DEVELOP Steering Group

11/01 A meeting of the DEVELOP Steering Group was held on Monday 7th March
2011 at 11am in Room 144, HumSS Building, Whiteknights Campus

There were present:
>   Dr Martha-Marie Kleinhans - Chair
>   Ms Maria Papaefthimou - Project Manager
>   Mr Mike Roch - Director, IT Services
>   Mr David Stanbury - Internal academic stakeholder
>   Mr Edward Bates - Student stakeholder
>   Mr Mark Gamble - External stakeholder
>   Mr Steve Ryan - External stakeholder
>   Ms Sarah Sherman - External stakeholder
>   Ms Jane Adams – Secretary
>
>   Mr Guy Pursey – by invitation
>   Mr Karsten Lundqvist – by invitation
>   Professor Shirley Williams – by invitation

Apologies were received from:
>   Professor Rob Robson - Pro-Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning
>   Dr Julia Phelps - Director, Centre for the Development of T&L
>   Dr Yota Dimitriadi - Internal academic stakeholder
>   Dr Karen Ayres - Internal academic stakeholder
>   Mr Aaron Sollesse - Student stakeholder

11/02 **Minutes of the last meeting**
The minutes of the last meeting, held on 9th December 2010 were
approved.

11/03 **Matters Arising**
Ms Papaefthimiou reported that all the actions from the last meeting were
currently being carried out through attendance and networking at the
Durham conference, networking with JISC and also the anticipated
discussion at the JISC widget bash at the end of March.

11/04 **ASSET video widget demonstration**
Mr Lundqvist demonstrated the video drop-box in Blackboard version 8
including instructions of how to embed videos into the VLE. It was noted
that in previous demonstrations to other University contacts greater
guidance for first time users was requested and this is currently being
developed.

The Steering Group asked for confirmation that this functionality would
be suitable within other VLEs and this was provided by Mr Lundqvist.

11/05   JISC interim report (and feedback to the response from JISC via email)

Ms Papaefthimiou gave an overview of the feedback received from JISC advising that they had been please to hear that involvement in the steering group had resulted in external institutions becoming interested in the project's outcomes. The feedback from JISC however indicated that use of Blackboard building blocks in the project was not their preferred approach and suggested that the project re-consider an open standards approach. Whilst it was agreed that JISC's feedback would be taken into consideration the steering group supported the Blackboard building blocks as being the most suitable way of testing functionality of what is being developed given that Blackboard if the institutional VLE for the University of Reading; but also as value for money given the number of other institutions both within and outside the UK using Blackboard as their VLE.

It was also reiterated that the tools and widgets being developed are openly available on the web for other external users to adapt to their own VLEs. The group made clear that Blackboard building blocks are only the "view" into Blackboard and with some modifications on the code they could be used with other platforms.

Further discussion took place about the proposed response to JISC. The group suggested that Ms Papaefthimiou both reassure JISC of the intention to meet the original remit of the project and inform them of the acceptance of a paper for the Leeds Blackboard conference in April. The group are confident that the widgets will be suitable for use beyond the project and by other institutions.

Actions: MCP to draft a response to JISC. MMK to check this before it is sent.

11/06   Scoping documents

Following discussion at the last meeting a number of scoping documents relating to the widgets under development were circulated the group for discussion.

Tagging and Recommender widget – Mr Lundqvist advised that at present it is not possible to add buttons to existing content within Blackboard. This prompted a group discussion regarding the capability of tagging within the widget but it was suggested that the team look to reduce the complexity of the widget. This could include splitting up the tagging and recommender aspects of the widget. The group cautioned against squeezing the timeframe set aside for evaluation and to remain conscious of the project's limitations both in time and scope. It was agreed that the team should investigate a more stable prototype with settings that could be turned on or off as appropriate. Whilst Ms Papaefthimiou advised that discussion had already taken place regarding separating the widget functions and had been discounted the group requested that that this be reconsidered.

Action: MCP, GP and KL to discuss and consider the splitting of the widget functions

ASSET video widget – It was agreed that this is easily useable in other platforms as previously demonstrated.

Content widget – It was clarified that this widget would be focusing on content from the University's "Destinations" website and would be an internal function which could be developed at a later date to include other internal and external resources. The group agreed this was useful and would be useable in other platforms. Further discussion took place about the license and authentication implications of this within Blackboard.

Portfolio widget – Clarification was requested about whether this was an enhanced version of the existing portfolio tool and whether there was use for it outside of Blackboard; it was however suggested that it could be transferable to other platforms. Particular interest was paid to the ability to provide feedback and as such the dialogue which could take place between students and lecturers. It was suggested that the team may want to present this function closer to the completion date of the project.

11/07 Piloting widgets with externals

Ms Papaefthimiou asked whether any of the external stakeholders would be interested in piloting any of the widgets within their own institutions. Mr Gamble expressed an interest in piloting the ASSET video widget providing there were no complications with accessing the server. It was agreed that this would be a useful way to test whether lecturers found this useful and give a good grounding in pedagogy. Ms Sherman could not commit to trialling the widgets within Blackboard due to discussions about a change of VLE within her institution however advised she would be happy to try testing widgets in Moodle should that be the system adopted. Ms Sherman also suggested contacting London users of Blackboard to test the widgets as part of the pilot.

Mr Stanbury expressed interest in testing the content widget with the "Destinations" users providing there was sufficient technical support for this.

> **Action: MCP, GP and KL to discuss technical specifications relating to piloting the content widget in "Destinations" with DS**

11/08 Any other business

Ms Sherman and Mr Ryan advised they would be unable to attend the next meeting.

11/09 The next meeting of the DEVELOP Steering Group will be held on **Wednesday 4th May 2011 at 1pm in Room 101, Henley Business School**, Whiteknights Campus.