



Project Document Cover Sheet

| Project Information | | | |
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| Lead Institution | University of Greenwich | | |
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| Partner Institutions | Not applicable | | |
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| Author(s) & project role | Claire Eustance – Project Manager, Paul Butler – Technical Lead, Duncan Reeder, Business Analyst and core project team member & Dave Mutti. | | |
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Interim Reporting Template

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| Project Name | UG-Flex, University of Greenwich |
| Report compiled by | Claire Eustance, UG-Flex Project Manager |
| With contributions from | Duncan Reeder (Business Analyst),; Paul Butler (Technical Lead) & Dave Mutti (core team members) and Professor Ian McNay & Dr Margaret Andrews (independent project evaluators) |
| Reporting period | 01 November 2009 – 30 April 2010 |

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| Section One: Summary |
| <p>In the period from November 2009 to April 2010 the UG-Flex project has conducted a detailed review of the University of Greenwich’s systems and processes for validation and review and delivered a series of recommendations for enhancement.</p> <p>Modification to the tracking of course/programme validation and review dates in the University’s student records system are currently being tested and are due to be fully launched in September 2010.</p> <p>The project is confronting risks associated with the impact of the economic downturn/credit crunch; lack of engagement from some stakeholder sub-groups; and scope creep.</p> <p>Evaluation activities have been extensive and useful.</p> <p>Awareness of the project has increased across the University of Greenwich and beyond and buy in is strong among some stakeholder groups in the University. Expectations of the project are high.</p> |

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| Section Two: Activities and Progress |
| <p>For the period from November 2009 to April 2010 the UG-Flex project can report the following progress towards achieving its aim of revealing and enhancing curriculum design processes in order to support a more agile and diverse curriculum:</p> <p>The project has conducted a detailed review of the University of Greenwich’s systems and processes for the validation and review of curricula. (This area of investigation is one of six identified through extensive stakeholder consultation in 2009. Others are self non-standard start and finish dates; speed of study; course level admissions; self service interface and library of academic models.)</p> <p>The review of validation and review processes involved stakeholders from across the university’s schools and offices, principally those dealing with quality issues. The project team was guided not to</p> |

restrict solution identification solely to the immediate scope and resources of the UG-Flex project. Consequently four recommendations were proposed to and endorsed by the University's Learning & Quality Committee in February 2010 as follows:

1. Implementation of a document management and workflow solution covering all aspects of validation & review;
2. Creation of an online course approval form with built in workflow, linked to the student records system;
3. Creation in student record system of tables and forms to record, track and monitor key dates and information on approval and review;
4. Enhancements to the way data is stored in the student records system to encourage its use as the source of truth for programme and course information.

These recommendations represented solutions to identified problems in relation to University's central management of quality; duplication of administrative tasks and the availability to staff and students of quality information on the curriculum. The project team advised that they had the resources to deliver on the third recommendation only and that delivery on the other recommendation would require dedicate leadership as well as additional resources.

The project team has since produced functional and technical specifications of enhancements to the tracking of course/programme validation and review dates in the University's student records system. These modifications are currently being tested and are due to be piloted from June and fully rolled out from September 2010 and have been described by a manager from the Learning & Quality Unit as a major step forward for the University. For the first time there will be a fully centralised approval and review schedule of dates and this will reduce duplication of records and effort. It will also be possible to track how much curriculum development activity comes to fruition following authorisation as well as track where conditions of approval are outstanding and to follow up these.

A factor that determined the choice of validation and review as the project's first area of investigation, and also the decision to recommend solutions that were both within and beyond the scope of the project's resources was that this was viewed by the project team as the most effective way for the project to deliver recognisable benefit relatively quickly and achieve recognition and credibility with key stakeholders in the University.

The review has been recognised by key stakeholders in the University, notably the DVC for Academic Development and other members of the Learning & Quality Committee and the Project Management Group as having made a significant contribution to the university's understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of its approval and review processes and to understanding of how the university manages planning and decision-making about the curriculum.

Over the course of this reporting period it has become apparent to the project team that the subtleties of the project making four recommendations for improvement but delivering on only one of them was being overlooked. It became apparent that stakeholders were associating the project directly with all four recommendations and it was considered to be in the project's interest to

continue to offer assistance in progressing action in relation to the other three recommendations. For example, the project manager has organised sessions for staff on SharePoint and a demo on a piece of curriculum management software.

This strategy has produced the desired effect in terms of raising the profile of the project with key stakeholders, notably with staff in schools and centrally who are involved in quality assurance and quality enhancement. However, the reverse side of a "capture all" approach to problem and solution identification has been that the project has found it difficult to communicate the need to refine the scope of the project at the same time when the project's raised profile has seen stakeholders associating the project with issues and solutions that are entirely beyond its remit and resources.

Following discussion at the Steering Group meeting of 1 March 2010 and the Management Group meeting of 23 March, the project manager has now taken steps with the help of the core team to refine the scope of the project. This work is ongoing and a revised approach (together with amended work packages) is due to be approved by the project's Steering Group at its meeting scheduled for 7 June 2010.

A review of the project's progress in terms of work packages as they currently stand reveals the following:

- UG-Flex's **project management infrastructure** is proving to be effective as a vehicle for delivering the project's aims and objectives, although evaluation has identified there is scope for improving engagement levels with practitioners in some schools and offices. The Project Management Group has met five times and the Steering Group once in this reporting period and attendance has been good.
- The project website has been reviewed and updated and a new, simplified URL created <http://www.gre.ac.uk/ils/ug-flex>
- All **baseline research activities** outlined Work Package 2 are now complete. A report on the two programmes that make up the overwhelming proportion of the University's "non standard" provision; the Summer University and the Associate Student Programme was completed and presented to the UG-Flex Project Steering Group and Project Management Group on 1 March 2010 and 23 March 2010 respectively.
- **Communication and dissemination** of the project's aims, objectives and progress (Work Package 3) continues through presentations to university committees, school and office meetings and via the project's internal portal group, web pages and blog. In the period since November 2009, members of the core project team have discussed/presented on UG-Flex at 15 meetings, mainly with internal stakeholders although two were with external stakeholders.
- An article about the UG-Flex project was published in the March 2010 edition of the University's magazine "Greenwich Line". A copy of the article can be found at <http://ugflex.blogspot.com/2010/04/article-in-greenwich-line-university-of.html>
- Two members of the core project team attended the SunGard Higher Education European

User Group Conference in Oslo in December 2009.

- Two members of the project team presented at the AUA annual conference in March 2010 and the project has collaborated in two submissions to ALT-C 2010.
- A review of the project's communication and dissemination activities was undertaken by the Project Management Group in December 2009 and revisited in February 2010: the need for sustained communication with schools and offices was stressed, although no actions in addition to those already in progress were identified.
- The **identification of good practice** has progressed slowly in this reporting period. Middlesex University has responded positively to a proposal to share practice and a meeting is scheduled for May 2010 (this relatively late date was requested by Middlesex). However approaches to Manchester Metropolitan University, Oxford Brookes University and London School of Economics have not been taken up to date. Further approaches to providers will be made once the project has a more defined focus and remit.
- **Process analysis and mapping of current processes and procedures** (Work Package 5) commenced in four of the six areas of investigation. There is slippage in this work package due to the number of areas of investigation the project is focussing on. The project's business analyst has reported challenges in trying to map complex processes simultaneously. Furthermore, the length of time it takes to build relationships of trust with stakeholders as well as difficulties in gaining access to them was also under-estimated when the work package was written. Current action to address and refine the project's scope will assist getting this work package back on track and a revised work package 5 is due to be agreed by the Project Management and Steering Group by end of June 2010.
- The project had an opportunity to review / add to its understanding of the current **quality framework** (Work Package 6) at a session with Peter Findlay from the QAA at the Cluster's CAMEL meeting in March 2010. In the same period the project organised a QA/QE session for senior university staff which provided an opportunity to further explore issues with colleagues. In terms of reviewing **funding and regulatory frameworks**, the project has secured access to the appropriate university manager and is in a position to ask for advice on an as and when basis. In summary, good progress has been made on embedding consideration of regulatory and quality frameworks into the project's remit/activities. Given the level of uncertainty that currently exists in this area it is likely that it will be necessary to adapt to new circumstances/guidance/leadership/policy within the project's lifetime and the project is well placed to do so.
- In relation to **stakeholder consultation and requirements gathering** (Work Package 7) the project made some progress on eliciting information from students on their requirements by taking part in a student consultation on induction at the University in February 2010. This event was organised as a "world cafe" format and involved a cross section of students. While much of the information provided by students confirmed existing knowledge, the format worked well and the project is planning a further event specifically for students studying part time on short courses as associate students or at a distance.
- Consultation with employers/employer groups has not progressed in this reporting period primarily because initial research indicated that employer needs are relatively well documented and relationships well established in school and little benefit was seen in the

project team making additional approaches at this stage. Further, advice from the project's external employer representation advised that employers would be more likely to respond positively when the project had clear proposals to offer.

- It is recognised that effective stakeholder consultation in relation to this project requires ongoing dialogue, through formal meetings/workshops and also through building trust through smaller / 1-2-1 meetings/discussions. Current action to address and refine the project's scope will assist in making this work package a useful reflection of required activity and is due to be agreed by end of June 2010.
- It was noted in the previous interim report that the decision to achieve the project's objectives through focussing on six areas of investigation meant that some work packages needed revision to make them fit for purpose. Moves since March 2010 to further refine the project's remit has meant that further work on revising the work packages relating to **systems and procedures modelling and development; pilots; review; and implementation** is required. A new deadline of the end of June 2010 has now been set to produce revised work packages that will guide the project's activity in these areas.

Section Three: Risks, Issues, Opportunities

Analysis of UG-Flex's risk profile has been undertaken formally on two occasions, once by the Project Management Group and once by the Project Steering Group.

The following risks are considered to be live issues:

Risk: Dramatic change in external drivers

In October the Project Steering Group increased the probability of this risk in the light of the global economic downturn and the likelihood of a change in Government in 2010. It is generally understood that the University stands to benefit from an increase in numbers of applications to full time undergraduate courses in the current academic year and the message from senior managers concludes that the University of Greenwich is relatively well placed to withstand the immediate impact of cuts in levels of public funding for HEIs.

In response to concerns raised by members of the project team in March 2010, the Project Management Group discussed how to deal with evidence that some stakeholders were seeking to distance themselves from the UG-Flex project's aim to enable more flexible curriculum design, choosing instead to concentrate on current demand for conventional study. Members of the project team further noted that they had found a general lack of awareness/knowledge about the University's vision for flexibility left room for the project's aims to be contested and challenged by staff who were concerned about the impact of greater flexibility on their areas of work and/or unconvinced about the benefits of greater flexibility in the curriculum generally.

It was agreed that the project team should take every opportunity to stress to stakeholders the underlying business need for the university to seek alternative markets by offering more flexible

programmes in the longer term and to emphasise the project's association with longer term strategy rather than immediate operational issues. A mitigating factor to this risk is the recognition that a reduction in levels of demand for immediate solutions to barriers to flexibility also reduces the risk of solutions that are not fit for purpose being delivered in haste

The presence of this live risk may impact on the achievement of the project's objective to increase the actual and planned number of flexible delivery courses offered at Greenwich by 2012. It is possible that any significant growth in flexible curricula may not be apparent until 2013/14.

Risk: Schools and relevant offices not participating in the project

In December 2009 the Project Management Group identified this as a live issue to the project. A review of the actions already identified to manage this risk, namely pro-active communication with schools and offices via presentations was seen as sufficient remedial action. In mitigation it was recognised that all of the schools where greater flexibility in the curriculum was a recognised issue were engaged in the project.

The presence of this live risk may impact on the project's objective to increase levels of staff satisfaction with support systems by 2012, by delivering an uneven increase which is concentrated on particular schools/area of responsible in the University.

Risk: Scope Creep

A significant risk, previously unidentified, that has recently been confirmed as a live issue is the presence of "scope creep", defined in this case as the inclusion in the project's scope of more tasks than it is possible to complete within the original project budget and schedule.

The growing awareness among members of the core project team that the project was trying to address too many problems and issues was given added weight in late March with a report from the project's independent evaluators who reported "the UG-Flex project risks overextending itself against the resources available".

Remedial action currently being taken involved members of the core project team reviewing all of the problems identified by stakeholders (currently organised in the project's six areas of investigation) and identifying those that most closely address the project's original aims and objectives. The core project team intends to present its recommendations to the Project Management Group meeting at the end May and to seek approval from the Project Steering Group at the next meeting in early June.

The presence of this live issue impacts on the ability of the project to deliver solutions to problems that are seen by some stakeholders as significant and levels of satisfaction may be affected

Action taken to mitigate this risk in relation to the project's review of validation and review may also be seen as an unexpected opportunity for the project to achieve its objective to contribute to supporting wider planning and decision making across the University.

A further opportunity that has emerged in this reporting period has been closer collaboration with representatives from SunGard Higher Education (who own Banner, the University's student records system). Discussions involving members of the core project team and SunGard at the European User Group Conference in Oslo in December led to a meeting at Greenwich in February 2010 to look at options for flexible registration. A subsequent conference call with SunGard representatives explored options for ensuring that the aims, findings and outcomes of the project and the wider CDD programme are communicated to and shared with SunGard.

Section Four: Outputs and Deliverables

The following outputs are expected to arise from the UG-Flex Project:

| Type of output | Details | Proposed audience: who will use this output and why? |
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| Final Project Report (& Executive Summary) | Describing approaches taken, key challenges, recommendations, lessons learned, outputs and outcomes, progress towards achievement of aims and objectives, recommendations etc. | External and internal audience will use this output to get information on what the project did and did not achieve, and how. The Executive Summary will summarise key information from the report and will be targeted at audiences who may like to have more information before they commit to reading the full report. |
| Case Studies | A maximum of five case studies to describe challenges of curriculum design at University of Greenwich as identified by different stakeholders and the steps taken to address these. | Mainly external audiences in order to become more informed on ways to address challenges in curriculum design from a systems and business process perspective. Internal audience too may use this output, mainly for publicity and possibly training purposes. |
| Curriculum Guide | A web based guide to curriculum design at the University of Greenwich which provides a step by step guide on the range of curriculum design and delivery options possible. | Mainly internal audience, with the language and approach aimed at University of Greenwich staff to ensure knowledge is widely available and used. External audiences will have access to the Guide which they may use as an example of practice and adapt accordingly. |

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| Process Maps and Functional & Technical specifications. | A process map of the University's Validation & Review process is available on the design studio and on Circle. | Internal audiences will be informed of the potential for wider university-driven enhancements that may have been identified through the modelling process. External audiences will have access to these models to inform their work and as a comparison/example. |
| Academic Models | Report on flexible academic models in use and a new academic model framework. | Internal audiences and external audiences for same reasons given above. |
| Video / Audio Clips to exemplify practice of engaging stakeholders in curriculum design review | A selection of no more than 6 videos and audio clips showing practice of engaging stakeholders (academic, support staff, students and other) in curriculum design review. | Both internal and external audiences to share examples of practice and/or issues. |
| Project Materials | Three rich pictures outlining stakeholder's perceptions of curriculum design & delivery at the University of Greenwich are available on Circle and the design studio. | Both internal and external audiences to share examples of practice and/or issues. |

Expected Technical Outputs

The University of Greenwich uses a proprietary student records and associated systems ("Banner") from SunGard Higher Education and where necessary adds or alters functions and processes in response to identified need.

Stakeholder feedback to date has emphasised the need for enhanced functionality to deliver improvements to staff and students' experiences of their teaching and learning and of the institution generally. This will be achieved by developing more streamlined systems and processes for one or more of the following scenarios:

- where students study concurrent curricula; require variations in their speed of study or seek to enrol on courses at any point in the year
- where stakeholders have identified the need for an improved self service interface for students to identify, select, register for and pay for their study at course level
- where stakeholders have identified they need better access to data that meets their needs, for example better tracking of course/programme validation and review dates and workflow.

To achieve these outputs the project is working with stakeholders to map existing processes and to

produce and test detailed functional and technical specifications for targeted development.

For the period from November 2009 – April 2010 the project can report that functional and technical specifications have been produced to deliver better tracking of course/programme validation and review dates in the University's student record system, Banner. These modifications have been developed and are currently being tested and are due to be fully rolled out from September 2010.

It is recognised that managing development and making enhancements within a vendor based systems environment presents particular challenges. For this reason the process maps and functional and technical specifications produced as part of UG-Flex can also be considered project outputs as they will be of interest to external audiences, particularly universities. Many HEIs in the UK and worldwide work with the same or similar product-based applications and it is envisaged that the technical documentation can be used to inform potential enhancement and development in other institutions. The project team plans to share what they have learned through UK-based networks of users as well as at forthcoming European and Worldwide SunGard conferences.

The following outputs have been produced in this reporting period:

- Summary of recommendations arising out of review of University's validation and review process
- Business Requirements Document for enhancements to Approval & Review Processes Systems
- Technical Specification Document for enhancements to Approval & Review Processes & Systems
- Validation & Review Process Maps (available on Circle and the design studio)
- Rich Pictures produced by stakeholders (available on Circle and the design studio).
- Updated project website and simplified URL www.gre.ac.uk/ILS/ugflex
- Map of current registration and progression points at University of Greenwich showing scenarios of non-standard models (currently a work in progress and available on request)

Section Five: Evaluation

The UG-Flex project is committed to ensuring that evaluation is an ongoing and holistic process that informs the project throughout its lifetime and beyond. To this end the project has undertaken the following evaluation activities in this reporting period:

1. A significant proportion of the December 2009 project management group meeting was given over to formative evaluation of the project. Members were asked to spend some time in silence brainstorming a series of questions relating to UG-Flex as follows: project management infrastructure, communication & dissemination and stakeholder engagement. Using principles taken from nominal group technique (NGT), participants were then asked to feedback in a round robin style one point at a time. Discussion was limited to questions for clarification. General discussion and some prioritisation then followed during which notes

were taken. This approach proved effective in ensuring that no one voice or interest dominated the discussion, as all members of the project management group were able to share their views and insights.

A report on this evaluation activity was discussed at the Management Group meeting in January. It was noted that a strong theme emerging in the discussions related to the implications and impact on the project of an uneven spread of school and office engagement with the project. It was agreed that the project manager should continue to work to secure active participation in the project from representatives from all schools and offices, specifically through seeking to present on the project at scheduled school and office meetings.

2. In January 2010 Professor Ian McNay and Dr Margaret Andrews commenced work as the project's independent evaluators and were tasked with reviewing the project's evaluation plan and the techniques and approaches proposed.

At a series of meeting with the project manager they advised that they would be in a position to comment on the evaluation plan once they fully understood the project. Consequently background briefings were given along with access to all project documents. These documents were subsequently scrutinised in great detail.

In early April 2010 Professor McNay and Dr Andrews met with the project staff team (the project manager, business analyst and programmer/developer) to report back on their findings. A short report was discussed and will be presented to the next meeting of the project management group in May 2010.

The evaluators were at pains to stress their view that the focus of UG-Flex was very ambitious and the project risked over extending itself against the resource available. A series of recommendations were made in relation to tightening the project delivery plan and enhancing the support given to the project team from practitioners, in both academic and support areas

The evaluators expressed the opinion that the evaluation plan contained appropriate areas for evaluation and indicated that further guidance on appropriate summative evaluation measures, along with sources, methods etc. would be possible once the issues raised in their initial report had been addressed.

In terms of benefits to the project, this contribution from the independent evaluators was both timely and critical. With hindsight it would have been useful to have this additional external perspective at the point when the project plan and was being drafted and this has been noted as a lesson learned.

3. The project manager and other members of the core project team have continued to use the lessons learned log and the project blog, Twitter and the Cluster's CAMEL meetings to reflect on the project and their practice as well as and the techniques used to plan and review, support,

engage, communicate and disseminate.

For examples of how the project blog is being used as a tool for reflection go to

<http://ugflex.blogspot.com/2010/04/greenwich-camel-meeting-24-25-march.html>

<http://ugflex.blogspot.com/2009/10/curriculum-and-design-programme-meeting.html>

Using Web 2.0 tools as an evaluation mechanism is not a technique that has come easily or naturally to the members of the project who use them. Issues about the target audience and individual privacy are questions that are being addressed on what is essentially a “try it and see” basis.

Observations to date are:

- Blogging on the project blog is time consuming – posts could be most usefully described as “mini reports” and a considerable amount of time and thought goes into the content. It is unproven that these reports are of interest outside the immediate CDD programme.
- Micro blogging (e.g. Twitter) is less time consuming since there is a word limit but is proving to be a useful reflection of key moments in the project.
- Further guidance on what works and what doesn’t in relation to project blogs would be welcomed and/or may be an additional project output.

Section Six: Outcomes and Lessons Learned

The original challenge UG-Flex set out to address was to deliver enhancements that would improve the choice and experience of learning for students on flexible programmes of study.

Through extensive consultation with stakeholders the project team identified six broad areas of investigation where recognised problems were grouped.

The project has started from a position where their ability to deliver was untested and unproven and in an institutional context where mistrust and resistance to change tends to prevail over optimism. For this reason the project took a decision to seek a “quick win” by tackling an area of investigation where there was a clear sponsor and supporters and where relatively small enhancements could have a significant impact. The project defined a “quick win” as achieving credibility with key stakeholders and a reputation for an ability to deliver solutions to identified problems.

The project recommends that the following factors are carefully considered and inform any

decision to seek a “quick win”:

- Has the project identified clear overall goals, deliverables and activities?
- do you have a strong sponsor/champion with sufficient influence to deliver the quick win?
- is the balance between investment of time and impact of change weighted towards low investment and high impact?
- are the main beneficiaries of the change central to the wider change your project seeks to deliver?
- to what extent is the change proposed a recognised/shared business imperative?
- are you confident that the primary agents of change will deliver what they promise in the required timescale?
- Is the project in a position to delegate work to others and/or lever additional resources?

At this stage the project can report that the strategy of seeking a “quick win” for the project by tackling aspects of the University’s systems and processes that support validation and review has delivered both benefits and challenges as follows:

- The project has delivered a well received review of the University’s systems and processes around validation and review and has championed four recommendations for enhancements.
- Enhancements to the way to university records and tracks key dates and information on approval and review are well underway and are due to be rolled out from September 2010
- Awareness of the project is high among staff dealing with quality issues; expectations are also high as is the likelihood of buy in to future work by the project;
- Enhancements in relation to other recommendations arising out of the review of the University’s validation and review processes are associated with UG-Flex but the immediate project team has limited influence and resources to contribute.
- Awareness of the project remains low among staff in some areas and the project is seen as a threat or irrelevant / of limited importance in some areas where delivering flexibility involves considerable change/expense.
- A challenge for the project is to manage expectations of what the project can deliver – something the project had already recognised as an issue. In short the level of work that has gone into the recent review cannot be replicated for the remaining five areas of investigation and it is therefore necessary to prioritise.

At this stage it is not possible to offer a definitive answer as to whether this scope creep could have been avoided or if it is a necessary part of a project that seeks to deliver lasting organisational change through stakeholder consultation. However, a lesson learned is that it is essential to be prepared for this eventuality. In the event, UG-Flex’s project management infrastructure has proved effective in identifying and addressing scope creep.

Section Seven: Communication and Dissemination Activities

Two members of the project team presented a workshop at the AUA annual conference in March 2010 at University of Warwick on “the role of administrators in revealing and enhancing curriculum design processes”.

The aim of the paper was to describe why UG-Flex believes it is necessary to capture and act on the expertise of administrators alongside academic staff to reveal and enhance systems and business processes in order to deliver a more agile and diverse curriculum, how we have set about doing this and the benefits/challenges/impact so far.

Among our 40+ audience (much more than we expected!) a diverse range of views emerged ranging from “curriculum design is nothing to do with me and I don’t want it to be” to “yes we’re involved but in a clearly structured manner as defined by clear processes and procedures that don’t need to be reviewed” and a few more who felt “yes, it is absolutely right for administrators to have a view on and be involved in curriculum design processes and this is why....”

It was significant that many in the audience (i.e. administrators in HEIs) didn’t recognise UG-Flex’s definition of curriculum design as a process that needs to take in account the complex set of dimensions concerning both the learning students will achieve (i.e. pedagogical issues) and how that learning will be facilitated/supported/structured/delivered/funded. It is a consideration that it might have been better to delay and go to the AUA conference with a more definitive product/outcome which could be used to evidence our view that administrators have a role in curriculum design processes.

In addition the project has used the following other methods of communicating the project’s work:

- Presentations at formal meetings; these have concentrated on internal University meetings and serve as an opportunity to give updates on the project’s progress;
- 1-2-1 meetings, particularly with newly engaged stakeholders or where detailed and specific information is required;
- An article on the project was published in the University of Greenwich’s staff magazine “Greenwich Line” in March 2010 and so far this has resulted in 2 members of staff contacting the project manager to find out more;
- CAMEL meetings involving other members of the CDD’s design cluster B, in this reporting period UG-Flex hosted a CAMEL meeting in Greenwich on 24-25th March 2010. Feedback can be found at: http://blogs.cf.ac.uk/palet/entry/no_camel_route_is_long
<http://blogs.test.bcu.ac.uk/tsparc/2010/03/29/feedback-from-university-of-greenwich-camel-meeting-including-session-with-qa/>
<http://ugflex.blogspot.com/2010/04/greenwich-camel-meeting-24-25-march.html>

- The project's portal group which contains all project documents, links and relevant related information (available to students and staff at the University of Greenwich) tends to be most used by members of the project's management group;
- The project's web pages on the University of Greenwich website have been revised and there is also a simplified URL at www.gre.ac.uk/ILS/ugflex. This communication resource was useful when speculative emails were sent out to Oxford Brookes, LSE and Middlesex. The project's web pages, rather than the project's portal group appear to be the preferred source of information about the UG-Flex project used by members of staff at the University of Greenwich.
- Members of the core project team have continued to post to the project blog at www.ugflex.blogspot.com. Visits to the blog have increased in this reporting period, as have the numbers responding to posts (although this remains very low overall). Posting details of new posts Twitter results in a short-term increase in the number of visitors to the blog. A possible reason for the lack of apparent interest in the project blog is that it is trying to do too many things; entries are a mixture of reports on events/activities and postings on issues that relates, very broadly to flexibility in the curriculum. It is the latter that has stimulated the most responses/discussion and it may be that this is the direction the blog should go in. Reports on project activities and meetings might be better reported on elsewhere.
- Twitter tends to be used to provide very brief updates on significant project moments/events (progress, challenges, frustrations). Additionally Twitter functions as a conduit for sporadic interaction with other members of CDD design cluster b. although email tends to be the preferred tools for more detailed enquiries/information exchange.
- Circle has been used in this reporting period to post some project assets. These have latterly also been posted on the Design Studio. The project has to date only received feedback on assets posted via Circle.
- Project postings on YouTube have reduced significantly in this reporting period. One reason is the quality of video captured using the Flip Camera is poor. The project is investigating purchasing new equipment and has received advice from the PALET project team on this.

Section Eight: Collaboration and Support

Contact with the JISC programme manager, critical friends and support team has continued throughout this reporting period and the project does not have any specific needs or requests at this stage over and above the support we currently receive.

Of note is how following individuals from the programme/support team on Twitter has proved to be a useful way of keeping up-to-date. For example, a tweet prompted the project manager to get in touch with the support team to share information on QAA/quality issues.

Marianne Shepherd from the support team was also very helpful in providing support to enable a conference call to take place between members of design Cluster B to discuss a joint submission to ALT-C 2010. The project also appreciated Marianne's efforts in putting together a further submission to ALT-C in collaboration with UG-Flex and other projects in the CDD programme.

The project team has continued to benefit from the community of practice that has developed in design Cluster B, as noted in the blog post referred to previously. The project manager is contributing to a joint workshop by members of the cluster at the SEDA Spring Teaching and Learning Conference in Leeds on 6-7 May 2010. Further reflections on why our cluster has worked well will follow after the workshop.

The project team was able to call on the help of our critical friend at very short notice to help staff to identify the key questions we needed to ask in order to narrow the project's scope. This help was given at a "critical" time in a supportive and non-judgemental manner, which was much appreciated. The meeting has since led to further good progress in a very short period of time.

Section Nine: Financial Statement

Please refer to separate Excel file: *UG-Flex Budget Report to JISC 29.04.10*