

2014

Organisational
Consultancy



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UNIVERSITY OF WALES
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SWANSEA • ABERTAWE

[PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT]

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Project initiation document

1. Project Justification

1.1 Aims and objectives

The aim of this project is to increase and maintain the participation levels in physical activity in students by expanding the provision of activities and services available that directly facilitate the uptake of student participation. The goals of this project are:

- Evaluate: Evaluation, will consist data analysis collated from university, also look at current research regarding general student participation in the UK to identify key themes and issues to consider.
- Second stage will involve the synthesis of this data to establish these themes and trends, which will in turn lead to the third step of diagnosis of the problem. This could range from lack of opportunities to various barriers to participation.
- From this stage there will commence a series of action planning sessions whereby measures to address any problems found in the diagnosis stage.
- Finally, the implementation of these plans will commence and be subject to review against the key performance indicators established in the planning stage.

Key Performance Indicators

The project aims to achieve these goals:

- Increase student participation by 15%
- Contact and engage at least one charity organisation for an event

1.2 Rationale

The main reason behind undertaking this project is that the participation in sports teams and societies is sporadic at best. Another issue is that the university rarely makes use of charity events to increase these levels. This project will also help lower the risk of obesity and social issues of the university students, as research has shown that sport and physical activity has several positive effects on the health and well-being on students.

1.3 Resources

Sport England student engagement plan – this document examines various barriers to participation as researched through English universities. From this research, the project can draw comparisons between the trends found in UWTSD students and English students to possibly find the best solution.

Sport Wales's community strategy – can be used for identification of potential funding and partnerships (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006), (Lewis, 2013)

UWTSD LSM Society – The LSM society of the university consists of several students and lecturers with expertise in developing and managing sports. The LSM team can be used for gathering and synthesising data on student preferences and participation levels through the use of the university's student communication channels.

Student union – because the project is aimed directly in line with improving the student experience at the university, the project is able to work in conjunction with the student union and utilise their resources.

1.4 Possible Constraints

Budget – the project does not have any budget to run activities or services independently. Therefore, the project must make use of partnerships with other organisations and other public funding streams to run services.

2. Business case

2.1 Potential issues

The project must effectively engage the student population of Swansea in order for the project to work, which means finding the most effective method of communication. Research indicates that students primarily communicate through social networking platforms; therefore this is the method the project will use.

There is no budget available to use for events or services, all services must be either free or generate their own revenue.

2.2 Potential benefits

Increase the participation opportunities for the students at the university, save the University money by providing these services for free.

2.3 Potential Outcomes

The whole point of the project is to increase the participation of students in sports and activities. This could take the form of:

- Increased participation in BUCS teams
- More active and sporting societies
- More students taking part in at least 5x60 minutes of activity per week as per Climbing higher guidelines

3. Project approach

The business case outlines a series of considerations which must be addressed in the project. The potential issues regarding student engagement and budget provide priority areas to focus on below.

3.1 Student engagement

Issues with student engagement relate directly to the reputation and influence of the project. As such, the project must either utilise the contacts within the university to maximise its outreach, or try to generate in own interest through the utilisation of the free marketing strategies outlined above.

4. Research methodology

The research methodology for the project will be based on a Deductive method. This method is described by Gulati (2009) as working from “top down”, starting with a theory or hypothesis and building the research around that. This applies to the project in that the proposed theory is that the lack of participation is due to provision and proximity of services available to students, as based on current research by Sport England. Therefore the research and literature review of the project should be built around this subject area, concentrating on the preferences and current provision of the students to ascertain the best solution.

However, there are some elements of the project which will be researched using the inductive method, whereby the research gathered during the project will be used to formulate new theories and hypotheses’ (Feeney & Heit, 2007). For example, using a questionnaire to gather data about the subject and then using the findings to ascertain the most effective strategy.

Qualitative data about the preferences of students will be gathered through the use of questionnaire and focus groups (Merriam, 2009), of which will follow a period of analysis to identify trends and formulate the most effective strategy.

Quantitative data about the actual numerical levels of student participation (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012) can be obtained through collaborating with the head of the LSM society and the student activities officer.

4.1 Questionnaire design and use

The questionnaire for the gathering of student data should be designed effectively to maximise the amount of high quality data that it yields. There are problems with using questionnaires, namely lack of participation and participant honesty (Gillham, 2000); however it would be the most efficient method given that the Student activities officer has access to all the email accounts for the students, allowing a direct access point to them.

The questionnaire will be administered through the online platform survey monkey, as it is free and allows a large degree of customisability (Survey Monkey , 2014). The survey will consist of a mix of closed questions and open questions, to give a more comprehensive yield of both qualitative and quantitative data.

5. Project management team structure

Student Activities Officer – Jamie Muir

Student Societies and RAG Officer – Luke Jones

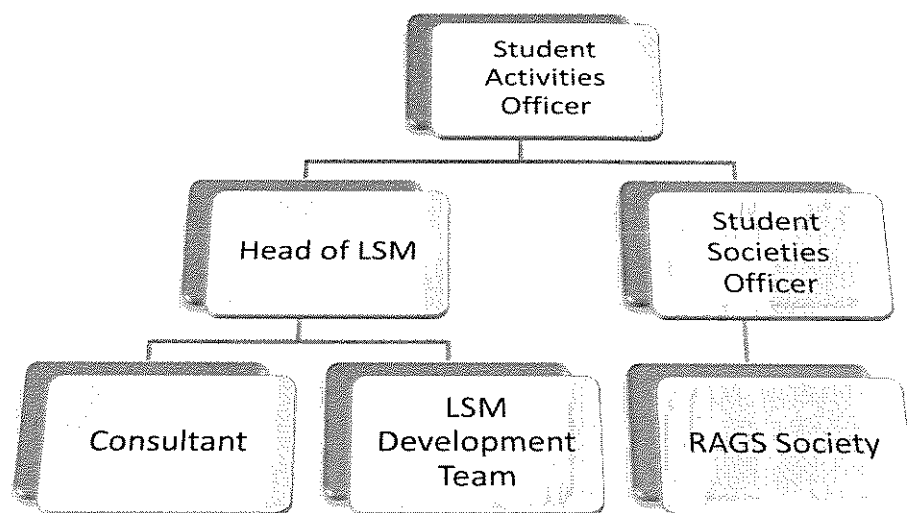
Head of Leisure and Sport Management society – Steven Osborne

Consultant – [blank]

RAGS Society – university society for charity and fund raising

LSM Development Team – Team responsible for developing sports and activity within the university

Below is a diagram illustrating the hierarchy of the project team.



6. Quality management strategy

The quality management strategy for the project will consist of regular review of each of the components of the projects. The components and quality controls are outlined below:

6.1 Social Media platforms – the quality management strategy for these platforms will be based on the analytics of their performance indicators. The performance indicators for the different platforms are:

- YouTube – the analytics available for the YouTube Channel are based upon Video views, Likes, Comments and channel subscribers. This information is easily available through the channel and can be easily monitored on a regular basis.

- Facebook – the traffic generated through the Facebook page can be monitored through the amount of people who like, share and post on the projects page. Again, this information is easily available to the page administrator, as well as further analysis made possible through the Facebook statistics website, which can track trends and peak times for student engagement.
- Twitter – The twitter page performance indicators are based on followers and Retweets of the projects messages. Further analysis of the traffic through the twitter account can be accessed through Tweetonomy, which can analyse peak times and trends, similar to Facebook.

The research methodology for the project is also subject to quality control, in order to ensure that the data it yields is of the highest quality. The questionnaires used for the gathering of students preferences for physical activity types should be piloted through a focus group first, to identify any flaws in the data it procures.

6.3 Communication management strategy

In order to communicate ideas effectively, the University sports development team (LSM) regularly meets on a weekly basis. The team is also integrated onto a closed group forum on the online platform LinkedIn, so ideas and progress reports can be shared and viewed more readily and regularly.

6.4 Project plan

Project plan

Stage 1. Social media campaign –utilise all social media outlets, particular focus on YouTube and google services. To be completed as soon as possible.

Stage 2. Partnership building – make contact with other organisations, including potential facilities, charity organisations and staff providers. At least two organisations on board by end of January 2014.

Stage 3. Organise events and services to run in refreshers week. The events and services run during refreshers week will be based on the results of the questionnaire.

Stage 4. Evaluate effectiveness of the events and services against the university Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). The KPI's will be based on the participation levels of the students before, during and after the project.

7. Costing estimates

7.1 Potential funding streams

Sport Wales's community chest, £1500 available for sports development events and strategies (Sport Wales , 2014).

Sport Wales's Community development grant, £25,000 available for sports communities development work (Sport Wales , 2014).

7.2 Budgeting approach

As stated above, the project either has to operate without funding using free services and platforms, or generate its own funding. There are several ways to take advantage of the free online platforms such as social media in order to meet the requirements of the project. These online platforms can also aid in the generation of revenue in the setting up of monetized societies and online ticketing for events.

Controls

The process of controlling the project is achieved through several stages of planning. The projected dates for the project are displayed below. Allowances for slippage and missed deadlines are also displayed.

Risk assessment

Below is the Risk assessment for the project, taking into account the relative likelihood and impact of the risks associated with the project.

Project Plan

Action	Date Started	Date Finished	Slippage	Outcome Achieved
Contact relevant student union officers	October 2013	October 2013	1 weeks notice for union officers	Establish communication channels and support
Meet with LSM team	October 2013	October 2013	1 weeks notice for LSM head and team members	Utilise resources from development team
Design student preference questionnaire	November 2013	January 2014	Allow 2 weeks for London Trip	Formulate pilot questionnaire
Implement social media strategy	November 2013	On-going	Should allow for university approval	Set up online platform and communication channel
Hold pilot group session	January 2014	February 2014	Allow 2 weeks to arrange focus group session	Evaluate effectiveness of questionnaire
Distribute questionnaire	February 2014	February 2014	Run during refreshers event at University	Gather data about student activity preferences
Formulate activities based on response	February 2014	March 2014	Allow time for questionnaire data analysis	Identify most popular forms of recreation
Investigate funding streams to aid implementation	February 2014	February 2014	Allow time to investigate several public funding sources	Apply for government funding to aid implementation
Plan and implement activities and services	March 2014	April 2014	Investigate several options and partnerships	Establish partnerships with providers to run activities
Plan exit strategy for post-event sustainability	March 2014	April 2014	Allow time for strategy formulation based on data analysis	Identification of most suitable post event provision method
Review effectiveness of activities and services	April 2014	April 2014	Constant review process of any online services	Identify most effective events and services
Implement exit strategy	April 2014	May 2014	Set up partnerships with external providers	Maintain project sustainability

Risk Assessment

Risk	Likelihood of risk (1-10)	Potential impact of risk (1-10)	Mitigating factors
Lack of student engagement	7	8	Utilise most effective method of student communication and engagement as highlighted by research
Drop out in government funding	6	8	Ensure that applications for government funding are well orchestrated and researched
Breakdown in communication between project stakeholders	5	6	Utilise efficient communication methods and meet regularly to update team
Lack of engagement with student societies	5	7	Ensure that project meets the goals and objectives of the student union and societies
Questionnaire may be ineffective	4	6	Run pilot session with questionnaire to ensure validity
Threat of cyber attacks on online services	4	8	Utilise most secure and reliable online platforms to provide services
Risk of injury during student activities event	6	7	Ensure event meet all health and safety requirements

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