



Date 08 December 2014
Subject LRS Customer Scrutiny Group
Location The Media Suite, Cheylesmore House, Coventry CV1 2WT
Time 10.30
Publication intent NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Present Robin Gadd (Brockenhurst College & Chair), Carolyn Savage (Skills Funding Agency), Jon Dalton (Skills Funding Agency), Joe Billington (Skills Funding Agency), Stephen McMillan (DfES Wales), Richard Cookson (Skills Funding Agency), Greg Fowler (Skills Funding Agency), Carole Morley (Skills Funding Agency), Caroline Mason (Skills Funding Agency), Ian Morgan (WJEC), Jonathan Couper (AQA), Jeanette Miller (Southampton Local Authority), Patrick Craven (C&G), Andrew Harland (EOA), Mike Cox (AELP), Terry Gibbons (C&G), Mike Birch (EFA),

Dialing in Michael Butterworth (OCR), Tim Wakefield (EDEXCEL)

Apologies Apologies have been received from:
Jasmin Masih (EOA), Bryan Horne (OFQUAL), Daniel Walker (UCAS), Dave Craig (EFA, (Mike Birch substituted)), Ian Turfrey (C&G), Jane Wild (HESA), Jennifer Mullis (BIS), Stella Turner (AELP), Theresa Consiglio (DELNI)

Guest presenter Andy Youell (HEDIIP) for Agenda item 8

Item 1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies on behalf of absent members and introductions made.

Item 2. Minutes of last meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the last meeting held on 25th September 2014 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Item 3. Action log

- 3.1 It was agreed that action points CSG183, CSG184, CSG185, CSG 187, CSG 188, can now be closed.
- 3.2 CSG182 and CSG 186 will remain.

Item 4. Performance Report (paper)

- 4.1 The Group was presented with the July 2014 – September 2014 LRS Performance Report (Paper C)
- 4.2 The attention of the group was drawn to: 1.9, relating to the extension of the IDA contract. 3.5 relating to agreement with FISSS and uploading Apprenticeship achievements 3.8 An update of meetings which had taken place and the expectation that business cases would be submitted to DAG and subsequently this group. 4.5 Reviews are currently happening and the Agency will seek the views of the members. Samantha Bestwick, Head of Citizen Digital Services at the Skills Funding Agency has been working with Cabinet Office on this and is invited to the next CSG meeting to provide an update.
- 4.3 Questions were invited. It was asked whether there is a timeline on 3.5 it was stated it is flagged as a priority area and work is underway.

Item 5. Security Forum Update (verbal)

- 5.1 A verbal update was given to the group.
- 5.2 It was explained that there has been a rise in incidents being logged and noted that unencrypted information has been sent into the Service Desk. In response, and in line with Agency policy, communications have been sent out to providers.
- 5.3 The group fed back that around September there is a rise in temporary staff and this may have an effect. This was noted and it was stated that the onus is on providers to ensure data is secure. The Agency has a process to deal with security breaches and this will be followed including where an organisation has more than 1 breach the Principal will be contacted.
- 5.4 Discussion followed regarding the possibility of moving away from email to a web-form approach and it was agreed that this would need to be discussed with the users/organisations with whom the Agency interacts. This was agreed and it was suggested that the issue be taken to the next security forum. **ACTION: CSG189 SFA to take to security forum.**
- 5.5 The group discussed constraints with service providers, staff changes, the user-friendliness of any adopted system and the peak times in the information exchange calendar. It was agreed that census dates would be taken into account and reflected in the demand plan.
- 5.6 The Chair summed up the conversation, the Agency advised that governance arrangements were being looked at across Consumer Services and an update would be given to members at the next meeting. **ACTION: CSG190**

Item 6. Data Management Update

- 6.1 The Group were presented with the Data Management Update (Paper D), National Headline Report (Annex A) and Shared ULN Issue Paper (Annex B)
- 6.2 A narrative was given for Paper D bringing attention to the possibility of a commercial data matching product being utilised by the LRS in the future.
- 6.3 Regarding data quality (Annex A) a brief narrative was given to the group and the opportunity for questions, none were raised.
- 6.4 Achievement Data Loads to the PLR. It was stated that the information in point 8 which wasn't available at the last meeting has now been included. An update from DfE data relating to the independent schools sector shows that when taking into account the independent schools there is a 3-4% short-fall of non-supplied achievement data the majority of which is most likely overseas learners. All Awarding Organisations were formally thanked for the uploading of their data.
- 6.5 It was stated that there were no Change Requests to report from the Data Advisory Group (DAG), some business cases were still expected. The main topic discussed at DAG was that contained in Annex B, this was then covered in a narrative and members were encouraged to review.
- 6.6 The question of whether the UPN could be used in the LRS search protocol was raised and this was discussed amongst the group. It was agreed that this could be looked into against LRS development plans and priorities and would need to be costed.
- 6.7 Discussion continued to include UPN criteria and whether the independent sector could adopt it. **ACTION: CSG191 Referral to be made to BIS.**

Item 7. Supply Chain Transformation

- 7.1 The group were shown a slide presentation and a verbal narrative was given to include background to some of the stages illustrated in the slides.
- 7.2 It was noted that the LRS Service Charter has been realigned with a single desk and single times. The Agency has the ability to flex-up and down as per known requirements.
- 7.3 Now that the Agency have moved to a multi supplier model a Service Management Integration (SMI) partner has been engaged; BAES provide this service. This means the Agency will be performing more of an assurance role, leaving suppliers to do their job and run the services. It was stated that there has been an awful lot of work going on in the background but we have managed to maintain a seamless service to customers.
- 7.4 A question was raised regarding how many services has been discontinued and it was stated that figures for decommissioned services would be supplied to the group. **ACTION: CSG192**
- 7.5 The group were assured that services had been reviewed by teams including the Deputy Directors.
- 7.6 The group were also advised that the Chief Technology Officer's (CTO) team) have been working on retiring systems in order to save money but

were also keen that when new systems were being built for the future the new one would not just run alongside the old one; More focus is being placed on ensuring we decommission old legacy systems when new ones are live and running.

- 7.7 Over the last 6 months the Agency has undergone a significant volume of change; we have changed from predominantly being supported by a single Tier 1 IT supplier, to many smaller suppliers coupled with going through a significant Agency wide transition process. From an LRS perspective the system has been stable and successfully maintained through a time of substantial changes.
- 7.8 LRS Progress – Cloud readiness: Proof of concept is done, SMI & new Service desk tool is in place, the service desk has moved to a new supplier. Members were advised their feedback was very welcome as to whether their users had seen any impact, positive or negative, following these changes.
- 7.9 Full cloud transition is more challenging and there is more integration and end to end testing to do. Originally we were hoping to deliver for March 2015 however it is now expected to be May 2015 to ensure full testing, it was also stated that critical awarding times would need to be avoided.
- 7.1 Disaster Recovery (DR) – Disaster Recovery (DR) – the current offering is that the system will be back up and running within 8 hours of DR being formally invoked. Replication of data is in place to ensure that in the event of DR being invoked, there will be no more than 5 minutes loss of data. This solution is fairly comprehensive and was designed when the LRS was originally developed over 7 years ago. It is however a fairly expensive solution to run. As part of SCT we need to review and replace the solution, so changes to the current service will be required. We are currently working with suppliers to establish a solution that provides a service that fits with the business requirement but which is also cost effective to deliver and run. We are under pressure to reduce costs across the Agency so a reduction in service is likely. As we move to new cloud technologies there are opportunities to change the way we approach resilience so we will be exploring all options. Naturally, any changes to the DR solution will be made in collaboration with stakeholders and through the agreed governance channels.
- 7.2 Some questions were raised regarding the siting of the data and members were assured that a private cloud is being used and data would remain 'on-shore'. There followed open discussion on data sensitivity and members were again assured that the Agency is mindful of sensitive personal data.

Item 8. HEDIIP Presentation

- 8.1 Andy Youell from HEDIIP joined the meeting to make a presentation and was welcomed to the group by the chair
- 8.2 A narrative was provided alongside the slide presentation and questions were invited from the group:

- 8.3 It was established that the main criteria of why data was collected is for the course accreditation process and membership or license to practice issues as found in medicine or dentistry.
- 8.4 It was asked if there will be challenges as Universities have autonomy and want to keep their data private. It was acknowledged that Universities are fiercely protective however they need funding and need accredited training courses otherwise their offer is less attractive.
- 8.5 The group discussed the burden of data systems to providers and how from the delivery point-of-view systems need to be more uniform and the possibility of bringing things together through the use of the ULN. It was agreed that it's about going back to the interface, the why something is being done, for whose benefit.
- 8.6 It was offered that schools have a common transfer file, different sets of data which go through secure fields to whoever needs it and would it be possible to start with a core data set? HEDIIP advised that their work so far was around personal core data and not yet at provider level.
- 8.7 A question was raised around timescales and HEDIIP confirmed they have been running for 3 months and they're now pulling together the analysis and identifying issues, round 2 will be to validate their understanding of those issues. March or April 2015 is the target for having an approach to the ULN for Higher Education (HE).
- 8.8 Discussion followed regarding the demand in the system, the financial drivers for widening access and a need to remember who this is being done for. It was stated that the White paper 'Students at the Heart of the System' made that clear and this should be reflected in how the data flows.
- 8.9 Degrees are not yet uploaded into the PLR and it's only a matter of time before students start asking why not.
- 8.10 A proposal was made to the group that HEDIIP be formally invited to become a member of the Customer Scrutiny Group, the chair opened this to the members for discussion. Agreement was given.
- 8.11 HEDIIP thanked the membership and advised that HEDIIP is an organisation with a particular remit, therefore limited lifespan – with that caveat noted HEDIIP was welcomed to the group.

Item 9. Any other business

- 9.1 Steve MacMillan of DfES Wales advised that because of a restructure this would be the last meeting he attended. It was not yet confirmed who would be attending in the future however a colleagues name was supplied for the secretariat. Terry Gibbons of C&G also advised that this would be the last meeting he attended and he was handing over to other C&G colleagues to attend in future.
- 9.2 The Chair, on behalf of the group, thanked both members for their contributions to meetings and wished them well for the future.
- 9.3 The SFA advised members that because of a commonality of agenda items and membership the PLR Implementation group and the Data Advisory Group would now become one meeting group. Both groups had been

consulted and agreement reached. The SFA will continue to co-ordinate and provide secretariat to the DAG.

9.4 It was proposed that an audit of membership takes place to ensure organisation and contact details were up-to-date. This would take place before the next meeting. **ACTION: CSG193**

9.5 The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Item 10. Date of next meeting

10.1 The next meeting of the Committee will take place at **11.30 on Thursday 5th March 2015** in the Media Suite, Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry, CV1 2WT.

Meeting chair	Robin Gadd
Minutes creator	Dena Read
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