ICT Forum – June 2012
Business Services and Projects Report

The paper provides an update on the status of the UAS Systems Development Programme.

1. Priority investment areas

The main priority developments for 2011/12, as agreed by the UAS Information Systems Board, are:
- to progress the new HR systems programme, with final completion in 2012;
- to complete the implementation of the new Development and Alumni Relations System, complete rollout to early adopter colleges and departments, and rollout the system to further colleges and departments over a two year period;
- to progress the implementation the new student administration system, SITS, to replace the Oracle Student System by July 2013;
- to progress the re-implementation of the Oracle Financials system to next release, R12, with final completion by May 2013;
- to continue with the planned replacement of Resolve, the University's research costing and pricing tool, with final completion planned for July 2013.

An update on the main initiatives is given below.

2. Progress and status by area

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. This followed a comprehensive review of the HR information requirements and processes across the University.

Within the overall HRIS programme there are five major implementation projects (Recruitment, Personnel Administration, Budgeting and Forecasting, Training Administration, and Payroll). The e-recruitment functionality has been rolled out to almost departments. Following a second pilot, in December 2011 the Programme Board agreed to go live with the Personnel functionality. A phased rollout is now underway for all other departments and is on track to complete in July.

Work on the Payroll module is underway with parallel running scheduled for the main payroll for June and July and a final implementation date of September planned. Further details can be found at http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/hrisprogramme.

Development and Alumni Relations System (DARS)
The new fundraising database (Blackbaud Enterprise CRM) to support the new collaborative and cohesive process of development and alumni relations process is now in use in a growing number of colleges, departments, and overseas offices.

The focus of the programme is now on further rollout to more colleges and departments following approval for a two year programme of work, which started in September 2011. A repeatable end to end migration process has now been developed with a maximum 7.5 months of activity for each college migration. DARS is now in use in over 20 colleges, departments, and offices with six colleges currently in the process of migration.

Further information can be found at the DARS website http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/dars

Student Systems Replacement Programme

The Student Systems Programme is overseeing the replacement and improvement of our current range of IT-based systems used in support of the administration of applicants and students. There are three main components to the programme:

1. To prioritise the replacement of the functions of the University's existing core student records system, the Oracle Student System (OSS), by August 2013 when Oracle will stop providing support for it;
2. To work on better integration and data-sharing between the new student records system and other systems that are used in support of applicants and student administration, and to improve administrative processes;
3. To review those other systems to determine whether they are meeting requirements, and if they are not, to carry out development or replacement work where appropriate.

Further details may be found at: Student Systems website

Finance Systems

The current version of the Oracle Financials system will be out of support in late 2013. This means that any bugs or issues will no longer be fixed by Oracle. As these could occur in any area, GL, Grants, Purchasing, operating without this guaranteed support is a risk to the University it is unwilling to take. A business case was approved last year for the first stage of a re-implementation to the latest release, R12. This re-implementation also provides us with the opportunity to review the existing finance processes, improve key system processes and revisit and align customisations and interfaces.

The R12 project is the first phase of a programme, which focuses on implementing the new version of Oracle and putting in some new functionality. In order to avoid overloading departments, some changes will be deferred until a next phase of the programme, an example of this might be e-expenses.

Two Conference Room Pilots have been held with input from several departmental users, R12 project experts, Hitachi (the R12 delivery partner), Finance and BSP, aimed at validating a set of 'best practice' processes against the University's business needs. A third CRP cycle is planned to confirm that the final configuration design is fit-for-purpose for the University's business needs.

Implementation is scheduled for May 2013.

Further information can be found at http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/oxonly/financials/r12/

Resolve Replacement (X5 project)

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. The X5 Core Project is a collaborative project between Oxford, Cambridge, and Unit4 (a third party supplier of HE systems) which will build a new system designed to meet the needs to both Oxford and Cambridge. The resulting product will become the Unit4 FEC Module and become part of the Unit4 product set.

The majority of the system has now been developed and work is progressing on the last few areas, including interfaces with other systems. The team have thoroughly tested the costing functionality from end to end, including manually checking all the calculations in the new system. The developers are now busy dealing with any bugs and issues that were found.

Implementation at Oxford is planned to start later in 2012 for Early Adopters, with other departments going live in 2013. Project completion is planned for the end July 2013.

Department staff will become increasingly involved in the project over the course of 2012. Further details can be found at http://www.x5project.net/ .

Infrastructure Modernisation Programme

The programme has now completed and has delivered improved capacity, performance, and resilience for the IBM pSeries servers that underpin our enterprise level systems, and improvements to our virtual infrastructure, storage, and networks. The programme has thereby delivered an 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.

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