

EISA

Information Systems

SITS Implementation Project

Stage 2008.Q4 End Stage Report

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals. A signed copy should be placed in the project files.

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Distribution

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SITS Project Board		19 Dec 2008	1
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1 Introduction

This document summarises the progress to date of the SITS Implementation Project and incorporates an amalgamation of all the Highlights Reports issued to the Executive during the execution of stage. It provides the basis for the Project Board to formally approve the end of the 4th Quarter 2008 Stage and decide whether to authorise the 1st Quarter 2009 Stage.

The Project has progressed according to plan during the 4th Quarter 2008 Stage and it has been possible to engage in some preparatory activities for work to be conducted during the 1st Quarter 2009 Stage.

Overall progress to date from start of contract has been highly encouraging primarily due to the dedication and effort of the Project Team in embracing the PRINCE2 methodology while at the same time progressing the development of the project according to the initial schedule of work defined by Tribal. Additionally the professionalism and commitment of the Tribal Project Manager should also be acknowledged as a key factor in the progress of the project to date.

2 Current Stage Plan

To support standard management practice and facilitate management control quarterly Stages are being adopted for the SITS Project. Each stage will necessarily be multi-purpose in its objectives. The current stage is shorter than normal (2 months) in order that the remaining stages of the Project are synchronised with standard University reporting cycles.

Subject to some minor revisions the Project Board approved the PID and associated documents at its second meeting on the 13th of November 2008.

The 4th Quarter 2008 Stage has been completed successfully with progress in line with the agreed product development schedules. Specific product developments addressed during the stage were:

- Academic Structures
- Data Migration
- Business Process Review
- Management Information and Reporting
- Project Resource Planning

2.1 Academic Structures

Product Deliverable: Draft Academic Model Coding Structure (SPB3-6)

A first draft of the proposed new coding structure for all the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes EISA currently offers has been produced. The proposed codes have been mapped against current EISA codes and this document will be used for migration purposes further into the project.

In order for the new coding structure to be compatible with the infrastructure of the SITS system, each of the External Systems Programmes needed an admissions code (MCR), course code (CRS), programme code (PRG), route code (ROU), and pathway code (PWY). The current coding system uses just a qualification code and field of study code for each programme. Whilst creating the new coding

structure, a certain amount of research into the nature of our programmes was required. For instance, the need to determine how many programmes are designed as single honours, joint honours, and major/minor. As only 9 programmes are currently offered which are either joint or major/minor, it was considered more sensible to programme all degrees as single honours when implementing the SITS system. It was also necessary to determine which of the current programmes can be considered to be within the same grouping, i.e. programmes which share classification rules and ease of transfer, and reflect this in the course code (CRS). Further consideration was also given to programmes where there has been a significant change to the curriculum and/or classification rules so requiring a 'cohort' system to be run. These significant changes have been indicated as different versions of the same programme (for example -00, -01), and this has been reflected in the programme code (PRG).

The proposed new coding structure has been designed so that it is significantly more intuitive and user-friendly than the current system. Each code can be broken down into clear and easily understandable parts which will improve current working practices and aid the coding of new programmes in the future. The new coding structure will also significantly increase reporting possibilities in a variety of ways.

The next stage for the academic model element is the recoding at modular level which will have a greater effect on most of the stakeholders than the programme coding. Detailed consideration is being given to the impact of module recoding so that there is a consistent approach across all modules, both undergraduate and postgraduate, whilst minimising any conflict with internal coding structures within the lead colleges. Discussions and work in this area are currently ongoing.

Aside from the proposed coding structure, both at programme and modular level, additional research for the academic model element is being undertaken. Areas being worked on are the course block occurrences (CBKs) for each programme, the range of our academic year, the use of personnel and user data, exemptions/credits, levels of modules shared across programmes, and the bespoke developments required for both the CIS and the EMFSS undergraduate programmes.

2.2 Data Migration

Product Deliverable: N/A

The identification of data sources is well advanced and has so far revealed that, in addition to the principal repositories for registered students and applicants (EARS and Atlas respectively), a number of areas within EISA hold data that it would be beneficial to migrate to SITS. These include Enquires, Ceremonies, and Examiners and Diploma Production. While most functions that these areas currently fulfil will need to be maintained through SITS, only a limited amount of historical data that they keep will require migration.

Most areas analysed so far would not be seriously handicapped if their supplementary data was not migrated and their data provision was instead developed from scratch. However, all the data identified is held using Microsoft

Office tools and will therefore provide a good basis for the development of appropriate migratory paths.

Alumni hold all their data in an independent application but the intention is to retain this application and provide an interface between it and SITS as it provides functionality that SITS currently does not.

The cataloguing of EARS and Atlas data is ongoing. Atlas study programme data structures will clearly convert more easily to the SITS model than those in EARS (although the Atlas provision is incomplete so cannot be used as the sole repository of programme structure data). This is partly due to the relational design and associated normalisation of the Atlas database. The multiple use of certain fields in EARS has been noted both as part of this task and the Academic Structure Modelling exercise, and the new coding structure derived from the latter will help to ensure that the data mapping process will successfully overcome these design flaws in EARS.

It has been established that EARS holds data for approximately 235,000 students who have at some time been registered with the External System since the mid-1980s. EISA will need to migrate this data in addition to records of applicants on Atlas who have yet to register or whose applications or offers have expired. A decision on the migration of skeleton records of internal/federal students held on EARS for examination purposes only has yet to be made.

2.3 Business Process Review

Product Deliverable: Schedule for high-level Business Process Review

The product has been progressing according to the Stage Plan. There have been a number of streams within the work package that have been started during this period.

In the initial phase, work has been undertaken to define the scope and the objectives of the business process review. At the high level, the External System is seeking to optimise business process to enhance service quality and ensure value for money. This review will also provide a structured framework in which the low level business process reviews, which are a key element of the implementation of the individual SITS:Vision components, can be carried out. These objectives will be developed and clarified after discussions with the Director of Business Transformation.

As a pre-requisite to process review, the team has been identifying and collating documentation on current business process to ensure that we have a comprehensive set of procedures upon which the analysis of our processes can be undertaken. As a corollary to this activity, the team have also been reviewing and updating process maps in consultation with the appropriate process owners. This work is continuing and will also support the analysis phase.

After we have an agreed set of process maps, we will move into an evaluation stage. A pre-requisite to this task will be to define a set of service and IS quality criteria within which a systematic evaluation of process can be undertaken. We have identified an evidence base for strengths and weaknesses of current processes to assist in this definition. This evidence is being collected and will be

used to identify those processes which require significant service or IS quality enhancement.

2.4 Management Information and Reporting

Product Deliverable: N/A

A outline case for investigating additional reporting functionality has been produced and will be discussed in the first instance with the Senior User in January 2009.

The initial outline schedule for the procurement and development of additional reporting functionality has been started. The task list has been produced but timeframes have not yet been allocated. The associated implementation team have been provisionally identified

2.5 Project Resource Planning

A set of MS Access reports have been defined that automatically generate resource plans for the SITS Implementation Project. These are produced from an analysis of the MS Project Gantt Chart provided by Tribal. These plans provide a breakdown of resource principally by product, time and task. The format of these reports has been reviewed and agreed with the Tribal Project Manager as appropriate to verification and sign-off of project resource requirements. Completion of this activity is due by Christmas with sign-off in January 2009.

2.6 Resource Usage

Project resource usage to date is presented in the table 2.5-1.

	August		September		October		November		December	
	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Gary Preston	9	9	22	22	23	23	20	20	17	17
Michael Suggate	5	0	11	4	11	11	10	10	9	9
Jonathan Seddon	9	9	22	22	23	23	20	20	17	17
Sally Mealing	9	7	22	21	23	23	20	20	17	17
Theresa Byrne	9	9	22	22	23	23	20	20	17	17
Robert Moody	9	6	22	24	23	17	20	12	17	8
Totals	50	40	121	115	126	120	110	102	94	85

Total	Plan:	501 days
	Actual:	462 days
	Underspend:	39 days

Table 2.6-1 Project Resource Usage

3 Project Plan Outlook

The execution of this stage of the project has not impacted on the Project Plan or the associated schedule as approved by the Project Board at the meeting held on 13th November 2008. The Resource Plan has been reviewed and the associated resource reports (section 2.5) are with Tribal for sign-off. These reports will inform the final proposal for the SITS Budget recasting.

The development of a stock management solution was originally excluded from the project scope. The Project Board advised that this product should now be in project scope and consequently it awaits the result of a requirements assessment being conducted by the Operations Directorate and the EISA IS team. This review will advise on the best solution to the provision of stock management functionality. Options under consideration include an Agresso Module, a bespoke enhancement to the SITS learning materials module and a bespoke in-house development. Only when the report is complete will the precise scope of the work be clear. At this point the inclusion of the work will be subject to change control and the Project Plan will be updated accordingly.

The Tribal consultancy schedule for 2009 has been agreed with the Tribal project Manager.

4 Business Case Review

The execution of this stage of the project has not impacted on the Business Case as approved by the Project Board at the meeting held on 13th November 2008. The Business Case therefore remains valid.

5 Risk Status

The Risk Log was reviewed on Monday 15th December 2008. It was requested that the Risk Log modified comply with University standards. The Central Secretariat has reviewed the format of Risk log and decided that, subject to the formal views of the SITS Project Board, it will not be necessary to ‘transfer’ the data to the University’s risk register template.

A summary of risk status is given in Table 5-1 below. Full risk assessment is given in the Risk Log.

ID	Title and Summary	Prob.	Impact
1.1	Requirements Insufficiently Detailed and Inaccurate:	↓	
2.1	Misinterpretation of Requirements		
3.1	Misinterpretation of Scope	▼	
4.1	Over Optimistic Schedule	▼	
5.1	Tribal Resource Issues	▼	
5.2	EISA Resource Issues	▼	
6.1	Quality of Service	↓	
6.2	Project Management Experience		
6.3	Pre Deployment Software Quality		
6.4	SITS Usability		
6.5	Customisation Prioritisation		
6.6	Lead College Engagement		
6.7	ULCC Relationship		
6.8	New Business Requirements	↓	↓
6.9	Productivity		
6.10	Project Board Engagement		
6.11	Funding	▼	
6.12	Requirements Evolution	↓	↓
6.13	Data Migration		
6.14	Loss of Key Staff		
6.15	Link to the Portal		
6.16	Data Interchange with Agresso		
6.17	User Expectations and Acceptance		
6.18	Over Complexity		
6.19	HESA Returns		

Table 5-1 Risk Status

Key: Risk Movement: ▼ Is reducing or expected to reduce. ↓ Has reduced.
 Probability / Impact: ■ Low ■ Med ■ High

6 Issues Status

6.1 Issue 2 – HESA Returns

The External System has made a statistical return to HESA (contributing to HESA's aggregate return for students studying wholly overseas). This is not the full Student Record return but rather the Aggregate Overseas Record. The issue is whether in the future these returns need to be expanded to encompass the full Student Record return and, if so, what impact it will have on the SITS system build with respect to schedule and budgeting.

Following consultation with the Vice-Chancellor, The Dean of the External System and the Director of Business Transformation are investigating the possibility of applying to access the T stream of HEFCE funding for external system students who meet the standard HEFCE criteria. Much will depend on the business case. However, it is likely that a recommendation will be made for Tribal to undertake some development work on the HESA model to allow a more straightforward retro fit for the External System if a decision to seek such funding is made at a later date.

7 Quality Statistics

All product developments required of this stage are being developed to the required quality standards.

8 Project Manager's Report

The Project has progressed according to plan during the 4th Quarter 2008 Stage and it has been possible to engage in some preparatory activities for work to be conducted during the 1st Quarter 2009 Stage.

8.1 Progress

Overall progress to date from start of contract has been highly encouraging primarily due to the dedication and effort of the Project Team in embracing the PRINCE2 methodology while at the same time progressing the development of the project according to the initial schedule of work defined by Tribal

Specifically significant progress has been made on the Academic Structures product with the Data Migration and Business Process Review products proceeding well.

Discussions to gather requirements for the first set of the bespoke SITS software developments have taken place with Tribal. Initial indications are that the original effort estimates to complete the work are considered to be more than sufficient to purpose.

The quality and strength of the working relationship with Tribal continues to grow as does the quality of service expectation. This is in no small part due to the

professionalism and commitment of the Tribal Project Manager, Heidi Voulstaker and she should be credited for efforts in this respect.

8.2 Budget Status

The SITS budget is currently being recast by Craig O'Callaghan, Director of Business Transformation (SPB3-5). This will be informed by a detailed review of the project resource being conducted with Tribal.

8.3 Staffing

Sally Mealing's maternity leave will be covered by Tim Guha. Tim is currently engaged by the CPQ Directorate. Tim is an apposite replacement for Sally and is welcomed as a member of the team. It is expected that the project will benefit from a seamless transition when Sally begins her maternity leave in February 2009.

The project support officer vacancy has been filled and the successful candidate is expected to start on the project at the beginning of January.

8.4 Project Assurance

Project Assurance will be provided by an external consultancy of appropriate pedigree. An invitation to tender for this role has been issued to Provek Ltd, LogicaCMG, Fujitsu, Nixon-Brook and PTS. It is expected that the contract will be awarded during February 2009. A budget of about four days per month has been allocated to this activity for the duration of the project.

Hitherto semi-formal project assurance has been provided by means of weekly meetings between the Project Manager and PTS. This has been supplemented through review of project documentation including progress reports by the project Board. This arrangement will continue until a consultancy is appointed.

9 Lessons Learned

Lessons learned during the period are:

- Securing agreement on obtaining project resource must be done at the earliest opportunity. Difficulties associated with getting agreement at the appropriate level can be significant.
- While the use of email to confirm verbal agreements on actions or timescales may seem either unnecessary or inappropriate at times it is nevertheless an essential mechanism for ensuring the accountability and commitment of individuals in terms of responsibilities and timescales in respect of an agreed action or task.

10 Communication

The Global Networks and Communities (GNC) Directorate is undertaking the execution of the SITS Communication Plan as part of the implementation of a wider communications strategy for the Business Transformation Programme (BTP). Two communication groups are supporting GNC in this commission:

- **The BTP Staff Communications Group:** comprising senior EISA staff and advising on the requirements for and approach to the overall BTP communications strategy and implementation.
- **The BTP Staff Consultation Group** (name to be agreed): providing a two way channel of communication between core users and senior management within the context of the BTP

10.1 BTP Staff Communications Group

The second meeting of the Staff Communications Group took place on 26 November.

Actions arising from the meeting were that there would be demonstrations of the Portal, a demonstration by Tribal of the SITS system, and Director of Business Transformation would address EISA staff on a department by department basis about the BTP. The current proposal is for these events to take place in the second half of January 2009 so that staff are informed of recent developments and the momentum of communication is maintained.

Global Networks and Communities have produced a paper providing a summary of the status of the different strands of the BTP. Once this paper has been reviewed and agreed it will be posted on the London External Website.

GNC will be employing an additional member of staff to work on the implementation of the communications plans.

10.2 BTP Staff Consultation Group

The first meeting of the Staff Consultation Group took place on 21st November 2008. Membership of this group comprises staff nominated by acting heads of the Operational Services and Registry Directorates. The principal objectives of the group are likely to be to consider operational issues related to the SITS implementation, identify associated staff needs and make appropriate suggestions for consideration by the BTP Staff Communications Group. Furthermore the group would be expected to aid the informal cascade of information to the operational end users of the SITS system.

At the most recent BTP Staff Communications Group meeting on 26th November 2008 general questions raised by this group were discussed and considered to be extremely useful in understanding the general staff perspective and concerns in relation to the BTP.

Generally there has been positive feedback from members of the group with respect to its value and it is hoped that future meetings will continue to raise staff confidence in the SITS project and the BTP generally.