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More SIS-ers join the project

As the UNESIS project continues, our team expands to welcome more new SIS-ers helping us reach our go-live date of September 2004.

Bronwyn Robb & Helen Kelemen joined us early March to begin to set up the design for testing our new system configuration. They're focusing on the strategy and test scenarios – setting up test cases and the steps to follow to make sure there are no big surprises when we begin User Acceptance Testing (UAT).



Bronwyn Robb



Helen Kelemen

Brisbane-based, Bronwyn & Helen will work on-site with us about a week each month through May. Although they normally test 'the product', the Callista system is proven, so their attention will focus on how we have configured the system, and making sure the major interfaces work.

Rob Gillon is another new Brisbane-based SIS-ter, working with us to coordinate some of the Callista

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Countdown...6 months to take-off



Callista think tank to tackle Nelson changes

A delegation of UNE representatives attended a two-day Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) summit last month to discuss the effects of the Nelson reforms on the Callista student management system. The summit was coordinated by the Callista Client Services Group (CCSG), a group of all 12 Callista universities working together with the software vendor to determine future developments for the Callista student system (*see January issue*).

The summit was designed to pool expertise and information about the reforms and their implications for member universities of the CCSG. Representatives from four of the universities sit on various committees working with DEST on practical aspects of implementing the reforms, and a number of institutions brought their own experts along to the summit.

The two days were divided into a half-dozen sessions, each focusing on a different aspect of the Nelson reforms and how it will affect student system functionality.

Pressing issues discussed at the sessions included the "learning entitlement" that will limit students' access to public, HECS-funded study, forcing students to finish their undergraduate and postgraduate studies within an allotted time or else pay full fees for the rest of their education. Universities will be required to track how much of a student's learning entitlement has been used while moving between degrees and universities, and to match that figure to a Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN).

This will pose a challenge for student management software developers and the universities they work with. It is still unclear exactly how a student's learning entitlement will be calculated, and responsibility for assigning students with CHESSNs is still to be resolved between DEST, UAC, and Australia's universities. Changes to HECS and PELS will also mean modifying student finance systems. Experts at the summit were able to offer an insight into how these changes might be dealt with, and Callista representatives were on hand to give advice about what the system can and cannot do at present.

Outcomes from the summit included the formation of a working group comprising Callista universities that have already launched their student systems and representatives from Callista Software Services. This group will be charged with working through all the specifications released by DEST and configuring the system to track them. They are expected to present their first report to the CCSG on 23 and 24 March when UNESIS Business Manager, Trevor Edgar – as UNE's representative on the committee – will host the next CCSG meeting at our Sydney centre.

More SIS-ers join the project

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resources (people and their time) dedicated to the UNESIS project. His work generally keeps him in Brisbane, but he'll be back to see us every couple of months. (We can't even scare him away with Armidale winters since his Scottish childhood makes him laugh at our cold!)



Rob Gillon



Michael Fearn-Wannan

Michael Fearn-Wannan, our first Brisbane Callista SIS-ter, thought he had said his final farewells to UNE last year. But he's back to take up the Business Analyst responsibilities that UNESIS Business Manager, Trevor Edgar, had been handling. The Callista Client Strategy Group (CCSG – see page 1 of our January issue), is keeping Trevor running as the group wrestles with the Nelson changes. Whatever the excuse, we're pleased to have Michael working with us again!

Roger Leang has just joined us as Callista's on-site project manager. He'll report to our old mate Dave Naylor, who is moving back to Callista's Geelong headquarters after having spent the last year with us. Besides being a skilled project manager, Roger brings some other dimensions to the UNESIS team. He speaks several Chinese languages and practices Wu-shu (martial arts); but the skill his new SIS-ers are excited about is badminton! He was a Vic-state representative in the sport, and we hope he'll help the UNESIS team in Sport UNE's comp.



Roger Leang



Kerrie Ryan

Kerrie Ryan is one of Callista's senior business analysts who works with their various clients on all aspects of the system. She and Wendy McKergow (see September newsletter) joined us early February

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February prototype demonstrations

More than one hundred and sixty users representing a broad spectrum of UNE staff got a first glimpse of the new Callista student system last month during the prototype demonstrations held on 16, 18, and 20 February. They included academics, school admin assistants, staff from ITD, TLC, Finance, and Student Admin. And at least one student even turned up! The demonstrations were presented by UNESIS Business Analyst Liz Ferris and introduced by Change Manager Carla Gregg.

Many of those who attended the demonstrations did not participate in the analysis phase of the UNESIS Project in 2002 and so had never seen the system in action before. Even those who were involved with the analysis hadn't seen the system for eighteen months, so the demonstrations provided an opportunity for them to refresh their memories and see the system operating with real UNE student and course data.

The sessions were intended to provide a basic introduction to the Callista system, to familiarise users with the look and feel, and show them how the system is navigated. More generally the sessions were intended to dispel any fears users may have had about the impending transition from Banner and to get them thinking about the system they'll soon be using.

The sessions were not designed to provide in-depth training in using the system – that will come closer to launch. Nor were they intended to show off all the functionality that the system will have in September. They just offered a "slice" of the main functions, especially those directed at "view users" such as academics and administrative assistants, who mainly need to know how to retrieve student and course information from the system and are not heavily involved in entering data back into it.



Carla Gregg & Liz Ferris at system demo

Towards the end of the sessions, Liz previewed some of the core functionality that will be used by Student Admin staff and other "update users". She gave them an overview of the student information life-cycle, from a prospective student's first telephone enquiry through to recording the student's results.

Fees and finance didn't feature in the presentations since those systems are still under development and weren't available for display in the prototype used in the demos.

Far from being the final opportunity to look at the system and ask questions about it, the demos were just the first of many familiarisation sessions that will take place over the coming months. Key users are already involved in the Prototype Business Process reviews underway from March through May (see bottom of page 3), and will participate in User Acceptance Testing after that. Before UNESIS goes live in September, all system users will receive thorough training, including an update on any business processes that have changed as a result of the move from Banner.

Dates for those training sessions will be announced closer to the system launch date.

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February prototype demonstrations

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Some penetrating questions were asked during the sessions, and Liz and her fellow business analysts Daphne Sauer and Silvia Danieli documented all the issues raised by the audience for use in later analysis and training. Most of the questions could be answered on the spot, though a few about certain business processes were referred to the business review sessions.

Aside from some complaints about a dodgy projector (which was fixed in time for the final Friday session), response to the demonstrations was extremely positive.

"A lot of people came up to me afterwards and said that they were feeling very positive after the sessions, that their fears had been allayed," said Liz. "They were pleased to be kept involved in the process, and a few even told me how much they were looking forward to using the new system." Surely a first for a student system implementation in Australia. ☉

Congratulations Kylie!

External Exams Officer Kylie Day was delighted to win a new Palm Zire handheld organiser in our Prototype Demonstrations draw – but not surprised. She had already told her boss the previous week that she was going to win.

"When I saw the competition announced in the UNESIS newsletter, I got the feeling that Wednesday would turn out to be my lucky day," said Kylie. "I told my boss, 'I'm going to win that Palm Pilot' and sure enough I was right. Of course I wanted to go along to the prototype demonstrations anyway to get a glimpse of the new system, but what a great bonus!"

Kylie has already put her prize to good use, organising her address book and diary. No doubt she has the (tentative) UNESIS go-live date marked in big capital letters, with alarms set to ring and lights to flash.

For anyone who missed out on the Palm organiser, you can purchase Palm products and accessories, including the Zire, from the ITShop (on the ground floor of the ITD building). ☉



Kylie accepting her prize from ITShop customer service officer Debbie Stevenson

Prototype business review sessions underway

Following the prototype demonstrations in February, a series of more detailed review sessions started early March and will continue through May. The UNESIS business analysts are presenting the detailed reviews to representative system users, and identifying gaps between system functionality and current UNE procedures. A number of UNESIS support specialists are also participating, to identify report needs, document system functionality and corresponding procedures, and work with system user reps to develop new procedures for filling any gaps. For an up-to-date schedule of sessions & participants, visit http://www.une.edu.au/unesis/pdfs/prototype_review_sessions_schedule.pdf. ☉

More SIS-ters join the project

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to train UNE's Student Information Transition Team (SITT – refer to [November's newsletter](#)). Kerrie isn't one of the regular Callista SIS-ters visiting Armidale, but it's nice to know she's available to pitch in when we need her. The SITT-ers' early training was to prepare them to test the pre-production system, following the test scenarios and test cases that Bronwyn Robb and Helen Kelemen are setting up ([see page 1](#)).

Greg O'Shannessy & Tony Pavan are moonlighting with the UNESIS team, having joined us from UNE's Organisational Development Unit (ODU). They've begun creating user documentation for the system – for training and to link into Callista's online help function – so you'll have info at your fingertips about UNE procedures, as well as Callista functionality.



Greg O'Shannessy



Tony Pavan

Geoff Smith has changed camps too – for a while, anyway. To set up first semester '04 exams in Timetabling, he's moved out of Exams and into IT, where he's immersing himself in the workings of the Syllabus Plus system. Because of his extensive knowledge of UNE's exams processes, Geoff is also participating in the UNESIS Prototype review sessions, but has left the day-to-day running of the Exams area with Kylie Day (good thing she has that new Palm organiser!).



Geoff Smith



John Baker

John Baker is one of the Applications Group's report writing specialists, so has also joined the SIS-terhood to analyse the university's SIS report needs. While Callista offers a suite of standard reports, the Apps Group will create other required reports in-house, following John's specifications. ☉

Callista SITT training

Selected members of the UNESIS project received their first in-depth training on the new system last month, during Callista training sessions run from 9 to 13 February.

Members of the SITT team (*see our January issue*) – including Lorraine Roberts, Carolyn Kirk, Greg Chappell, Steve Gully and Julie Fookes – attended the sessions to get familiar with Callista so they can test the pre-production system (*refer to SIS-ters info at top of page 3*), and support the transition from Banner to Callista.

IT Applications Group members John Baker (*see page 3*) and Jim Harrop (*see our May '03 issue*) came along to learn about Callista's report functions, to help them develop any UNE-specific reports required. UNESIS Communicator Leon Braun also attended to document the system in the lead-up to user training.

The training sessions covered pretty much the whole system, including enrolments, course and unit sets, advanced standing, and grading – as well as security and user roles. The training was conducted using databases containing actual UNE data, to make it relevant for the SITT-ers who are working on similar data in Banner.

Callista business analysts Kerrie Ryan and Wendy McKergow facilitated the sessions. You can meet Kerrie in our regular "SIS-ters" column in this issue, and Wendy in our September '03 *UPdate*. ☺



Wendy McKergow & Kerrie Ryan facilitated the February SITT-ers training (Greg Chappell, Lorraine Roberts & Julie Fookes follow & practice)



If there's any one area of the University that "owns" the new student information system, it's Student Administration. While the UNESIS newsletter is really about keeping you up-to-date with your SIS, we thought it might be useful to cover some of the related issues being addressed in Student Admin, so you'll know a bit more about what's happening around here.

SITT, SATT, whassat?

In our November issue we introduced you to the Student Information Transition Team (SITT), which is maintaining all the student, course, and unit data in preparation for the move from Banner into Callista. Well, there is another team known as SATT (past tense) which is responsible for student financial data.

SATT, which stands for Student Accounts Transition Team, was formed last October. Their first task was to document all the business processes and policies for student enrolment and invoicing in preparation for getting our finance system (Finance One) to talk to the new student system (Callista), via the Callista Open Finance Interface (COFI). The report they tabled was submitted to (then) Business Process Improvement Manager Rick Nelson in January. Stay tuned for further SATT developments. ☺

Call 5200 for student invoice enquiries

A new call centre located in ITD is helping students get the information they need about their 1st Semester enrolment costs.

The Fees Enquiry Centre was established by the Student Accounts Transition Team (SATT) in February to be the first point of call for all enrolment and enrolment fees enquiries until the Student Administration Centre opens in the Lamble building in May.

In the past all such enquiries were handled by overburdened Financial Services and faculty staff. Callers were transferred as often as four times before getting to speak to someone who could answer their specific questions. A computerised voice recognition system was trialled last semester, but this wasn't much of an improvement since the majority of callers ignored the various pre-recorded options and just pressed "1" to talk to an operator.

The Fees Enquiry Centre is staffed by four dedicated customer service officers who can answer most student finance questions on the spot. Rhonda McIlveen has been seconded from the Faculty of Economics, Business and Law and Helen Gordon is on loan from the Faculty of Arts. They bring with them a wealth of knowledge about student finance and enrolment issues. Bridget Gilmour and Ian Beissel are both casual staff who received a week of in-depth training in student finance with Financial Services prior to starting with the call centre. ☺

Want to participate?

There are a number of people participating in the UNESIS implementation project in one way or another. If you're particularly interested in helping implement your new SIS, but haven't yet been tapped on the shoulder, let us know you want to join in. Send an email to unesis@une.edu.au, use the 'Contact Us' link on www.une.edu.au/unesis/ or call **extension 3328**.