



Further Education Lecturer Research into Higher Education Choices Amongst Tourism Students in Herefordshire and Worcestershire

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INTRODUCTION

This is a report of research conducted into tourism student progression and HE choices in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The research was commissioned and conducted by Herefordshire and Worcestershire Lifelong Learning Network as a means of drawing on the experience of lecturers in Tourism to identify the interests and needs of their students as well as to highlight issues of progression within the 2 counties.

SURVEY

Travel and Tourism course leaders at all FE colleges that run level 3 programmes in Tourism in Herefordshire and Worcestershire were surveyed both by electronic and paper based surveys. The survey was conducted in June 2008, and was conducted in parallel to a survey of students. The questionnaire was informally trialled with a tourism lecturer and adapted to take into account feedback received.

SAMPLE SIZE

All 5 colleges offering Travel and Tourism qualifications at Level 3 across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

RESPONSE RATE

Responses from 3 further education colleges across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

RESULTS

Q1 & Q2 are a filter to ensure that respondents are lecturers on relevant tourism courses in Herefordshire & Worcestershire.

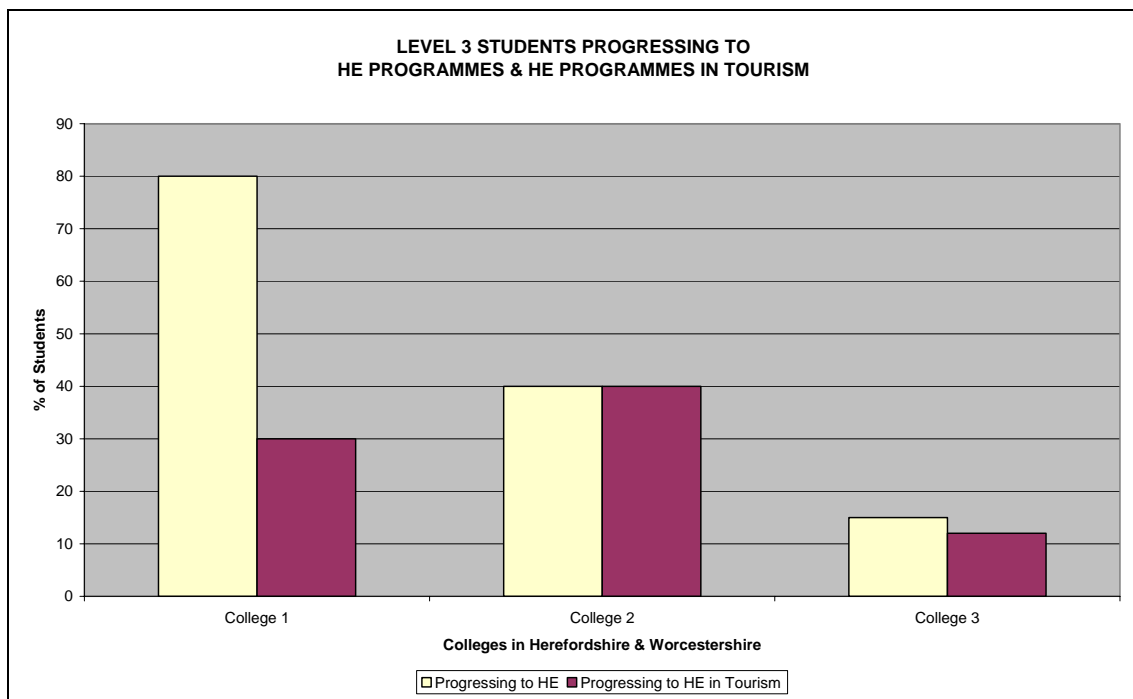
They identified three colleges spanning Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and providing a range of L3 qualifications:

College 1 – providing AS/A2 in Travel and Tourism

College 2 – providing OCR National Diploma

College 3 – providing BTEC Advanced National Diploma

**Q3. Approximately what percentage of your students...
progress to HE courses?
progress to HE courses in Tourism (or related subjects)?**



Q4. What sort of courses are most popular?

Lecturers selected the following:

Type of HE Course	College 1	College 2	College 3
Undergraduate	●		●
Foundation Degrees		●	●
HNDs			
Other			

Q5. Are they mostly interested in studying ... Full-time, Part-time, Distance Learning?

Full-time: 100%
Part-time: 0%

Q6. If these courses were available what courses would your students be most interested in (Mark your top three options)

Lecturers selected from a list of: *Tourism, Tourism Management, International Tourism, International Tourism Management, Sport Tourism, Sport Tourism Management, Adventure Tourism, Adventure Tourism Management, Heritage & Culture Tourism, Heritage & Culture Management, Sustainable Tourism, Sustainable Tourism Management, and Other*

The responses were:

Subject Area	College 1	College 2	College 3
Tourism	●	●	●
Tourism Management	●	●	●
International Tourism	●		
International Tourism Management	●		●
Other	Event Management	Hospitality Industry	

Q7. Additional Comments:

College 2 "The 40% is this year. In the past it has often been less"

College 3 "New areas that have become of interest include airport and airline operations and courses where tourism is an addition rather than the main part i.e. *Marketing with Tourism; Hotel Management with...*"

ANALYSIS

The research provides an overview of student HE choices from institutions providing Level 3 qualifications in Travel and Tourism within Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The research identifies variations in progression to HE between institutions, with greatest progression from the college providing AS and A2 qualifications, but within this there is a large proportion going on to study at HE level outside of travel and tourism. Within the vocational courses there are lower progression rates, but a considerably higher proportion of students continuing within the curriculum area.

Whilst there were equal numbers of responses for Foundation degrees and Undergraduate degrees, it is noteworthy that Foundation degrees were popular with both colleges that ran vocational qualifications. This may reflect the local availability of Foundation Degrees, the shorter timescale (and cost), or differences in student and staff expectations of different qualifications.

Course choices:

Tourism and Tourism Management courses were identified by all lecturers. This indicates that there is considerable interest in generalist qualifications in Travel and Tourism and for qualifications that include elements of management studies. None of the specialist options were selected other than *International Tourism* and *International Tourism Management*. This points to an interest in international aspects of tourism, and is reflected in the comments regarding airport and airline operations.

Lecturers also identified student interest in *Event Management* and in degrees related to the *Hospitality Industry*. These areas had been specifically excluded in the survey design and trial, in order to limit the scope of the survey. However the responses point to the need for further research into progression opportunities in hospitality and related fields in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The lecturers' comments point to the problem with a snapshot survey of progression routes with differences between cohorts and with changes in external conditions. The second comment also identifies several new areas for inclusion in future degrees, and the attraction of tourism as a minor subject within combined degrees. The interest in Tourism as a minor subject may indicate that students with vocational qualifications in Travel and Tourism may feel at a disadvantage when applying for courses outside of their area of study, and may wish for courses that recognise their specialist area of knowledge whilst allowing them to study in a different area.

CONCLUSION

Despite the small sample size, the research draws on the expertise and experience of Further Education lecturers to consider possible areas of curriculum development and the issues of progression routes in Travel and Tourism within Herefordshire and Worcestershire. It identifies considerable interest in generalist degrees at foundation and undergraduate degrees, and in qualifications including elements of management studies. It also point to the need for further research into progression routes in hospitality.

The research was conducted in parallel with a survey of students, and taken in conjunction they provide information on student needs and progression from 5 institutions across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.