and identify any duplication and gaps
- More time needs to be given to mapping progression routes for lower level qualifications

Demand Study: Key findings

- There is demand for more Healthcare Assistants at level 4: a foundation degree might enable upskilling
- A new framework for nursing careers is to be launched Spring 2006 – the implications of this will need to be assessed
- The development of a foundation degree would also help meet gaps in Long Term Conditions provision
- The career framework for Social Care is undergoing re-organisation and the implications will need to be reviewed

Study into Current Transition Practices from level 3 provision to HE for the 19+ cohort in the three curriculum areas:

- i. Links between providers to assist transition:
 - A number of compact arrangements are in place, including Aimhigher
 - There is an over reliance on informal relationships, often between admissions tutors
- ii. Barriers to progression:
 - Students deemed to 'Lack talent' for Creative Industries
 - Students have insufficient relevant work experience
 - The perception that some courses are more 'academic' than others still dominates
- iii. Evidence of Good Practice
 - Strong collaboration on the Cadet Nursing Programme
 - Response to HEI Taster Sessions is very positive
 - Case studies left by former students
 - An HEI coordinator can significantly aide transition
- iv. Recommendations or 'Wish list'
 - Links between levels 3 and 4 need to be strengthened and formalised
 - There is need for staff development to ensure that staff are fully informed of the choices available to students, in particular the range and value of vocational options

Survey of Information Advice and Guidance in Hampshire and IOW

Initial Recommendations based on report made by IAG Advisory Group:

- i. There is a need for an external impartial central 'service' for local employers, HEIs, and clients that is accessed through Drop-in, appointments and email. The service might be delivered through Roadshow mobile activities and through a known national brand such as Learndirect. It might offer:
 - APL guidance
 - A dedicated guidance service
 - The bulk of information and resources
 - Development of 'Learning Champions' with employers
 - A training service



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3.2 The Isle of Wight: a unique context carefully considered

3.2.1 The LLN has been involved in close consultation with the IOW college, the LSC and the Acting Director of Child Services among others to carefully consider the precise contribution that can be made by a fully funded LLN to educational provision on the Isle of Wight. Box 6 provides a summary of the unique education profile. It is within this context that the LLN has concluded that whilst its members are wholly sympathetic to the higher education needs of the Isle of Wight, in the current context it is only willing to facilitate higher education opportunities *for* but not *on* the island.

3.2.2 To that end, the LLN proposes to concentrate primarily on facilitating vocational learner progression to higher education on the mainland in the following ways:

- i. The LLN would include the island wherever possible within its progression agreements
- ii. The benefits of LLN work on Information and Guidance, together with the clarification of progression routes for vocational learners within the sub-region would be made available
- iii. The LLN will work with other partners (LSC, Island Education Partners) to secure bursaries for travelling students to ensure travel costs are subsidised.
- iv. The LLN and its partners would lobby the three major Solent ferry companies and local/national government to seek a reduced rate of fares on cross Solent travel for students.
- v. The LLN would examine flexible study options for island students, retaining contact hours but timetabled in conjunction with ferry and other transport times.
- vi. The LLN would explore incentives to employers to ensure vocational students were given appropriate access to HE in respect of time and finance

3.2.3 The LLN is however aware that there is some evidence from student feedback that adult vocational learners may prefer HE provision on the island and that the IOW College is developing an HE strategy that would seek to meet this demand.

- vii. The LLN would be willing therefore to explore the potential for (and assist in) the development and delivery on the island of appropriate IT distance learning modules.

3.2.4 As the LLN develops and at the same time any planned changes to educational provision on the island are implemented, and/or specific demand for HE on the island can be further demonstrated (as seen in box 6 POLAR data does suggest a relatively high HE participation rate for the island (HEFCE)), then the LLN would keep under review the ways in which it could best contribute. It might be appropriate, for example, were there to be proven demand and the resource to develop more HE on the island, for a consortium approach to be applied to quality assuring that provision.



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3.2.5 Table 2 over the page demonstrates progress already made in mapping current HNC and HND provision on the Isle of Wight for progression to higher education institutes in the LLN.

Key to table 2

- = Southampton Solent University also run HND
- ** = Southampton Solent University run HND in Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering
- = University of Winchester
- = University of Southampton programme runs over 3 and 4 years
- = University of Chichester
- = University of Portsmouth

**NOTE UCC provided progression to one-year top-up programmes in Business and Childhood Studies*



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Table 2: THE ISLE OF WIGHT COLLEGE OFFER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION CURRENT HNC AND HND PROVISION MAPPED FOR PROGRESSION TO HEIs IN THE LLN

BUSINESS	COMPUTING	ENGINEERING	COMMUNITY STUDIES	GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION	HOSPITALITY
HNC in Business <i>Progression: 5 students</i>	HNC Computing (BIT/Internet Design) <i>Progression: 0 students</i>	HNC Mechanical Engineering <i>Progression: 6 students</i>	HNC Early Years Childhood Studies <i>Progression: 13 students</i> HNC/D Foundation Care <i>Progression: 12 students</i>	HNC Graphic Communication <i>Progression: 12 students</i>	HNC in Hospitality
HND in Business* <i>Progression: 7 students</i>	HND Computing (BIT/Internet Design Technology)* <i>Progression: 6 students</i>	HND Mechanical Engineering**	HND Early Years Childhood Studies <i>Progression: 15 students</i>	HND Graphic Communication	HND in Hospitality Management
BA (Hons) Business 1 Yr top-up	BSc (Hons) BIT 1 Yr top-up	BSc (Hons) Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering		BA (Hons) Graphic Design	
BA Business and Management 'BAMBA' 1 Yr top-up			BA Education Studies (Early Childhood)	BA Media Studies	
BSc Management	BEng Software Engineering	BEng Mechanical Engineering*			
BSc Management Sciences	BEng Computer Engineering				
	BSc (Hons) Information Technology in Organisations				
BA (Hons) Business Studies			BA (Hons) Childhood Studies: Early Years		
BA(Hons) Business Studies	BSc(Hons) Computer Science BSc(Hons) Software Engineering BSc(Hons) Computing etc	BEng(Hons) Mechanical Engineering BEng(Hons) Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering		BA (Hons) Communication Design	BA(Hons) Hospitality Management



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Box 6

Isle of Wight Socio-economic and Education Profiles and Issues Concerning Education Provision

Socio-economic and education profile:

- ◆ An unemployment rate of 3.2% (compared to 1.5% for the area) with much of employment being seasonal in nature
- ◆ Deprived wards
- ◆ Year 11 attainment is well below the national average of 52.9%: only 44.3% achieve five or more GCSEs grades A*-C
- ◆ Continuation into further education is higher than the average for the area in the Isle of Wight. This is possibly due to a combination of high unemployment, low skill level seasonal employment and a 13-18 High School System. Similarly, POLAR data for LEA area shows a relatively high participation in higher education.

Hampshire	33%
Isle of Wight	29%
Portsmouth	20%
Southampton	21%

Source: www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/polar

- ◆ From a total population of about 133,000 (Census 2001), over the last three years there have been between 650 and 675 island applications to higher education in each year (source UCAS and Local Authority data).

Current provision and key issues

Higher education on the island has been most recently provided by the Isle of Wight College in association with the University of Chichester, and in the past, through various links with a wide range of south coast universities. Those links have generally not proved sustainable and Chichester has withdrawn with effect from September 2006, with the sole exception of a new Foundation degree in Early Years Childhood Studies. Some observers see the solution in a fundamental reorganisation of the schools structure (from a three to a two tier model) but this remains locally contentious and there is unlikely to be any major change for the immediate foreseeable future. Closer, structured links between sixth form schools and the FE college may offer a more feasible, alternative route but no decision has been made and again this would take some time to bear fruit.

Higher education numbers at the Isle of Wight College have fallen since their peak in the mid 1990s, with the present small numbers scattered across several wards making for unviable cohort sizes. The College has improved its quality ratings but has not been able to make the progress it had hoped with the creation of dedicated HE accommodation and facilities. College ambitions to introduce foundation degrees, from 2007 onwards, must be tempered realistically by the possibility of uncertain market demand and their realization will require, in any case, significant additional resource, in terms of improved accommodation and curriculum and staff development. Chichester has recognised that it lacks the subject range to act in this capacity and as with any single HEI acting alone would find the strategic and business case a difficult one to make. A consortium approach, however, would also face the same structural obstacles, uncertainties and problems of viability.



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4. Looking Forward: The full LLN

The intensive development and initial delivery stage has demonstrated the degree to which the LLN partners have found strength in collaboration and have achieved significant outcomes. Not only has the partnership gained strong support from a number of key stakeholders, but it has shown its ability to work effectively as a team to produce important outputs such as the two progression agreements. However, the research demonstrates also that there is a considerable amount of work still to be done. The LLN partners now seek the opportunity to develop their work to date, to build on existing good practice, and ultimately to work towards their vision. The LLN partners will need to be proactive in ensuring that learning opportunities mirror those required for changing patterns of local and regional development; they will need to be both responsive and innovative. Collaboration with other networks, such as employer learning hubs will be essential, and building strong working relationships with workplace learning representatives will be vital, given their valuable role in understanding the barriers and gaps in progression currently facing learners in the sub region.

4.1 'The LLN learner': Student profiles

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight LLN will widen participation in higher education by targeting learners who:

- ◆ Are in employment and disengaged from education and training.
- ◆ Are not currently employed and may benefit from advice and guidance to be 'upskilled'.
- ◆ Are currently disadvantaged by their geographical location or a limit in the range of vocational learning available in their area.
- ◆ Are employed in an industry or service where there is an identifiable need for upskilling of the workforce.



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4.2 Objectives

The following objectives have been established to meet the overall aims of the full LLN:

1. To enhance progression and curriculum development through coordinated curriculum planning
2. To deliver flexible and effective progression routes in identified subject areas
3. To enhance capacity and information sharing through staff development
4. To strengthen communication, for and between learners, employers and providers, and to promote learning and progression opportunities through the provision of effective advice and guidance provision
5. To ensure the effective dissemination of information and to promote learning between the partners through the development of meaningful tracking, evaluation and dissemination systems

These five objectives are complementary in nature and will be facilitated by governance arrangements outlined in part 5.

4.3 Anticipated Outcomes

1. To enhance progression and curriculum development through coordinated curriculum planning

The data that have been gathered in the IDID stage are being utilised to assess the most effective collaborative interventions in meeting learner need and addressing skill shortages in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Objective 1 is concerned with providing the *strategic overview* of progression and curriculum development that will underpin the work undertaken in Objectives 2, 3 and 4.

Anticipated outcomes:

- 1.1 Extension of the successful curriculum auditing that has taken place in the development phase to an additional 3/4 disciplines (subject to confirmation and agreement by partners)
- 1.2 Demand studies to evaluate learner and employer demand, which will include assessment of modalities of delivery and be linked to training needs analyses conducted by LLN staff.
- 1.3 Collaborative planning of Foundation Degree provision in the identified subject disciplines.
- 1.4 Exploration of a sustainable model for future collaborative planning and provision of Foundation Degrees across the sub-region.
- 1.5 Extensive research evaluating the capacity for extending more flexible access to learning in the sub-region with respect to geographical location and access to efficacious e-learning resources.



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2. To deliver flexible and effective progression routes in identified subject areas

The HEFCE funded IDID phase has provided an opportunity for essential groundwork for the implementation of progression agreement. From September 2006, first stage progression agreements will be operating in two of the subject areas identified for the pilot phase: creative industries and business and management.

The experience of developing these agreements will be applied initially in furthering the range of subjects within the pilot areas that can be realistically included in a new progression framework. From August 2006, subject to funding, curriculum groups will be established in an additional 4 disciplines, namely Construction, Engineering, Retail and Childhood, Youth and Community Studies. These additional curriculum groupings have been selected as they relate to key sectors in the South East's economy, prioritised by SEEDA and were assessed as having the most potential to benefit from enhanced progression routes.

The development of progression agreements depends upon a number of issues, not least demand sufficient to justify the investment of the learning providers. The LLN provides an essential resource to bring key partners together to share information, expertise and build trust. The experience of this partnership from initial delivery is that agreement can only operate where there is:

- (i) an established level of learner demand or
- (ii) an established level of employer commitment

A crucial part of the intensive development stage has been the collection and analysis of data in regard to these key factors. See Section 3.1.1 and Box 5, page 31.

Anticipated outcomes:

- 2.1 Delivery of new Foundation Degrees that reap the benefits of close collaborative and consultative working as evidenced by the exceptional partnership work that has realised two initial progression agreements (operable from September 2006).
- 2.2 Successful linkage of new Foundation Degree provision with a CATS framework that is fit for purpose in providing learners with clear progression routes in the subject disciplines.
- 2.3 In close consultation with employers, the development of new professional qualifications, such as the new 'associate professional' roles currently being defined by the NHS and relevant professional bodies, and routes for progression to higher levels. This to include the analysis of a distinctive LLN provision in subjects that have demand across a broad geographical spread of the sub-region.
- 2.4 Further development of progression agreements in the 3 subject areas of Business and Management, Creative Industries and Health and Social Care.



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- 2.5 Progression agreements in a further 4 disciplines (linked to demand studies and employer liaison).
- 2.6 The establishment, over the lifetime of the project, of protocols and agreements sufficient to ensure the sustainable implementation of a sub-regional progression and credit framework.
- 2.7 The identification, development and usage of new teaching and learning resources that support the above outcomes.

3. To enhance capacity and information sharing through staff development

Staff development has a key role to play in the achievement of the objectives of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight LLN. The IDID stage has highlighted the need for greater awareness of available opportunities across the partnership and sub-region (or even within the same institution). Capacity building is also essential if the work of the LLN is to be sustainable.

Sharing of information and perspectives between universities, colleges, employers and training providers is vital for the effective development and delivery of this programme of work.

Anticipated outcomes are therefore:

- 3.1 Task focused (e.g. a specific Foundation Degree) staff development that meets the needs of diverse collaborative working parties.
- 3.2 Discipline based groups and events that give the opportunity to a)genuinely build capacity that will make a significant contribution to the realisation of LLN objectives and be sustainable beyond the life of the project and b)effectively disseminate information on curriculum provision, credit transferability and the range of qualifications that meets the needs of partners engaged in development and delivery of, for example, continuing professional development.

4. To strengthen communication, for and between learners, employers and providers, and to promote learning and progression opportunities through the provision of effective advice and guidance

A research consultant has been tasked with providing an overview of issues pertaining to advice and guidance for potential vocational learners. This has included dialogues with key providers (such as Connexions and 'Next Step') as well as colleges, university careers staff and the local Learning and Skills Council.

The study, looking at provision of advice and guidance to adults produced the following conclusions:



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- i. Access to guidance (one to one with a qualified professional) for the general public is limited.
- ii. Advice is more generally available, but LSC funding is only available for people with less than level 2 qualifications (plus a limited number of specified groups) and precludes repeat appointments. Advice sessions are funded for 20 minutes only and would not be available to, for example, Access students.
- iii. There is a limited supply of qualified advice and guidance staff and organisations find it prohibitively expensive to train them.
- iv. There is insufficient knowledge of existing advice and guidance provision, even within staff that work in this area (see Objective 3 – staff development).
- v. The specific needs of potential adult learners are poorly met. Referral is often to a disparate range of agencies for advice on matters ranging from finance to childcare.
- vi. Further work is required to ensure that ‘Next Step’ is supported and embedded in the LLN network to maximise its potential contribution in this area.
- vii. Universities, especially in admissions, need to be aware of the complexity of these issues and trained appropriately (see Objective 3 staff development).
- viii. Much national information, increasingly web-based does not always provide the necessary local detail (including basic logistics such as travel links). Access to the internet is frequently, erroneously, assumed.

In the final report, a number of recommendations were put forward, including the need for an external impartial central ‘service’ for local employers, HEIs, and clients that is accessed through Drop-in, appointments and email, and which might offer APL guidance, a dedicated guidance service, the bulk of information and resources, the development of ‘Learning Champions’ with employers, and a training service (Sue James January 2006)’ (see also Box 5, page 31).

For the LLN, a core element of IAG will be learning that needs to take place *between* LLN partners and local employers: LLN partners require a much better understanding of employer needs if curriculum provision is to be appropriate; at the same time, there is evidence to suggest that employers are reluctant to invest in training because they are confused about the courses available (see Box 1), so the opportunity to learn more about current provision is critical. Already the two conferences planned as part of the IDID stage have been designed to enable consultation between LLN partners and its diverse range of stakeholders. The full LLN proposes to develop an Employers’ Forum, with sector sub – groups, to facilitate the exchange of advice and information between the LLN and local industry.

The promotion of learning and progression opportunities needs to be carried out in such a way that it will reach the maximum number of potential learners. The internet is still and looks set to remain one of the dominant modes of information communication, and for this reason building and maintaining an up-to-date, dynamic and accessible website will be a key outcome for the full LLN. Much can already be learnt from the excellent work already carried out by Aimhigher. However, research



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findings highlighted the fact that access to the internet should not be assumed, therefore the LLN will also investigate other appropriate modes of communication, such as Roadshows, so as to ensure maximum possible outreach.

Anticipated outcomes for objective 4 are therefore:

- 4.1 An Employers' Forum, with sector sub – groups, to facilitate the exchange of advice and information between employers and the LLN
- 4.2 A promotion strategy to include a dynamic and up-to-date website.

5. To ensure the effective dissemination of information and to promote learning between the partners through the development of meaningful tracking, evaluation and dissemination systems

Anticipated outcomes:

- 5.1 Tracking of individual learners, including identification of the effective means by which they were engaged.
- 5.2 Management of information such that partners and other interested parties can benefit from dissemination (subject to appropriate protocols and legislation).
- 5.3 Effective monitoring and reporting in regard to key outcomes.
- 5.4 Mid term and a final report from independent evaluators based on the criteria stated above.
- 5.5 Dissemination events based on work programme, discipline or communication concerning LLN objectives.

Tracking Learners

Tracking learners poses well recognised problems relating to management of information and data protection. The partners in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight LLN have the benefit of experience of database operation for Aimhigher as well as the earlier 'Wessex and Solent Partnership'. It is anticipated that efficient information management from the outset of the fully funded project will enable a reliable system for tracking learners that benefit from the LLN.

The information needs of the existing Aimhigher project will provide some assistance in early formation of systems to support the LLN. Similarly, the experience of the Aimhigher project with regard to the use of web-based materials is informing our approach to the LLN. Notwithstanding the earlier point about access to the internet, electronic media will play a significant role in delivery of LLN programmes as well as facilitating general communication and networking.

Evaluation of the impact of the LLN

The LLN will be structured and managed with self-monitoring against targets and milestones contained in the business case. In addition, resources have been identified to support independent evaluation which will ensure compliance to the stated objectives and outcomes of the LLN. Evaluation will also consider the broader strategic concerns which the LLN has been created to address, namely:



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- Is the LLN serving the learner constituency identified in the business case?
- Are partners sufficiently engaged in the network suitable to the meeting of the stated objectives?
- Are resources deployed in a manner best suited to supporting the achievement of specified outcomes?
- How effective is the LLN communication strategy at disseminating key information and managing discourse?

Dissemination

Dissemination of information is essential for a healthy network. Dissemination events and network communications form a vital part of the LLN. All major areas of work will be required to have a dissemination plan linked to the overall LLN communication strategy. This is an area which will be explicitly evaluated on a periodic basis.

4.4 Achievement of Objectives: LLN Strategic Plan

A strategic plan with appropriate SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related) targets and milestones is essential for making the LLN operational. The writing of the plan is a dynamic process which requires participation and periodic review by core partners and consultation with stakeholders. The strategic plan is a key document used by the Strategic Board in tracking progress. Although pulling together the final version will be the responsibility of the LLN Project Director and core LLN team (see section 5), the following table sets out the objectives, indicators of success and a timeframe that will constitute the strategic plan.

A supplementary operational plan and a detailed resource plan will be developed once this bid is approved, as part of the approach to project management. These will include plans for staffing.

OBJECTIVE 1					
<i>To enhance progression and curriculum development through coordinated curriculum planning</i>					
Planned Outcomes		Action Required	Target/ Indicator	Deadline	
1.1	Extension of the successful curriculum auditing that has taken place in the development phase to an additional 4 disciplines, namely Construction, Engineering, Retail and Childhood, Youth and Community Studies.	Engage consultant/ organisation to undertake collaborative discipline audits and identify progression gaps and opportunities	Complete first two audits	July 2006	
			Complete final two audits	July 2007	
1.2	Demand studies in each of the additional four disciplines to evaluate learner and employer demand, which will include assessment of modalities of delivery and be linked to training needs analyses conducted by LLN staff.	Agree terms of reference and engage consultant/ organisation	Consultancy agreement signed	October 2006	
			Complete investigation and analysis	Completed review	March 2007
			LLN partners to review implications for future curriculum development	Action plan developed and agreed by partners	June 2007
1.3	Collaborative planning of Foundation Degree provision in the identified subject disciplines involving anticipated 20 employers for each of the 7 sectors	Agree coordinator and partner representation for each subject discipline	Collaborative groups established	Phased from October 2007	



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	(depending on size and scale of employer).	Undertake reviews and collaborative curriculum development	Action plans developed for each discipline and agreed by partners	Phased from June 2007
		Launch new Foundation Degrees	Phased introduction of new FDs as per related ASN bid	From 2006/07 onwards as per bid
1.4	Development of a sustainable model for future collaborative planning and provision of Foundation Degrees across the sub-region.	Best practice emerging from above discipline collaborations to be identified and shared	Sustainable model to be agreed by LLN Steering Group	July 2008
1.5	Extensive research evaluating the capacity for extending more flexible access to learning in the sub-region with respect to geographical location and access to effective e-learning resources.	Agree research brief including literature review, investigation of best practice eg through CETLs and learner focused primary research.	Research brief agreed by Steering Group	December 2006
		Commission consultants/organisation	Research contract signed	October 2007
		Complete investigation and analysis	Publish review findings	July 2008
		LLN partners to review implications of research findings	Action plan for further development agreed by LLN partners	November 2008

OBJECTIVE 2

To deliver flexible and effective progression routes in identified subject areas

Planned Outcomes	Action Required	Target/Indicator	Deadline	
2.1	Delivery of new Foundation Degrees that reap the benefits of close collaborative and consultative working as evidenced by the exceptional partnership work that has realised two first stage progression agreements (operable from Sept. 2006)	Launch new Foundation Degrees	Phased introduction of new FDs as per related ASN bid	From 2006/07 onwards as per bid
2.2	Successful linkage of new Foundation Degree provision with a CATS framework that is fit for purpose in providing learners with clear progression pathways in the subject disciplines.	Development and consultation on proposed CATS framework	Framework agreed by the Steering Group	October 2007
		Implementation of CATS framework in initial pilot areas	Use of the framework by at least 30 students	October 2008
		Extension of CATS framework across other disciplines in the LLN	Use of the framework by at least 30 students per discipline p.a.	October 2009 onwards
2.3	In close consultation with employers, the development of new professional qualifications, for example for new 'associate professional' roles currently being defined by the NHS and relevant professional bodies, and pathways for progression to higher levels. This to include the analysis of a distinctive LLN provision in subjects that have demand across a broad geographical spread of the sub-region.	Initial phase focusing on health and care sector, where new associate professional roles are being defined	Introduce at least one new FD targeted at associate professionals	October 2008
		Agreement on new progression routes, based on IDID research	Introduce new FDs, degree top-ups and PGT routes as per ASN bid	From 2006/07 onwards as per bid
2.4	Develop existing progression agreements to cover specific conditions required by HEFCE	Development of action plan evidencing planned outcomes, actions required to meet conditions and how actions will be implemented	Completion of action plan	End of October 2006
2.5	Further development of progression agreements in the 3 subject areas of Business and Management, Creative Industries and Health and Social Care.	Initial Implementation of agreed 1 st stage progression agreements	Use of each progression agreement by at least 5 learners p.a.	October 2006



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		Full roll-out of phase two of the agreed progression agreements in these three subjects	Use of each progression agreement by at least 25 learners p.a.	By October 2009
2.6	Progression accords in a further 4 disciplines (linked to demand studies and employer liaison).	Collaborative development of appropriate progression agreements in these four disciplines	Initial use of each progression agreement by at least 5 learners p.a.	October 2008
		Full roll-out of the agreed progression agreements	Use of each progression agreement by at least 25 learners p.a.	By October 2009
2.7	The establishment, over the lifetime of the project, of protocols and agreements sufficient to ensure the sustainable implementation of a sub-regional progression and credit framework.	Best practice emerging from development and use of progression agreements to be identified and shared	Recommendations for managing future developments published	July 2008
		Process for regular review and update of progression agreements, taking account of changes in learner demand and courses offered by partners	Sustainable model to be agreed by LLN Steering Group	December 2008
2.8	The identification, development and usage of new teaching and learning resources that support the above outcomes.	Development of a bank of easily accessible resources that support learner choice and progression	Internet and/or CD resources available	December 2008

OBJECTIVE 3

To enhance capacity and information sharing through staff development

Planned Outcomes		Action Required	Target/ Indicator	Deadline
3.1	Task focused (e.g. a specific Foundation Degree) staff development that meets the needs of diverse collaborative working parties with likely engagement of approximately 70 admissions staff and tutors.	Training needs analysis across partners	Summary to Steering Group	February 2007
		Develop training resources and run pilot activities	Run pilot activities in at least two subjects	August 2007
		Implementation of tested staff development	Deliver at least fourteen staff development sessions p.a.	On-going from 2007/08
3.2	Seven discipline based groups and two events per year that give the opportunity to genuinely build capacity that will make a significant contribution to the realisation of LLN objectives and be sustainable beyond the life of the project.	Establish collaborative discipline groups involving staff from each LLN partner active in that subject	Seven groups established and initial events held	January 2007
			At least two meetings/ events p.a. for each subject	Ongoing from 2007/08
3.3	The effective dissemination of information on curriculum provision, credit transferability and the range of qualifications that meets the needs of partners engaged in development and delivery of, for example, continuing professional development.	Develop and implement dissemination strategy covering all aspects of effective dissemination: awareness, understanding, action and embedding.	Awareness of the LLN by staff in partner institutions (95% awareness by relevant staff for example staff involved in admissions, IAG, APEL, CPD)	Ongoing from 2007/08



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OBJECTIVE 4

To strengthen communication, for and between learners, employers and providers, and to promote learning and progression opportunities through the provision of effective advice

Planned Outcomes		Action Required	Target/ Indicator	Deadline
4.1	An Employers' Forum, with sector sub – groups, to facilitate the exchange of advice and information between employers and the LLN	Establish appropriate means of engagement with target groups of employers	Agreed list of partner employers developed	August 2007 and refreshed thereafter
		Hold road shows and other interactive events	At least three events p.a.	Ongoing from 2007/08
4.2	A promotion strategy to include dynamic and up-to-date website www.progress2succeed.net	Enhancement of current website and development of other media in line with dissemination strategy (see 3.3)	Active website with positive trend in hits per month	December 2007 and refreshed thereafter

OBJECTIVE 5

To ensure the effective dissemination of information and to promote learning between the partners through the development of meaningful tracking, evaluation and dissemination systems

Planned Outcomes		Action Required	Target/ Indicator	Deadline
5.1	Tracking of individual learners, including identification of the effective means by which they were engaged.	Requirements for tracking system to be defined and IT solution sourced drawing on experience from Aimhigher Hampshire & IOW	Agreement on appropriate tracking system by Steering Group	May 2007
		Pilot implementation and testing of system	Pilot implementation by one HE and one FE partner	October 2007
		Full implementation of system across partners. Monitoring of learner progression in place, feeding in to evaluation of LLN activities	Monitoring reports on learner progression opportunities achieved	May 2008
5.2	Management of information such that partners and other interested parties can benefit from dissemination (subject to appropriate protocols and legislation).	Agree key management information needs and prepare regular reports using models developed by Aimhigher Hampshire & IOW	Provision of key data such as progression opportunities achieved twice p.a.	Ongoing from 2007/08
5.3	Effective monitoring and reporting in regard to key outcomes.	Full project plan developed, with regular reporting against milestones	Regular reports to the Steering Group and HEFCE	Ongoing from December 2006
		Standard reporting against key performance indicators introduced	Regular reports to the Steering Group and HEFCE	Ongoing from 2007/08
		Use of external evaluators building on good practice in Aimhigher	Reviews undertaken annually and recommendations reviewed by Steering Group	Ongoing annually from 2007/08
5.4	Mid term and a final report from independent evaluators based on the criteria stated above.	Reports prepared and reviewed	Reports produced to deadline	July 2007 and July 2009
5.5	Dissemination events based on work programme, discipline or communication concerning LLN objectives.	Targeted programme of events related to different phases of dissemination strategy: awareness, understanding, action and embedding. One stakeholder conference per annum plus one sector dissemination event per annum.	Positive feedback on communication benefits from attendees	Ongoing from 2007/08



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5. Governance and Management

5.1 Leadership and staffing

5.1.1 Leadership of the LLN

The partners have agreed that Southampton Solent University will take receipt and be accountable for the SDF grant. The University will take immediate action to recruit the Project Director and core LLN team to effect a speedy rolling out of the work programmes outlined in this document.

5.1.2 LLN Strategic Board

Strategic direction and management of accountability will be provided by an oversight group consisting of senior managers from the five HEIs, plus one elected representative from the LLN employer forum, two further education representatives elected by the FE College Principals meeting, one sector skills council representative and the Director of Aimhigher for Hampshire & IoW. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Southampton Solent University will chair the Board.

The Board will:

- meet at least twice a year to provide strategic direction and linkage with wider HE, training and skills agendas;
- monitor progress against agreed targets;
- scrutinise budgets and compliance with the aims of the network.
- oversee development towards the sustainability of the LLN following the initial funding period.

In particular, the nature of some of the programmes and initiatives proposed for the LLN requires high-level dialogue and agreement to ensure operational feasibility. The Board will operate to ensure that these requirements are met and that the project is being run consistent with the objectives and outcomes specified in the business case and in agreement with appropriate auditing of good practice. In this respect, the Board will be ultimately responsible for reporting to HEFCE and other partners and agencies, regarding the delivery of the LLN business plan and the proper use of SDF funding in the achievement of this.

The Project Director and LLN Team will monitor and relate to the strategic board any issues that may require further policy consideration. Where this has urgent bearing on achievement of outcomes, extraordinary meetings of the Board may be called.

The Board will be informed by a regularly convened 'LLN Employers' Forum' (with sector sub – groups), to ensure the input and buy-in of the key sectors addressed by the project. The exact composition and role played by these for a will be specified in the first quarter of operation of the LLN.



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5.1.3 Operational Management

Project Director

The overall responsibility for operational delivery of the LLN will reside with a Project Director. This will be a fixed-term appointment for three years. Based at Southampton Solent University, the Director will possess high-level project development and management skills and be capable of operating effectively at a strategic level. This will include brokering and co-ordinating a number of employer fora as detailed above.

The Director will report to the Chair of the Strategic Board and provide quarterly progress updates to Board members. In addition, the Director will ensure that all partners and stakeholders in the LLN are engaged appropriately through operation of a co-ordinated communication strategy.

The Director will be supported by a 'Credit and Progression Manager' with responsibility for brokering and overseeing progression agreements and associated responsibilities. Further support to the central team will be provided by a project administrator. These posts will be based at Southampton Solent University.

Further staff appointments are proposed for the coordination of key outcomes, these are:

1. Staff development co-ordinator
2. Information manager
3. Work based services manager

Further consideration is required as to the location of these posts, all of which are likely to be 'split' posts. The funding application is based on 1 full-time equivalent post for each function identified above, but these may be fractional, where feasible, to enable a wider engagement of partners and perspectives in realising the goals of the project. This decision will be made by the Project Director in conjunction with the LLN Strategic Board based on an assessment of the best 'fit' for specific purposes.

In short, staffing the LLN is based on a 'breathe-with-demand' model to ensure long-term sustainability.

5.1.4 LLN Management Team

This team will oversee the implementation of the LLN under the leadership of the LLN Director. The team will be drawn from staff within the core partnership of five HEIs and will typically be seconded on a fractional basis. Though this latter arrangement has not been formally applied previously, the model is similar to the Operational Management Group that successfully delivers Aimhigher in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

This team will ensure:

- partnership co-ordination and communication to ensure partners are appropriately engaged and informed;
- progress monitoring with a periodic reporting requirement to the Strategic Board;



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- operational support to partners and staff delivering aspects of the LLN across Hampshire and Isle of Wight;
- marketing, promotion and dissemination of LLN activity.

5.1.5 Staffing

Other than central roles agreed by the Board, such as LLN Director, the majority of posts will, where possible, be seconded from within existing partner and stakeholder institutions. This will ensure wide engagement by partners and stakeholders and efficiencies brought about by flexibility in responding to variable operational demands. In the longer term, this will also assist in building the capacity necessary for sustainability of the LLN within relevant institutions.



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5.2 Accountability

The Hampshire and IOW LLN will not be a separate legal entity or employer. The LLN model is based on strong collaboration between core partners and key stakeholders, in which each institution recognises their own responsibilities and accountabilities.

These accountabilities are set out in table 3 below:

Table 3: Table of Accountabilities

Responsibility:	Accountable:	Monitored through:
1. National Policy and Guidance on LLNs	<i>HEFCE</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Continued advice and guidance over the development of the LLN
2. Receipt and allocation of LLN funds	<i>Southampton Solent University</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Published accounts ◆ Report to HEFCE
3. Strategic Direction and Management of Accountability	<i>Strategic Board</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Annual reports and review ◆ Meetings ◆ Annual Stakeholder Conference
4. Monitoring progress against targets and checking budgets	<i>Strategic Board</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Annual reports and review ◆ Meetings
5. Operational delivery of business plan	<i>LLN Director supported by Management Team</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overseen by LLN Coordination Group
6. Implementation: partnership coordination and communication; operational support to partners	<i>Management Team overseen by LLN Director</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overseen by Strategic Board
7. Employment of LLN staff	<i>LLN Director supported by Management Team</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overseen by Strategic Board and Coordination Group
8. Quality and quantity of provision; additional students numbers resulting from LLN	<i>Providing institutions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ofsted, QAA ◆ ASNs
9. Advice and Guidance	<i>IAG Advisory Group to initially oversee provision</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reports and recommendations ◆ Consultancy where appropriate
10. Progression Agreements	<i>Credit & Progression Manager</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overseen by Strategic Board and Coordination Group



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5.3 Financial Management and Sustainability

5.3.1 The financial proposal for the LLN is presented in annex 3 of this document. The budget has been prepared in such a way as to ensure affordability and value for money. For example, the staffing model is flexible and designed to 'breathe' with the demands of the project. Aside from the core team, further staffing engagements will respond to the variable operational demands of the project.

5.3.2 The budget also reflects the value given to complementarity and synergy to limit duplication of resources and therefore includes a significant element of partner contribution where there is clear synergy or overlap with existing work.

5.3.3 This project is conceived of as a 'launch pad' for a number of initiatives that are expected to be self-sustaining after the period of SDF funding. Sustainability is therefore built into the model proposed and funding is proposed from an early stage to fully explore the most effective means of embedding the new relationships and practices that the LLN entails. Sustainability is also a key factor in the monitoring and evaluation process described above under Objective 5.

5.4 Risk Assessment

The LLN acknowledges that there are risks, and table 4 identifies some of the areas of risk and uncertainty that will be addressed by the LLN. However, none of the risks identified are thought to be too significant, and with a common understanding of 'shared risk', it is thought any uncertainties will be both limited and manageable. The work and experiences of the LLN during the IDID stage have also been useful in identifying possible areas of concern and considering how these might be overcome. Carefully conceived arrangements for management and governance will also make a considerable contribution towards risk limitation.



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Table 4: Assessment of Risk

Risk Identified	Risk Assessment	Mitigation
i. Failure of Partnership	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LLN builds on strong existing networks, Letters of agreement to collaborate have been signed Governance arrangements provide a means of managing partnership (see section 5)
ii. Failure to deliver defined outcomes	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Monitoring and Evaluation through Strategic Board meetings should identify concerns early on and ensure that the LLN is focussed and responsive Governance arrangements will ensure appropriate management and accountability The objectives of the LLN have been informed by research carried out in the IDIDS, and are also based upon a thorough analysis of the context in which the LLN will operate
iii. Engaging employer commitment	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder meetings and annual Stakeholder Conferences are to be held to ensure employer voices are being heard IAG Advisory team to focus on other ways of engaging employers commitment
iv. Failure to stimulate new sources of demand	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice and guidance will be carefully targeted Marketing and promotion techniques will be employed using appropriate modes of communication The choice of curriculum areas is based on research and consultation
v. Demand cannot be met	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on key subjects will enable better management of demand
vi. Unforeseen increases in cost	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HEFCE Financial Forecast methodology has been used to allow for inflation
vii. Non-completion of courses by students	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IAG will need to focus on strong student support facilities Monitoring and tracking of students will enable the early identification of problems
viii. Funder Expectations are not met	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The whole LLN bidding and implementation process Dialogue between the LLN and HEFCE is continual The LLN has already established a good professional working relationship with HEFCE
ix. Failure to recruit suitable staff on time	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term contracts with appropriate career incentives are to be offered Posts will be carefully marketed Fractional secondments will be used
x. Failure to obtain agreement on progression agreements and credit transfer issues	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A learning approach to the LLN will ensure that partners and providers learn from Good Practice A Progression and credit manager will be able to manage the negotiation process



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6. Relationship with other Strategic Priorities

6.1 Coherence and Complementarity

The role of the LLN will not be to replicate the work of other initiatives. Instead the LLN will strive to bring coherence to the range of partnerships, projects and other initiatives within the sub-region. To ensure complementarity and to avoid duplication of effort and resource, the LLN has been developed in close consultation with all key stakeholders including, Further Education Colleges, Higher Education Institutions, LSC (Hampshire & IOW), Skills Councils, and Education Business Partnerships.

6.1.1 Specific examples of where strategic links have been particularly fruitful include:

- Funding received from SEEDA by the University of Portsmouth for work that contributes to and will be integrated with that undertaken in the IDID stage (£50k).
- Engagement of employers through the network of colleges gaining Action for Business Status, and Centre of Vocational Excellence status.
- Aimhigher Hampshire and Isle of Wight (see 6.1.2)

6.1.2 An example of how the full LLN might continue to *complement and support* other initiatives is presented below with specific reference to the Aimhigher Hampshire & IOW:

Table 5: Example of Complementary Activity by LLN

Aimhigher focus	Complementary activity by LLN
Strengthening progression routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Enabling</i> progression routes by providing clarification of entry requirements, developing progression agreements, enabling APEL
Raising aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development</i> of the curriculum to make it more vocationally relevant for a range of different needs and interests
Providing information advice and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close collaboration</i> by core partners in developing a coherent pool of up to date resources • <i>Providing an infrastructure</i> for the dissemination of information relating to progression routes (e.g. road shows) • <i>Providing training</i> to IAG staff and Admissions staff



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6.2 A Shared National, Regional and Local Vision

The LLN has been developed in line with national and local policy to ensure a shared vision. Engagement with the strategic priorities of HEFCE, HESE, the LSC, Local Authorities, Hampshire Economic Partnership, SEEDA, and SEDA among others has been critical to the development of this document. A number of key strategy documents have helped inform this business case, and these are listed in the references section at the end of this document.

Every opportunity will be taken to ensure that the work of the Hampshire & IOW LLN continues to inform and be informed by regional and national organisations.



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References

Aimhigher Hampshire & IOW Strategic Plan 2004-6

HEFCE Regional Perspective of South East of England (Richard Blackwell 2004)

Informing our Future (Hampshire Economic Business Partnership 2004)

Learning Works, Further Education Funding Council, (Kennedy Committee 1997)

Skills Insight Annual Skills Review 2004

South East England Development Agency Regional Economic Strategy

Strategic Area Review 2002 to 2005 (LSC, Hampshire & IOW, 2005)

IDIDS reports referenced:

- i. *Curriculum Audit and Progression Mapping, Business and Management* (author not given)
- ii. *Curriculum Audit and Progression Mapping, Health and Social Care* (Health Care Innovation Unit, University of Southampton)
- iii. *Progression Agreements in Health and Social Care: A Case Study of Foundation Degrees, Final Report* (Health Care Innovation Unit, University of Southampton)
- iv. *Current Transition Practices from level 3 to HE in Business and Management, Creative Industries and Health and Social Care* (OCN South East Region)
- v. *Demand Study, Health and Social Care, Final Report* (Health Care Innovation Unit, University of Southampton)
- vi. *A Survey of Information, Advice & Guidance in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (Sue James, January 2006)