

Portal Management Group
Notes of the meeting of 15th May 2006, Room 5D6

Present: Barry Cawthorne (Chair), Rich Egan, Margaret Needles, Karen West, Sid Baldwin, Helen Cole, Jenny Wills, Sarah Mackie, Emma Taylor (Notes).

1. Apologies

Kevin Foreman, Mike Garnier, Debra Campbell.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 3rd April

Approved with one correction: Margaret was present at the meeting.

3. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

3.1. Faculty Liaison Post

Rich confirmed that Margaret had accepted the post of Project Manager, Faculty Liaison, and would be starting on 22nd May.

3.2. Testing of component systems

As testing of component systems (ISIS, Syllabus Plus and UWEonline) is not currently possible in the live Portal environment, Rich raised the need for a group of people with an understanding of the component systems to meet to establish whether live testing may be made possible.

ACTIONS:

- **Rich to arrange a meeting with members of the UWEonline, Portal, Timetabling and Business Systems teams.**
- **Karen and Helen to nominate members of their team to attend.**

3.3. Students registered in more than one faculty

Helen confirmed that she, Rich, Sid, Dave Spiller and Richard Norman had met to discuss this issue and had agreed the following:

- A user who belongs to more than one faculty, or studies modules in more than one faculty, will generally see timetables for all faculties aggregated in Syllabus Plus and therefore in the portal timetable tab. The exceptions are where the students study some of all of their modules at AMD or HSC. These faculties have their own separate databases.
- To accommodate the above, the ISIS feed to the portal will set flags for the faculty associations of each user, which the portal will use to determine which timetable to show. If the user is flagged in the portal as belonging to one or more faculties using the same database, they will receive their timetable from that database. If a user is flagged as belonging to a faculty combination which spans Syllabus Plus databases, they will be asked to choose which one they wish to access each time they access the portal timetable tab. This assumes all faculty timetables are appropriate for portal access (e.g. timetable in the appropriate manner).

Sid noted that HSC students would not currently be able to see their timetable within the portal, but that this solution would work for AMD students assuming they timetable in the appropriate manner.

In response to a query by Sarah, Barry confirmed that Joint Honours students on BBS modules would be able to access their marks via the portal when it is rolled out to all students in February 2007.

4. Rollout in 2006-2007: timescale of appointment of remaining posts

Rich reported that an additional vacancy had arisen as Rory Galvin (Application Developer) had resigned shortly after the previous meeting. There are now four portal vacancies:

- Systems Administrator.
- Senior Programmer/Analyst.
- Application Developer.
- A half-time Support post.

Rich confirmed that these posts would be advertised in the Evening Post on Wednesday 17th May. Interviews will be held in early June with a target start date of 1st August.

5. Demonstrations to faculties

Following a suggestion by the Portal Project Board, demonstrations of the portal will be given to faculty executives on 18th and 24th May. A demonstration will also be given to AMD staff at the Arnolfini.

6. Progress reports: channels

6.1. Online coursework submission

Rich noted that this had proved a disappointment as, of the group of 10 FAS postgraduates whose work item had been identified as suitable for online submission, one had withdrawn, six had handed in their coursework prior to the deadline, and none of the remaining three had logged in to the portal. Margaret suggested that a pilot of the system could be repeated with FAS, as there were coursework submissions early in the 2006/07 academic year. Sid expressed concern that this time was marked for preparing the portal for production, and asked that any submission tests be restricted to a specified set of dates to minimise the disruption of production work. Rich noted that Jane Harrington had expressed interest in involvement, but Sarah advised that BBS had few submissions of a suitable size for pilot in Term 1. Jenny suggested that, as HSC submitted all year round, she could look at July and August submission dates for suitable items. In response to a query by Sid, Jenny confirmed that the students submitting would already be in the pilot. Sid noted that online re-enrolment would also be piloted in July and August. Rich stressed that, as HSC have an existing e-submission system, tutors taking part in the pilot would need to be sensitive to the possible need to check submissions on both systems.

ACTION: Jenny to look at July and August submission dates for HSC students in the portal and pass this information to Margaret.

6.2. Academic record

Sid reported that the academic record application and channel have been written and are ready to go into the portal subject to the completion of the ISIS service and a sign-off of the wording. It was agreed to proceed with the first two elements of the record and to include results if possible. Helen confirmed that, if she and Margaret were uncertain whether or not to include results, they would consult the Group via e-mail. Sid noted that some additional work would be required if results were to be excluded from the channel, but confirmed that this would not be a major task.

ACTIONS:

- **Helen and Margaret to review the academic record wording ready for sign-off.**
- **Margaret to arrange a preliminary meeting with Helen and Sid.**

6.3. Online re-enrolment

Margaret reported that Finance would be submitting written requirements to WPM to enable a specification to be drawn up for the additional work required. In response to a query by Barry, Margaret confirmed that she had met with Steve Grive following the Portal Project Board meeting of 7th April to discuss the limitations of a single payment method for online re-enrolment. Margaret confirmed that, although the deadline would be tight, the project was on target.

7. Announcements channel

Helen confirmed that she had picked this up in Mike Garnier's absence. Bryan Mitchell has proved Mike's concept, and Helen is meeting Bryan, Sid and Rich to review the current position.

8. Access statistics

Rich circulated portal access statistics for April and noted that these were approximately two thirds of the accesses in March, despite the Easter closure. Sarah enquired whether it was possible to get an indication of the areas which users were accessing. Sid confirmed that, while it would be possible to determine the number of times a channel was started up, this wouldn't give any indication of whether/how the channel was being used. Feedback would give the best indication of which features portal users found useful.

9. Date of next meeting

26th June 2006, 11:00 – 12:15
Room 5D6, Bolland Library, Frenchay Campus.

10. Any other business

10.1. Technical liaison

Rich reported that he and Karen had discussed technical liaison between Timetabling and the Portal Developers. Sid suggested that this would be a suitable role for the Senior Analyst.