



WMRO Skills Team work plan for the period November 2010 - January 2011

Prepared for the WMSP Data Group

25th October 2010

This short paper sets out proposals for work to be carried out by the Observatory's Skills Team during the remainder of 2010. Please note that the current operations of the Observatory are likely to cease from March 2011. Recognising that our outputs and activities are valuable to a wide range of partners, proposals have been invited from organisations wishing to acquire our assets. As a result, depending on the outcome of this process, these proposals may be subject to change. We will provide an update on progress with discussions, and highlight any implications for the future work programme, at the Data Group meeting on 17th November 2010.

1 Purpose of the research

It is proposed that work is linked to priorities for supporting the West Midlands Skills Partnership (WMSP) identified by AWM, which now provides 100% of the funding for our work, in its Closure & Transition Plan.

Specifically the activities detailed in table 1 overleaf are designed to provide the labour market and skills intelligence needed to:

- Inform the development of Local Enterprise Partnership proposals and plans
- Support the development of Regional Growth Fund proposals by local authorities, businesses and other interested stakeholders

2 Staff resources

As table 1 shows the research requires an input of between 125-145 days of staff time and the work will be carried out by a mix of 6 staff. The Head of Skills Research and two Skills Analysts will work full time on the projects. The Observatory's Research Assistant, an additional Analyst and Deputy Chief Executive will also provide input as required.

3 Timetable

The WMSP is due to continue until the end of December 2010. The work proposed is scheduled to be largely completed by then - although it is anticipated that consultation with partners on the outputs will take place in the first half of January 2011 and that the final reports will be published on the Observatory website by the end of the month.

4 Request for partner feedback

We are seeking feedback from individual partner organisations on the proposals, and in particular:

- Whether the research proposed will be useful to inform the development of Local Enterprise Partnership and Regional Growth Fund proposals
- Whether any follow-on work is required - for example it would be possible for us to customise the research outputs to meet partners' specific needs

Table 1: key projects

Project	Details	Timescale	Staff resource required (days)
Regional Skills Assessment briefing papers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The potential impact on local economies of cuts in public spending 2. Achieving transformational change - the potential implications for jobs and skill needs at a sub-regional and local level 3. Skill gaps and deficiencies in the workforce - key sectors and occupations affected and underlying causes 4. The extent to which any new jobs created will be sufficient to meet the demands of local people at a sub-regional and local level 	<p>Drafts to be completed by the end of November 2010</p> <p>Consultation and production of final reports by the end of January 2011</p>	10-15 per briefing paper
Further development of the WMRO skills index	Further work to create versions of the index, which is an overall measure of skills performance based on indicators such as employer investment in training, recruitment and retention of graduates, skill gaps and shortages and qualification attainment by individuals, at a sub-regional and local level	<p>To be completed by the end of December 2010</p> <p>Consultation and production of final reports by the end of January 2011</p>	40
Further work on the measures linked to the Statement of Investment Priorities	Further analysis, where possible, of measures to provide information to inform decision making at a sub-regional and local level. This work will include updated analysis of participation of learners in courses linked to key sectors of the economy	<p>To be completed by the end of December 2010</p> <p>Consultation and production of final reports by the end of January 2011</p>	30
Regional labour market information for UKCES	Provision of a range of analysis, covering demographics, the economy, employment/unemployment and skills forecasts, to a template provided by UKCES	To be completed by 9 th January 2011	15