

Toolkit & Demonstrator Final Report (v0a)

Project name/acronym:	Minted (Moodle Integration with Enterprise Data)
Project website/blog address:	http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/minted
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Methodology

The Prince2 project management methodology was used as a framework for managing the Minted project and was effective in providing structure for the work undertaken.

As recommended, public forums were used as our main mode of communication on the project. Bugs and other issues arising from the CETIS-ES SDK were raised on the CETIS-ES source forge project forums. The Moodle forums were also used as appropriate.

The project blog was found to be a very useful tool for self-reflection, communication with other Minted team members and our wider department, and for communication with other JISC project teams and with CETIS.

The technologies used were J2EE, SOAP, WSDL, XML, SQL and PHP.

The Moodle components of the Minted project have been made available within the moodle.org site, also available via the project site at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/minted>. Minted java helper packages for CETIS-ES will be made available via the CETIS-ES source forge site.

Implementation

Please see <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/minted> for details on this.

Outputs and Results

Please see <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/minted> for details on this.

Implications

The Minted project has made a considerable effort to make it easier for other projects to use the CETIS-ES toolkit. As a demonstrator project, one of our key aims was to make it easier for others to build on the work we have done.

The CETIS-ES toolkit currently provides Java packages that are required both for the server side and for the client side of the web service. As Moodle and many other candidate systems for integration using CETIS-ES are PHP systems, it would be extremely useful if there was a PHP SOAP version of the client packages. This would be a useful addition to the software components available to support the Enterprise services within the e-learning framework.

As an additional part of the work we undertook in the Minted project, we explored the feasibility of using a REST-style approach to implementing IMS Services. This is described on our project site (see <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/minted/index.php?page=discussion>). REST implementations can have a smaller footprint than SOAP ones, both in terms of the ease of development and implementation and in terms of the speed of processing. We think it would be a very worthwhile future development to offer IMS services via a REST approach. This would considerably lower the barriers of entry for other institutions.

Conclusions

Please see <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/minted>.

Recommendations

In terms of how the programme is taken forward, we would definitely support the continued use of blogs and other collaborative tools for project communications. We felt we benefited a great deal from the community aspects of the JISC programme, and would welcome its continuation and development for future programme strands.

In terms of engaging Higher and Further Education communities with the e-learning framework, we feel that further development of REST-style approaches may have an important role to play as they offer relatively low barriers of entry.