



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

## **Council Oversight Group: Student Lifecycle Project (Meeting held on 18 October 2018)**

**Chair:** Mr Adrian Belton

**Secretary:** Mrs Rebecca Barker

### **1. Background**

In February 2016, Council received and approved a proposal to establish a Group to oversee the project, together with its terms of reference and membership. The project was subsequently been renamed Student Lifecycle Project to better reflect the scope of the project and recognise that it is IT-enabled rather than IT-led.

The Oversight Group is chaired by Mr Adrian Belton and focuses on governance oversight matters, while the more detailed work associated with the programme is the domain of a Programme Board (chaired by the Director of Academic Services) and an Executive Sponsorship Group (chaired by the Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor).

This project represents a significant opportunity for the University but its large scale and complexity necessitated the engagement and support of a wide-range of colleagues across the organisation.

### **2. Progress to date**

The Group met on 18 October 2018 to discuss the following:

- 2.1 Overview of the project's progress: An update on the progress to date in relation to the implementation phase of the project and the critical developments required for the 2019/20 academic year.

The project is currently undergoing a review of the essential requirements that are needed to facilitate the transition of the student record to the Strategic Information Technology System (SITS) ahead of the 2019/20 academic year. Central to this review is the need to facilitate new statutory requirements, in particular Data Futures – a change to the statutory reporting requirements in the UK that is being implemented in early 2020.

This review is due to be completed late October and it was agreed that the outcomes of this review would be discussed at the next meeting of the Oversight Group.

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The project is currently operating within the allocated budget with a further c£15m to spend over 3 years.

Reflection on what is going well, and why, to ensure that: (a) the learning is being captured and embedded notwithstanding changes in senior leadership (e.g. new VC and Director of CICS); and (b) the importance of leadership in encouraging openness, candour and willingness to learn, thereby linking to institutional culture

regarding capacity, capability, and readiness for transformational change more generally.

It is important to appreciate that the project has progressed to a point where it cannot realistically be paused or stopped, in the context of a new regulatory regime and the recent data futures considerations.

- 2.2 Primary Risk Update: The Interim Director of CICS provided a status update on the primary risks associated with the delivery of the project.

A new IT director had been appointed and would continue to sit under the leadership of the Director of EFM, whose new title will be Director of Infrastructure.

An update on risk should be a standing item on the Oversight Group's agenda.

- 2.3 PwC state gate review: PwC's third Programme Assurance Report was presented by a representative from PwC (Mr Stewart Light). This review was two-fold:

- To perform a lessons learnt review relating to the progress from blueprint to go-live of the Prospective Student Engagement project (the first project to complete within the programme).
- To review the ongoing integrity of the Business Case.

In relation to Prospective Student Engagement, the report identified a number of areas where documentation had not been updated to reflect how lessons learned had been actioned and embedded into new approaches and practices; that greater collaboration with Tribal is required to clearly define technical solutions and agree a combined resource plan that minimises risk; and that a more active dependency management is required to ensure that identified and documented dependencies are not overlooked during development.

With regards to the Business Case, the report noted that since the start of the project a number of external factors have impacted the project and there would be value in incorporating information on these into the Business Case, especially relating to GDPR and Data Futures. It also noted that a further review is required in relation to the Primary Risks and Strategic Benefits to ensure that the up-to-date position is represented.

The main focus of the Oversight Group's discussion related to good practice as highlighted by PwC:

- A positive culture which is keen embrace change and challenge.
- Strong buy-in from stakeholders across the institution.
- Ability to learn from past lessons, particularly relating to the Agile approach.

It was noted that the Sponsoring Group had accepted the management comments and the recommendations were being adopted. It was agreed that a high-level phasing and budget update to would be brought to the next meeting of the Oversight Group.

### **3. Next steps**

In terms of next steps, it was agreed that Council should receive a prospective as well as a retrospective overview of the project for new members with a particular emphasis on the assurances around risk. The Student Lifecycle Project Overview and the Student Lifecycle Project Service Change Timeline are available to view in the related Council Reading Room.

The next meeting of the Group would take place in Spring following the completion of the next stage gate review (date to be confirmed).