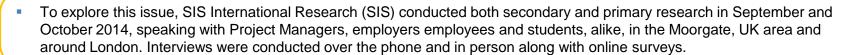# Case Study: New Course Development for Major University in London

PAIN POINTS

- The client wanted to launch a project management (PM) course with potential focus on Prince2, Agile or another certification. The question was whether there is sufficient demand which the university can satisfy (e.g., within the area of university campus(es)), and, if so, the type, shape and market approach of this project management course itself.
- At issue was the emerging need for specialization within an increasingly competitive employment landscape (specifically, following the economic recession from Q2'08 to Q3'09, which heavily impacted banks and investment firms where PM certificate holders are found) and whether certification training truly makes a candidate more desirable above and beyond demonstrable skills and personality. This new separate certification course could be either isolated or work as an extension to the university which offers a comparable project management certification Masters. The aim of the project was to further consider the feasibility from both a marketability (reputation) and cost (leveraging existing resources) perspective .

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- To explore this issue, SIS International Research (SIS) conducted both secondary and primary research in September and October 2014, speaking with Project Managers, employers employees and students, alike, in the Moorgate, UK area and around London. Interviews were conducted over the phone and in person along with online surveys.

SELECTED FINDINGS

- **Employers or PM certificate holders noted that experience and personality were more important than the certification itself.**
- **Prince2 and Agile is more preferred than general Project Management Courses.** Prince2, specifically, is growing internationally in demand and above and beyond other PM courses this has been one which most are familiar with. More so than Agile, perhaps, and, arguably, more beneficial than a general-specific PM course, would be providing Prince2 certification.
- **Competition in London is strong when it comes to supply of Prince2 and Agile certification.** Vast majority of Prince2, Agile and PM courses are provided by Training Centers along with online course providers.
- **Cost and distance are strong important factors when deciding to take PM certification.**
- **Face-to-Face is preferable for employers in training staff.** While there are strong arguments for online (from students' point of view), employers may feel more comfortable with classes being Face-to-Face. Based on initial conversations, there seems to be more of a need from the students' point of view (e.g., they are more likely to pursue Project Management certifications) than employers.
- **Courses with flexible (and frequent) timing may be preferred.**
- **People that are good in project management often possess these capabilities by nature**, one respondent emphasized, "but a PM course would enhance them definitely".