

<b>Cover Sheet for Proposals</b> (All sections must be completed)	<i>JISC Capital Programme</i>
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<b>Name of Capital Programme:</b> <b>E-Learning Programme – Cross institutional use of e-learning to support lifelong learners</b>		
<b>Name of Lead Institution:</b> <b>University of Birmingham</b>		
<b>Name of Proposed Project: Access for All</b>		
<b>Name of Project Partners:</b> <b>University of Birmingham</b> <b>Access to Birmingham Schools</b> <b>Birmingham and Solihull LEAs</b> <b>Aimhigher Birmingham and Solihull</b>		
<b>Full Contact Details for Primary Contact:</b>  <b>Name: Gail Rothnie</b> <b>Position: Head of Outreach</b> <b>Email: g.h.rothnie@bham.ac.uk</b> <b>Address:</b> <b>Aston Webb Building, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT</b>  <b>Tel No: 0121 415 8545</b> <b>Fax No: 0121 414 3850</b>		
<b>Length of Project: 2 years Six Months</b>		
<b>Project Start and End Dates: October 2006- March 2009</b>		
<b>Total Funding Requested from JISC: £200,000</b>		
<b>Funding Broken Down over Project Years:</b> <b>Contribution from JISC Year 1 - £91,000</b> <b>Year 2 - £98,000</b> <b>Year 3 - £11,000</b> <b>Contribution from UoB Year 1 £65, 880</b> <b>Year 2 £71,760</b> <b>Year 3 £ 15,880</b>		
<b>Total Institutional Contributions:</b> <b>£153,520</b>		
<b>Outline Project Description</b> The 'Access for All' project will explore the use of e-learning to support lifelong learning and develop a series of tools that support the delivery of HE materials to sixth form and further education colleges. To do this it will build upon the successful outcomes of the University of Birmingham led A2B (Access to Birmingham) learning partnership by extending the programme itself and developing and publishing a sustainable and cost-effective model for implementing such programmes across any partnership of UK educational institutions.  Specifically this project, starting in September 2006 and finishing in March 2009, will support the JISC core e-learning programme for the 'Cross institutional use of e-learning to support lifelong learners'. It will work with students in schools, sixth forms colleges and colleges of further education to better prepare them for the progression to higher education (HE) study.		
<b>I have read the Circular and associated Terms and Conditions of Grant at Appendix B</b>	<b>YES</b> √	<b>NO</b>

## University of Birmingham

### JISC Circular 03/06: JISC Capital Programme - 'Access for All' Project Proposal

#### 1. Introduction

##### **Overview**

The 'Access for All' project will explore the use of e-learning to support lifelong learning and develop a series of tools that support the delivery of HE materials to sixth form and further education colleges. To do this it will build upon the successful outcomes of the University of Birmingham led A2B (Access to Birmingham) learning partnership by extending the programme itself and developing and publishing a sustainable and cost-effective model for implementing such programmes across any partnership of UK educational institutions.

Specifically this project, starting in September 2006 and finishing in March 2009, will support the JISC core e-learning programme for the 'Cross institutional use of e-learning to support lifelong learners'. It will work with students in schools, sixth forms colleges and colleges of further education to better prepare them for the progression to higher education (HE) study. It is envisaged that the outcomes from the project will be:

- Production of high-quality, interactive, flexible HE preparation materials which:
  - Address the lifelong learning skills needed to be successful in higher education.
  - Help to improve their performance at their current learning level.
  - Can be provided to students as part of a personalised learning experience.
- Extending the use of Progress Files at the University by enabling students to track their progression from early sixth form to graduation, and beyond.
- Development of pedagogical approaches that better support learners as they progress from school and college into the HE environment, in particular:
  - Development of working practices that raise the aspirations and attainment of learners from under-represented communities and support their successful progression to HE.
  - Development of learning scenarios that facilitate a seamless transition from schools into further and higher education.
  - The development of knowledge and skills to help them to become independent lifelong learners.
- Provision of information and evidence to assist University admissions staff in considering the suitability of candidates in a more holistic way.
- Publication of an implementation guide for other institutions wishing to adopt a similar methodology, based upon an extensive evaluation of the project outcomes.

##### **Rationale**

The 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper identifies the need to stretch the most able sixth form students and better equip them for higher education study. To do this it says that the most able teenagers will be able to take HE modules while in the sixth form.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time it is a constant complaint of the HE sector that students are under-prepared for the requirements of HE study. Professor Alex Hughes, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic Quality and Students) at the University of Birmingham, has recently done a series of 'road shows' with academic departments of the University, where a constant theme has been the fact that even students with good A' levels, or equivalent, are under-prepared for the level of independent study required in HE. The development of those skills and greater general learner independence is a major strategic driver for the University, which will be investing approximately £1m in this area over the next two years.

The Access for All project will take these developments into schools and colleges, enabling work of this kind to begin earlier in the students' academic careers. The project will also

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<sup>1</sup> 14-19 Education and Skills, February 2005, para 13

enable the sharing and dissemination of good practice, providing a model with which all UK institutions can work to make their own contributions to early development of lifelong learning skills.

Specifically this project will provide learning support at pre-entry level for students in schools and colleges, facilitating transition and progression from Level 3 to Level 4 study. At the same time it will provide students with additional skills and support to enhance, record and reflect upon their achievement at Level 3.

This project also supports the aims of the Higher Education (HE) Academy in promoting Personal Development Planning (PDP) via the use of Progress Files, as defined by the Quality Assurance Agency  
[<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/progressFiles/guidelines/progfile2001.asp#what>].

The HE Academy is 'promoting PDP because it offers the potential to enrich the higher education experiences of students. It also helps students to develop knowledge about themselves and through this builds a stronger sense of identity.'<sup>2</sup> The work proposed will enable this process to begin before students enter HE and facilitate an incremental development of the learning processes that underlie PDP.

The objectives of this proposal also support the development of Lifelong Learning Networks. A recent circular from HEFCE 'Lifelong Learning Networks: progress report and next steps' refers to their focus on progression and the 'development of e-portfolios, guidance systems, databases and learner support materials'.<sup>3</sup> The LLN for Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country is currently in a stage of rapid development, and, as the University of Birmingham is an active partner, we would use the Access for All project outcomes to inform the development of the LLN.

The Foster Report published in November 2005 focuses on the drive to enhance employability amongst college learners. 'The UK education system needs to improve the employability and commitment to employment of UK adults'<sup>4</sup> and this proposal linking to developments within the Personal Skills Award (see appendix C) at the University helps to meet this agenda.

Building on the existing partnership and content of the University of Birmingham's Access to Birmingham, or A2B, scheme Access for All will develop HE preparation materials and provide students with an electronic portfolio, which can be accessed online. These materials and the associated learning activities will aid the transition to HE and contribute to the natural progression from directed learning to a more active engagement in their own learning processes. Study skills materials at the University of Birmingham are usually developed at individual departmental level. This project will enable best practice to be brought together, both internally within the University but also by looking at what is available across the sector as a whole, thereby making it more easily accessible to a wider constituent audience.

The project will first identify appropriate materials that are already in existence, using services such as JORUM [<http://www.jorum.ac.uk>] to which the University of Birmingham already subscribes, TE3 [Technology Enhanced Enterprise Education <http://www.te3.bham.ac.uk/>] and NLN [National Learning Network <http://www.nln.ac.uk/>], and develop new, and highly interactive, materials which would be made available for educational use via the project website and JORUM repository.

The Access for All project will ultimately provide learners with highly interactive learning materials, delivered in a personalised environment, where students can measure, record and reflect upon their progress. Successful completion of the units of study will lead to accreditation. This approach will also enable learners to carry their learning records with them into HE and beyond.

## **Current Position**

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<sup>2</sup> [www.heacademy.ac.uk/PDP.htm](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/PDP.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Lifelong Learning Networks :progress report and next steps , May 2006

<sup>4</sup> Realising the potential 'A review of the future of further education colleges' para 54, Andrew Foster November 2005

The Access to Birmingham (A2B) partnership forms part of the University's commitment to widen participation from under represented groups. Part of the scheme involves students completing an online study skills module covering topics such as plagiarism, academic writing and critical analysis. Results from an end of module test are considered alongside A' level grades, or equivalent, and a departmental essay for final admission to the University. This approach ensures that many students who have considerable potential but might otherwise have fallen short of the admission grades are able to gain admission. Once in higher education the evidence is that these students perform well and are a major asset to the University. Hence the University's commitment to extend this scheme and disseminate the model to other universities.

Currently the A2B partnership, within which the Access for All project would begin, involves 70 schools and colleges (see appendix B). The current materials are at pre-entry level, with the intention of adding materials to enable progression to undergraduate level study, prior to entering higher education. The Access for All project will facilitate the identification and development of materials complementary to those already in place, pilot the use of those materials within the A2B partnership and ultimately make those materials available to schools and colleges across the UK.

The University of Birmingham has also been involved in the development of an online portfolio tool that allows students to reflect upon their own learning, setting personal objectives and working towards specific learning objectives, recording their achievements and presenting their portfolio to a range of audiences, tutors, fellow learners, employers, mentors etc., in a variety of ways.

The University has a 'Personal Skills Award' (PSA) for its undergraduates, in which employability and other key skills are developed alongside the main degree, with credits being awarded. Successful completion of the PSA is detailed on the student's transcript on graduation. As part of this work we will be looking at how pre-entry work can progress on to the PSA and lead to accreditation (see appendix C).

## **2. Project Description**

### **Project Plan**

This will be a 30 month project beginning in October 2006 and ending in March 2009.

During the first year we will work in close consultation with other members of the A2B partnership to identify and prioritise gaps in current provision. Materials to fill these gaps will first be identified from existing pre-entry study skills materials, using sources such as JORUM, TE3, NLN and the University of Nottingham CETL (Centre of Excellence in Learning and Teaching) for Integrative Learning [<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/integrativelearning/>]. Any gaps in provision that still exist will be filled by developing additional materials. The new programme will be piloted with a core group of 6-12 schools and colleges from within the A2B partnership. A key priority of the project is to develop a programme of interactive materials which stimulate a high level of student engagement.

In order to deliver the materials in an effective and easily accessible manner an IT platform will be developed, maximising the use of existing systems, so that students can access the materials either in school / college or elsewhere. At the same time internal procedures will be developed to record summative assessments and thereby facilitate accreditation. Materials will be evaluated through online questionnaires and focus groups, feeding-back to further develop and refine the materials.

The technical architecture will be developed using the RAD (Rapid Application Development) [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapid\\_application\\_development](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapid_application_development)] methodology, ensuring a rapid and responsive link between the identification of needs and the implementation of solutions. The overall system architecture will be clearly documented and will not be dependent upon any specific software or hardware system. Any associated software systems developed for the project will be made freely available via the project website and documented within the project report.

During the second year the materials will be made available throughout the A2B partnership, currently over 70 schools and colleges, and also made freely available to all UK educational institutions.

At the end of the second year an extensive evaluation will be carried out, covering areas such as level of access and usage of the materials to inform future development. The evaluation will also seek to assess the overall success of the programme in facilitating wider access to HE and the development of lifelong learning skills. Experiences and lessons learnt from the project will be included in the project report and implementation guide.

### Timetable

Pre-project preparation is already taking place and the main project would start as soon as confirmation was received from the JISC. The official project start date would be from the first meeting of the steering group, this would be no later than the start of October 2006.

The first phase of the project would run until the end of September 2007, at which point the first set of extended materials would be made available to the pilot institutions.

The second phase would involve the trialling, review and revision of materials aiming for release across the partnership as a whole, by September 2008.

The third phase of the project would be evaluation of the project and the production of the final project publications.

#### Pre-Project Preparation

<p><i>April 2006 - June 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with members of the A2B partnership.</li> <li>• Assessment of feasibility of project proposal.</li> <li>• Preparation and submission of bid.</li> <li>• Carry out technical feasibility analysis</li> <li>• Ensure access for A2B students to the University's virtual learning environment</li> </ul>	<p><i>July 2006 - September 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receipt of bid outcome.</li> <li>• Communication of outcome to project members.</li> <li>• Confirmation of opening steering group meeting.</li> <li>• Commencement of recruitment procedures.</li> </ul>
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#### Year One

<p><i>October 2006 - December 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First steering group meeting and official start to project.</li> <li>• Detailed project planning and creation of action plans.</li> <li>• Staff recruitment.</li> <li>• Commencement of technical work.</li> <li>• Gap analysis for existing programme.</li> <li>• Identification and confirmation of A2B partnership schools and colleges wishing to form part of the first year pilot work and in particular to test materials, system access and workflow procedures.</li> </ul>	<p><i>January 2007 - March 2007</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of existing 'best practice' study materials to be adapted and included in the portfolio of modules.</li> <li>• Development of a robust but easily accessible IT platform which can host interactive, appealing materials for young people</li> <li>• Revision of gap analysis and identification of learning materials to be produced.</li> <li>• Creation of new learning materials in partnership with the Birmingham City Council Education Service, Aimhigher, at least one further education college, one sixth form college and two schools.</li> </ul>
<p><i>April 2007 - June 2007</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of formative and summative assessment materials in the light of the expanded content.</li> <li>• Establishment of quality assurance procedures.</li> </ul>	<p><i>July 2007 - September 2007</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation of materials to improve their currency and take up with schools, colleges and students.</li> <li>• Identification of links to further work, within the University's Division of Student</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of ongoing quality enhancement and review procedures.</li> </ul>	<p>Life, around the retention of students, study skills and employability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dissemination of the materials to the pilot core of schools and colleges.</li> <li>Start of training and professional development for A2B partners.</li> </ul>
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*Year Two*

<p><i>October 2007 – June 2008</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation of the uptake and use of the materials by students and schools / colleges</li> <li>Beyond 2008 once the platform and materials have been used in Birmingham and Solihull it is envisaged that they will be made available to schools across the West Midlands. Additional modules can be added over time as demand and need is identified.</li> </ul>	<p><i>January 2008 – September 2008</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modification of materials in the light of evaluation.</li> <li>Extended access to all members of the A2B partnership.</li> <li>Training and support for all members of the A2B partnership.</li> </ul>
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*Year Three*

<p><i>January 2009 - March 2009</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dissemination activity</li> <li>Preparation of final project report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project of implementation guide for the 'Access for All' project methodology</li> <li>Final steering group meeting</li> <li>Official end of project</li> </ul>
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**Deliverables**

- The Access for All project materials will be piloted across a minimum of seven institutions, including at least one university, secondary school, sixth form college and college of FE.
- In the final project report there will also be a full evaluation report, covering all aspects of the Access for All project, which will analyse areas in which the project has been more and less successful, highlighting the implications and challenges of implementing e-learning to support cross-institutional delivery of lifelong learning.
- The experience of the learners in using both the Access for All learning materials and the technological aspects of the learning environment will be evaluated at the end of the second phase, for initial modification. The results of this evaluation, and the changes made as a result will be included in the final project report. A further evaluation of the overall influence that the systems have had on the learning experience will be carried out at the end of the project and included in the final project report.
- The final report will include an Implementation Guide, which will give guidance on how the Access for All model can be transferred to help any cross- institutional group use elearning to support lifelong learning.
- The final report will highlight significant issues relating to the use of e-learning to support cross-institutional delivery of lifelong learning.
- The project will aim to maximise use of existing systems and learning content:
  - The system architecture will be fully documented.
  - References to all existing systems and content that the project deploys will be included.
  - Any content and technical tools created for the project will be appropriately documented and made available via the Jorum online repository.
  - All systems deployed will be standards compliant, an analysis of how the relevant reference models, specifications and service definitions meet the needs of the project will be included in the final report.
- Effective and interactive learning materials aiding the transition from school/college to higher education.

8. A documented methodology for the creation and maintenance of a transferable progress file for each individual student, as they move from sixth form, through HE to graduation and beyond.

9. A proven mechanism for students to undergo a 'skills audit' and to thereby identify personal needs and development priorities.

10. Presentation of findings at the University's annual Learning and Teaching Conference in March/April 2007 and 2008, and other fora (see below)

#### Risks

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Action to Manage Risk</b>
<i>Staffing</i>				
Project Manager recruitment	2	5	10	Ensure extensive advertising, targeting appropriate media.
				Ensure that salary is commensurate with the level of skill and responsibility.
				Consider secondments from within the project partners.
<i>Technical Development</i>				
Creation of appropriate learning environment	2	4	8	Pre-project feasibility and scoping.
				Adoption of appropriate project methodology (RAD).
				Close liaison with then University's elearning team
				Inclusion of Head of eLearning as project team member.
Content sourcing	1	2	2	Pre-project preliminary investigation of free content.
				Consideration of commercial learning content.
				Seek support and advice from CETL for Integrative Learning and HEA subject centres as to possible sources of appropriate content
				Apply existing content from within the University of Birmingham
Content development	2	4	6	Maintain maximum flexibility with respect to content creation methodology
				Apply appropriate project management methodology
				Maintain option for external commissioning of content
<i>Partnership</i>				
Participation of schools and colleges	2	5	10	Use established contacts developed through Outreach Team and A2B partnership
				Minimise workload and training implications for partner institutions.
				Maintain close liaison with school / college leaders and LEA
				Ensure adequate representation of school / college leaders on the project steering group
<i>Processes and Procedures</i>				
Accreditation of materials	3	3	9	Work closely with Quality Assurance department in the University
				Ensure adequate representation of the QA department on both the project steering group and the project team

Access to University facilities	2	4	8	Gain agreement in principle prior to submitting the project bid.
				Ensure adequate representation from Information Services on the project team and steering group
				Maintain close liaison with relevant sections of the University's support services.

### Outcomes

The Access for All project will facilitate the following outcomes:

- An extensive pilot of a new implementation of e-learning technologies to support lifelong learners, including:
  - Support for HE and HE preparation courses in FE, sixth form colleges and schools.
  - Wider access to HE for under-represented groups of students.
  - Flexible delivery of learning materials, encouraging reflective practice and learner independence.
  - Provision of the foundation for a personalised learning environment, taking learners from the start of post-compulsory education ,through higher education and beyond.
- Identification and mapping of 'best practice' materials both internally and externally to the organisation.
- Build improved capacity, understanding, knowledge and skills amongst universities, schools and colleges in the use of e-learning to support lifelong learning, and in particular materials that support access to HE for under-represented groups, through institutional and collaborative cross sector projects.
- Build improved capacity, understanding, knowledge and skills for learners, by generating and offering the type of teaching and learning opportunities needed to develop as lifelong learners in higher education.
- Develop, pilot and implement technical models that support the flexible, affordable and pedagogically diverse implementation of e-learning.
- Gain knowledge to inform future JISC e-learning developments, through engagement with the ICT industry and through a collaborative e-learning research programme.
- Improved understanding amongst schools and colleges of the particular skills required for study at HE level.
- Production of an implementation guide to ensure that all UK educational institutions can benefit from the project deliverables.

### Intellectual Property Rights

The Access for All project will be implemented by the University of Birmingham on behalf of the JISC.

Any systems, documentation, procedures, software and other forms of intellectual property created as part of this project will be considered to be the property of the JISC, with the University of Birmingham maintaining the right to use those systems, documentation, procedures software and other forms of intellectual property unconditionally and in perpetuity.

Any pre-existing systems, documentation, procedures, software and other forms of intellectual property will be unaffected by participation in this project.

### Sustainability

The project will develop a methodology that will form an integral part of the University's strategic plan.

Once the enhanced system is established it will become a fully embedded part of the processes and procedures within the University and, as such, further modules will continue to be added and the A2B partnership will continue to be extended.

### Use Cases and User Scenarios

Although all stakeholders can be seen as 'users' of the system, there are three key groups that will be seen as the core 'end-users', they are learners, Access for All Coordinators and Access for All Support Officers. See appendix E for detailed scenarios.

### **Dissemination Strategy**

The project dissemination strategy will be based upon three main strands:

#### *Strand One - Internal embedding and dissemination within the project's partner institutions*

- Further embedding of A2B processes into the systems and procedures of the University of Birmingham, in particular:
  - Working with the Learning and Progression Manager and Director for Student Life
  - Working with the Careers Department
  - Seamless progression for A2B students onto the University's 'Progress' electronic portfolio
  - Dissemination via the University's Learning Development Unit
- Participation in the extended A2B scheme by schools and colleges within the A2B partnership

#### *Strand Two - Publication*

- Updates on progress will be on the University website but will also be included in the Student Recruitment and Outreach newsletter ( distributed 3 times a year)
- A section on the Birmingham and Solihull pages of the Aimhigher website
- Updates in Aimhigher newsletter
- Submission of conference papers, target conferences to include the JISC Annual Conference, EIFEL Conference, ALT-C, Educause, University of Birmingham Learning and Teaching Conference and other appropriate conferences.
- Submission of journal articles, target publications to include ALT-J, British Journal of Educational Technology and other appropriate publications.
- End of project evaluation and report
- Access for All Implementation Guide

#### *Strand Three - Professional Networking*

- Aimhigher schools and college network meetings. At the 2007 Summer Term meeting materials for use by Birmingham and Solihull schools will be demonstrated
- Project steering group
- School collegiate coordinators ( each school and college in Birmingham and Solihull is part of a 14-19 Collegiate Grouping).

### **Quality Assurance**

The project team will be required to report on progress regularly through the Campus Life Committee, and – through the Director of the Learning Development Unit – to indicate to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor's Educational Enhancement Group how the work is enhancing our understanding of the needs of these particular students

The modules will be subject to the same scrutiny and standards as any other new modules at this level and will be added to the portfolio of provision currently monitored by our External Examiners.

Evaluation of the project will be integral to its work and will include anonymous tracking of the students using the materials as well as direct qualitative feedback through questionnaires and focus groups of the main users and staff in the relevant schools, colleges and education authorities.

University systems require that all academic provision is reviewed annually, with a more intensive review at least every five years. Reports on these reviews , plus statistics on progression and completion are routinely interrogated by Senate's Quality Assurance and

Enhancement Committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and comprising the Deans, Deputy Deans, Academic Registrar and the Vice-President (Quality and Access) from the Guild of Students

### Project Partnership

The University of Birmingham is committed to encouraging more applications from students, families and communities who have little or no experience of higher education. In order to assist in this, the Access to Birmingham scheme (A2B) was created in 2000 and is now a well established and successful partnership.

The A2B scheme aims to improve performance of its participating students at the same time as giving them the opportunity to present a holistic view of their own achievement to the admissions staff within the University.

It is this partnership that will take this project forward.

Within the partnership there is a core of institutions that will participate in the early pilot of the extended programme, with the intention of rolling out a fully evaluated, and probably refined, version of the programme across the partnership as a whole. The University of Birmingham is lead institution for Aimhigher. It works closely with Aston, UCE Birmingham, Newman College and the College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies on collaborative projects in mentoring, masterclasses and a new project involving Widening Participation research under the Aimhigher umbrella.

Access for All Core Teaching Partners (see appendix D)

- University of Birmingham
- Cadbury College
- Matthew Boulton College
- Swanshurst School
- Small Heath School

Also coming to partnership will be representatives from:

- Birmingham City Council Education Service
- Solihull Local Education Authority
- Aimhigher Birmingham and Solihull
- Lifelong Learning Network

### 3. Budget

	JISC Contribution			University Contribution		
	£	£	£	£	£	£
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y1	Y2	Y3
Project Manager	XXXX	XXXXX				
Head Outreach – 5 days mth				XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
Head eLearning 2 dys mth				XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
Director of LDU 1 day mth				XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
Director Quality 1 day mth				XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
Estates and indirect costs				36,000	38,000	
Technical Development	20,000	20,000				
Content Development	20,000	20,000				
Dissemination Activities	5,000	10,000	5,000	2,500	5,000	2,500
Travel & Subsistence	2,000	2,000				
Evaluation	1,000	3,000	5,000			
Staff training	1,000	1,000		2,000	2,000	
Conferences	2,000	1,000				
Equipment	4,000					
Contingency	1,000	1,000	1,000			
Total	91,000	98,000	11,000	65,880	71,760	15,880
<b>Total Project</b>	<b>353,320</b>					

**4 Key Personnel** - The University of Birmingham bid is supported by a team of experienced and well qualified staff with extensive skills and experience in the use of educational technology, as teachers and managers in secondary, higher and further education and as project managers for large externally funded projects. For more complete details of the skills, knowledge and experience that each person will bring please see the relevant appendix.

Project Director - Gail Rothnie is the Head of Outreach at the University of Birmingham, and has overall responsibility for the A2B partnership. Gail is the lead author for the project proposal and will lead the project team. Gail has extensive experience in business and education, as a teacher, a manager and working with a wide range of educational consortia. Her responsibilities will include guiding the overall direction and aims of the project. Acting as line manager for the project manager and convening the Steering Group.

Access for All Project Manager - The recruitment process for the post of Project Manager will start as soon as possible after the grant confirmation has been received. The role of the Project Manager will be to manage all the operational aspects of the project, working closely with the Project Director and the A2B Outreach Officer.

The project manager will carry out a significant proportion of the non-technical work of the project, including documentation, monitoring all aspects of the contributory work, participating in training, dissemination and alerting the project director of any potential problems affecting the overall progress of the project, including identifying and proposing solutions to those problems.

A2B Outreach Officer - Anne Snell is the Outreach Officer responsible for the A2B programme. She will maintain the existing A2B programme while working closely with the Project Manager and other relevant project staff to seamlessly incorporate the outcomes of the JISC-funded Access for All Project into the Birmingham-specific A2B Programme. Anne has extensive experience in both further and higher education, having worked as a teacher for 14 years and more recently leading the development of the A2B programme.

E-learning Consultant - Stephen Clarke is the Head of eLearning at the University of Birmingham. His role will be to act as a consultant, particularly in response to technical and workflow systems. He has already participated in analysing potential requirements for the Access for All project and commenting upon their feasibility. Stephen has extensive experience working with educational technology as a teacher, a manager and through a number of educational development projects.

Stephen has also already acted as an editor for the project proposal, and will continue to support the Project Director and Project Manager in the production of project-related documentation.

Learning Development Consultant - Bob Hunter is the Director of Learning Development at the University of Birmingham, and will be leading a £1 million 'Learner Independence Project' at the University over the next two years. His role will be to advise the project on general pedagogic approaches and to ensure that the work of the Access for All Project, A2B Programme and Learner Independence Project are co-ordinated so as to maximise the benefits to the learner.

As an experienced project manager and project director for both internally and nationally funded projects Bob will be a key member of the Steering Group and support the project as and when the need may arise.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Consultant - Anne Ruston is the Director of the Academic Quality Unit (AQU) within the Academic Office at the University of Birmingham. The role of the AQU will be to advise the project team on, and support them in, embedding the extended programme into the normal working processes of the University and to ensure that the study units are effectively monitored once they have gained formal accreditation within the A2B programme. AQU also has a key role in quality enhancement and will wish to ensure that the insights gained from the project are appropriately disseminated across the university to enhance related work on student skills and in the induction and development of teaching staff.

Anne is an experienced manager, having worked in areas related to both secondary and higher education, and has in-depth knowledge of working practices across the sectors.

## 5. Supporting Letter



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

Pro-Vice-Chancellor  
Professor Alex Hughes  
BA PGCE PhD

20 June 2006

Dear Sir

I am writing to confirm that this proposal, submitted by Ms Gail Rothnie, has my full support. The University of Birmingham is committed to taking forward progression and widening participation agendas: the proposed JISC-funded project sustains both and will elaborate moreover a methodology that could be usefully adopted by other HEIs.

The project will have the following outcomes:-

- The creation of effective and interactive learning materials geared to aiding transition from school/college to Higher Education
- The creation and maintenance of a transferable progress file for each individual student, geared to enabling the move from sixth form, through HE to graduation and beyond.
- The enabling and improvement of links with schools and colleges geared to ensuring a co-ordinated development of skills supportive of student progression.
- The development of a facility for students to undergo a 'skills audit' to enable them to focus on their personal needs and priorities.
- The facilitation of better understanding, by learners, of the teaching and learning opportunities they will encounter in HE.
- The facilitation of an improved understanding amongst schools and colleges of the particular skills required for study at HE level.
- The identification and mapping of 'best practice' materials, both internal and external to the organisation.
- The production of an implementation guide geared to ensuring that the UK HE sector can benefit from the project deliverables.

Yours sincerely

Professor Alex Hughes  
Pro-Vice-Chancellor

University of Birmingham Edgbaston Birmingham B15 2TT United Kingdom  
T: +44 (0)121 414 5940 F: +44 (0)121 414 4534 E: a.hughes@bham.ac.uk W: www.bham.ac.uk

## Appendix A

### **CVs for Key Personnel**

#### Project Director

Gail Rothnie has 18 years experience of working in both business and the education sector. Within education she has 12 years experience as a secondary school teacher, in further education and now higher education. Prior to becoming Head of Outreach at the University of Birmingham she was the Aimhigher Area Coordinator for Birmingham and Solihull managing a successful and complex partnership of higher education Institutions, colleges, schools and other related institutions and 12 projects hosted by a variety of partners totalling more than £4m. As Head of Outreach at the University she leads on widening participation strategy and manages a team of staff engaged in working with schools and colleges to attract students from under represented groups into the University. She also has overall responsibility for the Access to Birmingham programme. She is a member of the Aimhigher Area Steering Group for Birmingham and Solihull, the Russell Group WP Group and the West Midlands Higher Education Association Widening Participation forum.

#### Access to Birmingham Outreach Officer

Anne Snell has spent 14 years teaching Modern Languages at secondary level with 12 years at a local sixth form college. In 2005-2006 she was project leader for a project in sharing good practice with local schools in Solihull and Birmingham running study days for A' level students and disseminating materials. She has also been involved in the training of foreign language assistants and mentoring of PGCE students. Throughout her teaching career she has been involved in the creation of teaching materials for A level delivery. She has recently joined the University of Birmingham as coordinator for the Access to Birmingham programme.

#### eLearning Consultant

Stephen Clarke is the Head of eLearning at the University of Birmingham, and leads on the University of Birmingham eLearning Strategy. He has been working with educational technology, both as a teacher and a manager, in Secondary (including post-16), as a teacher of mathematics and computer science and Head of IT, and Higher Education, as an IT support manager and Head of eLearning, for 19 years. He has led a number of ICT projects, both on physical learning spaces and learning technology. In 2000 Stephen was a key member of the project team that designed and implemented the University of Birmingham's Learning Centre. In 2001 Stephen was responsible for setting-up and managing the institutional Virtual Learning Environment (iVLE) at the University of Birmingham, this service now provides 2,000 courses to around 30,000 students across the University. Stephen also led the successful bidding process and setup the JISC funded Altis consortium, the consortium, which included members from HE, FE and the commercial sector, provided the ALTIS Internet Guide (part of the Resource Discovery Network now being relaunched as Intute). In 2005 Stephen played a major role in preparing the bid for, and delivering the outputs from, the JISC-funded 'eSpaces' project, which reviewed and reported upon the affects of learning technology on the design of physical learning spaces. Stephen is involved in a number of U21 (Universitas21) projects and participated in a U21 study tour of Australia looking at the use of learning technologies and their impact on the student learning experience. Stephen has been a guest speaker at a number of international learning and teaching events, and has delivered a number of conference papers on e-learning. He is also a co-author of the chapter on change management for the book "Supporting E Learning: A Guide for Library and Information Managers." Stephen is on the UK Heads of eLearning Forum (HeLF) steering committee and is an active member of regional and national e-learning groups, including the European WebCT Vista user group. In 2006 Stephen was a member of the product development partnership for the recently launched WebCT Portfolio tool.

### Learning Development Consultant

Bob Hunter is the Director of the Learning Development Unit (LDU) at the University of Birmingham; his main areas of responsibility include the development and embedding of innovative ways of learning and teaching using learning technologies. As the Director of the LDU he sits on a number of strategic University committees, including the Learning and Teaching Facilities Group (LTFG) and the Educational Enhancement Group. The remit of the LTFG is to develop and maintain learning and teaching spaces across the University. Bob has over 20 years experience in HE, as media services manager at the University of Lincoln he was responsible for the learning and teaching spaces across five campuses. As Development Manager at the University of Lincoln Bob led the development of one of the first virtual learning environments, in use with over 2,000 students by September 1996. This VLE is now a commercial product and marketed by as the Virtual Campus.

Bob has managed a wide range of projects including the ELEN (Extended Learning Environment Network) TLTP phase 3 project. This involved the embedding of learning technologies across eight HE institutions. He is currently the Project Director for the Technology Enhanced Enterprise Education project with 12 post-16 consortium members across the West Midlands region and £750,000 of funding over three years.

Bob represents the University of Birmingham on the Association of Learning Technologies Board and has written conference papers, articles for journals and is the lead author of a chapter on Change Management for the book "Supporting E Learning: A Guide for Library and Information Managers." He has been guest speaker at a wide range of national and international teaching and learning events related to e-learning. Recently he was invited by the British Council to speak to both Saudi Arabian and Iraqi academic and government delegations on strategic approaches to developing and implementing e-learning. Bob participated in a recent Universitas 21 (U21) study tour of Australia, looking at the use of learning technologies and their impact on learning spaces. He is also involved in a number of other U21 activities. His current research interests include the use of learning technologies in flexible learning spaces and during the next academic year will be developing a number of projects to encourage academic staff to use purpose-built flexible learning spaces in innovative ways.

Relevant web sites:

LDU Projects <http://www.ldu.bham.ac.uk>

Technology Enhanced Enterprise Education <http://www.te3.bham.ac.uk>

### Quality Assurance and Accreditation Enhancement Consultant

Anne Ruston is currently Director of the Academic Quality Unit within the Academic Office at the University of Birmingham, with responsibility for TQI, support for the meetings of the School Directors of Learning and Teaching and the Educational Enhancement Group, in addition to the management of the University's academic audit and review processes.

Anne moved into academic administration after three years of research into teacher education with the Colleges of Education Research Group. She has managed around 25 QAA subject review visits and at least four institutional audits within the UK and abroad. She is a regular contributor on quality assurance matters to the Southern Universities Administrators Development Programme. She also played a key role in the creation and implementation of the University of Birmingham's Integrated Quality Assurance and Enhancement System in 2002/3.

In 2004 Anne completed an MBA on knowledge management, creativity and innovation within the HE context.

## Appendix B

Further information on the Access to Birmingham scheme is available at [www.marketing.bham.ac.uk/recruitment/access.htm](http://www.marketing.bham.ac.uk/recruitment/access.htm).

### Access to Birmingham Partnership Schools and Colleges

<b>a2b list</b>
<b>School/college</b>
Aldridge School
Alexandra High School
Archbishop Ilsley RC
Arthur Terry
Baverstock
Bham College of Food, Tourism and Creative St
Bishop Challoner Catholic
Bournville College
Bournville School
Broadway
Cadbury College
Caludon Castle
City College
City Technology College
Cockshut Hill
Coundon Court
Dame Elizabeth Cadbury
Dudley College
Foxford School
Friary School
George Dixon International
Great Barr School
Halesowen College
Hamstead Hall School
Handsworth Grammar School
Handsworth Wood Girls
Heath Park High School
Heathfield Foundation
Herefordshire College of Technology
Highfields School
Hillcrest
ISCC East Bham
Joseph Chamberlain College
John Willmott
Josiah Mason College
Kineton High School
King Charles I School
King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls
King Edward VI College, Stourbridge
Kings Norton Boys' School
Kings Norton Girls' School
Lordswood Boys' School & 6th Form Centre
Lordswood Girls
Matthew Boulton College
Moseley
New College
Ninestiles

<b>a2b list</b>
<b>School/college</b>
Parkfield High
Pendeford Business & Enterprise College
Sandwell C
Sheldon Heath
Shenley Court
Shireland Language College & 6th Form Centre
Sidney Stringer School
Small Heath
Solihull College
South Bham Digbeth Centre
South Bham St Philips
St Augustine's Catholic High School
St Edmund Campion RC
St Paul's School for Girls
St Thomas Aquinas Catholic School
Stourbridge College
Stuart Bathurst School
Sutton Coldfield College
Sutton Coldfield Grammar
Swanshurst
The Sixth Form College, Solihull
The Trinity Catholic Technology C
The Women's Academy
Washwood Heath
Wolverhampton College
Wolverhampton Girls' High School
Wood Green High

## **Appendix C - Personal Skills Award**

The Personal Skills Award (PSA) at the University of Birmingham was launched in 2003-04, to facilitate a culture of independent, life-long learning amongst its students. It is an optional 30 credit Award that students take in addition to their main programme of study, across a minimum of two years.

The PSA supports students in planning for their skills and career development, and ultimately for graduation. Student choose from a variety of five and ten credit modules that provide opportunities for them to enhance their competence and confidence in essential transferable skills relevant to academic study and graduateness.

For more information please visit the PSA website: [www.psa.bham.ac.uk](http://www.psa.bham.ac.uk)

## **Appendix D – Partnership Support**

### **Birmingham LEA**

Message Received: Jun 08 2006, 09:52 AM

From: Cate\_Duffy@birmingham.gov.uk

To: member@stonor7.fsnet.co.uk

Cc:

Subject: RE: University of Birmingham

yes of course it is. i would quite like to be invloved myself but know that probably time won't allow me to commit properly. perhaps i could be kept awre of meeting and attend at least as an observer when i am able. Cate

(Cate Duffy Senior LEA Advisor)

### **Solihull LEA**

From: michael brown [mikebrown\_2002@yahoo.co.uk]

Sent: 08 June 2006 12:14

To: Gail H Rothnie

Subject: Re: University of Birmingham

Hi Gail

yes.

Mike

### **Swanshurst School**

University of BirminghamFrom: Debbie beckford  
[debbie.beckford@swans.bham.sch.uk]

Sent: 05 June 2006 15:02

To: 'Gail H Rothnie'

Subject: RE: University of Birmingham

Dear Gail

Count me in - very busy at mo - Year 10 first day of Work Experience - unable to talk further until later in the week. Would like to support you with anything - not sure on that phrasing but you know what I mean.

Thanks

Debbie

### **Small Heath School**

From: TIM SMITH [tim92@btinternet.com]

Sent: 07 June 2006 11:20

To: Gail H Rothnie

Subject: Re: University of Birmingham

Gail

Would be very interested in supporting the project. Please let me know what we can do to help...

Tim

Tim Smith ( Assistant Head)

### **Matthew Boulton College**

University of Birmingham  
From: Hilary Rimmer [Hrimmer@matthew-boulton.ac.uk]  
Sent: 06 June 2006 18:26  
To: Gail H Rothnie  
Subject: RE: University of Birmingham

Hello Gail

Yes - we would be very supportive of your plans - and I would ensure that we have a member of staff on the Steering group.  
Just tell me where and when  
Thanks  
Hilary

( Hilary Rimmer Vice Principal)

### **Cadbury College**

Verbal confirmation in a conversation with Mike Smith ( Head of Careers) and Chris Gardner ( in charge of their Virtual Learning Environment during w/c 12 June 2006.

### **Aimhigher Birmingham and Solihull**

From: Michael A Thompson  
Sent: 20 June 2006 16:39  
To: Gail H Rothnie  
Subject: JISC Bid for E-Learning Bid

Dear Gail

To confirm Aimhigher's support for Birmingham University's bid to develop the cross-institutional e-learning project in support of the Access to Birmingham Scheme.

Wishing you every success  
Regards

Mike

Mike Thompson  
Area Coordinator, Aimhigher Birmingham and Solihull  
Outreach Department  
University of Birmingham  
C Block  
Aston Webb Building  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2TT  
Tel: 0121 415 8176  
Mobile: 07887 821249

### **Contact with Nottingham University**

From: Smallwood Angela [Angela.Smallwood@nottingham.ac.uk]  
Sent: 19 June 2006 19:26  
To: Gail H Rothnie  
Subject: RE: University of Birmingham JISC Bid - Lifelong learning

Dear Gail

Pleased to hear from you about this. Have tried to phone as it would be easier to speak. Did you get my message left with a colleague today?  
Please could you phone me on Tuesday morning some time? All best wishes, Angela  
Angela Smallwood  
Director, Centre for International ePortfolio Development University of Nottingham  
0115 846 7301

Phone conversation took place Tuesday 20 June.

## Appendix E - Use Cases and User Scenarios

*Learners* - Jane is a 20 year old returning to education having left school at 16. Jane always enjoyed school and did fairly well in her exams, but felt that she wanted to leave school and gain some work experience. Many of her friends stayed on in the sixth form, or went to the local college, and are now enjoying degree courses. Jane feels that she would like to go to her local university and has started an access course, but she is out of practice at studying and has little experience of managing her own learning.

She has discussed this with her personal tutor in the first few weeks of the course, and he has arranged for her to be registered on the 'Access for All' course. She is enjoying the materials, and the fact that she can access them at any time from any computer on the Internet is helping her to find the time to do the materials, she is also finding that she is getting better at organising her work, and as a result is doing well.

The university admissions staff have told her that her work on the 'Access for All' scheme will help her application, and although her grades so far would suggest that she will get in, successfully completing the scheme will help her to get onto one of her preferred courses.

*Access for All Co-ordinators* - Darius works in a large sixth form college. He is, among other duties, the 'Access for All' co-ordinator. His main tasks, in relation to the scheme, are to make sure that other staff are aware of the scheme, to handle the registration process for new learners and to act as the main liaison person between the university and the college. Once registered students get their main technical support from the university's computing helpdesk, but some of them still come to Darius in the first instance - he can choose whether to just direct them to the University or, if it is a simple problem, to help them himself.

At the start of the year Darius compiles a list of students who the college would like to be on the scheme and sends them to the university's Access for All Support Officer, who uploads all of them in one go. When additional students ask to be added Darius enters their details on an online form and they get access, normally within a few hours, but occasionally it will take a couple of days.

Once registered most students get information and updates directly from the university, but occasionally he gets information which he circulates to all the relevant staff and students.

*Access for All Support Officers* - Kathryn is the Access for All Support Officer for the university. The Access for All scheme is her main role, and takes nearly all of her time. Most of the material for the course is self-paced and automatically assessed, but she does deal with general questions and queries about the course, the system and how to use it. These queries may come from the students themselves or from staff in the partner schools and colleges. Some of the queries come directly to her, others have been referred from the computing helpdesk, although many of the queries they receive they are able to answer and she only hears about them in the termly report.

Most of her time Kathryn spends developing the course, she is responsible for the course content and is constantly reviewing what is there, how it can be improved and what else is needed. Often she will add or amend the content herself, the system is designed for use by non-technical people with the emphasis being on the learning rather than the technology. From time to time more specialist content is required, and Kathryn will manage the projects to develop this content.

Most system related tasks she can do herself, but the university's Elearning Team provide additional support and advice as and when necessary.