Portal Project Board
Notes of the meeting of 25th February 2005, 4D24

Present: Steve West (Chair), Barry Cawthorne, Steve Grive, Rich Egan, Emma Taylor (notes).

1. Apologies
Warwick Jones, Steph Keeble.

2. Minutes of meeting 17th December
Approved.

3. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

Matters arising 4.3.
Steve West has contacted faculty staff and has identified funding to allow staff to be released if necessary. This funding will be made available at the discretion of the Head of School.

6.1. Requirements emerging from HSC and benchmarking of them in BBS
Steve West has held a meeting with HSC staff, and has raised awareness of the Portal project at Faculty Board, where interest was expressed. Rich Egan and Katie Huthnance have also met Student Ambassadors and Health and Social Care Students' Union Representatives. Steve requested that any issues of staff engagement be referred to him.

4. Updated Project Initiation Document
Rich Egan has circulated a revised Portal Project Initiation Document, incorporating and highlighting the changes requested at the meeting of 17th December 2004. The document was approved by the Board.

5. Resources
Rich informed the Board that the FIN10 for additional portal support had not been successful, and that alternative means of supporting expansion in 2005/06 are being explored. In answer to a query by Steve Grive, Rich confirmed that the current hardware is sufficient to support the portal pilot. Steve noted the need for an indication of the likely resource requirements for 2005/06.

Rich raised the issue of the online re-enrolment project, which will be using the same hardware as the portal, and require input from portal developers. Barry noted that, although it had been stressed that the portal and re-enrolment projects were separate, a degree of connection was inevitable and should be taken into consideration when identifying resource needs.

6. Current status of project

6.1. Timing and nature of the pilot in HSC
Barry sought advice from Steve West and Kevin Foreman on the appropriate format for the launch of the portal pilot to students within the School of Allied Health Professions. It was agreed that the portal should be an intuitive system, which could be introduced to students via live demonstrations rather than hands-on training. It was agreed that it would be valuable for programme leaders and academic staff to attend launch events to champion the portal. Steve confirmed that approximately five to seven hundred students would be participating in the pilot.
ACTION: HSC to give timetable for presentations for launch.

6.2. Specification of ongoing requirements

Barry and Rich have met to discuss the specification of requirements. Barry reported that the original plan to conduct meetings to specify the needs of HSC and to benchmark these with another faculty had been modified. Discussions have taken place with HSC staff, student reps and student ambassadors, and findings of the JISC report on portal requirements have also been incorporated. Additional consideration has been given to the results achievable by the planned launch in April. Workshops with CSA are pending, and further workshops will be held with staff and students after the pilot launch.

Rich was pleased to see the degree of alignment between the requirements identified in workshops with students, and the requirements identified by JISC. A requirement which arose from student meetings which hadn't previously been identified was access to contact information. Rich anticipated that, with the exception of telephone numbers, this information should not be difficult to provide.

Barry noted that, following discussion of the planned mark-checking facility with HSC and BBS, Margaret Needles had advised that changes should not be allowed until marks are locked, as the locking of marks will allow subsequent changes to marks to be tracked. As BBS do not lock marks until just before boards, Margaret had queried whether mark checking at this stage would be useful to BBS students. Barry stressed that he was keen that the portal not be seen to be driving changes in faculty procedures, and anticipated that, as experienced with the Blackboard rollout, a student push would drive changes.

Rich reported that a support web site is currently being built, incorporating a contact form. A feedback questionnaire will also be incorporated into the portal. Steve West confirmed that he would be happy to make funds available to provide an incentive for students to give feedback. Rich confirmed that the incorporation of a tick box in the feedback form would be necessary to conform with privacy legislation when collecting student details to allow the administration of an incentive.

ACTION: HSC to put funding aside to encourage student feedback.

6.3. Proof-of-concept of delivery through the portal to groups

Rich noted that delivery to groups was an addition to the original proof of concept. Microsoft Identity Integration Server (MIIS) is being used to deliver grouping information. In Leon Smith's absence, Scientia are being consulted for advice on transferring grouping information from Syllabus Plus in to MIIS. It was agreed that grouping was critical to allow the targeting of content to staff and students. Rich reported that the portal developers were currently awaiting a source of data for groups. Barry enquired whether the Board could help in this process, but Rich confirmed that he was applying pressure to get this information. Steve West wished to emphasise the importance of this.

ACTION: IT Services to prioritise the delivery of group information to the portal.

6.4. Pilot staff facing portal to allow access to lists of students and their photographs

Rich reported that a process is now in place for getting student photographs into ISIS, and from ISIS into the portal. Work is now being undertaken to improve the architecture and speed of delivery, but the provision of photosheets arranged by

timetabled groups is dependent on the availability of grouping information from Syllabus Plus.

6.5. Progress with the on-line re-enrolment project
Barry confirmed that the scope of the project was re-enrolment of existing 'clean' students who had passed all modules.

6.5.1. Report
Barry reported that proof of concept was now in place to take the student enrolment status to EN. Issue still outstanding are the design of pre-printed forms for award details, address and personal details, and determining what will constitute an acceptable signature. The next phase of the project in 2005/06 will involve finance and payment.

6.5.2. Proposal to co-opt Margaret Needles on to the Project Board
Barry proposed that, as the portal and online re-enrolment projects were closely linked, Margaret Needles should be co-opted on to the Portal Project Board. The Board agreed.
ACTIONS:
- **Steve West to inform Julie Lydon.**
- **Emma to issue a formal invitation to Margaret, and advise her of dates of future Project Board meetings.**

7. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 27th April 2005, 10.00am.
Room 4D24, Bolland Library, Frenchay Campus.

8. Any other business

8.1. Risk Register
Rich circulated the Risk Register from the Portal Initiation Document and drew the Board's attention to items with risk levels of 6 and 9. The Board agreed that issues 102 and 103 with a level of 9 remained an issue, but that there was no reason to raise the levels of risks 401, 404 and 701 from level 6 at this stage.

The Board agreed to keep a watching brief on Risk 202, which is currently at level 6.
ACTION: Risk register to be a substantive item on PPB agenda.