

ICT Forum – July 2010

BSP Update

Following regular consultation within the key functional areas of UAS and further discussion at meetings of the UAS Information Systems Board, a proposed development programme for 2010/11 was drawn up and subsequently approved by the Budget Sub Committee of PRAC, as part of the annual budget process.

The main priority developments agreed by the UAS Information Systems Board are:

- to progress the new HR systems programme, with final completion in 2011/12
- to complete the implementation of the new Development and Alumni Relations System and complete the rollout to early adopter colleges and departments;
- to assess options and deliver a recommendation for the replacement of the Oracle Student System;
- to assess options and deliver a business case for the upgrade or re-implementation of Oracle Financials to the next release;
- to continue with the planned replacement of Resolve, the University's research costing and approval tool, following sign off of the requirements phase.

An update on each of these priority investments is given below.

Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS) Programme

The HRIS business case was approved by Council in July 2009 and the HRIS Programme was launched in November 2009. Within the overall HRIS programme there are five major implementation projects (Recruitment, Personnel Administration, Budgeting and Forecasting, Training Administration, and Payroll) two of which are currently active. In July 2010, the prototype e-recruitment process and supporting technology will be piloted in selected departments. The central HR records functionality will be released in early 2011. Further information can be found at the HRIS website <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/hrisprogramme>.

Development and Alumni Relations System (DARS)

The first phase of the DARS project is now complete. A second phase was approved by Budget Sub-Committee (BSC) in November 2009, in accordance with the original phased approach agreed at the start of the project. This phase is delivering additional functionality that is essential to meeting the benefits stated in the original business case and is extending the rollout to more colleges and departments. The rollout to the initial early adopter colleges

and departments will complete in 2010/11. Further information can be found at the DARS website <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/dars>

Resolve Replacement

Resolve is the University's research costing, and pricing and approval tool used to calculate the Full Economic Costs (FEC) of a sponsored research project and then determine the price according to the requirements of each sponsor. The current in-house developed system no longer meets the University's requirements, and approval has been given to seek a replacement.

Earlier work identified that there is no suitable third party product available and so requirements gathering and functional specification work has progressed based on the assumption that a bespoke system will be built.

Cambridge University have participated in the current design phase work and their requirements have been incorporated. We have reached agreement with them to share some of the costs of the current work and we will shortly sign an agreement to work together on the next development phase, sharing the cost equally. Gartner Inc were engaged to advise on the scale and complexity of the system and to assess options for development approaches and technologies. The first stage of the development phase of the project was subsequently approved by the PRAC Budget Sub Committee in June.

Infrastructure Modernisation Programme

Following an initial review project earlier this year, the Budget Sub-Committee of PRAC authorised a comprehensive refresh of BSP's technical infrastructure covering servers, data management, networks, security and access, disaster recovery, and data centre management. The objective is to provide a level of availability in line with the expectations of users and flexibility to accommodate increasing demands. The intention is to introduce infrastructure that is more cost-efficient and resilient, less dependent on human intervention for recovery and easier to maintain, whilst minimising disruption to end users.

The first phase will deliver improved capacity, performance, and resilience for the IBM pSeries servers that underpin our enterprise level systems by July 2010. A second phase has now been approved which will deliver improvements in our virtual infrastructure, storage, and networks. This work is planned to complete by July 2011.

Student Systems

Following the decision by Oracle to withdraw support for their Student System in 2013, funding has been approved to progress with the initial work towards replacing OSS. By the end of the calendar year 2010, the programme team infrastructure will be in place and a procurement plan proposed.

As part of this work, the team will be working with colleges and departments on their priorities for development as part of the drive to ensure that common solutions are developed wherever possible, ensuring an integrated approach to student systems, utilising the possibilities of shared services that will bring benefits in terms of a common user experience whilst also reducing costs.

Finance Systems

During 2010/11 a proposal to upgrade Oracle Financials to the next version (R12) will be prepared. An upgrade would bring additional functionality and would ensure that the system remains fully supported by Oracle.

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1 July 2010