

Cover Sheet for Proposals	JISC Capital Programme
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Name of Capital Programme: e-Learning

Name of Lead Institution: **University of Worcester**

Name of Proposed Project: **Wider Horizons: an open online educational environment**

- Name of Project Partners:
- University of Worcester
  - Kidderminster College
  - Lifelong Learning Network for Herefordshire and Worcestershire
  - Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce
  - Worcestershire County Council

Full Contact Details for Primary Contact:

Name: Ms Anne Hannaford  
 Position: Director of Information and Learning Services  
 Email: a.hannaford@worc.ac.uk  
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Length of Project: 2 years 4 months

Project Start and End Dates: September 2006 – December 2008

Total Funding Requested from JISC: £199,924

Funding Broken Down over Project Years:

[1] Sept – Dec 2006 £21,000  
 [2] Jan – Dec 2007 £100,000  
 [3] Jan – Dec 2008 £79,000 (Rounded to nearest '000)

Total Institutional Contributions: £104,030

**Outline Project Description**

The project will lead the creation of an open online educational environment for students and the wider community in the region – *Wider Horizons*. It will serve as a paradigm for future development in other cities and represents a model of cross-sector working to widen horizons and raise aspirations. It will provide online places where academic and cultural communities can be supported, where there will be access to community resources, and connections into resources and courses within further and higher education institutions.

I have read the Circular and associated Terms and Conditions of Grant at Appendix B (Tick Box)	YES ✓	NO
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## University of Worcester

### *JISC Capital Programme Circular 3/06*

#### **Wider Horizons: an open online educational environment**

#### **Introduction**

##### **Aim of the Project**

The project will lead the creation of an open online educational environment for students and the wider community in the region – *Wider Horizons*. It will serve as a paradigm for future development in other cities and represents a model of cross-sector working to widen horizons and raise aspirations.

It will provide:

- an online environment focussed on the needs of the individual
- a community portal to enable access to lifelong learning opportunities
- facilities for stakeholder organisations to collectively interact with new learners
- new routes to encourage wider participation in further and higher education
- stimulus and opportunity for knowledge exchange activities with regional businesses

##### **Concept of the on-line community**

The concept is founded in the ground-breaking integrated university and public library being developed by the University of Worcester and Worcestershire County Council in the centre of Worcester, as part of a major expansion to widen participation in higher education in the West Midlands.

Ultimately the library will create a cultural, learning and information centre of excellence, overtly and subtly offering learning opportunities and raising aspirations in the broadest sense for the whole community, regardless of age, background, or ability. *Wider Horizons* seeks to develop a parallel virtual environment, open to school children (through links with the schools' Virtual Workspace), the business community and the wider public as well as the more traditional base of HE and FE students. It will provide online places where academic and cultural communities can be supported, where there will be access to community resources, and links to resources and courses within further and higher education institutions. Anyone who is eligible for library membership automatically becomes eligible for becoming part of the virtual learning and cultural community.

It is important to note that while the overall concept is wide ranging, this bid is limited to asking JISC to fund a discrete element which focuses on the creation of the on-line environment in key curriculum areas, and ensuring that the needs of higher education, further education, and potential participants are firmly embedded. JISC contribution is essential as this project provides the leadership and initiative to enable us to make a beginning.

##### **Project Overview**

The project will build the online environment, and will bring together the partners who will contribute content and services. This is not a pilot scheme but the start of a flexible incremental development which will continue after the project ends. The project will start with system development, will include one full year of actual large-scale implementation of its core components and conclude with work to finalise the processes for its continued development. This will be spread from September 2006 to December 2008.

The core partnership consortium we have put together reflects the innovative nature of the project and our commitment to delivering the strategic aims of the Call:

- University of Worcester (HE lead)
- Lifelong Learning Network for Herefordshire and Worcestershire (University of Worcester is the lead HE partner)
- Worcestershire County Council (Educational Services, Adult and Community Services; Cultural Services)
- Kidderminster College of Further Education
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce

In addition there are a number of Further Education College partners who will be part of an extended group contributing content and piloting use.

### **Relation to JISC programme**

The project contributes to the JISC's aims as it takes forward its aspirations in respect of:

- Additional ways of widening participation
- Technological support for lifelong learning, and removing barriers to progression
- Provision of a personalised online learning experience
- Development of open source tools such as e-portfolio
- Cross-institutional collaboration for e-learning
- Fostering collaborative links with business and commerce
- Greater use of e-learning in institutions

Being part of the JISC network of developers, and having access to the expertise within the community of JISC project teams would enable us to carry out the work to the correct standards and learn from those with experience and knowledge of this field. Our project is so very close to the JISC agenda we wish to feed into it the developments and outputs from JISC's programmes. Such benefits, though not measured in financial terms, are of immense value.

### **Scenario**

A member of Worcester Joint University/Public Library discovers *Wider Horizons* - the open online environment, and finds a community area which has information about local activities in film making using digital media. A local club has an online noticeboard and a discussion forum for local hobbyists and she starts by joining in the online activities, and then goes on to attend one or two meetings. The discussion forums include students at local colleges who exchange information they have learned on their respective courses. There are also two online "taster courses" offered free of charge by the university and a local college, and she takes one of these. Eventually she decides to enrol on a college course and pursue the HND in Film Making. Whilst studying, she keeps in contact both with other students in the region and the members of the local club, and publishes her own blog describing her film projects. She maintains her e-portfolio within her personal learning space in the online environment, and later uses it to find opportunities for career development within local businesses, and for further skills training.

<b>Project description</b>
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### **Background**

The University is developing a second campus in the heart of Worcester, on the site of the former Worcester Royal Infirmary in Castle Street, to respond to the demand for higher education places to study in the region. Alongside the new campus will be the first integrated University and Public Library in the country which redefines a library for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This major civic amenity will give open and virtual access to the integrated information and cultural resources of a university and city library, with exhibitions, meeting rooms, social space, quiet reflective areas, all within a building alive with innovative technology for creation, motivation and learning. This is a project of major strategic significance for Worcester, the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire and the South-West Midlands (incorporating the South

East of the Black Country and South Birmingham), including the Central Technology Belt. The total investment of £141m, much of it secured from outside the region, will have a major regenerative impact on the area.

This imaginative concept, based on a notably effective record of successful partnership working has attracted very considerable support. This includes:

- A £10m grant from the HEFCE for the joint library
- £36.8m in PFI credits from the Department of Media Culture and Sports

We have always seen the library as the natural hub of a virtual connected community serving the people of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. *Wider Horizons* will create an extended virtual learning community through linking together the adult and community network, the schools virtual workspace, FE colleges and the university spreading across the West Midlands.

The project described here is the essential first step in the overall online community scheme. We would expect the full online community scheme to be ready prior to the completion of the campus/city development in 2012. So completing this JISC-supported project by 2009 will then allow sufficient time to go on to build up the full scheme by 2011.

### **System overview**

The system we develop will be a portal with a public graphical interface, built to standard accessibility standards. The system will consist of an attractive “shop front” with easy navigation to a series of targeted communities, see examples below. The system will support input from the stakeholders set up via the project staff, supported by a web content management system, but the style and content of the published output will be devolved to the publishing team from each of the represented communities on the portal.

There will be an open access web site, with single user sign-on access via the portal. The stakeholder communities will want to include a selection of functions on their pages, which may need varying levels of access, so implementation of Shibboleth standards will enable controlled sign on access to these services and resources depending on the access rights of the user. Such resources will include web information pages, links to external sources, materials from local VLEs, course delivery, community tools, forums, media delivery, news, gallery, co-operative web tools. The portal will be designed to accommodate additional plug in modules as they are developed.

The system will consist of a web portal with navigational links to areas such as:

- ❖ Link to new combined library online functions
- ❖ Focussed communities (examples)
  - Health and Care
  - Leadership and Management
  - Creative arts, digital media, film making
- ❖ Community resources (examples)
  - Skills station/Knowledge Desk
  - Chamber of Commerce services generally
  - Experts online service
  - Databases, repositories, services
- ❖ Public learning communities (examples)
  - Lifelong learning support contacts
  - College and university provision
- ❖ Personal tools (examples)
  - E-portfolio
  - Blogs

Community support functions would include:

- ❖ Web information pages
- ❖ Links to external sources
- ❖ Display of scorm materials from local VLE sources and repositories
- ❖ Community tools
  - Forums
  - Media delivery
  - News
  - Gallery
  - co-operative tools such as wikis
  - Links to pass through to sponsoring organisations
  - Links to information/enrolment educational institutions
- ❖ “Taster” courses relevant to the community

### **Portal implementation**

Open source technology will be used to design and implement the portal. Freely available web communication tools can be run from the project server and customised or modified to give a seamless look and feel to the system. Many external web applications have been tried and tested and work very well when “plugged in” as an external resource. We see the use of existing software as an important part of the project and by using popular and stable applications it will allow the project team to concentrate on coding the portal itself. Any software used in the project will need to be modified; this will be done in a modular way, so when new versions are installed it won't break any functionality.

Typical attributes required by applications would be the institution the user is from, their role, student for example, and a course code or County Library card.

The portal will be written in PHP with a MySQL database (free open source software), giving the opportunity for customising the way the portal looks where appropriate. These customisations will also ensure that external systems can incorporate functions for the visual impaired.

Links can also easily be added by community publishing teams, for example, Kidderminster College have a forum in Moodle for each course and a link could be embedded which goes directly to the Moodle forum, providing taster or complete online courses.

It is important that the project web developer work closely with each of the stakeholders to ensure they understand how to add their own links, customise the look and feel of their own pages on the portal to include branding, and to have a quick and easy way to add information and links to the pages.

### **Content partner management**

The key partners in the project are those involved with developing the system. However, the university and the regional Lifelong Learning Network together have a number of existing collaborative partner colleges groups.

To give an example based on digital media, the university already offers face-to-face taster courses in film making and works closely with Kidderminster in respect of HE in FE courses. The project staff would help the staff set up and run a community area in the system for this subject. In addition, online taster courses developed by the subject areas would then be linked into the online environment. In addition “static” information about the subject and about course offerings can be made available too, together with links to library services.

This example illustrates the process of “content partner management” which would be undertaken by the Project Leader and the Project Officer. They would work with all the institutions, organisations and agencies who will provide content and services to include in the online environment; they would negotiate delivery and access and provide initial support to those who contribute.

The subject areas which would be introduced initially are:

- **digital media and film making**, since this is a lively well-developed area in the university and colleges, cuts across a range of academic levels, and is of interest to the general public as well as students
- **health and care**, since this is one of the areas included in the Lifelong Learning Network project, and the project will be committing substantial resources to content development via the university content repository, and the project will have staff who can work alongside this project and alongside the lecturers; it is also another area with a public as well as an academic dimension
- **leadership and management**, again this is the other area whose online development is heavily supported by staff employed in the Lifelong Learning network project; and it relates well to the involvement of the H&W Chamber of Commerce, the business community and the knowledge transfer activities in the region

### Running the project

The project will be run by an **Executive Group** consisting of representatives of the key partners. This group is more than a steering group. Its members will also work as an extended team ensuring that the contribution of their organisation is delivered and co-ordinated effectively. There will be about 10 meetings across the lifetime of the project.

The project will be carried out by a **project team**:

**Project Leader** (FT) – primary control, accountable for deliverables, reports to JISC, ensures full co-ordination is made and initiatives taken, oversees content partner management

**Technical Manager** (PT) – technical co-ordinator to ensure the portal and supporting software systems are operational and delivered to the project requirements

**Web developer** (FT) – to design and create the web system and related services, and include modifications in the light of experience in using the system

**Project Officer** (PT) – to assist the Project Leader in the day to day work of the project and content partner management

**Project Director** (PT) – Senior university manager to chair Executive Group, be the line manager of the Project Leader and supervise overall project progress

**Scheme Director** (PT) – Senior university manager reporting directly to the Vice Chancellor in charge of the overall online educational environment development scheme, of which this project is a part, to ensure mechanism for future development is in place

### Project outline schedule

There are three phases

- [1] September - December 2006. Project set up and system design
- [2] January - December 2007. System building, partner involvement, pilot use.
- [3] January - December 2008. Environment in large scale use. Review and development.

Activity	Phase [1] Autumn 2006	Phase [2] 2007	Phase [3] 2008
Start up phase: recruit staff, prepare detailed project plan, confirm partnership agreements	X		
Executive Group meetings	X	X	
Portal and web site design	X		
Portal and web site construction and testing		X	
Technology development for links to external services		X	
Shibboleth compatibility implementation		X	
Environment fully operational			X
Web site interactive tools development		X	X
Content partner engagement		X	X
Integration of resources and partner services e.g. WCC, Chamber, LLLN, etc		X	X
Establishment of community areas		X	X
Special projects e.g. "experts online", taster courses		X	X
Project review and evaluation			X
Establish future development and support for the scheme			X

### Risk analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action to minimise risk	Remedial action
Key partner unable to contribute	Low	High	Early contractual partnership agreements	Re-allocate roles
A few extended partners do not commit	Medium	Low	Choice of partners is related to established partnerships already working on shared e-learning projects	Adjust scope of content
Project staff leave early	Medium	High	Include a substantial proportion of secondments, who are more stable	Re-appoint

### Partners and their roles

**University of Worcester** – Worcester is the lead institution and will contribute the time of the overall online community Scheme Director and the Project Director. It will arrange the secondment of Project Leader, the appointment of the Project Officer and Web developer. UW will contribute capital funds to purchase servers and related technical infrastructure. UW has previously run two relevant JISC projects: one within the MLEs for Lifelong Learning Programme entitled 'Delivering a Foundation Degree through a Managed Learning Environment', and more recently 'WM-Share: Promoting the use of shared content in the West Midlands', within JISC's Distributed E-Learning Programme.

In addition the university brings with it a group of partner colleges. As an example, one such project is collaborative development project of shared e-learning for the university's HE students taught in the colleges. The group includes Kidderminster College, Worcester College of Technology, Pershore Group of Colleges, Evesham and Malvern Hills College, Hereford College of Technology, Halesowen College, Bournville College and Josiah Mason College.

**Kidderminster College** – Kidderminster will be responsible for technical operations, arranging the secondment of Technical Manager, and the direct contribution of the services of an experienced staff team with technical expertise for developing and implementing the underlying systems. The college's Business Development Unit will contribute by incorporating its activities in linking to regional skills provision.

Kidderminster has experience of JISC projects, especially in respect of Shibboleth, for example, under JISC's Core Middleware Technology Development Programme it ran "KC-ROLO": Shibboleth authentication for a learning object repository. Kidderminster is a key partner in 'WM-Share' and responsible for the Shibboleth component of that project.

**Lifelong Learning Network for Herefordshire and Worcestershire** – The LLN project is a regional consortium project led by UW. Synergy with the LLN is key to our success and demonstrates an imaginative and efficient use of public funds. *Wider Horizons* will be able to draw upon the expertise and developments within the LLN – for example their creation of the customised e-Portfolio and the extensive on-line content development – and use it within the online environment. Equally, *Wider Horizons* will form a major on-line market place for LLN activities.

We have deliberately chosen the two curriculum areas within the LLN as our starting point: Health & Care, and Leadership and Management, the choice of which was informed by the Regional Skills Partnership, the Regional Observatory, and HEFCE. They are also areas which are likely to have a broad appeal for non-traditional potential students as well as established recruitment pools.

The LLN brings also with it a group of partners working collaboratively. It includes the colleges listed above together with further partners such as the Worcester and Hereford Sixth Form Colleges and some specialist institutions.

**Chamber of Commerce** – The Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire and Worcestershire has a long tradition in facilitating training and workforce development.

It will provide technical expertise from its own staff and its technology commercial partner on a matched funding basis for design of the online community, drawing experience from its commercial IT partner in this area. It will provide access to its range of services and information systems.

It has developed KnowledgeDesk (KD) to provide a complete solution for the Business Support Service. KD's integral Knowledge Bank contains information on national, regional and sub-regional business support service offerings from a wide variety of stakeholders, partners and agencies through a client portal. Integrating with the Wider Horizons Project will enable a wider community to access the information held within the system.

The guide includes over 200+ services provided by the Business Link, dti, Advantage West Midlands, CONTACT, UKTI and the Chamber itself. Separately Skills Station are using the system to hold all the 90 accredited Providers courses in the Knowledge Bank of over 7000 courses for Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Worcestershire.

A further development is in hand with the University of Worcester Business School and Library to provide a regional business intelligence service.

**Worcestershire County Council** – The County Council's contribution to the project covers a number of areas. It provides co-ordination of the web links to the Library, to the learning and

skills support agencies and the Adult and Community network; it has also offered to host some of the web services to be incorporated into the online environment.

Also Worcestershire in collaboration with Wolverhampton already has a well established Virtual Learning community for schools supporting some 22,000 users in the 14 to 19 age range. Government plans will extend the availability of an online learning environment to all schools over the next two years. It is expected that this project will provide many exciting opportunities to enable co-operation with public, further and higher education providers and thus support the development of individual personalised lifelong learning.

The County Council is also the key strategic partner with the University in the development of the joint library.

### **Partnership agreements and IPR policy**

We will draw up formal contracts for project partnership agreements in September, the basis of which have already been agreed with key partners. It might be useful to note that the University of Worcester already has a Strategic Partnership agreement with the County Council, with Kidderminster College and is in the process of drawing up a similar agreement with the H&W Chamber of Commerce.

The project is fully committed to making all its systems and developments open for others to use in accordance with JISC policy and guidance. We will ensure that appropriate IPR conditions are incorporated into the partnership arrangements.

### **Sustainability**

This project is inextricably linked with the expansion of higher education in the West Midlands through the £90 m development of the new city centre university campus in Worcester and the £50 m development of the joint university/public library. The library project alone demonstrates the commitment of the County Council and the University to find new ways of building aspirations and wider horizons for students and the wider community.

JISC funding to establish the structure for the on-line community will enable us to lever more funding from other sources, such as the LSC who have already expressed an interest in receiving an approach from us.

In addition to public funding, the project will help the region develop a business model for the online community. In time stakeholders will have to contribute to the cost of managing and running the online environment. The commitment of the initial partners to contribute a large proportion of the current project indicates that they will be prepared to continue funding in future.

The University of Worcester has for some time in its strategic plans articulated an objective to create a "regional virtual learning environment" in which students at all institutions can work, interact and communicate. *Wider Horizons* is the manifestation of this ambition.

## **Budget**

The budget has been established at full economic costing (fEC) using standard TRAC methodology. The full financial analysis provided by the university finance office for fEC staffing and related items is presented in the Appendix. A summary taken from the spreadsheet is given below. The equipment costs contribution from the University has been added to this summary to give the total budget.

Phase [1] September – December 2006

Phase [2] 2007

Phase [3] 2008

Item	JISC contribution	Partner contributions
Scheme Director 20 days  UW		[1] 1164 [2] 2328 [3] 2328  5821
Project Director 30 days  UW		[1] 2328 [2] 3202 [3] 3202  8732
Project Leader secondment £30K salary level 0.5FTE for 4 months 1.0FTE for 2 years	[1] 11197 [2] 33592 [3] 35609  80398	
System design consultancy from Chamber of Commerce 31 days based on £700 fee per day	[1] 5600 [2] 3500  9100	[1] 5600 [2] 3500 [3] 3500  12600
Web developer £25K salary level 1.0FTE for 18 months	[2] 28620 [3] 15169  43790	
Project Officer £20K salary level 0.5FTE for 2 years	[2] 9876 [3] 10470  20346	
User support and help desk 50 days @ £80 per day  UW		[2] 1345 [3] 2611  3956
Technical manager secondment £40K salary level 0.4FTE for 1 year 0.2FTE for 1 year	[2] 16778 [3] 8389  25168	
Technical development, backups and maintenance 180 days @ £150 per day  KC		[2] 17838 [3] 8919  26757
Business Development Team 30 days @ £300 per day 50 days @ £150 per day  KC		[2] 8082 [3] 8082  16164
Accommodation and facilities for equipment and personnel at Worcester	17822	
Travel and subsistence, staff development, materials and consumables	3300	
Total contribution	199924	74030
Purchase of servers (UW)		30000
Final total	199924	104030

These are budget estimates and actual spending is subject to operational requirements in agreement with JISC.

### Value for money

This is a project which substantially benefits the learning community in the Worcester and surrounding region and supports a number of existing initiatives such as the LLN Project, the Chamber of Commerce services, a wide range college and university courses, the County Council's educational and cultural services. So clearly, the benefits are very specific and therefore the key partners are happy to contribute a substantial proportion of the fEC of this project.

In addition we have not included explicit costings of the contribution of the associate partners who will work collaboratively with the university and with the LLN. Such costs reflect attendance at project planning meetings, liaison activity for creating access to content and services. And the substantial value of the content creation and e-portfolio development funded within the LLN is not included here as this is separately funded from HEFCE. These costs are not formally part of the project budget but show the enhanced value associated with its work.

Benefits are not just local. This model will be an innovation of major significance nationally as it can be adopted in other regions. It also takes forward HEFCE and JISC objectives for e-learning, lifelong learning, widening participation and knowledge transfer. Therefore we see that JISC's share of the fEC of this project is appropriate and represents good value for money.

Clearly future development after 2008 will be supported by local partners and other funding agencies.

### **Key personnel**

**Anne Hannaford (Online Community Scheme Director)** Anne is Director of Information and Learning Resources at the University and a member of the University Executive reporting directly to the Vice Chancellor. Anne is the lead Director on the development of the integrated library.

**Andrew Rothery (Online Environment Project Director)**. Andrew has been Director of E-Learning and Online Information within ILS since 2003, and previously was Director of IT. He is Project Director for the WM-Share project, which finishes this year. Andrew will chair the Executive Group.

**Viv Bell (Project Leader)**. Viv is a lecturer in E-Learning in the University Business School and has been both Research Officer and Project Leader for the WM-Share Project

**Graham Mason (Technical Manager)**. Graham has been Head of ICT at Kidderminster since 2002 following a career in computer engineering. He leads a number of open source development projects and the JISC projects KC-ROLO and the WM-Share Shibboleth component. It should be noted that the technical team at Kidderminster have substantial experience of this work and will be, in effect, seconded to the project.

**Project Officer and Web Developer** to be appointed in January 2007

**Geoffrey Elliott (EG member)**. Geoffrey has led the creation and funding bid for LLN and reports directly to the Vice Chancellor. The Director of the LLN project will be appointed in Autumn 2006 and we expect that person to join the EG.

**Rayhana Rahman (EG member)**. Rayhana is Business Systems manager for the Chamber of Commerce H&W. She has over 10 years experience of IT and systems development, managing a multi-skilled IT team over 5 sites and 140 staff, including day to day management of commercial partner support. Rayhana has worked on a wide portfolio of projects including portal development.

**Nigel Haigh (EG member)** is Technical Systems Manager for Education Services at Worcestershire County Council and worked on the online community development in schools

### **APPENDICES**

- 1. Letters of support from key partners**
- 2. Spreadsheet showing fEC financial analysis detail**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Letters of support from key partners**



**University  
of Worcester**

**Professor David M A Green**  
Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive  
Direct Line: 01905 855123 Fax: 01905 424638  
e-mail: d.green@worc.ac.uk

21<sup>st</sup> June 2006

Ms A Hannaford  
Director of Information & Learning Services  
University of Worcester  
Henwick Grove  
Worcester WR2 6AJ

Dear Anne

**JISC Capital Programme Circular 3/06**

I am delighted to confirm the full support of the University for Wider Horizons: an open on-line environment for students and the wider community in the region.

The innovative nature of this project has the capacity to not only widen the horizons of the community served by the University and our partner further education colleges, but to widen the horizons of the HE sector in our understanding of what we mean by a learning community.

The project falls within our current strategic aims for the University, and I can confirm that we are well able to meet our commitments within it.

Yours sincerely

**Professor David Green**  
Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive



Anne Hannaford  
Director of Information Services  
University of Worcester  
Henwick Grove Worcester  
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19<sup>th</sup> June 2006

Dear Anne

Kidderminster College is pleased to support the bid for funding under JISC Circular 3/06 for project entitled "An open online educational environment" led by the University of Worcester.

We are actively engaged in developing e-Learning with a focus on open source technology and have a proven track record through our JISC project development work with the Universities of Birmingham, University of Wolverhampton and University of Worcester, researching issues in authentication, authorisation and security.

This project gives us the opportunity to build upon existing knowledge and develop accessibility to technology modules and therefore welcomes the development of the online community and can confirm that its development relates well to our strategic aims. It fits in with many of our current activities and provides the initiative and coordination needed for successful progress.

Kidderminster College has a strong, experienced and stable ICT Development team and I can assure you that the appropriate support will be provided to ensure a successful outcome to this project.

Therefore I am pleased to strongly support the proposal, and to confirm that Kidderminster College's commitment to its role in the project.

Yours faithfully,



Timothy Mason  
Director of Curriculum, Strategy and Workforce Development  
(Director of ICT / ILT)

21<sup>st</sup> June 2006

Anne Hannaford  
Director of Information and Learning Services  
University of Worcester  
Henwick Grove  
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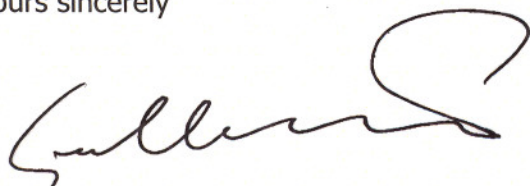
Dear Anne

**JISC PROJECT – WIDER HORIZONS: AN OPEN ONLINE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

The JISC Project Proposal by the University of Worcester (lead institution), to create an online educational environment for students and members of the public in the region around Worcester will, if successful, significantly enhance progression opportunities and pathways for students in further and higher education and those engaged in informal learning. In establishing a freely accessible online environment, the work of the project will complement that of the recently approved HEFCE Lifelong Learning Network for Herefordshire and Worcestershire. I am therefore pleased to confirm the support of the Lifelong Learning Network for the development of our interest in contributing to the Wider Horizons project.

A particular feature of the JISC programme will be the creation of a web portal with navigational links to focussed communities including Health and Care, Leadership and Management. I recognise the potential for linking these communities to the progression pathways that will be developed by the Lifelong Learning Network for vocational learners in the sub-region. The LLN is keen to work with you in enhancing the opportunities for students to progress in these priority skills areas and we recognise the potential for meeting some of the particular needs of the sub-region which the proposed JISC project offers.

Yours sincerely



**Professor Geoffrey Elliott**  
**Director of Lifelong Learning**

**Worcester office:** Severn House, Prescott Drive, Warndon Business Park, Worcester, WR4 9NE  
Tel: 0845 641 1641 Fax: 0845 641 4641  
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Minicom users please dial: 0845 641 1645



Anne Hannaford,  
Director of Information Services,  
University of Worcester,  
Henwick Grove,  
Worcester  
WR2 6AJ

19 June 2006

Dear Anne,

The Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire and Worcestershire is pleased to support the bid for funding under JISC Circular 3/06 for project entitled "An open online educational environment" led by the University of Worcester.

We strongly welcome the development of the online community and can confirm that its development relates well to our strategic aims. It fits in with many of our current activities and provides the initiative and coordination needed for successful progress.

The Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire and Worcestershire strongly supports this project and I am pleased to confirm its commitment to its proposed role in the project.

Sincerely

Christine Jones  
Chief Executive

Our Patrons are:



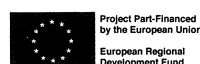
**Hereford office:** Crossway House, Holmer Road, Hereford, HR4 9SS  
Tel: 0845 641 1643 Fax: 0845 641 4643

**Revolution House Conference Centre:** Revolution House, Stanier Road, Shire Business Park, Worcester, WR4 9FE  
Tel: 0845 641 1614 Fax: 0845 641 4614

Email: [training@hwchamber.co.uk](mailto:training@hwchamber.co.uk) Website: [www.hwchamber.co.uk](http://www.hwchamber.co.uk)

**UK Trade & Investment**

Tel: 0845 641 1613 Email: [internationaltrade@hwchamber.co.uk](mailto:internationaltrade@hwchamber.co.uk) Website: [www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk](http://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk)





# worcestershire county council

Ms A Hannaford  
Director of Information and Learning Services  
University of Worcester  
Henwick Grove  
WORCESTER  
WR2 6AJ

21<sup>st</sup> June 2006

Our Ref: PB/mb

Dear Anne

Worcestershire County Council is pleased to support the bid for funding under JISC Circular 3/06 for project entitled "Wider Horizons: an open online educational environment" led by the University of Worcester.

We strongly welcome the development of the online community and can confirm that its development relates well to our strategic aims. It fits in with many of our current activities and provides the initiative and coordination needed for successful progress.

Worcestershire County Council has a Strategic Partnership with the University to develop the innovative joint library project in the centre of Worcester. We have always believed that extending life-long learning and raising aspirations for the people of the region are both at the heart of what will be realised. This development of an open on-line community is an essential part of achieving that vision.

Worcestershire County Council strongly supports this project and I am pleased to confirm its commitment to its proposed role in the project.

**Patrick Birch**  
Director of  
Corporate Services

Yours sincerely

County Hall  
Spetchley Road  
Worcester  
WR5 2NP

**Patrick Birch**  
Director of Corporate Services

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DX 29941 Worcester 2

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## **Appendix 2**

**Spreadsheet showing fEC financial analysis detail**

JISC Circular 3/06

Item	JISC contribution	Partner	Partner contributions	days	Yr. 1 wte	Yr. 2 wte	time period	Year 1				Year 2				Grand Total
								1	2	3	Total	1	2	3	Total	
								£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Scheme Director 20 days@£300 per day		UW UW UW UW	[1] 1200 [2] 2400 [3] 2400 6000	4 8 8 8				1,164	2,328	2,328	5,821				5,821	
Project Director 30 days@£300 per day		UW UW UW UW	[1] 2400 [2] 3300 [3] 3300 9000	8 11 11 11				2,328	3,202	3,202	8,732				8,732	
Project Leader secondment £30K salary level 0.5FTE for 4 months 1.0FTE for 2 years	[1] 12000 [2] 36000 [3] 38160 86160	JI JI JI JI			0.50 1.00	1.00	4 mths 2 yrs	6,029	18,088	19,174	43,291	5,168	15,504	16,435	37,107	80,398
System design consultancy from 18 days@ £700 per day		CC CC CC CC	[1] 5600 [2] 3500 [3] 3500 12600	8 5 5 5				5,600	3,500	3,500	12,600					12,600
System design consultancy from 13 days@ £700 per day	[1] 5600 [2] 3500 9100	JI JI JI						5,600	3,500		9,100					9,100
Web developer £25K salary level 1.0FTE for 18 months	[2] 30000 [3] 15900 45900	JI JI JI			1.00	0.50	18 mths		19,080	10,113	29,193		9,540	5,056	14,597	43,790
Project Officer £20K salary level 0.5FTE for 2 years	[2] 15000 [3] 15900 30900	JI JI JI			0.50	0.50	2 yrs		4,938	5,235	10,173		4,938	5,235	10,173	20,346
User support and help desk 50 days@ £80 per day		UW UW UW	[2] 1800 [3] 2200 4000	17 33 33					1,345	2,611	3,956					3,956
Technical manager secondment £36K salary level 0.4FTE for 1 year 0.2FTE for 1 year	[2] 24000 [3] 10176 34176	JI JI JI JI JI				0.40 0.20	1 yr 1 yr		16,778	8,389	25,168					25,168
Technical development, backups 180 days @ £150 per day		KC KC KC KC	[2] 18000 [3] 9000 27000	120 60 60 60					17,838	8,919	26,757					26,757

**JISC Circular 3/06**

Item	JISC contribution	Partner	Partner contributions	Yr. 1		Yr. 2		Year 1				Year 2				Grand Total		
				days	wte	wte	time period	1	2	3	Total	1	2	3	Total			
								£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£		£	
Business Development Team 30 days @ £300 per day 50 days @ £150 per day		KC KC KC KC	[2] 8250 [3] 8250  16500	40 40					8,082		8,082						16,164	16,164
<b>Total Pay</b>		UW CC KC JI		100.00 18.00 260.00 13.00	0.00 0.00 0.00 3.60	0.00 0.00 0.00 2.00			3,493 5,600 0 11,629	6,875 3,500 25,920 62,385	8,141 3,500 17,001 42,910	18,509 12,600 42,921 116,925	0 0 0 5,168	0 0 0 29,983	0 0 0 26,726	0 0 0 61,877	18,509 12,600 42,921 178,802	18,509 12,600 42,921 178,802
<b>Grand Total Pay</b>				<b>391.00</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>2.00</b>			<b>20,722</b>	<b>98,681</b>	<b>71,552</b>	<b>190,955</b>	<b>5,168</b>	<b>29,983</b>	<b>26,726</b>	<b>61,877</b>	<b>252,832</b>	<b>252,832</b>
<b>Non Pay</b>																		
Travel and subsistence, staff development & Materials and Consumables		JI							700	1,400	1,400	3,300						3,300
<b>Total Non Pay</b>									<b>700</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>3,300</b>
Accommodation and facilities for equipment and personnel at Worcester		JI							3,363	6,620	7,839	17,822	0	0	0	0		17,822
<b>Total Costs</b>		Partner contributions UW CC KC Partner Contrib's total JISC Contribution		100 18 260 378 13	0.00 0.00 0.00 0 3.60	0.00 0.00 0.00 0 2.00			3,493 5,600 0 9,093 15,693	6,875 3,500 25,920 36,295 70,406	8,141 3,500 17,001 28,642 52,149	18,509 12,600 42,921 74,030 138,047	0 0 0 0 5,168	0 0 0 0 29,983	0 0 0 0 26,726	0 0 0 0 61,877	18,509 12,600 42,921 74,030 199,924	18,509 12,600 42,921 74,030 199,924
<b>Total Costs</b>				<b>769</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>2.00</b>			<b>33,878</b>	<b>142,996</b>	<b>109,434</b>	<b>286,108</b>	<b>5,168</b>	<b>29,983</b>	<b>26,726</b>	<b>61,877</b>	<b>347,984</b>	<b>347,984</b>

**Key**

UW	University of Worcester
CC	Hereford & Worcester Chamber of Commerce
KC	Kidderminster College
JI	JISC