JISC

JISC Progress Report Template - Full

Project Information			
Project Identifier	*To be completed by JISC*		
Project Title	Making the most of Course Information: Stage 2		
Project Hashtag	Optional		
Start Date	12/01/2012	**End Date**	30/03/2013
Lead Institution	UWE		
Project Director	Jo Midgley		
Project Manager	Chris Little		
Contact email	Christine2.little@uwe.ac.uk		
Partner Institutions	NA		
Project Webpage URL	http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/its/jisccoursedataproject.aspx		
Programme Name	Course Data: *making the most of course information - Stage 2*		
Programme Manager	Ruth Drysdale, eLearning Team Innovation		

Document Information			
Author(s)	Chris Little		
Project Role(s)	Project Manager		
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Document History		
Version	**Date**	**Comments**
0.1	14/11/2012	Draft for circulation to Board members
1.0	23/11/2012	After Board members comments

Table of Contents

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Section One: Summary

Progress on the project has accelerated since May with the appointment of a business analyst and allocation of a project manager. Existing systems and processes have been analysed and documented, and key decisions have been made on how XCRI data will be extracted. The mapping between our SITS database and the XCRI standard is well advanced and the data feed development is due to start in mid November.

Our main subject matter expert on the project left UWE in late October, and we're currently bringing alternative resources into place. We want to ensure the maximum benefit from the project in the time available and to ensure that by the end of March we deliver a feed tested against at least the exemplar courses, improved processes, a plan to ensure the complete data is ready to use in the feed, and a plan for future developments.

Section Two: Activities and Progress

Workpackage 01: Project management
1. Planning - the time scale of the project is fixed, and resources are limited by the funding and the SME staff available, so the scope may need to flex as the analysis reveals the complexity of the processes, system and the work required. The scope was revised and agreed at the Project Board meeting on 8/11/12
2. JISC web site: completed: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning/coursedata/uwe.aspx
3. UWE web site: completed: http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/its/jisccoursedataproject.aspx
4. Interim report May 2012: completed, except for the financial report, which is pending UWE confirmation of appropriate budget line following departmental structure change. Staff hours worked are being recorded on a monthly basis.
5. The project budget was agreed with Board members 24/9/12.
6. Product descriptions for workpackages have been discussed with the owners to clarify the work to be done. There is overlap between the work packages so the product descriptions will be adapted as necessary and used with a light touch.
7. Interim report Nov 2012 – this document plus financial report to follow

Workpackage 02: Proof of concept – an analysis of the technical resources needed, lessons learned from previous similar projects (eg KIS) and interfaces with other work; completed.

Workpackage 03: (applicant facing) Course marketing strategy
UWE has an operational approach to course marketing and the project is aligned with that. UWE is developing a new Marketing and Recruitment Strategy which is likely to be complete in early 2013. Project Board members involved in the strategy development are ensuring that the Project remains aligned with the strategy as it develops, so this WP is completed.
Work has been done to define how the project would measure the benefits of XCRI to the course marketing strategy: a number of use cases are presented and reviewed to be used in the testing and evaluation of the benefits in later stages of the project.

Workpackage 4: Business case – completed. This is available to JISC on request

Workpackage 05: Courses publishing process review
The work on documenting the existing processes in the Admissions & International Development (AID) and Marketing & Communications (M&C) services is nearly complete, subject to sign-off by the business leads. Process maps will be put on the UWE project web site when they've been signed off.

Workpackage 06: Content review
Progress on the mapping between SITS and XCRI-CAP fields is nearly complete, but the expected end date of the workpackage has slipped from end October to December, as the mapping will

inevitably change as the data feed is developed. The departure of the lead user in AID has delayed the completion of this work, but resources have been identified to take over. The exemplar courses which will be used to test the data feed during development are agreed; the data for these is being set up.

Workpackage 07: Technical and systems review

UWE holds its course data on a number of different systems, depending on the process and the nature of the applicant/student. For example, Continuing and Professional Development (CPD) courses are on different systems, and sometimes more than one system, depending on whether (for example) they are credit bearing (ie assessed). The location and maintenance of course information for CPD is being reviewed in a separate UWE project, but the XCRI project has helped UWE identify and address corporate priorities relating to CPD information. The SITS system used for Admissions holds a subset of courses and most, but not all, potential course offerings; this subset includes over 90% of the applicant population and a wide range of courses of different types including "hard to find" courses such as CPD. The Board agreed that a data feed from SITS would be sufficient for this project.

UWE's SITS implementation reflects the limited range of processes originally supported on SITS, and the XCRI work has highlighted a number of areas where further development would help support wider usage.   Although this will not be possible within the timescale of the XCRI project, the benefits of the changes are now clear, eg
- reduce manual intervention for the course data feeds (eg to the UWE web pages, XCRI)
- support a wider range of courses
- improve the information available to applicants

Mapping of the "as is" systems and dataflows is complete, subject to signoff.

A number of questions about use and future maintenance of the feed have arisen, so this WP cannot be completed at this point. Some are dependant on the JISC programme intentions which are as yet unclear, eg what relationship HEIs are expected to have with users of the aggregated data. For example, will users want to supplement the feed data with additional fields; what is the relationship between UWE providing data (and corrections) and the users taking the data; will users provide any intelligence about potential applicant behaviour to the HEIs. This has led to a new risk, that it may be less efficient to use the XCRI feed than current arrangements, which would prevent implementation of the feed. Some of these questions will also be looked at in WP10, as they affect the "to be" business processes. The expected completion of WP7 has slipped to early 2013.

Workpackage 08: Data preparation.
This is underway. M&C have been reviewing and improving data quality throughout 2012 and are currently inputting abstracts for all courses. The development of the data feed in Nov-Dec will identify further data cleansing requirements, and a plan for these will be developed. It is expected that this plan will start in January 2012 but go beyond the end of March, ie beyond the project timescale.

Workpackage 09: Produce data feed.
Alternative methods to produce the feed from SITS have been considered and the option to produce a feed direct from SITS has been agreed on. The work is being scheduled for mid November to end of December, depending on the completion of other priority SITS work. Initial requirements for the feed (eg the mapping) have been defined, but changes to the data mapping are still expected as the data feed develops.

Workpackage 10: Develop business processes.
This has started. Recommendations for the "to be" processes are being compiled and the impact of changes to UWE's Quality Management and Evaluation Framework process (UWE's course approval process, outside scope of the JISC project) will be incorporated. Given that a number of

beneficial changes to processes will not be possible during the project (eg multiple occurrences on SITS), the changes to business processes are expected to be limited, and further changes for the future will be recommended.

The owners of the data are the academic staff, and the project will need to consider how to involve them in developing the "to be" business processes. The major benefit to academic staff would be to be asked less often for course information.

Workpackage 11: Course workflow development
Removed from plan, so we can prioritise the data feed and stay within project timescale and resources.

Section Three: Institutional & Project Partner Issues

In December 2011, the Project Manager who had managed the Stage 1 Course Data project and was both a business lead in admissions and intended to be the project manager for Stage 2, left UWE. This lead to delays in the start of the project.

In January 2012 a new structure for support services was introduced for UWE, including new structures and responsibilities for AID and M&C. The changes have meant that staff were willing and ready to review processes and data quality, but there is also a negative impact as changes are still bedding down. Staff pressure is still impacting on the project, eg allocating staff time to the project, higher than usual turnover of staff in post, competition for IT resource; also it has sometimes been necessary to get new processes in place on a timescale which didn't align with the project.

Course information is an example of a complex problem, with multiple stakeholders and objectives, silos of systems, information and processes which have grown up over the years, and both internal and external constraints. UWE is tackling the problem incrementally. One of the main benefits of the project so far is that the complexity of UWE's course information collection and maintenance has been revealed in significant detail. This project is one step in a longer journey to improving the collection and use of course information within UWE.

Section Four: Outputs and Deliverables

"As is" process maps (will be on UWE web site by end Nov)
Course information Context Diagram (will be on UWE web site by end Nov)

Section Five: Outcomes and Lessons Learned

Relying on manual intervention to compensate for a database configuration which is no longer suited to the data may have costs which are sustainable initially but increase when the uses of the database multiply.
Courses delivered in partnership with other institutions are handled differently, in this context with respect to data collection and maintenance, or have different requirements, eg for marketing, which can lead to them being treated as "too difficult" in projects like this.

Section Six: Evaluation

The business case includes benefits which will be monitored; some of these will run beyond the end of the project in March 2013. The XCRI Project Board will monitor benefits until the end of March 2013, and an evaluation plan will be developed to track the changes beyond this.

Six exemplar courses have been chosen to test the data feed, including undergraduate full time, postgraduate full time and part time and professional courses. A franchised course run by a local

college is expected to be added. The courses held on SITS cover the full range of UWE courses (see subject list below) and they break down as follows (approximately):

Undergraduate full time/part time		236
Postgraduate full time/part time		165
Professional/short courses	Dip or Cert	297
" "	Non-credit bearing CPD	60
" "	Credit bearing CPD	144
Open/distance learning (may overlap with other categories)		75

- Arts
- Accounting, economics and finance
- Allied health professions
- Applied sciences
- Business, MBA, management and marketing
- Computer science and creative technologies
- Construction and property
- Creative Industries
- Education and teaching
- Engineering design and mathematics
- Geography and environmental management
- Health and applied social sciences
- Law and legal practice
- Nursing and midwifery
- Planning and architecture
- Psychology
- Sports, animal and land

Section Seven: Dissemination

UWE and JISC web sites (see links above). Project members have attended programme events. Otherwise no dissemination activities to date. We'll be attending the Show and Tell event in January.

Section Eight: Risks, Issues and Challenges

Risks

Risk Description	Probability	Impact	Risk	Mitigating Actions
The present impossibility to record multiple occurrences of a course in the year in SITS will impact the ability to market different intakes on a course. It is presently not possible to define a publication of a course to run in the next year together with an intake in January of the present year or to market a course in two different locations. The amount of effort to solve this issue might be high. If not solved it may impact negatively	5	4	20	**Reduce** Analyse possible solution for multiple occurrences in SITS (eg data fixes, development) in order to propose a solution. Establish costs involved in implementing this solution. Liaise with project CPD review who also have a interest in a solution and weigh costs against benefits of solving the solution.

the way UWE presents itself to the prospective students.				
Key people leave, leading to time needed to get up to speed, delays in completion	4	3	12	**Reduce** New project manager identified along with contingency support- **PM in place from 22/6/12, business lead from 9/7/12.** Workstream leaders tasked with ensuring teams briefed on project requirements and deliverables. **Done. Status closed wef 10/8/12** **Reopened Nov 2012, with DB's departure**
CPD Review (another project in UWE, which reviews the current CPD recording and enquiry process) will result in using a repository for CPD information other than SITS (eg CRM), resulting in a significant proportion of "hard to find" course information being maintained in a system which does not go into the XCRI-CAP feed.	4	3	12	**Accept** Maintain links with CPD Review to monitor the likelihood of this outcome. Identify scale/volume/importance of CPD within total course data and project objectives, and review project scope and objectives in the light of this (Board meeting Sept 12).
The QMEF and course approval process is being revised by Rachel Cowie in 2012 (was summer, then autumn), which may impact on the processes for data collection and maintenance for courses held on SITS. The XCRI project had assumed this process was not going to be changed; impact is unclear.	4	2	8	**Accept** Monitor the changes; ask that AID be consulted before any changes are implemented to see what impact it brings. **Update 18/10:** the QMEF process is still under review; CL arranged to meet RC on 23/10 as it appears the impact on AID and M&C course info processes has not been looked at yet.
The focus of the business case is 'hard to find' courses. The amount of work necessary to be able to reach the benefit mentioned in the business case might be very high.	4	2	8	**Accept** Focus first on realising the data feed for UG and PG courses. Result will be a technical solution to realise the correct output for courses who are likely to be best equiped to reach the benefits for the project. Discuss what is meant by 'hard to find' courses and research options to add these to the data feed. Define business rules to correctly address those courses. **19/9/12** Project Board has accepted that there is sufficient range of courses on SITS, and sufficient courses of priority for UWE, so the scope will be just courses on SITS. Impact reduced from 5 to 2. Action from

				Reduce to Accept
Risk that expected relationships with users of the aggregated data will require further work from UWE to manage the relationships, or will still require manual intervention to produce the feeds currently provided, eg extra fields.	4	2	8	Keep of JISC activities to define relationships. Consider whether UWE wants to take on extra work, eg providing fields.
Fatigue from One University Administration (reorganisation to a central administration function) may impact appetite for further process change	2	2	4	**Reduce** Effective communications about what the project is required to achieve and the advantages for UWE and the OUA Programme Engagement with key stakeholders who see the benefits of consistency beyond the project outlined Readiness review in Stage 1 gathered feedback from appropriate stakeholders and took account of concerns Ensure there is suitable Project Manager and work stream leaders clearly identified to drive through stage 2 - **PM in place from 22/6/12, business lead TBC**
Scale and complexity of UWE courses means significant work to ensure consistency required which may require additional resource not factored into business case	2	2	4	**Reduce** Quality review and improvements underway, regular review of process and update provided on progress to monthly Board for consideration of need for investment
Front line staff are not fully briefed on courses content changes so unable to respond to prospective applicant queries	1	1	1	**Reduce** Ensure implementation plan delivers ongoing communications about the project and includes a sustainability stage to embed the changes Consistency will provide significant efficiency and help front life staff in engaging with course content

Issues:

Issue	Owner	Description	Action
Loss of business lead in AID	Jo Midgley	Loss of business lead in AID, potentially taking months to	Staff identified to take over this role; further discussions with their line

		replace. Risk of lack of suitable resources has escalated from a risk to an issue.	managers are to be held to discuss what resource is needed to deliver the project outputs

Section Nine: Collaboration and Support

It would be useful to discuss the following areas with other projects in the Course Data programme:

- SITS
- Aggregators developed by universities themselves

It would be helpful to have more information about the following areas:

- Results of any market research of possible aggregators in the HE/FE market. Is there a possibility that some universities will produce possible aggregators themselves, since they might have different specialities and markets around them?
- How likely will it be that possible aggregators will have specific and different requirements for the data feed. What will be the need of the different users (ie persona as defined in the 14/15 November sessions) of the feed?
- Licensing options: possible issues with the open government license.
- Vocabularies: vocabularies used in the data standards might not be standards yet. What is the path towards standardising vocabularies within the whole of the HE/FE market?

Section Ten: Financial Statement

Provided separately

Section Eleven: Next Steps

- The development of the data feed and refinement of the data mapping, including mapping the vocabulary and building in business rules where necessary to convert information to XCRI-cap field format and values.
- Development of the "to be" processes for information collection and maintenance
- An analysis of the suitability of all course data on SITS for use in the feed (ie gaps, amendments) and an action plan for data cleansing/revisions to address this
- A plan for future actions or project "phases" beyond March 2013.
- Project management activities: final report, lessons learned, project closure, etc.

Checklist:

Before you return this report:

- ■ Ensure that your project webpage on the JISC website is up to date and contains the correct information. Attach details of any required amendments to this report. Project webpages can be found from:
  http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning/coursedata/stage2projects.aspx

See Appendix 1 below for requested changes

- ■ If there have been any changes to the original project plan and/or work packages, ensure that amended copies of the relevant sections of your project plan are attached to this report.

Revised plan provided separately

Appendix 1: Project web page changes required:

1. Amend:

- A project is being funded within UWE from Nov 2011 to Dec 2012 to (review the provision, support and marketing of CPD, now termed professional and executive development - TBC).

To

- A project is being funded within UWE from Nov 2011 to Dec 2012 to review the provision, support and marketing of CPD, also called termed professional and executive development.

2. From Project Team, remove

David Bullen

Charles Beckett

Katie Jenkins

And add:

Peter Cooper: Systems Development Officer, Business Systems

peter.cooper@uwe.ac.uk