

Portal Project – Overview

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1. Portal project sub-projects

The Portal project is a holistic term to describe a list of related sub-projects or services. The full list of sub-projects (services) that comprise the Portal project are:

1.1. Identity and Access Management Service

The purpose of the Identity and Access Management Service is to create a central directory of all External System students and to control access to the majority of services and applications offered by the institution where authentication is required (for example, Moodle, Online Library, Webmail). The Identity and Access Management service underpins the whole of the Portal project and all services offered through the project are dependant on this service.

The core functionality of this service is:

- To create user entries in central directory (LDAP) based on values exported from EARS
- To create an email account for each user
- To manage access to applications based on values in LDAP (groups and/or attributes).
- To manage security and password settings
- To synchronise data between LDAP and EARS

1.2. Business Integration and Personalisation Service

The Business Integration and Personalisation Service is the main, visual element of the Portal project, and it is this service that people will see when they logon to the Portal. The purpose of this service is to:

- To provide a single access point to a variety of applications and information via a consistent and uniform interface and to adhere to the underlining business logic of these systems
- To provide Single Sign-On (SSO) to applications and information where authentication is required and to adhere to the existing security policies of these systems
- To present information to the user based on who they are and what they are allowed to see and do

- To allow users to change what is displayed based on their personal preferences

The Business Integration and Personalisation Service is dependant on:

- Identity and Access Management Service

1.3. Student Email Service

The Student Email Service is a web-based email service for all External System students. The purpose of this service is:

- To provide all External System students a designated University of London email account to establish a safe and reliable communications channel
- To give students a sense of 'identity' with the institution
- To conform with students expectations of 'minimum standards'

The Student Email Service is dependant on:

- Identity and Access Management Service
- Business Integration and Personalisation Service

1.4. Student Networking Service

The Student Networking Service is an online social networking service provided to all External System students. In time, this will replace the existing Student-to-Student network. The purpose of the Student Networking Service is:

- To provide an integrated, collaborative environment that promotes dynamic networks of colleagues, peers and subject experts
- The Profiles tool will allow users to find other students and staff based on such things as their programme of study, location, interests and areas of expertise.
- The Communities tool will allow groups of people to collaborate, exchange and share information with others who have similar interests, responsibilities or areas of expertise
- The Social Bookmarking tool (Dogear) allows users to save, organise and share bookmarks with others, and to discover bookmarks that have been shared by others with similar interests, responsibilities and areas of expertise.
- The Activities tool allows users to organise information, people and work, to manage projects, track workloads and exchange all related task information in a centralised location

The Student Networking Service is dependant on:

- Identity and Access Management Service
- Business Integration and Personalisation Service

The Student Networking Service is expected to be live in early 2009.

1.5. Profile and Security Management Service

The Profile and Security Management Service is the part of the Portal project that allows users to view key information that is held about them on the EARS database.

In some cases, it will be possible to edit this information (e.g. contact details) and this will update EARS accordingly. Additionally, the Profile and Security Management Service also allows users to change their passwords and security questions. The purpose of this service is:

- To provide a quick and efficient system for students to access key information held about them on the EARS database
- To give users the ability to update key information in EARS without the need to contact EISA
- To allow users to be able to change and recover their passwords without the need to contact EISA

The Profile and Security Management Service is dependant on:

- Identity and Access Management Service
- Business Integration and Personalisation Service

The Profile and Security Management Service is expected to be live in early 2009.

1.6. Web Content Management Service

The Web Content Management Service allows the creation and management of web content within the portal environment, either through embedded HTML content, or via the portal content management system. The web content can be targeted at certain groups of users, or made available as public content to all users: The main purpose of the Web Content Management Service is:

- To provide general web content to all users of the portal that falls outside the remit of the External System public website
- To provide targeted web content at groups of students based on such things as their study units or programmes of study

The Web Content Management Service is dependant on:

- Identity and Access Management Service
- Business Integration and Personalisation Service

2. Related projects outside of the Portal project

The following projects are related in scope, membership and management to the Portal project but currently are not part of this project. However, these other projects will regularly make contributions to, and use functionality from, the Portal project.

- External System Public Website
- Online Library
- Moodle and other Learning Technologies
- Hardware and Technical Infrastructure (EISA Network)
- Technical Helpdesk and Student Support