



Project Document Cover Sheet

Project Information			
Project Acronym	T-SPARC		
Project Title	Technology-Supported Processes for Agile and Responsive Curricula		
Start Date	October 2008	End Date	June 2012
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Partner Institutions			
Project Web URL	http://blogs.test.bcu.ac.uk/tsparc/		
Programme Name (and number)	<i>Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design (05/08)</i>		
Programme Manager	Sarah Knight		

Document Name			
Document Title	Interim Report		
Reporting Period	May 2010 – October 2010		
Author(s) & project role	Paul Bartholomew – Project Manager Rebecca Freeman – Project Researcher Oliver Jenkins – Project Support Officer Hannah Newland – Project Support Officer		
Date	29 th October 2010	Filename	
URL			
Access	<input type="checkbox"/> Project and JISC internal		<input type="checkbox"/> General dissemination

Document History		
Version	Date	Comments
1.1	1st November	Project Manager's Final Copy

Interim Reporting Template

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

Project Name: T-SPARC Project at Birmingham City University

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Reporting period: May 2010 – October 2010

Section One: Summary

The project remains on target, with little deviation from plans outlined in previous documents. Progress has been made in relation to:

- Wider consultation with stakeholders, four stakeholder consultation events with academic staff have taken place in this reporting period.
- Ratification by the University's Senate of new technology-supported processes for programme approval (and as a consequence, design).
- Business process mapping of our review and approval procedures. This continues to inform the development of proposals for new processes, and to develop product specifications for the proposed SharePoint architecture.
- Identification of staff development needs. The Project Manager now has responsibility for academic staff development at Birmingham City University and is in a position to articulate the Master's level provision and ad-hoc workshops offered by the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching with the emergent curriculum design development needs made apparent through the work of the T-SPARC team. Additionally, our stakeholder engagement model is informing the way we are engaging with our own stakeholders in relation to the curriculum (re)design of our own provision.

Section Two: Activities and Progress

Following on from the document we offered for the last reporting period we offer a summary of our progress with reference to the phasing of the project as laid out in section 3.3 of our Project Initiation Document:

In relation to *'Review of current processes and practice'*:

A presentation to the University's Learning and Teaching Committee took place on 18th May 2010, following on from the presentation, invitations to present to a variety of other stakeholders have been forthcoming for the Project Manager to present to Faculty Learning and Teaching Committees and to the External Examiners of one faculty (Health).

The project team anticipated the need to run six stakeholder consultation events during May and early June, staff were asked to register for the events via a Doodle poll and 50 members of staff representing all six faculties signed up to attend the events. Once the poll was closed it emerged that only four events would be needed to accommodate all of the participants.

The events were held on:

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

- Friday 14th May 2010
- Monday 24th May 2010
- Wednesday 2nd June 2010
- Thursday 3rd June 2010

As mentioned in the previous report, two comprehensive business process maps of our institutional approval and review mechanisms have been developed. As envisaged during the previous reporting period, these process maps were used at the events as artefacts to catalyse discussion, comment and stakeholder review. The events consisted of 3 activities:

1. Annotation of business process maps titled '*Filling in the gaps*'

The participants were split into smaller groups to work on this first activity. A number of large (size A0) process map posters were produced and participants encouraged to annotate the documents and to comment on their interpretation of the lived experience of curriculum design. Participants were encouraged to consider additional (local) loops that happen in their faculties / schools.

2. Annotation of business process maps titled '*Critiquing the processes*'

In the same smaller groups the participants were asked to discuss with their peers, '*Which aspects of the processes are problematical for you?*' '*What things do you find cumbersome, unnecessary or inefficient?*' Participants were given clean copies of the process maps and again asked to highlight and annotate these sheets.

3. Questionnaire, discussion and peer video interviews titled '*Re-imagining programme design, review and approval*'

This final phase of consultation comprised three stages, firstly participants were asked to complete a series of analogue scale questions rating their opinion on a number of topics. They were then asked to use *Flip* video cameras to record each other in turn, and run through their answers giving a brief rationale as to why they positioned themselves on each of the scales. They were then asked to think about how they would '*like things to be*' and encouraged to identify ten keywords (or phrases) to describe how curriculum design and approval '*should be*' and to list these.

In relation to '*Understanding the issues and identifying the changes desired by the end of the project*':

As described above, since the last report four stakeholder consultation events have taken place. The data collected through these events has been used to inform the institutional decisions taken in relation to the development of new approval mechanisms. Details as to how this data was collated and used is given below:

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

We had two distinct requirements of the data we collected:

1. We needed to use the data to inform the institutional decisions relating to programme approval.
2. We needed to produce a set of shareable artefacts that would allow us to feed back effectively to participants (and staff more widely across the University) in a way that demonstrated that their input had truly informed the institutional choices made.

Consequently, we used the data we collected in the following way:

- The process maps were usable as artefacts in their own right. Photographs were taken of recurrent themes and these photographs have been used to represent stakeholder views and linked into a *Wimba Create* document as multimedia evidence (see below for further information on the *Wimba Create* document).
- The analogue scale questionnaire responses were approximated and turned into a figure between 1 and 10 to represent the response. These were then plotted into a series of graphs and as the participants were asked to identify their faculty on the questionnaire; it was then possible to break this down into responses by faculty, and an overall average response to each of the questions, and relative comparisons to be drawn comparing faculty responses to the university average. These graphs are therefore a representation of how stakeholders perceive the current University processes as enacted within their own faculty. Differences in perception between participants across faculties were not too disparate but we do have some evidence that may indicate that two of the six faculties are more satisfied with current (pre-T-SPARC) processes than the others. This may indicate a need to offer a greater degree of support for these faculties as we move forward with the project.
- The responses from the 'ten keyword' exercise were collated and some thematic analysis was applied to the data. General topics were identified and these were used as headings for a series of 'bins' that each keyword (or phrase) was then allocated into. Once all the keywords had been placed into an appropriate 'bin' the data was then rationalised so that identified topics were represented by the same keyword. For example, *less documentation*, *reduction in documentation* and *documentation reduction*, were all rationalised to the common term *less documentation*. This allowed us to upload coherent data to *Wordle* (www.wordle.net) and produce a series of images that represent recurrent themes. These *Wordle* images were used as the primary visual element in a document that was produced to inform the University's Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (ASQEC) of the findings from the consultation events.

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

From the analysis of the data collected at the consultation events, it was evident that no changes to the draft processes in development were required since the evidence collected from stakeholders was an excellent match.

We do not believe this to be fortuitous, but an inevitable consequence in having invested significant amounts of time in the review period at the beginning of the project (as described in our previous reports, multimedia review, evaluation of RoLEx etc) and also as a consequence of members of the T-SPARC project team (the Project Director and the Project Manager) having been members of the University working group tasked with facilitating the development of new approval methods.

- Subsequently, the proposal for new approval mechanisms informed by T-SPARC's 2009 Multimedia Review and endorsed through the engagement events outlined above was accepted by ASQEC and then formally ratified by the University's Senate in July. By way of summary, a truncated / indicative account of the new approval procedures are outlined below:
 - For new courses agreement in principle (to begin development / design) is sought and granted by the University's Internal Scrutiny Group.
 - Faculty puts together a design team including external experts who will be involved throughout – externality has a formative role, not just a summative / approval role.
 - Early liaison with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) is sought (as appropriate).
 - An 'Academic Moderator' (analogous to a Panel Chair) is appointed to be involved throughout the process overseeing both the design process and the approval of documentation.
 - The Programme Team will undertake in-gathering of stakeholder engagement data using a wide range of 'capture' technology as appropriate.
 - Multimedia artefacts representing evidence of stakeholder engagement will be electronically hosted and shared via *Mahara*.
 - Other inputs into the design process – the Learning and Teaching Strategy, good practice developed across the sector, the particular strengths of the team, available advice and guidance from the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching and Academic Registry will be collected, considered and evidenced through multimedia artefacts.
 - Student representatives will have a role in confirming that students' views are adequately represented and that the Programme Team has indicated how these views have informed the design of the programme.
 - When ready, the module templates will be put forward for approval by the designated external subject expert (including representatives of PSRBs as appropriate). The externals will be asked to confirm that the modules and assessments are set at the appropriate level and

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

- meet expectations set out in relevant subject benchmarks, professional standards etc.
- Other definitive documentation (student handbook, programme specification, admissions policy etc) will be prepared.
- When the definitive documentation has been agreed by a faculty's Associate Dean, the Academic Moderator will be asked to confirm that s/he is satisfied that the design process has been used effectively and the documentation is ready for publication.
- Faculty Board will be advised and a recommendation to approve will be made to the Senate.

Key features of this process:

- Robust stakeholder engagement in the curriculum design process is built in and verifiable.
- New emphasis on the design process with new opportunities for formative dialogue with externals throughout the design process.
- Absence of a panel event prevents undue near-exclusive focus on production of documentation packs for scrutiny.

Management of the process:

What doesn't come through in the description of the process above is how the workflow associated with the sharing of definitive documentation and the various sign-offs along the way are facilitated by technology. We are currently developing our *SharePoint* infrastructure to automate the majority of these sorts of processes; we are also developing ways of working with the other technologies we are using to support the curriculum design and approval process.

Subsequent to Senate's ratification of these new approval processes we have gone on to identify pilot programmes and are now tasked with scaling up the infrastructure to support roll-out across the institution for the beginning of the 2011 / 2012 Academic Year. This endorsement of the aims of the T-SPARC project by our staff and the University's Senate is a significant milestone in the life of the project.

By way of feeding back to all of those stakeholders who have engaged with us over the development of new approval methods, we have taken the proposal document as ratified by Senate, converted it to HTML using *Wimba Create* and added hyperlinks to the key features of the process. These hyperlinks link to the data we collected through the engagement events (such as the *Wordle* images and photographs taken of the annotated process maps) enabling us to demonstrate to our stakeholders how the final ratified process reflects their needs as shared in our engagement events. *Wimba Create* has been an effective tool to generate this resource because of its support for long descriptions of images, making the visual data accessible to screen-reader software.

The Senate-ratified proposal document has also been used to develop a new (MS *Visio*-based) business process map representing the new design and approval processes. In addition to this descriptive map, a separate version that details *SharePoint's* role in the support of the design and approval process is in the final stages of development and will form the basis of a definitive 'product specification' for the design of our *SharePoint* architecture. This map details all the contact points *SharePoint* has with documentation and stakeholders (internal & external), the points of interim

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

sign-off and the points that *SharePoint* is required to notify stakeholders of actions (such as meeting requests, informing course teams of approval of documentation at specific stages). This process map will inform the design of the *SharePoint* infrastructure that will eventually support the course design and approval process from the academic year 2011 / 2012 onwards.

After a meeting with the head of our CICT project management department to discuss and compare the functionality of *SharePoint* with our envisaged workflows, the project team were (re)assured that CICT are able to configure *SharePoint* to complete most, if not all of the desired functions we require. There were some minor issues such as the synchronisation of MS Outlook Calendars with meeting requests sent from the *SharePoint* calendar, but CICT are looking into solutions to these issues through the use of *SharePoint Designer* and have assured us the workable solutions will be developed.

Following this meeting, the T-SPARC Project Manager has committed to exploring the possibility of securing dedicated funding for a member of our CICT department (approximately 0.5 WTE for 6 months) to work specifically on the development of the design and approval *SharePoint* workflow architecture. CICT will run this facet of the T-SPARC project as a sub-project with an accountability path to the POG (Project Operations Group).

In relation to the new work-streams described in the previous report we offer the following accounts of continuing activity:

1. Learning community:

The Student Academic Partners (SAP) scheme employs student partners to work in partnership with academic staff to develop or evaluate learning and teaching. The scheme has built upon the successful cross-University pilot last year to advertise for a second cohort of projects to run in 2010/11. Members of the T-SPARC team continue to be engaged in the facilitation of the scheme this year.

The SAP scheme has generated considerable national interest from the NUS, HEA, SEDA and the QAA and has recently been shortlisted for a THES award in the 'outstanding support for students' category. T-SPARC team members have facilitated presentations and workshops at a number of high profile events in order to promote the scheme and the philosophy of collaborative working. In addition, our approach formed a key focus of the recent CAMEL meeting at BCU and formed the basis for considerable discussion within the Cluster around student engagement models. The cluster went on to present a session entitled 'Students as Agents of Change' at the recent JISC Programme meeting.

A number of new T-SPARC funded opportunities to promote student and staff partnership around curriculum design are currently being promoted. Through the T-SPARC away-days and the Learning Through Innovation module (on the MA Education staff development programme) we have begun to talk to staff about ways in which students may be involved in curriculum design with reference to our stakeholder engagement model. A series of suggestions / methods have been developed to encourage staff to consider approaches to using technology to engage students in curriculum design including;

- a) Course Reps are provided with flip cameras/audio recorders and asked to interview 10 of their fellow students on a particular topic to inform design (types of assessment,

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

module content). The videos are discussed by the Course Reps and staff and outcomes developed to inform design and development.

- b) Students are given flip cameras/audio recorders and asked to keep a video diary recording their experiences on the course, which is then submitted to the course team each week. Data is then considered by the course team and feeds into ongoing iterative design.
- c) Students are given flip cameras and a different sealed envelope for each day of the week. Students open a different envelope each day (text message prompts could be sent) and are asked to reflect upon the enclosed theme (assessment, feedback, teaching on the course). Data is considered by course team and feeds into ongoing iterative design.
- d) Students are employed through the Student Academic Partner Scheme to work as part of the course design team. Students attend away days and team meetings and contribute to the development of the course. Student partners use flip cameras/audio recorders and/or face-to-face discussions with other students to feed into the course development process.
- e) Staff timetable one or more evaluation sessions with students to focus on particular modules/the overall course. Students are given flip cameras/audio recorders and asked to answer a number of open evaluation questions (e.g. identify what you have found useful about the course or identify ways that you would improve the course in the future). Students then record each others' responses to the questions. Data is considered by course team and feeds into ongoing iterative design.
- f) Pose a series of questions about the course using the *VOXUR* video unit. The unit can then be set up within a faculty or practice-setting and stakeholders invited to access the unit to record their responses.

2. New ways of working:

The T-SPARC team have become increasingly involved in the support of a project investigating current student induction processes, looking onto the institutional infrastructure supporting students' initial impressions and first weeks at university.

The stream of work was initiated by the University's Business Process Review Group (BPRG) and was initially looking for a series of business process maps to be developed, detailing the processes involved in student induction. The team wanted to introduce some of the technology we have invested into the wider university, to help inform the design of institutional processes and mechanisms. The suggestion to bolster this investigative work through the use of multimedia technology to capture real-time student opinion during their induction weeks, and as ongoing video diaries after induction was made by the project team and received well by the BPRG. This investigative work has so far taken two forms:

VOXUR Units

Video-based evaluation of induction and enrolment programmes across a range of campuses using the recently purchased *VOXUR* units:

VOXUR video recording units were sited and manned at a number of campuses over a three-week period during induction weeks. We employed students through the Student Academic Partners scheme to help devise and to record questions onto the *VOXUR* unit and to lead on the recruitment

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

of student respondents. One of the Student Academic Partners has been assisting with the analysis of the data so collected.

Flip Video Cameras

Ongoing video diaries using *Flip* video cameras:

As part of the investigation into induction processes, the University's International Office, and Student Services' Disability Team were approached to see if they would like the opportunity to work with members of the T-SPARC team on a project looking into student induction experiences of the students those departments support. Members of the T-SPARC team proposed to loan students the equipment, give them an initial talk on the project and then facilitate the Disability team and International Office to set their own agenda of topics for the students to talk about on a weekly basis; some of which would refer to induction and enrolment. The idea was well received and taken up by both departments. Twenty students are currently taking part.

It is hoped that this hands-off approach will generate some emergent narrative accounts relating to the 'lived experience' of student life at BCU and that this emergent data might inform curriculum design.

The SAPs have been an integral part of the investigative project team to date. They collaborated with project staff on the design of methodologies and research questions, they have added greatly to the capacity of the project and have increased our ability to collect data at a number of sites over a longer period of time. The students were approached because they are current Media students and can therefore add value to the project aims, objectives and outcomes. The SAPs will collaborate with staff on the collation, analysis and evaluation of the collected data, and produce a series of 'edits' that will be used as shareable artefacts (with a range of stakeholders) to document student expectations, experience and opinion of the current induction processes.

We aim to take what we have learnt from these video-based initiatives, both in terms of unearthing emergent themes relevant to curriculum design and by way of piloting the technologies in real situations to inform a wider rollout across all six faculties.

Whilst initiating this preliminary usage of *VOXUR* units, it became clear that a bespoke data protection policy should be authored by the University to ensure maximum value was drawn from the contributions made by our stakeholders. The University's Information Manager was kind enough to collaborate with the project team to author a data protection policy (DPP); our chosen form of words ensures that we are able to share the students' video responses with a range of other appropriate groups and individuals (such as other HEIs or the NUS). A copy of the DPP is offered below*.

The T-SPARC team are deploying video technology at an increasing rate. This is not in the service of expanding the use of technology per se, but because we believe that video-capture offers the best solution to collect, collate and share the authentic, unmediated contributions of others.

** I, the user and stakeholder consent to my video contribution being used for the purpose of developing educational provision at Birmingham City University and investigating the student experience in collaboration with Birmingham City University Students Union, subject to the statement below:*

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

The University and the Students Union appreciate the input of respondents as stakeholders, who will thereby have enhanced opportunities for influencing the development of educational provision and the student experience; video footage will be treated as the stakeholder's personal data as defined in the Data Protection Act 1998. The Act demands that such personal data will be held securely, solely for the purpose described above, and disposed of in a timely fashion (the University and the Students Union do, however, reserve the right to re-visit this data over a reasonably lengthy period as part of the exercise). The University may also share your video data with various other educational institutions (e.g. universities, Further Education institutions, the JISC (the Joint Information Systems Committee) and the National Union of Students) so as to maximise the effect of your valued input.

The University's Students Union has been approached by the National Union of Students (NUS) to produce a range of videos documenting student experience of induction, as the T-SPARC data protection policy (DPP) enables us to share video data with relevant stakeholders, we have agreed to make them available to the BCU SU, and the NUS. This will help us to achieve one of our goals of 'maximising the effect of valued contributions' as mentioned in the DPP.

The Student Handbook

The Student Handbook is seen to be a key facet of definitive programme documentation. The handbook is likely to be one of the first documents that a student will come into contact with during the early part of their study so will in part frame their expectations of the course and the University. It is therefore vital that it provides comprehensive programme information as well as other useful information for students such as the services that are available throughout their time at University.

The University has had a standard Student Handbook template that is updated and re-published annually by Academic Registry. This year it was deemed to be important that the University should spend time looking at new ways for this information to be distributed to students, as the Student Handbook in its paper form had become rather cumbersome (with some course handbooks reaching over 150 pages) and when put on our *Moodle* VLE as a PDF was far too long to scroll through. Academic Registry set up a pilot to look into this issue and seconded a member of the T-SPARC team to facilitate the work.

It became obvious through feedback from staff and students, that there was a need for the information to be separated into at least two areas. In response to this evaluative work, the 'Course Guide' was created and the main University level information was then put onto the University website, with a view to it later being moved onto the University's intranet site. Six programmes in two faculties, Health and Birmingham Institute of Art and Design (BIAD), are currently piloting the 'Course Guide'.

2. Staff Development:

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, due to changes to staffing and organisational structure, the T-SPARC Project Manager now has responsibility for Academic Staff development. The Project Manager also holds the University brief to lead on Curriculum Design and as such the joining up of these work streams allows for tight integration between the identification of the needs associated with curriculum design and the development of support to address those needs. In September 2009, a paper was submitted to the University's Learning and Teaching Committee outlining proposed changes to academic staff development including the development of new modules and a new taught Master's route.

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

3. Engaging with students in the rejuvenation of curriculum design:

By way of an example of how the needs of curriculum design and staff development provision can be successfully conflated; for the second time, the project team have sought to garner interest in the SAP scheme with participants on the Learning Through Innovation module (part of the MA Education – Learning and Teaching) and once again this articulation has yielded some SAP project applications – these applications have included use of technology to inform curriculum design.

The Pathway Director for the BSc Health & Wellbeing from the Faculty of Health had approached the T-SPARC team earlier in the year to request further information on the scope of the project. After a meeting in July, the Pathway Director informed the team that she has a series of student engagement activities planned over the coming months. A session with the programme team and student representatives took place on the 1st of November to discuss the options available to them to facilitate the collection of data to allow students to have an input on the design of their course. Of particular interest was the request for additional support from the T-SPARC project to gather some information relating to the optimisation of patterns of delivery and programme structures. There is a good deal of interest in short stand-alone courses and the programme team are interested in exploring how such short course may be designed with a dual purpose as both a stand-alone short course and a degree programme module.

The project team have had contact with another JISC funded project being run at the University -the COMSLIVE Project: Communication Skills Learning in Immersive Learning Environments. This JISC funded (through an Innovation Grant) project seeks to explore the potential value of the Open Wonderland virtual world technology to enhance the communication skills of healthcare learners. The project specifically seeks to address the extent to which this technology can be integrated within large cohort healthcare courses and as such explores scalability, scenario design, impact on student learning, impact on learner behaviour, CICT security and resource implications and the logistics of virtual world learning support and facilitation.

The COMSLIVE team have used T-SPARC-purchased technologies (a *VOXUR* unit) to capture student opinions on the potential that COMSLIVE learning has to support their skills development, its potential to be integrated within their courses and to scope further development. If this is successful then the COMSLIVE team intend to capture the opinions of other stakeholder's e.g. academic staff, senior managers, staff in CITC and the NHS to identify their perceptions of value or information needs. Captured data may be shown to course teams, senior managers and the wider community with appropriate consent.

4. Engaging with employers in curriculum design

There are currently two courses that are piloting the full suite of T-SPARC design and approval processes - MSc Psychology and MSc Radiotherapy. There are a further three courses that are taking part in the mini-pilots projects which are piloting either an individual technology, or a collection of selected technologies.

The MSc Radiotherapy team are a full pilot course and have been conducting employer engagement activities using one of the *VOXUR* units. Academic staff from the radiotherapy team recorded two questionnaires onto the unit and deployed it into a series of local hospitals where they collected responses from a number of clinical staff about desirable characteristics of a new MSc Radiotherapy

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

programme. Six sets of responses were collected and in the words of the MSc Radiotherapy Joint Lead, responses received were “Very useful with some interesting, unexpected information”.

The Radiotherapy team have stated that without the T-SPARC methodologies and the use of *VOXUR* units to facilitate employer engagement, they would not have been as thorough at conducting this initial line of enquiry, and as a consequence the engagement would have been less well developed and the design of the course would have been less responsive to employer need as a result.

After this initial stage of engagement with employers, the Joint Lead for the MSc Radiotherapy programme has been given the opportunity to collaborate with the T-SPARC team on Project Blog to reflect on their experiences so far. They have contributed two blog postings to the site and have been asked, along with the second pilot team and the mini-pilot teams, to continue to reflect on their experiences and let us have updates that we can use on the Project Blog.

In addition to the work completed with the *VOXUR* units, the MSc Radiotherapy team have also used a *Flip* camera to record a meeting with their clinical Radiotherapy colleagues from across the Midlands to document their views on which proposed modules would be viable, what content they would like to see in the modules and any areas they haven't covered which could become new modules. This opportunity for meaningful engagement with course teams has been well received by external colleagues and is felt to have benefitted from all stakeholders being aware that the evidence of engagement so produced was required as part of the new approval processes; i.e stakeholders could be confident their contribution would receive the most thorough consideration.

A new post within the University's CELT (Centre for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching) with the title of *Senior Lecturer with Responsibility for Employer Engagement* has been created. Although this post has been financed from outside of the T-SPARC funding stream, the post-holder (when appointed) will report to the T-SPARC Project Manager with the explicit brief of facilitating employer engagement in curriculum design.

In relation to '*Planning innovations in curriculum design processes to realise desired changes*':

The team have continued to develop the process maps that relate to the new design and approval procedures. A separate process map has been developed specifically for the use by the CICT department in the development of the *SharePoint* architecture. As mentioned in our previous report, a bespoke process mapping method has been adopted which allows for documentary items, target recipients and flow of documentation throughout the process to be identified. An initial meeting with CICT confirmed that they were satisfied with this bespoke process mapping approach. Before design of the *SharePoint* workflows begins, the process maps will be checked by Academic Registry to ensure an accurate representation of the reported processes are represented by the proposed *SharePoint* architecture. Once Academic Registry has verified the maps, CICT will begin converting the bespoke process map into a functional *SharePoint* workflow template.

In relation to '*Piloting the innovations*':

The last report declared an intention to run a 'Design Jamboree' in July 2010 but after the consultation events held at the end of May / start of June 2010 it became apparent that the project was still in too an early a stage of progression for the 'Jamboree' event to be effective. The project team decided that they would revisit the idea of the event in the future. Subsequently, it has

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

emerged that other Cluster B project teams hold an interest in the work of projects outside of the Cluster (Cluster C in particular). At the Cluster B CAMEL meeting the group discussed the possibility of inviting members of Cluster C projects to a joint Cluster B/C meeting. This idea was explored more fully at the Programme event in Nottingham in October and planning for such an event is ongoing.

Additionally, following a meeting between members of the T-SPARC and OU Learning Design Initiative project teams at this year's JISC Design Bash, a meeting is to be held between Birmingham City University's T-SPARC Project, the Open University's Learning Design Initiative Project and the University of Gloucestershire's Co-genT Project on the 12th November 2010. This meeting will explore the potential for collaboration between these projects.

In relation to '*Evaluation of the new processes*':

During this initial stage of the pilots, course teams have been asked to provide feedback in the form of a video diary detailing their experiences of using the technology that has been placed at their disposal. This ongoing evaluation has generated some feedback relating to the use of *VOXUR* units, and some initial feedback on the use of the *Flip* video cameras.

These pilots have allowed us to explore the workflows associated with handling the mobile devices and the sort of data that is generated by this work. Emergent issues are listed below:

- The team operate an equipment log, not only to keep a log of location of loaned equipment, but also to ensure that data has been removed from devices, log where the data has been stored, and to verify that the data has been removed from the device before reissuing equipment to other users.
- Once devices are received back by the team after usage, the data is stored on a recently purchased 8TB external RAID drive (mirrored and striped). This device contains 4 x 2TB hard drives in it, this allow the drives to be mirrored – each portion of data is recorded to two separate locations simultaneously, allowing a redundancy of one drive (cluster) – any one drive can fail and the device will still have be able to recover the data from the mirrored cluster.
- We have experienced an issue with file compatibility, the *Flip* cameras that were purchased record natively into an MP4 file format, and the University's installed version of Windows Media Player does not support the playback of these files as standard; an additional codec is required. The team are pursuing getting the appropriate MP4 supporting codec rolled out as an institutional system update in the near future.
- When we initially purchased the RAID drive, the intention was to run the drive from a Windows XP machine, we have since found out that XP can only address external drives up to a limit of 2TB. The way that the RAID drive is configured, as 2 x 4TB drive clusters, meant that the storage was incompatible with operating system. Our CICT department informed us that we would have to run the RAID drive through a computer running Windows 7. This has since been installed on the host computer and the issue has been resolved.

In relation to '*Embedding the innovations and planning for sustainability*':

As mentioned above, technology supported processes for programme approval were endorsed by the University's Senate in July 2010. Two course teams have currently been identified to pilot the full

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

suite of T-SPARC technologies and processes, MSc Radiotherapy and MSc Psychology. Technologies being used so far have included:

- *MS SharePoint* team sites have been created and have been populated with course documentation for collaborative authoring, iteration and sharing.
- A *Mahara* page has been created to host artefacts and publish a number of views that can be shared with a range of stakeholders involved in the design and approval process
- The production of a series of video based artefacts capturing a range of stakeholder views including:
 - *VOXUR* video capture units used to engage with employers on specific curriculum design related topics
 - The use of *Flip* cameras to record clinical meetings
- Dialogue with the Project Manager in his *CELT Nominee* capacity to support the Programme Team in their design activity.

We are in collaboration with Academic Registry and the individual faculties to encourage the identification of further pilots. These additional pilots will include undergraduate programmes with relationships with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). This will ensure that the new design and approval process can be tested for its suitability with PSRBs prior to wider roll-out.

Section Three: Risks, Issues and Opportunities

Each item of our initial risk analysis is discussed below with reference to our current context:

- There is a risk that critical, identified resource is not available for specified stages of the project e.g. caused by illness, allocated to other projects, overloaded with other tasks from inside and outside the project:

Although the senate approval for the processes offer significant opportunities for taking the aims of the project forward, it raises the stakes for the Project Team since considerable amounts of core institutional activity will depend upon the success of the project. This is especially critical in relation to the development of the *SharePoint* architecture.

As mentioned in the last report, competing demands on the time of the project staff is an ongoing issue, with staff being hived off to work on parallel work streams fairly frequently. However, benefits relating to impact and sustainability of the project offset this risk.

- Human resources not to the identified and required expertise:

No additional risk identified.

- Identified technical products/ platforms not of required quality to progress project:

The concerns relating to *Mahara* remains, but has been greatly reduced. *Mahara* will shortly be transferred onto a cluster of load-balancing servers that will mean

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

increased scalability for the system. The commissioned work to build some additional features into *Mahara* has been completed and has been incorporated in release 1.3 for the *Mahara* community.

During the current reporting period the team have continued to develop process maps and to work with CICT and have received ongoing reassurances that *SharePoint* can support the processes that are being designed. The team have progressed contact with University of Southern Queensland and, at the time of writing, a date for collaborating via teleconferencing facilities is being confirmed.

- Institutional re-organisation:

Due to reorganisation within the University, the Project Manager now has additional responsibility for Academic Staff Development. Although there are workload issues to balance, the opportunities for the aims of the project to be more fully integrated into staff development offsets this risk.

- More transparent systems being regarded by some members of staff as offering a potential mechanism for monitoring the activities of staff:

No additional risk identified.

- Complexity of project content:

No additional risk identified.

- Scope of project expands:

No additional risk identified.

- Integration of the project timescale with other institutional departments and priorities:

No additional risk identified.

Section Four: Outputs and Deliverables

In addition to those mentioned in previous reports, we anticipate the following additional outputs:

- The stakeholder engagement model adapted from the ladder of engagement (Rudd et al, 2006) was updated by members of the team and shared on the T-SPARC blog on August 18th 2010 and is available via the Project Blog.
- After the development of the new processes, and approval of Senate, new versions of the business process maps of the envisaged institutional design and approval processes are being developed. These maps will be converted into the *SharePoint* workflow

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

representations that will support the design and approval process. These new maps represent the second half of a 'before & after' process mapping artefact which will be shareable on completion.

- In addition to the development of the design and approval business process maps, a (more technical) *SharePoint* workflow map is also under development to facilitate the design of the *SharePoint* architecture.
- The development of a series of 'how-to' guides aimed at students and staff, exploring approaches to the use of technology to support student engagement is ongoing. These resources are being informed by our collaboration with the staff and students involved in our pilot work.
- As mentioned earlier in this document, we have used *Wimba Create* to produce an HTML version of our approval process document (as ratified by Senate) and have annotated it with links to the artefacts that were generated from the data we collected during our engagement events. The resultant multimedia artefact demonstrates to stakeholders how the ratified process reflects the needs and aspirations of staff. We are hoping to embed some of the multimedia clips we host on T-SPARC's *YouTube* channel into the artefact too. These videos, collected during the initial multimedia review, had a fundamental impact on the direction we took in developing new processes. This work is ongoing.
- The *Wordles* produced for use in the *Wimba* artefact have become shareable artefacts in their own right - as visual representations of people's aspirations for design and approval mechanisms.
- The team are looking into producing a more technology-specific 'how to guide' produced from our experiences so far of using *VOXUR* units and *Flip* cameras. This will be hosted online on a side page of the T-SPARC blog and will also contain a number of resources relating to capturing video feedback, video research etc.
- As part of the activity we undertook with our colleagues in Cluster B, we generated a 'Map of Curriculum Design' – this map (generated with *XMind*) seeks to reveal the scopes of the projects in Cluster B. The collated scope, as represented by this resource, demonstrates that the projects have had to articulate themselves with a very large set of overlapping institutional functions. Rather than seeing the map as a representation of 'scope-creep' we see the map as a visual testament to the pervasiveness of the projects. For our project we feel this pervasiveness is proportional to influence, impact and sustainability.

Section Five: Evaluation

The use of *VOXUR* units and *Flip* cameras

The use of the *VOXUR* units has so far been evaluated through the use of *Flip* video cameras to record narrative accounts of how the pilot teams are finding using the technologies. Early feedback has suggested that pilot teams feel as though the design of their course is benefitting from stakeholder evaluation activities such as the employer engagement that the MSc Radiotherapy team undertook. Without the ability to record and use video data generated as a shareable artefact with

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

those tasked with conferring approval, the team feel that the quality of the engagement would have been less significant.

Evaluation of the two early pilots

We will be evaluating the two early pilots during the next reporting period. There are two distinct areas that will be evaluated separately:

- The new design and approval processes.
- The fitness for purpose of the technology deployed to support this process.

This evaluation work will commence during the first quarter of 2011 and it is envisaged that this will allow the team to hone processes for technology support in advance of mainstreaming the processes and technology in the 2011 – 2012 academic year.

Our *VOXUR* units have been mentioned extensively throughout this report. We have three such units, purchased following a recommendation from JISC CETIS. We have found them to be a very useful tool and they have created a lot of interest both inside and outside of the institution. Indeed, we have just agreed to lend one of unit to one of the projects in our Cluster.

Our use of the tool has not been without challenge and some software bugs have become apparent through our use. We continue to liaise with the manufacturers (55degrees) who are addressing the issues we have found. The company have made available a loan unit while they have one of our units in for analysis.

Section Six: Outcomes and Lessons Learned

Managing the Project

We continue to manage the project as organically as possible and continue to resist some traditional project management methodologies, such as the authoring and scheduling of 'work-packages'. We have also been willing to rethink aspects of our project as necessary – for instance the postponement of the 'Curriculum Design Jamboree'. We feel that the fluidity afforded by our approach to project management has contributed to our credibility with stakeholders and, as a consequence, our ability to influence institutional agendas.

Although we deliberately designed the project to exploit mature technologies (*Moodle*, *Mahara* and *SharePoint*), we have supplemented those with some untested (for us) technologies (*VOXUR*). This carries some risk. We were fortunate that the first people to pilot this technology (in our institution) were colleagues from the NTI (New Technology Institute, part of the Faculty of Performance, Media and English); these colleagues are well versed in the use of technology per-se and understood fully the pilot nature of our work. Consequently when they encountered a fault they were very accommodating and helpful in providing useful feedback. Had this early pilot been with another less technology-confident set of colleagues, this early fault could have easily damaged our project's credibility. In that sense, the selection of NTI as an early adopter was a good choice.

Section Seven: Communication and Dissemination Activities

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

We continue to use the following tools for ongoing dissemination of the project:

- A WordPress Blog - <http://blogs.test.bcu.ac.uk/tsparc/>
- Twitter - http://twitter.com/TSPARC_BCU
- Moodle (currently limited to hosting our 'baseline' review)
- Mahara (currently limited to hosting the multimedia content embedded in our 'baseline' review)
- YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/user/TSPARC>
- Circle - <http://www.circlespace.net/>

We are finding Twitter becoming increasingly useful for communicating with other Cluster members and especially for fielding questions out to external listeners. The T-SPARC blog is becoming increasingly popular with stakeholders and has experienced a rise in 'hits' recently. Pilot course teams are being offered the opportunity to collaborate with the project team and author posts that will be published on the T-SPARC blog. So far we have had two posts written by the MSc Radiotherapy team, and are expecting input from additional contributors in the near future as they generate experiences to share. We feel that the collaborative blog represents a transparency of process as it relates to stakeholder involvement.

Project team members have presented on / contributed to aspects of the T-SPARC project at a range of events: JISC's Design Bash, a JISC event relating to employability and a NUS/HEA event on student engagement. Additionally, as mentioned earlier in the report, presentations have been given to a range of course teams, faculties and individuals as we have received invitations to present our work and the opportunities available to staff to be involved has been disseminated.

The project team are collaborating with other teams in our Cluster to develop a book as a collaborative output of our work. This activity is being led by City University.

Section Eight: Collaboration and Support

A project progress meeting with our Critical Friend, Professor Stephen Brown occurred in mid-September. This meeting had, as its primary aim, the identification of outputs that might be of use to the rest of the sector. The team also took the opportunity to offer an in-depth update on progress.

Several areas of work were identified as having the potential to generate shareable artefacts, these include:

- A toolkit to pilot with projects in other institutions. Look at running as a longitudinal impact study and comparative implementation study at other institutions to see the impact of toolkits produced.
- A model for alternative project management strategies, a shareable institutional approach to change management.
- Software and hardware usage guidelines (*VOXUR, SharePoint, Flip video, Mahara, Moodle*) for the use of these technologies in the support of curriculum design.
- Advice and information on creative uses of other technologies in support of curriculum design.
- The running an *Illuminate* session about the T-SPARC project. This has since been arranged and will run at 2pm on 3rd November 2010.

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

- The generation of a video presentation detailing the T-SPARC project to be placed on the project's *YouTube* channel.

The team continue to feel well supported by the programme manager; her continuing support, understanding and flexibility are of great value to the project team.

Section Nine: Financial Statement

Total Grant	£399,227.64	Duration of project	45 Months
Reporting Period	November 2009 – May 2010		

Budget Headings	Total budget allocated	Expenditure this reporting period	Total expenditure to date	Further information
Staff	£327969	£68363	£141065	Funds being rolled forward for employment of students to further project aims
Travel & Subsistence	£6500	£285	£3434	
Equipment	£45550	£31229	£41786	Purchase of Voxur unit plus cameras, voice recorders to underpin consultation work
Dissemination activities	£16000	£0	£1762	Expected increase in dissemination activity in later part of funding period
Evaluation activities	£5000	£0	£0	Additional costs reflected in staff and equipment costs.
Other (please specify)	£5000	£3826	£3826	Expenditure mainly on internal consultation events, plus a small amount on stationery, printing and training

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.

Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme

- 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.