

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
Learning Management System Advisory Group

Minutes for the second meeting of the Learning Management System Advisory Group held on Wednesday 25 July from 1.00 – 3.00 pm in the David Myers Meeting Room, Bundoora campus, teleconferenced to the Albury-Wodonga campus and video-linked to the Bendigo, Shepparton and Mildura Campuses.

Present: Dr Kay Souter (**Chair**), Mr Jeff Barnes, Mr Peter Barton, Mr Rob Bassett, Ms Eileen Clark, Mr Marcus de Rijk, Dr Anthony Jarvis, Ms Shannon Kerrigan, Dr Katherine Legge, Dr Iain McAlpine, Dr Ben Ong, Mr John Pinniger, Ms Jennifer Rogers, Ms Fiona Salisbury, Ms Bess Secomb, Ms Cindy Taylor, Ms Dianne Williamson.

Secretariat: Ms Sally Went

In attendance: Dr Ric Canale, Mr George Ciotti, Ms Carla Wallace (*vice* Dr Caroline Walta).

MINUTES

A PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A1 Welcome from Chair and apologies received

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies from Dr Chris Campbell, Ms Helen Carter, Dr Jennifer Masters, Mr Wesley Pryor, Dr Caroline Walta,

A2 Confirmation of the previous minutes, 27 June 2007 LMSAG07/6(M)

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings after a correction was made to item B4 'Monitoring and Reporting Requirements'. Although the item was not discussed at the meeting it was inaccurately titled on the agenda. The item was suggested by participants in the WebCT Taskforce after they were shown a range of settings in WebCT that could be adjusted according to individual needs. The intention was for this information to be shared with the LMSAG. The Chair thanked Ms Aly Waterson for preparing LMSAG07/9, apologised for the misunderstanding and asked if the WebCT Team could prepare a presentation on this revised item for the next meeting.

***Action:** WebCT Team to prepare a presentation on the optional settings within WebCT for the next meeting.*

A3 Action arising from the previous minutes (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

A3.1 Revised terms of reference and membership LMSAG07/8

The Chair suggested that the discussion on the revised terms of reference and group membership be deferred until the group has the opportunity to consider a proposal from Helen Carter that it be reformed into a series of working groups. The alternative format is proposed to improve the effectiveness of the advisory group given the number of members. It is proposed that each of the working groups would meet for an hour a month and then report back to a one hour meeting of the full group once a month, keeping everyone's time commitment to

two hours per month. There was general support for this idea and the Chair undertook to distribute the proposal to the group prior to the next meeting. When the new format is agreed upon the terms of reference will be revised accordingly.

Action: Ms Went to distribute Ms Carter's proposal for a revised structure for LMSAG.

A3.2 Migration management

LMSAG07/5

The group received Helen Carter's paper titled 'WebCT Implementation for Semester 2, 2007' which was circulated after the previous meeting. The only issue raised was that of staff training. It was reported that there was WebCT training at Bendigo during the first two days of semester which was an inconvenient time for most academic staff. It was noted that this may have been scheduled to meet the needs of casual or sessional staff who are not employed or available during non-teaching periods.

[*Secretarial note:* The availability of training was followed up after the meeting by Marcus de Rijk, Manager, Online Teaching Support Unit, who reported that WebCT training was held on the Bendigo campus during the non-teaching period and follow up sessions were held during the first week of semester at the request of Bendigo staff.]

A3.3 Monitoring and reporting requirements

LMSAG07/9

As noted in A2 above, this item was removed from the agenda and will be replaced with a renamed item at the next meeting.

B GENERAL BUSINESS

B1 Project plan for development of WebCT resources

LMSAG07/10

George Ciotti, consultant to the Online Teaching Support Team, attended the meeting for this item to provide the group with an update on the development of resources for WebCT users. He referred the group to the project plan outlined on pages 6-7 of his report (LMSAG07/10) and reported that he had completed the first phase of the project which was reviewing learning management system websites and documents from other Victorian universities for examples of best practice.

George will seek input from the LMSAG during the second phase of the project which is determining the priorities for the resource development. The current WebCT website will be corrected throughout the project to improve navigation and usability. At subsequent meetings he will seek advice on branding for the website and user materials, and seek volunteers for user testing. The group will also need to identify which organisational unit will have responsibility for maintaining and further developing the WebCT resources at the conclusion of George's contract.

Kay Souter reported that she believed that the former Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) had reserved funds to provide assistance to faculties in developing the pedagogy to support their WebCT sites. This will be investigated further and reported at the next meeting.

Action: Dr Souter and Ms Went to investigate funds that may be available to assist faculties with reviewing the pedagogy around the use of WebCT.

B2 Report from the Learning Management System Consultant LMSAG07/11

Ric Canale reported that the Issues Register (LMSAG07/11) was for global system-wide projects to improve the learning management system, not a register of individual problems that had been raised by users through the 'help desk' facilities. One of the more urgent issues on the register was the project to automate the creation of WebCT accounts for new and existing units. The register will be added to as Ric consults with significant stakeholders and an updated register will be presented at each meeting of LMSAG.

B3 Minimum online presence LMSAG07/12 LMSAG07/13

The group noted from Ric Canale's paper 'WebCT Minimum Presence Discussion Paper' (LMSAG07/12) that there were two immediate requirements for teaching staff to meet – a minimum online presence for every unit by the end of 2007 and for that minimum presence to consist of the set of resources prescribed by Academic Committee at its April meeting (Academic Committee reference 159.3.11).

The group agreed that in order to meet these directives, the following action be taken -

1. A twin project approach to minimum presence be adopted, with (1) a project focussed on supporting compliance by end 2007 and (2) a related project with a longer time-frame being established to devise a process for automating minimum presence for all units.
2. In order to commence project 1 above, LMSAG will ask all Schools to indicate whether they need assistance to comply with minimum presence by the end of 2007 and include an estimate of the number of units believed not to comply with minimum presence at the start of semester 2 (i.e. have no online presence or have an online presence that does not comply).
3. The project to automate minimum presence (project 2 above) be established as a complex project in accordance with the ICT Project Management Office guidelines and methodology.

Ric advised that staff who do not yet have a WebCT presence for their units should not wait for the automated system as this would not be in place by the end of the year. It may be possible, however, to establish a whole-School approach to getting all units online.

Action: *The Chair to write to Heads of Schools seeking advice on whether they require assistance in achieving a minimum online presence for all units by the end of 2007. Information would also be sought on how many units did not have an online presence at the start of semester 2.*

The group also reviewed the statement on minimum online presence (LMSAG07/13) prepared by Kay Souter and Helen Carter. The statement is a response to a recommendation of the WebCT Taskforce that the reasons for mandating a minimum online presence need to be communicated urgently to the University community. The group made a small correction to the wording before approving it for submission to the Learning Technologies Policy and Governance Committee.

Action: *The Chair to recommend the statement on minimum online presence to the Learning Technologies Policy and Governance Committee.*

Ms Fiona Salisbury reported that the Library had established a working group to investigate possibilities to increase the library's presence in WebCT, for example, integrating access to learning resources (particularly e-readings) within WebCT. Ms Salisbury will report on this at the next meeting.

B4 Security of WebCT administration site

LMSAG07/14

The group noted the paper from the Faculty of Health Sciences about the security of individual WebCT sites and agreed that there was only a very small risk that a staff member may access another staff member's site and corrupt it. The move to Active Directory access to WebCT sites, which would be implemented by first semester 2008, would eliminate this security risk. Rob Bassett reported that ICT make regular back ups of the system so that if a corruption took place, material could be retrieved from a previous record of the site.

B5 Impact on LMS of common first year in Health Sciences

LMSAG07/15

Dianne Williamson spoke to her paper which raised concerns about the ability of WebCT to cope with the large classes they are expecting in 2009 when the Faculty of Health Sciences moves to a common first year curriculum. It was her experience at the start of 2007 that the system was very slow when 800 students were enrolled in one unit. Rob Bassett reported that this may not have been a result of the number of students accessing the one site but other difficulties with the system earlier this year. The processing capacity of the system had been increased significantly since then. It was agreed that the Health Sciences developments should be noted and planned for to ensure that large cohorts could make effective use of WebCT in the future.

***Action:** During 2008 testing be performed on the learning management system by the relevant ICT staff to ensure that it can accommodate units with enrolments of up to 1700 students.*

C OTHER BUSINESS RAISED BY MEMBERS AT THE MEETING

C1 Service desk arrangements

Rob Bassett reported that the new arrangements, where requests for WebCT assistance are initially handled by the ICT Service Desk, had commenced. The new system of logging service calls and sharing the support function between the two teams (the WebCT team and the ICT Service Desk staff) appeared to be working well.

D NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Learning Management System Advisory Group will be on Wednesday 29 August, from 1.00 – 3.00 pm, David Myers Meeting Room. Regional campus venues to be arranged.

The meeting closed at 3.00 pm.

LOG OF ACTIONS

Meeting	Date	Item	Action	Resp.	Status
1	27.6.07	A2	Distribute WebCT Taskforce report.	SW	Done
1	27.6.07	B2	Request permission from VC to send University-wide email on reasons for minimum online presence	KS	
1	27.6.07	B3	Forward WebCT Migration Report to the committee secretary for distribution to the Advisory Group after the meeting.	HC	Done
1	27.6.07	B4	WebCT Team to prepare a brief presentation on WebCT reports for the next meeting of the LMSAG.	HC to delegate	Done
2	25.7.07	A2	WebCT Team to prepare a presentation on the optional settings within WebCT for the next meeting.	HC to delegate	
2	25.7.07	A3.1	Distribute Ms Carter's proposal for a revised structure for LMSAG.	SW	
2	25.7.07	B1	Investigate funds that may be available to assist faculties with reviewing the pedagogy around the use of WebCT.	KS SW	
2	25.7.07	B3	Write to Heads of Schools seeking advice on whether they require assistance in achieving a minimum online presence for all units by the end of 2007. Information would also be sought on how many units did not have an online presence at the start of semester 2.	KS	
2	25.7.07	B3	Recommend the statement on minimum online presence to the Learning Technologies Policy and Governance Committee.	KS	
2	25.7.07	B5	During 2008 testing be performed on the learning management system by the relevant ICT staff to ensure that it can accommodate units with enrolments of up to 1700 students.	RB to take back to ICT	

Distribution

Mr Jeff Barnes, Law and Management
Mr Peter Barton, Education
Mr Rob Bassett, ICT
Dr Chris Campbell, Education
Dr Ric Canale, LMS Consultant
Ms Helen Carter, Flexible Learning and Teaching
Ms Eileen Clark, Albury-Wodonga Campus representative
Mr Marcus de Rijk, Online Teaching Support Unit
Dr Anthony Jarvis, Humanities and Social Sciences
Ms Shannon Kerrigan, Equity and Access Unit
Dr Katherine Legge, Science, Technology and Engineering
Ms Jennifer Masters, Bendigo Campus representative
Dr Iain McAlpine, representing the educational designers
Dr Ben Ong, Science, Technology and Engineering
Mr John Pinniger, Academic Services
Mr Wesley Pryor, Health Sciences
Ms Jennifer Rogers, Mildura Campus representative
Mr Cameron Rose, Humanities and Social Sciences
Ms Fiona Salisbury, Library
Ms Bess Secomb, Library
Dr Kay Souter, Acting Director (Learning and Teaching), **(Chair)**
Ms Cindy Taylor, Law and Management
Dr Caroline Walta, Shepparton Campus representative
Ms Dianne Williamson, Health Sciences