

ITS USER GROUP

Meeting Number 2.

Minutes of the meeting held on 20th April 2009.

Chair: Dr Basem El-Haddadeh

Present: Ms Vicky Annand, Ms Linda Agili, Ms Angela Bibby, Dr Jacqueline Cooke, Mrs Marl'ene Edwin, Ms Julie Graves, Mr Barry Hayward, Ms Rachael Johnson, Ms Rebekah Lee, Mr Eamonn Martin, Ms Tanith McCrindle, Mr Pdraig O'Connor, Ms Jane Offerman, Ms Jessica Pavlos, Ms Tuula Juvonen-Rasen, Mr Mike Riley, Ms Vivienne Rose, Mr David Smith, Ms Sue Tarhan, Mr Tomas Valeuzuela, Kate Fisher (Secretary)

Apologies: Ms Antoinette Gooding, Ian Hannent, Dr Jacqueline Rattray, Ms Vannessa Smith, Pete Rogers

Tomas Valeuzuela attended in place of Pete Rogers for Design
Dr Rekha Diwakar attended in place of Bernadette Buckley for Politics

1 Terms of reference

Sent electronically and on web.

2 Matters Arising from the minutes

(a) College IT Strategy

Noted that:

- (i) the ITS college strategy has now been approved by Council.
- (ii) it has been agreed that the college will fund all necessary IT infrastructure.
- (iii) due to the funding squeeze in place, project proposals and a business cases will have to be raised for certain aspects of the ITS Strategy.

Resolved:

- (i) that an implementation plan now needs to be created. ITS will be looking for feedback from the group in order to help create this.

(b) Student Records System Update

Noted that:

- (i) final negotiations with the remaining two possible suppliers are to take place in mid May with a view to signing a contract by the end of May.
- (ii) it is hoped that the core modules will be rolled out by the end of the year with other modules being added after this.

(c) Bulk order system

Noted that:

- (i) Dell have agreed to keep that same discount that they offered us under the bulk order system but it will now be possible to place orders throughout the year.
- (ii) Dell have raised their prices by 25%.
- (iii) the User Services group are going to keep a rolling stock of standard desktop machines so that they are able to provide users with these as and when they are needed.
- (iv) as laptops are ordered much less frequently these will continue to be ordered on demand.
- (v) Apple offers no discounts for bulk orders so these will continue to be ordered under a rolling scheme for the time being. Should this prove to become impractical in the future a quarterly order system might be used.
- (vi) the bulk order record system has been altered so it can be uploaded directly on to the finance inventory. This is in order to streamline services to reduce the number of requests from finance for outstanding information to user departments.
- (vii) when departments set up their own machines upon arrival in the college ITS have been unable to issue the machines with an asset number. Rachael Johnson will decide if it is best to pay Dell a fee of £2.50 per machine to issue asset numbers prior to sending the goods out or if ITS technicians should open each box as it comes in and add them on.

(d) Disposal procedure

Noted that:

- (i) there is currently a back log of items awaiting disposal. A walk-in skip has been considered as a solution to this but is not a viable option as hazardous waste can not be put in these skips. The

necessity to securely wipe all data prior to disposal of the machines is also a limitation.

- (ii) the desire of the group to be able to dispose of all IT and electrical goods under the same system has been taken on board and that ITS is currently in discussions with Estates about this.
- (iii) there is still a lack of space in which to store machines while they are awaiting collection.

Resolved that:

- (i) departments are to report any delays in the porters responding to requests for items to be collected for disposal.
- (ii) ITS will organise more frequent collections of disposal items so that the storage area does not become full to capacity.

3 ITS-UG Chair

Noted that:

- (i) college rules require a senior member of academic staff to chair the ITS- UG group.
- (ii) Rosemary Harrison is searching for a suitable member of staff willing to become the chair.

Resolved:

- (i) that if committee members can think of anyone suitable they will pass on a name to Basem El-Haddadeh.

4 Service Level Descriptions (SLDs)

Received:

The link to the webpage outlining ITS SLDs
(www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/it/guides/slds.php)

Noted that:

- (i) as the ITS department is not a private organisation failure to meet service level agreements will not result in a refund or the department getting penalised.
- (ii) it is the responsibility of ITS to meet the agreement but users also have a responsibility to help ITS achieve this.

- (iii) in the event of ITS failing to meet any of the criteria set out in the SDLs, the department shall report this to the college, explain why and look at ways to rectify any issues.
- (iv) whether or not ITS are meeting SLDs targets is to be monitored by key performance indicators in the form of targets within each SLD. An example of this being the response time achieved on requests to the helpdesk where individual requests opening and closing times are logged. This is also the case for requests to the web team which should be answered in 24 – 36 hours (unless an alternative time scale is agreed with the user) failure to respond within this time being seen as a 'fail'.
- (v) qualitative feedback from users is also key to motioning and improving levels of service.
- (vi) having available facts and figures showing how well ITS is doing in terms of meeting their SLDs will help increase transparency and show users what ITS is doing with the funding it is receiving from the college.

Resolved:

- (i) that feed back on the SLDs is to be sent to BEH by the end of the month. The updated SLDs will then be published on ITS web pages.

5 ITS planning consultations update

Noted that:

- (i) the department liaison meetings have a significant impact on what goes into the plans. So far these meeting have been well received and generally feedback has been positive.
- (ii) the user group will be kept updated on trends in the information being gathered from the department liaison meetings including information on areas identified for improvement.

Resolved:

- (i) once the meetings have finished a report on the findings will be sent to Hugh Jones. This will form part of the bigger over all plan for the Administration and Support Departments.

6 Google Apps Education /Microsoft live@edu email for students and/or staff

Noted that:

- (i) the ITS department is currently investigating whether or not using Google or Microsoft as an email provider for students and/or staff would be a good idea.
- (ii) both providers offer their emails service free of charge to educational institutions.
- (iii) if one of these companies were to be used, students would be issued with an email address as soon their place on a course was confirmed. The format of emails addresses would still follow the 'x@gold.ac.uk' format.
- (iv) both providers offer an 'email for life' service which would mean that students could keep their account indefinitely. The advantages of this would include encouraging more students to use their university account thus providing the university with a way of staying in touch with students once their course has finished (it is thought that this would be especially welcomed by the Alumni department). It would also be an advantage for students to be able to keep hold of the data in their emails after completing a course. It would be too expensive for the college to offer email for life on its own system. Surveys have shown that emails accounts are used significantly more when email addresses are offered on a permanent basis.
- (v) It was reported that neither company would advertise via email while a student is still studying at Goldsmiths.
- (vi) the college would retain the right to stop email accounts should the agreed etiquette fail to be maintained and the external company would not be permitted to stop email accounts without consultation with the college.
- (vii) both Google and Microsoft have now agreed to hold all data in the EU under EU data protection laws.
- (viii) using one of these external email systems would mean users had access to other Microsoft/ Google applications such as calendars etc. Google would allow users to use Google applications from anywhere in the world.
- (ix) if the decision to use one of these email providers is reached then the decision as to which one will be made by looking at user feedback from other institutions along with which of the two best fit in with Goldsmiths systems and budgets. When it comes to reaching a decision feedback and in-put from the group will, as always, be vital so the ITS can determine what users want and need and aim to provide this.

7 AOB

- (a) **Update on the roll out of the new website.**

Noted that:

- (i) the college website is being recreated so that departments can update it themselves at any time from anywhere.
- (ii) so far training to departments on how to do this has been ad hoc but classroom based training is soon to be introduced.

(b) Upgrades of Office applications

Noted that:

- (i) the current standard Office applications is the 2003 version.
- (ii) upgrading to 2007 is being considered but this would require a lot of preparation along with college-wide training
- (iii) the Altairis that is being installed will mean that it is much easier to roll new software out across the college.

Resolved that:

- (i) if people are still on 2002 they can email the helpdesk who will come and install 2003 on to machines.
- (ii) the apps team need to be made aware of those Mac that have been upgraded to Office 2008 and are without the spell check function.

(c) IT training

Noted that:

- (i) that the ITS Training Officer and the college Staff Development Officer are currently in discussions to organise IT training being tied in with the other training offered by HR.
- (ii) that it would be useful to hold training courses on varying days of the week to enable those who are unable to make specific days to attend.
- (iii) that Outlook training is available as part of the Outlook roll out. Departments can ask the applications team to supply this.

(d) Oracle problems

Noted that:

- (i) some users had noticed that Outlook seems to run more slowly on some machines when Oracle is installed due to the link between the two. It was suggest that the delay might actually be being caused by running Unit-e.

(e) Support for privately owned computers

Noted:

- (i) the current drop in clinic being run for students is to assist with problems that they experience connecting to the residential network.
- (ii) it is not possible to offer a service to fix staff personal computers as there are not enough resources for this. Doing so would have a negative impact on efficiency and also damage attempts to standardise the support and expertise offered by the technicians.

8 Next Meeting

Noted:

that the next meeting will be held on Thursday 1st October 2009.