

Minutes of the eLearning Governance Group, Thursday 2 July 2009

Present:

Associate Professor Rob Ellis, Director of eLearning (Chair)
Mr Andrew Cooper, Director, Architecture and Technology
Associate Professor Mark Freeman, Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Faculty of Economics and Business
Dr Geoff Gordon, ICT Solutions Manager
Mr Bruce Meikle, Chief Information Officer
Associate Professor Chris Roberts, Director and Associate Dean (Education Development), Faculty of Medicine
Mr John Shipp, University Librarian
Dr Charlotte Taylor, Director of Learning and Teaching, Faculties of Science

Apologies:

Professor Bruce Sutton, Chair, Academic Board
Mr Jonathan Saurine, Head, Centre for Continuing Education Programs and Education

1 Minutes of previous meeting

Resolution 6/09

The eLearning Governance Group adopted the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 February 2009 as a true record.

2 Report of the Chair

Associate Professor Rob Ellis has replaced Prof Derrick Armstrong as Chair of the eLearning Governance Group.

The Chair reported on the changed reporting mechanism now in place for the eLearning Governance Group, and on the establishment of the Workslate Project: Student and teacher e-experience. The eLearning Governance Group now reports to the SEG Education Committee. The workslate project will report to eLearning Governance in order to align the items under discussion and budgets of both groups.

The Chair advised that due to the overlap of membership, meetings of the eLearning Governance Group will now take place quarterly. The time of the next meeting will be arranged online. Urgent matters will be discussed by email.

Resolution 7/09

The eLearning Governance Group noted the Chair's report

3 Workslate Project: Student and teacher e-experience

The Chair invited Associate Professor Mark Freeman, as convenor of the project, to talk to this item, and to the diagram : Learning and Teaching systems and support at the University of Sydney 2009 – 2012 (page 3: Learning and Teaching Systems Strategy 2010 – 2012)

Scope of project

The student and teacher e-experience requires greater cohesion that it currently has. In addition to guidelines and management models for the software solutions, two portals will be developed over the next two years: students and lecturer/designer portals, with the aim of giving all stakeholders a coherent e-experience. Whilst students already have MyUni, which can be enhanced with a better more integrated design, nothing is in place for academics. The project will aim to develop solutions that are sustainable into the future.

Planning steps

Evaluate current student and teaching experience: take an inventory of current systems to highlight duplications

Engage with key stakeholders: students, academics, Associate deans network

Note the budget in place from the (e)Learning and Teaching systems strategy.

Issues raised during discussion:

- Where would longitudinal tracking of student outcomes fit into the model?
 - Life cycle assessment is included in the new Sydney Student Portal. Suggested that should input into the project at current scope development stage to ensure inclusion
- How will faculties alignment with Graduate Attributes fit in?
 - Faculties will use community model of Blackboard/ LMS to show information on how assessment items align with Graduate Attributes.
- Issues of confidentiality particularly in relation to social networking and academic and social spaces.

Resolution 8/09

The eLearning Governance Group noted the report on the Workslate Project: Student and teacher e-experience.

4 Learning and Teaching Systems Strategy 2010 – 2010

(Document circulated with Agenda)

The Chair spoke to the circulated document, and also circulated a draft budget for core activity areas. He advised that the goal was to achieve sustainable targets, tied to strategies. Key items included:

- Increase in streaming downloads since commencement in 2008
- Aligning system activities over the next three years
- Alignment with the Workslate project and the need for tighter integration

Issues raised during discussion:

- University has anticipated maximum target of 100 rooms and 300 – 400 recordings per week
- Demands for more capacity will increase as lecturers develop own material; lecturers may not use if not available in all the teaching spaces they use across the University.
- Need to have balanced investment across all categories of learning and teaching technologies
- Consideration has been given to off campus students at three teaching hospitals.

Resolution 9/09

The eLearning Governance Group noted the report on Learning and Teaching Systems Strategy 2010 – 2012 and resolved to take the following actions:

- Adjust the principles to take into account discussions on the strategy
- Work on targets
- Feedback comments to the Chair by the end of August 2009

5 ePortfolio system recommendations (Document circulated with Agenda)

Geoff Gordon reported that two systems were able to deliver a suitable solution: Pebblepad and Desire2Learn. The decision to choose Pebblepad was arrived at by comparing functionality; holding workshops with students and staff; and a review of reference sites. Pebblepad was considered to be not only sustainable, but also having a vendor road map which was more suited to the University's interests in the medium term.

Issues raised in discussion:

- Where does it sit in relation to student portal and LMS
 - Road map meets our needs; more integrated into university systems; other users of similar size and type to University of Sydney; costs largely similar
- Is it integrated with Blackboard?
 - Amount of integration present; standards moving in positive direction; can integrate in future depending on cost
- Will their road map be significantly affected by our signing up
 - Compared to Wollongong – no change in use of ePortfolios during year; cost model scalable, depending on demand.
 - Both have capacity to transfer e-portfolios onto their own system
- Tender waiver
 - Need to get tender waiver in writing from Procurement

Resolution 10/09

The eLearning Governance Group endorsed the report on ePortfolios at the University of Sydney, and the work of Ulrich Woznitza and Geoff Gordon in preparing the report. Purchasing of Pebblepad was endorsed subject to procurement requirements.

6 The meeting closed at 1300hrs.

7 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting, originally scheduled for August 21st 2009, will be determined by email.