Research Management as an Integrated Research System

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Integrated Research System

• Where did we begin?
• The first steps to integration
• IRIS project 2007-2010
• Where are we now?
• What’s next?
Where did we begin?

- Individual systems used for separate purposes
- Finance - Agresso
- HR – Jasper (ALTA-HR, University of Birmingham)
- Research output (publication) recording in EndNote, Reference Manager etc
- pFact and Excel - project costings
- Little integration
2001 – 2007: The first steps to integration…

- **2001**
  - Research outputs/publications recorded in central Oracle database, web front-end for input

- **2002**
  - The University of Liverpool Information Portal (TULIP) – Oracle Portal

- **2005**
  - Project Approval Forms – standalone TULIP facility to record research application data

- **2006**
  - RAE 2008 data collection facility in TULIP
  - HR, Finance (Agresso) and Student system (Banner) feeds

- **2007**
  - Integrated Research Information System (IRIS) project begins
System overview - 2007

**ALTA-HR (Jasper) – HR**
- Staff – Post & Position
- Contract Dates
- Salary Information
- Management Information Variables

**Project Approval Forms**
- Flat structure for some research activity data

**Agresso – Finance**
- Research and Non Research Financial Accounts
- Budgets
- Expenditure
- Relations for Management Information

**The University of Liverpool Information Portal**
- Personal administrative information
- Entry of research publications esteem and connections
- Basic displays of research activity

**Paper transfers between offices – approvals slow**

**Duplication of data entry within systems**

**Inconsistent practices/approvals**

**Management information difficult**

**Poor communication**

**No standard costing tool**
Integrated Research Information System (IRIS)

Why did we want changes?

- University focus on research
- Improved communication between academics and administrative support
- Reduction in preparation time for mandatory reports
- Efficiency maximisation
Integrated Research Information System (IRIS)

Project Aims:

- Standardise research approval process across all areas
- Online approvals in timely manner, cutting down paperwork
- Full data capture, in line with reporting requirements
- Improved and consistent management information
- Standardised costing process and tool, including FEC principles
IRIS - Aims
IRIS Project Timeline

Aug 07 – April 08
- Business process analysis
- Output analysis
- System design

April 08 – June 08
- User testing
- System ‘tweaks’
- Training manuals
- Training sessions

Sept 08 – Feb 09
- Costing tool development
- Collaborative work with University of Birmingham
- Management Information additions

March 09 – July 09
- Costing tool user testing
- System ‘tweaks’
- Training manuals
- Training sessions

July 08 - IRIS release

Aug 09 – Costing tool release
IRIS business process for application and award approval

- Project outline
- Project type identified
- Indicative costs

**Project Concept Development**
- Peer review
- Research group leader approval
- HOD approval

**Bid Development**
- Costs calculated
- Funding bid developed
- PI approval
- HOD approval
- Dean approval
- SMT approval
- Submission to funder

**Award Acceptance**
- PI approval
- HOD approval
- Dean approval
- SMT approval

**Project Closed**
- Interface with finance system (Agresso)
- Cost centre and budget created
- Expenditure and commitment reporting

- Synchronisation with Agresso
- Management Information

**Project Concept Review**
- Project type identified
- Indicative costs

**Project Active**
- Interface with finance system (Agresso)
- Cost centre and budget created
- Expenditure and commitment reporting

- Synchronisation with Agresso
- Management Information
Lessons Learnt

• **Analysis should be done as whole process** – splitting into process analysis, output analysis and design meant effort duplicated

• **Limited access to academics and senior managers can delay timings**

• **Key stakeholders need to retain involvement throughout project**

• **Need thorough user acceptance testing** – users need time away from day jobs

• **Sometimes better to delay release and revisit design** - if don’t have buy-in from all key users

• **Strong user support team is essential** – in early days following release

• **Communication** – essential at every step along the way
2010 and beyond – Research Archive

- Institutional repository - ePrints software, Oracle database
- All articles to be deposited as full text - mandatory
- InCites citation software and data cleaning
- Load facilities from EndNote, PubMed etc
- When fully rolled-out will be part of integrated research system
- Will be linked to the University’s REF data collation tools
2010 and beyond – Research Excellence

- Facility to search for ‘Liverpool expertise’ – for potential partners, collaborators, students etc
- Available from the University’s web site later this year
- Data sourced from integrated research system
- Search by keyword, person, unit of assessment etc
- Ability to produce reports and see staff profiles
2010 and beyond – POD

• People and Organisational Development project
• Enabling the achievement of institutional excellence and delivery of key priorities
• Review of HR policies and procedures
• People management framework and focus on leadership
• Interlinked tools which use data fed from integrated research system
• Portfolios of activity, workload management, enhanced professional development and review (PDR) process
2010 and beyond – REF

- Data collation system within IRIS to pull research data from TULIP, IRIS and the Research Archive
- Will also pull data from finance, HR and student databases
- Ability to administer at different levels – department, school, faculty
- Will allow for basic scenario modelling
Questions

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