

myUWE Management Group
Notes of the meeting of 14 April 2008
Room 4D24, Frenchay Campus

Present: Barry Cawthorne (Chair), Kath Holden, George Coulsting, Sid Baldwin, Rich Egan, Chris Griffiths, Karen West, Ben Wynne, Terry Davies, Polly Smith, Emma Taylor (Notes).

1. Apologies

Kevin Foreman, Margaret Needles, Simon Ramsden, Becca Danes, Richard O'Doherty.

2. Minutes of last meeting 3 March 2008.

Approved.

3. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

3.1. Single sign-on

Sid reported that progress had been slow, but the intention was to go live on Tuesday 3rd June with single sign-on into myUWE, Blackboard, Webmail, LiveMail, Library catalogue, Outlook Web Access and Athens DA. There have been some problems with eLibrary and Metalib, but these systems were to be included in the next phase of work, and development will be concentrated on essential applications for the roll-out. Easy Proxy, which allows off-campus access to eLib resources without the use of Athens, will also be included in future development. Sid noted Barry's request to enable single sign-on into eLibrary by the start of the 2008-2009 academic year. Ben clarified that it was currently possible to access eLibrary via myUWE, but users would be challenged for a login. Ben noted that, if Easy Proxy and Athens DA were not available via single sign-on by the new academic year, the library would need to make a decision on the use of eLibrary and determine whether the existing means of accessing electronic resources would be kept running in parallel. Rich confirmed that an informed decision could be made on this by the end of July 2008.

4. Update on current programme of work

4.1. Academic Record channel extension

Sid confirmed that the extension to the Academic Record channel was now live, and circulated a screen-shot. Notification of credit and assessment marks went live to students on 1st April, replacing the old stand-alone web publication of results.

4.2. Online coursework submission

Sid advised that Online Coursework Submission was still in managed pilot mode, but all categories of late work have now been received. The intention is to go live in October 2008, following the completion of online registration. Barry noted that the system would be made available, but there were currently no university usage protocols in place and this had been raised with LTAC. It was agreed that a decision was required on appropriate use. Barry noted that the following general guides for the use of OCS were in place:

- Use for genuine distance learning courses.
- Use for part time courses on which the attendance day differs from the submission day.
- Use by academics who have expressed an interest in marking online.

Sid reported that there had been one problem mid-way through the collection of one work item, when data had disappeared, but investigation had revealed that

the problem had been caused by the faculty deleting the existing work item and creating a new one, thereby changing the unique identifier. The ISIS team are working to prevent a re-occurrence of this issue by implementing a read-only field. Changes have been made in the portal view, the stand-alone application for staff and the ISIS web service, but Rich noted there are some outstanding changes, which will be made live as soon as possible.

In answer to a query by Kath, Barry advised that MMG was not empowered to prohibit the use of other online submission systems, but advised that OCS was now the university's approved method for collecting work online. Rich noted that a meeting was being scheduled in ITS to close the pilot and enquired whether a similar opportunity should be taken to look at the policy framework and guidance. Chris noted that this should be placed in the context of the university's Business Process Review, which is looking at the submission of coursework. Barry echoed the view expressed at the previous meeting that there was a difference between reviewing existing processes and putting in place those that don't exist.

5. Update on progress with new work streams

5.1. Library portal and library record

Sid circulated a screen-shot of the library channel, which appears as a sub-tab on the Home tab. This has been piloted with two groups of 650 students, and will go live to all users during the at-risk period on the morning of Tuesday 15th April. The tab will show loans and holds and will include due dates, fines and renewal information. Fines on returned books are not currently shown. In answer to a query by Barry, Sid confirmed that the channel was read-only and that users would have to access their library account to manage their account and place holds. In answer to a query by Barry, Rich advised that single sign-on would be using Active Directory, so users would be encouraged to synchronise their passwords.

5.2. Photograph collection and updating

Sid noted that the project had grown significantly. The original remit was for myUWE to offer a facility for users to upload and maintain their UWE photograph, rather than sending in a photograph to be scanned. Discussion with Kate Best has since brought to light the need to validate photographs to allow the production of ID cards, so a proof of concept application has been written to allow uploaded photographs to be reviewed, cropped and re-sized. The requirement for approval has also led to investigation of a workflow process for Kate to approve photographs before they are placed in the master database. Margaret Needles has been heavily involved in the specification and facilitation exercise. The portal team were currently working with the Windows Development team to pass photographs to Sharepoint, where WinDev will put a workflow in place. Sid advised that the intention is to go live on 1st July to let students upload photographs, but they would still be required to complete a paper application form for their ID card. In answer to a query by Ben, Sid confirmed that this system could eventually be used for new staff. Rich suggested that this be included in the next requirements phase.

ACTION: Staff photograph collection to be included in the next requirements phase.

5.3. Student access to financial status in Agresso

Rich advised that Agresso Version 5.5 was due in May and this was still dependent on Finance.

5.4. Supplying photographs by additional groupings

Rich advised that this was dependent on the Business Systems Team and work to get information into MIIS was on Bryan Mitchell's project plan for the end of June 2008. Rich noted that this may enable announcements by other groupings.

5.5. Student status letters

Sid reported that Margaret was waiting to hear from the manager of the local NatWest bank, but three of Steven Gardiner's Council contacts had been very positive based on a description of a proof-of-concept for Council Tax letters. Margaret has therefore recommended that at least the Council Tax certificate be made available through myUWE, with the three local councils identified by Steven Gardiner as pilots. Chris advised that, on his return from Limerick, Patrick Nolan would be writing a paper on the possibility of access to Digity for tamper-proof duplication of certificates and Council Tax certificate letters.

6. Outcome of meeting on 10 April 2008 regarding the proposed event for the Federation relating to the Portal (and Blackboard)

Barry reported that he had met Alastair Osborn and Jonathan Simmons and had expressed concern that there did not appear to be a sense of urgency to arrange the event agreed at the Federation meeting on 7 February and there had not been the awareness-raising as had been done prior to the initial launch of myUWE both internally and at Hartpury. The Federation conference on 1st and 2nd May 2008 will cover registration among other things, but not the portal (even though registration is effected through the portal). Barry stressed the need for an event for Federation staff on Blackboard and the Portal before the date at the end of July which had been suggested, as Federation students will have had access to myUWE before that date and may have made changes to their ISIS record which won't be reflected in their local college record. Terry suggested that work may be done with particular programmes of students and, if a number of meetings were required with different colleges, a script may be used to ensure consistency. Barry expressed concern about the resource multiple meetings required and the Group took the view that it had done all it could and will await further contact in due course from the Federation Director.

7. Online registration 2008

A paper by Margaret Needles was circulated. Sid outlined the main points:

- Students not paying fees will be taken directly to 'ON' without having to calculate their fee payment.
- The scope of online registration will be extended to include all students, except Postgraduate research and referred, to EN only.
- A means has been found to accommodate Hartpury's request to exclude International students, however, Margaret has raised the concern that not all issues relating to online registration at Hartpury may have been identified, and any further issues arising may be too late to address. Margaret has therefore recommended that Hartpury not be included in online registration this year and requested the group's endorsement.

Chris confirmed that he shared Margaret's concern about as yet unidentified issues and noted that he was uncomfortable with the changes to the portal which are required to accommodate Hartpury, suggesting instead that Hartpury should be encouraged to fall in line with existing university processes. Rich noted that, even before Hartpury is considered, there is already an ambitious programme of work for online registration this year. Barry agreed with the concerns raised by Margaret and Chris and the Group agreed the recommendation that, if any other differences emerge from Hartpury that cannot be very easily accommodated, Hartpury must be excluded from online registration. In answer to a query by Polly, Chris confirmed that

Federation students would be included in online registration but if UWE was unable to collect their fees it would only be possible to take these students to EN.

Sid noted that another issue not addressed by Margaret's paper was the Addresses channel. There had been a request for a 'nag tag' to remind students to complete their term-time address at the point of registration in both the Registration and Addresses channels. However, Kinetics, the Accommodation Services system for institution-maintained accommodation, has a contractual requirement that address information must be corrected in Kinetics, not in ISIS, thereby introducing a requirement for addresses to be read-only. Sid noted that a lot of development work would be needed to identify a solution to manage addresses with this new requirement, and the nag tag work had now been pulled. Rich noted that the group should be aware that this would require the re-writing of the addresses channel.

8. To note that the next round of the consultation process takes place in w/b 5,12 or 19 May with the RPSG meeting on 28 May

Barry noted that this round of the consultation process would generate the next tranche of work to be taken to the MMG meeting of 9th June. In preparation, Barry asked Rich and Sid to prepare a brief statement by the end of April on progress with the work currently underway, an indication of the time taken to finish, and an indication of when the next tranche of work might sensibly start. Rich suggested that the group might consider re-prioritising work not already begun.

ACTION: Rich and Sid to produce a brief progress statement by the end of April 2008.

9. System and performance report

Sid circulated usage figures, which had been relatively low over the Easter break, but had now increased to up to 500 simultaneous users. Sid noted that data for 29th and 30th March was missing as myUWE had been disabled for a planned shutdown weekend, but there had been no other outages.

10. Date of remaining meeting for 2007-2008

9 June 2008 in room 4D24 and scheduled from 11:00-12:30.

11. Any other business

11.1. Attendance at conference

Sid advised that he and Margaret would be attending a JSIG conference in the USA at the end of April 2008.