



Project Document Cover Sheet

Project Information			
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Project Title	ENABLE		
Start Date	10/2008	End Date	07/2012
Lead Institution	Staffordshire University		
Project Director	Professor Mark Stiles		
Project Manager & contact details	Fleur Corfield, f.m.corfield@staffs.ac.uk		
Partner Institutions	Stafford College, Newcastle Under Lyme College, Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology, Ashton Sixth Form College		
Project Web URL	http://projects.staffs.ac.uk/enable		
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Programme Manager	Sarah Knight		

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Document History		
Version	Date	Comments

Interim Reporting Template

Project Name: ENABLE, Staffordshire University

Report compiled by: Professor Mark Stiles

With contributions from: Sam Rowley

Reporting period: May 2010 – end of October 2010

Section One: Summary

The project is now in transition from its third phase "Pilot and Evaluation 1" and entering its fourth phase "Pilot and Evaluation 2". The work undertaken during the reporting period under Phase 3 included working with initiatives (including new initiatives that have arisen during Phase 2 and 3) to support the identification and resolution of issues raised and problems encountered.

The period being reported on has been a difficult one for the project due a number of factors (these are discussed in the project blog <http://jiscenable.blogspot.com/>), which can be summarised as:

- The loss of the Executive member who was the ENABLE sponsor (see the blog <http://jiscenable.blogspot.com/2010/07/take-me-to-your-leader.html>)
- "Organisational issues" arising from the process of selecting a new Vice-Chancellor
- The project manager leaving to go on maternity leave in late August (she will be return in early January).

All this has slowed progress in some ways (particularly as regards the work on a Programme Office, which is currently stalled) and produced a bit of a University-wide "hiatus" not helped by the Browne Report and the Comprehensive Spending Review! Nevertheless the core work of ENABLE has carried on, along with work on the current "spokes" and the current ENABLE "mini-project" on External Examiners.

However, on top of these various frustrations, there have been very encouraging signs that the "ENABLE messages" around the need to manage change and innovation, and the need to take an "Enterprise View" of information are rapidly growing in currency amongst senior managers across the institution and that a cultural shift may really have begun.

Section Two: Activities and Progress

The ENABLE goal of producing a "joined up" approach to change and sustaining innovation, along with an agile and effective approach to Curriculum Design and Development depends to a surprisingly great degree, on the ability of the project and its team members to "influence" strategy and policy makers, and promote appropriate changes in governance and decision making approaches. Despite the problems outlined in the introduction the team feel that at last, the constant dissemination of the "ENABLE Message" to senior managers and University committees and boards has started to succeed.

The work of ENABLE has been built into (and has greatly influenced) the new Technology Supported Learning Strategic Plan, which is now in full draft and will shortly go to committee members for initial comment prior to being discussed at the next Learning Teaching and Assessment Sub-Committee. The project director – who authors the TSL Plan - also has a forthcoming meeting with the Finance Director, Director of Information Services and one of the Deans to discuss the relationship between the TSL Plan and the University's "emerging" Information Strategy. The TSL Plan, as well as including much of ENABLE's CDD direction, exposes many of the larger issues identified by the project by including them in the Risk Register of the plan, thus providing yet another "permanent reminder" of badly needed organisational changes.

The University is in the process of producing a new Information Strategy. An initial draft, produced earlier in the year by Information Services, went to various IS governance boards for comment,

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discussion and report back to the Information Strategy Group (the main IS governance body). The discussion at these boards revealed again that the "ENABLE message" that we need to have a corporate view of our information and how it can be used to enable the university to meet its plans seemed to have "taken hold" amongst increasing numbers of senior staff. The view fed back from these discussions was that the Strategy was not yet a "University" strategy and lacked the "big picture". The ENABLE project director is now part of a group that will redraft the Information Strategy to ensure it is indeed a "University" strategy and reflects the needs of all stakeholders. (This was agreed following a full meeting of ISG to discuss the strategy).

Changes in the Executive gave the project an invaluable opportunity to get the message across to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The Project Director used the EQAL developments at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) as an example of how other Universities were tackling the issues identified by Enable, and also pointed out that University's currently piecemeal handling of course related information constituted an almost insurmountable barrier to good provision of information to learners via mobile devices (a concept dear to some Executive members' hearts). As a result of this, the team were asked to write the "Managing Information" short paper discussed below. Following this, Professor Mark Stubbs from MMU visited us and met with the Director of Academic Development to talk about EQAL. Professor Stubbs' visit was well received and the familiarity of the problems experienced by MMU was striking. MMU have identified the need for Enterprise Architecture input into developments to cope with the large scale and strategic/change nature of them. The opportunity to get an independent view on our situation and some insight into how others are tackling the same issues was invaluable. (Mark Stubbs commented on the striking synergy between the Staffordshire situation as described in the "Managing Information" paper and that at MMU, and took a copy of the paper for repurposing...)

The interest in mobile technologies and the barriers presented by the management of CRI has also provided the "Bradford" and "Mobile Survey" opportunities described later

The Managing Information Paper

We were asked by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to write up a summary of the problems identified by Enable and suggest ways forward. The paper, "Managing Information – a challenge to meeting University plans", draws heavily on the approach in the book "Enterprise Architecture as Strategy". This approach includes the Programme Office and Enterprise Architecture elements already identified by Enable as missing from the current Staffs environment but it introduces other elements to ensure a shared strategic direction and the all-important "joined-upness".

The concept of an operating model is introduced which defines the strategic flavour of the organisation. The operating model is chosen from the four models defined, which capture the attitude of the organisation - e.g., whether customer experience and innovation are key or whether standardisation is more important. The operating model acts as a background against which the fit and direction of changes can be gauged.

The approach also introduces the IT engagement model which ensures that the Enterprise view is carried through to all developments, ensuring that projects meet University-wide as well as local objectives. The IT engagement model has 3 main ingredients

- IT governance
- project management
- linking mechanisms, e.g. Programme Office

The emphasis on IT in the wording, e.g. the IT engagement model, is not particularly helpful as the approach is about taking an enterprise and strategic view of every change in the University, not just those involving IT. It might be better referred to as simply the Engagement Approach.

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The book comes recommended by members of the JISC FSD Strategic Technologies Group and the metrics outlined in the book for assessing the case for change presented a compelling case when we used them. Our use of the book was another attempt to present an independent view of our current state, as we suspected messages from the Enable project were being discounted. A number of senior managers now have the paper and so the message is spreading (It has not been formally circulated, being written for the DVC originally, but has become almost a “subversive document” or “revolutionary text!”). We will produce a sanitized summary of the approach as an output from the project and also a more “politically worded” version for wider circulation within the University.

Development has continued on the external examiner “mini-project” looking at streamlining business processes through data sharing, document management and process automation. This will reduce duplication of effort in managing local collections of data and documents and speed up processes by removing some manual notification steps. We have developed domain model classes and database mappings based on the XCRI CAP 1.1 spec. Using the Hibernate persistence framework, this allows us to work with domain objects in our Java code and let Hibernate take care of generating all the SQL statements to save and load objects from the database. Using frameworks like Hibernate is analogous to using power tools. With some initial investment up front, the framework does a lot of the work and allows you to develop much more quickly on top of it. As always, this type of approach is essential for a micro development team like ours. We will release the persistence code as a project output as it may be a useful example of Hibernate/Java Persistence mapping or the XCRI-based domain model may be of use. This work has exposed wider governance issues and given rise to an opportunity described later.

Development of the enterprise architecture model covering the curriculum design domain continues. This will be used to plan further developments after the external examiner mini-project is finished. The intention is to use this to demonstrate the value of EA models in helping to define, plan and guide developments in the hope that this approach can be adopted more widely across the University.

We are conscious of the need to get understanding and use of EA models more widespread in the University. The Archimate modelling language used in the EA models has proved accessible to stakeholders so we are trying to use every opportunity possible to help improve communication and understanding with EA models. This is only half of the story though. We also need to ensure modelling skills are more widespread across the University to address the current risk of too much capability being resident in too few members of staff. EA models need to become a common language understood across the University by all types of stakeholders to allow them to provide the ‘big picture’ context for developments.

A newer ENABLE “Spoke initiative” is progressing well. The TransAPEL project, funded by the University’s Sales and Student Recruitment, is designed to produce a “demand focussed” approach to APEL that does away for the need for the completion of APEL portfolios. The project is strongly linked to ENABLE as the ENABLE director and technical manager are heavily involved. The project is truly stakeholder focused, actively involves Quality and Faculty staff and is engaged with employers. The project is using the same development approach and tools as the ENABLE external Examiners mini-project. TransAPEL is focused on the “black box” of carrying out the APEL process itself but is cognisant of its links to the business and CDD processes and governance that surround APEL. This awareness has resulted in ENABLE discussing TransAPEL with those engaged in the University’s large CRM project to ensure proper connection (e.g. around details of candidates and employers contacts and managers) and has also resulted in a successful proposal to JISC by the University of Plymouth’s Pineapple team to carry out “benefits realisation” work around APEL at Staffordshire. This work will address the business processes surrounding Staffordshire’s approach to APEL and links to other aspects of CRI and CDD. Neil Witt will be visiting Staffordshire in November to meet all members of the TransAPEL (and ENABLE) team plus others engaged in traditional APEL at the University.

As part of ENABLE’s Phase 3, the project manager (and subsequently the project director) have completed a series of in-depth interviews with all “Spoke” initiatives and discussed progress/outcomes/expectations (as appropriate depending on the state of the initiative – some have

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finished, some are in mid-stream, and others are new). The outcomes of these meetings have been fed back into ENABLE and issues raised with other parts of the University as required. In addition, contact with the partner colleges has been maintained and the project director has a forthcoming meeting the University's Partnership staff to discuss issues (largely around CDD processes) raised by partners in their October updates.

Section Three: Risks, Issues and Opportunities

Risk: Loss of key personnel

The project manager took maternity leave in July. The project director and technical manager are performing the project manager duties whilst the project manager is away but obviously not to the same extent, e.g. more infrequent blog posts, contact with partners, etc. The project has also drawn on other members of the Learning Development and Innovation team who are not formally part of ENABLE. The project manager will be back in action at the start of January.

Risk: Senior Management: Unengaged

Changes in the Executive and the recent appointment of the next VC who is due in post in mid-2011 has resulted in the ENABLE SMWG being poorly attended. This has resulted in confusion for some about the nature and aims of ENABLE which has hindered our attempts to get our message across. We are being successful in mitigating this risk by identifying opportunities to talk face to face with senior managers to get them engaged with the ENABLE concept even if they don't engage with the ENABLE project meetings. It has now been agreed that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor will chair subsequent ENABLE SMWG meetings which, given previous experience, will greatly improve attendance!

Risk: Loss of Senior Management Staff/ restructure of services/ faculties

The project sponsor left the University and the newly appointed VC is an external appointment so major strategic decisions are effectively on-hold until mid-2011. We will be using this hiatus period to continue seeding our ideas with senior management in the hope of getting a head start when normal service is resumed. The work of embedding ENABLE and its message in on-going changes to governance/decision-making and the various strategies is a key part of this.

Issues:

A new issue encountered in the external examiner development work was opposition to the Enterprise view of requirements. Whilst most of the faculties are happy with the external examiner system being based on around a standalone database in its initial incarnation, one faculty wanted the data in the student records system so they could report on it in the same way as student data. The problem with that approach was that it did not fit with the way the other faculties or the central quality improvement service operates. However the Faculty had independently approached the Information Services team who manage student records with a view to progressing their wishes. We held a meeting with relevant stakeholders to identify the best way forward and it was decided that we would continue with the original concept of a standalone database with the potential for future integration. We would also work closely with the objecting faculty to ensure their requirements were included. It remains to be seen what the response of the faculty will be.

There has been valuable learning and indeed an "opportunity" (see below) from this episode. It has yet again drawn senior staff attention to the problems that "local" practices and variations in process can cause in the absence of a shared "big picture" of information. It has also raised issues around governance and decision making processes, as the University came perilously close to have two parallel, overlapping initiatives...

The "hiatus" has led to a stalling of progress towards a University-level Programme Office, but the issue above (and others) have reinforced the need for one in the minds of many senior staff and have also given rise to the "Change Heap" initiative/opportunity described below.

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Opportunities:

As a result of attending JIF2010, the project director was approached by Professor Peter Hartley from the University of Bradford who was interested in ENABLE in the context of their "Mobile" initiative to provide information to learners on mobile devices. They had identified problems in providing the information it was felt learners really wanted – not because of technology, but because of the way CRI was managed. It has been agreed to carry out a knowledge sharing exercise and visits to share Staffordshire's ENABLE work and Bradford's mobile technology experiences.

This proved very timely – at a meeting with the Deputy VC, the ENABLE project manager was asked "We've seen Bradford have a big mobile initiative – could we do something like that?" The answer: "Well we could set the technologies up but we couldn't feed much to them" reinforced the ENABLE message and has increased engagement. This was further reinforced by the visit by Professor Stubbs, who said that MMU had bought the same mobile technology system as Bradford and had also found the same problem!

Alongside this, Staffordshire, Plymouth, Manchester Metropolitan and Bradford University are all carrying out a survey on learners uses and wants around mobile devices. Each University has some "local" questions of its own, but there is a substantive shared core of questions, which the four universities will share the results from and publish as a common report. Given that this will almost certainly prove that the information learners want is information the universities would struggle to provide (and will be of great interest nationally), it should greatly reinforce the ENABLE message at Staffordshire. The activity has received enthusiastic support from the Dean of Students and her team, and the Staffordshire Students Union is assisting in promoting it.

The "External Examiner" issue that arose above, coupled with frustration at the slow progress around a Programme Office, result in the project director having a "cunning plan":

This issue, plus comments made widely during ENABLE interviews, wider planning meetings etc focused on one single problem – "How can I know if someone else is doing this?/Is anyone doing anything about this?". The project director has come up with the idea of "The Change Heap" this will be designed to enable exactly these questions to be answered in a simple and quick way. It is designed to allow someone to use a simple web form to enter search terms like "External Examiner" and get back answers like:

"LDI and QIS have a project on managing External Examiner information" Contact: Sam Rowley

This "Web 2.0ish" concept (designed to capture the source information in simple and easy ways) has received support from the Dean of Students, Head of Academic Development, Business Re-Engineering Manager and the Director of Information Services – the idea will be rapidly developed and prototyped capturing information from these sources and committees and groups they chair. The idea seems to be an original one – a crude measure of that is that Scott Wilson of JISC-CETIS had not come across the notion.

As a result of all of this activity, senior staff have suggested that an appropriate version of the "Managing Information" paper, and the work of ENABLE should be presented to the University Business Development Group and Information Strategy Group. If this happens (particularly to the BDG) it will present the ENABLE message to key senior staff that have not yet really engaged and could form part of a "great leap forward".

Section Four: Outputs and Deliverables

The project outputs and deliverables have not changed since the project plan. The project blog continues to be updated (<http://jiscenable.blogspot.com>) and stakeholder feedback has been summarised and published on our website, <http://projects.staffs.ac.uk/enable>. Write-ups from the evaluation of Phase 3 will appear once the project manager returns (all the required information is in place to enable this)

We will be making the following outputs available via links in the Design Studio:

- a summary report based on our “Managing Information” paper
- XCRI-based domain model and Java Persistence mapping code.
- An evaluative report and code for “The Change Heap”

As agreed in the telephone conference with the support team, the ENABLE team will get in touch with Helen Beetham in February, once the project manager is back from maternity leave, to take forward our use of and contribution to the Design Studio.

Another output agreed with the support team was to develop an output around the college partnership i.e. a generalised curriculum design workflow especially around the relationship with WBL/employer engagement. This will also be progressed upon the return of the project manager.

Section Five: Evaluation

The project manager (and subsequently the project director in her absence) has carried out in-depth interviews with all Spoke initiatives focusing on outcomes and expectations. Information from these has been fed back into activity and to relevant stakeholders, but write-ups of these will not be complete until the project manager returns. The engagements with the partner colleges are being handled similarly.

The external examiner mini-project and the TransAPEL spoke (with the Pineapple involvement) are being recorded and formatively evaluated as is all ENABLE activity. This area is in hiatus in terms of reporting until the project manager returns.

The project director is collecting and collating high level “influence” and “cultural change” “occurrences” and evidence. This evidence is largely “phenomenological”, but when viewed against governance and decision-making process will probably prove to be very revealing.

Section Six: Outcomes and Lessons Learned

On top of what has already been said above, two things are probably worthy of mention:

The hiatuses caused by the departure of the Project Sponsor (which also left the Project Director without line management for some months) and the disruptive impact of selecting and awaiting the arrival of a new VC have brought home the fragility for “senior management engagement”. The coping mechanism the project has employed – which has, as can be seen, been successful in circumstances – has depended on two things that are not necessarily in the “toolkit” of all projects:

- Firstly the seniority and standing of the project director in the University – because the project director is a member of senior governance structures and committees, the “ENABLE message” has been thrust home at every opportunity, and other senior staff (who may not turn up to Project meetings at such times) have remained readily accessible for informal communication and one-to-one meetings. The fact that the project director is himself responsible for the University TSL plan has also ensured doors remained open.
- Secondly, the project technical manager and project manager are well respected across the University, which has also provided opportunities “peripheral” to the project. For example, the

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technical manager is frequently invited to meetings/visits to software suppliers as part of procurement (e.g. when the CRM software was chosen) because of his recognised expertise in things like EA and SOA – this helps the message to be kept in view.

The importance of constantly aligning the goals of projects like ENABLE with organisational plans, strategies and policies (which will change over the life of such a project) - this is very challenging and depends on things like influencing skills as much as governance and empowerment.

Section Seven: Communication and Dissemination Activities

During development of the EA models and the external examiner process improvements, our approach to stakeholder engagement has been to work with a member of our Quality Improvement Service (QIS) as a core member of the development team and to consult with faculty quality administrators and other relevant staff on a regular basis. In these meetings we have asked stakeholders to identify what works well in current processes rather than just to identify problems. We've not gone entirely down the appreciative enquiry route but we have tried to recognise and build on good practice whilst identifying possible improvements. This approach has worked well with the vast majority of stakeholders (see the problems section for the exception) but it has been time-consuming and introduced delays to the project in August and September when faculty staff availability was poor.

Our approach to Senior Management engagement has been to seize any opportunity to meet with senior managers or attend committees and groups to inject our message. (This has proved key in the circumstances – and the constant 'drip-feed' is taking effect as discussed above)

Project progress and updates have been posted to the project blog – the project director has maintained this practice whilst the project manager has been on maternity leave (and has started to enjoy doing it)

We continue to attend the JISC Flexible Service Delivery Strategic Technologies Group and Enterprise Architecture Practice Group. The ENABLE Technical Manager is contributing to the JISC "Just enough TOGAF" guidance.

The project hosted a workshop (with sponsorship from JISCInfoNet) on [Sustaining Innovation via Organisational Development](#) with speakers from other CDD projects and other national and international speakers. The Project Directors talk on [Do institutional decision-making processes block innovation?](#) Is available on-line.

The project manager (bravely given her pregnant state) presented a peer-reviewed paper on the work of the ENABLE project at EISTA 2010 in Orlando in July.

The Technical Manager was also interviewed by Dumebi Oderinde from the University of Bolton who is a PhD Researcher with a focus on developing a case for enterprise architecture.

The project director disseminated the work of ENABLE at JIF 2010 – which has resulted in collaboration with Bradford University.

The project was represented at the programme meetings in May and October and disseminated either formally or informally at both. The project director found the October meeting particularly rewarding.

The Technical Manager will be presenting at the Integrating and Subverting Corporate Systems for Educational Purposes session at the CETIS conference.

Section Eight: Collaboration and Support

The project manager and technical manager had a telephone conference with the support team in July.

Professor Mark Stubbs visited the University to share information about the MMU EQAL programme (see above)

There are ongoing collaborations with Bradford, MMU, and Plymouth universities

We have continued the Cluster meetings, which have been extremely valuable. The opportunity to learn more about other projects and approaches is essential, as is the ability to have the wider experience of other project members focussed on your project.

Through the JISC FSD groups we have developed an informal support network with other Enterprise Architects who are pioneering the approach in UK HE.

Section Nine: Financial Statement

Total Grant	£400,000	Duration of project	Sept 2008 – May 2012
Reporting Period	22nd April 2010 – 22nd October 2010		

Budget Headings	Total budget allocated	Expenditure this reporting period	Total expenditure to date	Further information
Staff	£273,396	£43,938	£176,760	One staff member started Oct 08 and a second Dec 08 (as per bid/plan). Administrative Assistant took up post Nov 09
Payments to College Coordinators	£75,000	£14,000	£34,000	Colleges were not engaged in the project until Jan 09 – we have shifted their involvement by 4 months. One partner (Burton College) has been dropped due to inactivity (no payments were made to them) and we plan to use of the funding allocated to them with the other partners.
PHOEBE Consultancy	£5,000	0	0	PHOEBE involvement put forwards and being reviewed. It is possible this involvement will now not happen – may need to discuss
Other University Staff (including Senior Staff) Participating in project as per bid/plan	£20,603	£4,000	£13,500	
Travel & Subsistence	£9,000	£3,537	£5,993	Some not shown as not appeared on financial statements yet
Dissemination and related activities including cluster activity	£17,000	£3,442	£10,999	Some not shown as not appeared on financial statements yet

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Checklist:

Before you return this report:

- Ensure that your project webpage on the JISC site is up to date and contains the correct information. Attach details of any required amendments to this report. Project webpages can be found from: www.jisc.ac.uk/curriculumdesign
- If there have been any changes to the original project plan and/or work packages, ensure that amended copies of the relevant sections of your project plan are attached to this report.
- Identify and name any areas within this report that you'd like removed before the report is made public (*see below)

***Please note** the interim reports will be made available on the JISC website and on the Circle site with the budgetary information removed. We recognise that projects may occasionally address very sensitive issues. We would like you to present as full a picture in this report as you can as the lessons you learn are valuable to us. We assure you that any issues you identify as confidential are removed before the report is made public. Where such issues do represent valuable lessons for the community we will involve you in further discussion as to how they could be passed on without identifying institutions or individuals.