

**IT COMMITTEE**

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012 at 2.00 pm 3.16, Williamson Building**

**Minutes**

**In attendance:**

Ms Cath Dyson, Dr. Charles A. Erin, Dr. John Smith, Mrs Zoë Day, Mr. Andy Bell, Mr. Bill Hebenton, Mrs Alison Wilson, Mr. Aubrey Scully, Ms Alex Kalinowska, Ms Damaris Freeman, Prof. Mary Vogel

**Apologies:**

None received

**1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

John Smith reports that storage space would be useful in Williamson building during the refurbishment of Williamson Computer Cluster 3.69. Damaris investigated. Unfortunately no storage space was available.

Cath Dyson agrees that the Elearning Team will provide a calendar of technical upgrades for Blackboard next year. Calendar will be distributed shortly.

John Smith has agreed to liaise with MULS regarding supply of paper from Law firms. John looked into to this but unfortunately this is not supported by the new printer system.

That a working group is set up to support the move to the T4 website.  
The T4 project is delayed due to the School's new website – the Faculty has recruited a web officer to assist with this.

Zoë to liaise with Jackie Gandy regarding extra student emails.  
Zoë now produces a weekly bulletin to reduce student email traffic. Alex Kalinowski reports that the bulletins are popular with the students.

Zoë to explore the possibility of using a shared Outlook Calendar to advertise important events.  
Zoë has put a calendar on the BB9 programme pages.

## **2 Matters Arising**

### **Reported**

Cath Dyson reports that the Semester 2 submission dates for Law are required.

Alison to give Semester 2 submission dates to Cath Dyson.

**ACTION: Alison Wilson**

### **Reported**

Alex Kalinowski asks if personal appointments can be added to the calendar in My Manchester. John Smith agrees to look into this.

**ACTION: John Smith**

### **Reported**

Aubrey Scully reports that the Course Unit Database will be changing. Damaris to report this to the Timetabling Project Manager June Finch.

**ACTION: Damaris Freeman**

### **Reported:**

Charles Erin reports a problem with Turnitin - marker's comment bubbles obscure the student's original text. Cath Dyson agrees to look into this.

**ACTION: Cath Dyson**

### **Reported:**

Charles Erin asks how blind double-marking on dissertations can be managed through Turnitin. Cath Dyson agrees to look into what is possible.

**ACTION: Cath Dyson**

### **Reported:**

Geraint Howells has asked about the possibility of providing Ipads/ Kindles to students and/or staff. Cath Dyson to look into what equipment may be possible.

**ACTION: Cath Dyson**

### **Reported:**

John Smith raises the issue that Kindles/tablets may cause neck strain if used for long periods (ie. for online marking). Damaris to look into Health and Safety implications.

**ACTION: Damaris Freeman**

### **3 Report from Dr John Smith (of Faculty IS )**

**John presented to the following report:**

#### **P: Upgrade**

During November it was planned that University staff and students would be moved onto a new P: drive system. This will provide 2G of storage as standard. Those who already have more than 2G will not lose any quota. This has run into some difficulty in making sure that Apple Mac users can connect to the system. Information will be sent out by email with further details when you are scheduled for transfer. During the changeover, you will be unable to access your P: drive for a few hours.

After the changeover, users on University PC's will get their mapping to P: drive changed to the new service automatically. Users running unmanaged desktops including PC, Mac and home machines will need to re-establish their connection to the P: drive. Details of how to do this will be supplied via email, on completion of each P: drive migration.

#### **Windows 7 Desktop image**

Most of the student clusters in the Faculty have remained on the old Windows XP image though some were changed in the summer to the Windows 7 image. The new Windows 7 image is working well – the reason we stayed with Windows XP was that not all the teaching applications used in the Faculty had been repackaged for use on the Windows 7 image. It's currently planned that the remaining Faculty clusters including those in Williamson 3.33, 3.59 and 4.06 will be changed to Windows 7 during the Christmas vacation. It should be noted that although User Acceptance Testing has been carried out on most applications this is not the case for all of them and so there is some risk of software issues.

Work on the move of staff to the Windows 7 image is on-going but detailed plans are yet to be finalised. I will be circulating a list of applications proposed for the machines of administration staff within the Faculty with a request for feedback on extra items required.

#### **Staff PC Upgrades**

The deployment of large monitors to teaching staff was carried out over the summer with the helpful assistance of staff within the School. Subsequently these have also been supplied to GTA's within the School.

New PCs bought out of Faculty funds are being rolled out to staff with older desktop PCs in preparation for the move to Windows 7. If you are considering upgrading your PC please ask via the IT Service Desk whether your PC is already scheduled for upgrade

to avoid unnecessary expenditure. If the machine is a Dell Optiplex 745 or earlier then it will definitely be due for replacement and you can request this directly by filling in the online form at

<http://remedy.manchester.ac.uk/cgi-bin/sr.cgi?scid=133>

### **Cluster Refurbishments**

The School arranged for the refurbishment of the cluster in Williamson 3.33 during the summer. Faculty did likewise for the one in W3.59. That was changed from a deep thin room configuration to a shallow, broad one to improve the audibility and visibility of teaching staff and projector screens to those at the back of the room. Large screen monitors were also provided in these two clusters and that in Williamson 4.06.

### **New Charged Printing System for Students**

This was introduced at the start of September and has gone well in the main from our perspective. Feedback on this from student reps is welcome.

The process for adding new charged printers to the system is no longer to buy a new network printer and ask IT to hook it up as the printers are supplied and maintained by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party supplier.

### **iManchester App**

It's currently available for iPhone and Android devices, with Blackberry and web versions coming soon. Features include:

- A powerful campus map
- Ability to search the Library's collections, reserve books and manage Library account
- Search staff and student contact database
- Direct access to Blackboard e-learning environment
- Quick access to My Manchester student portal

Both versions can be downloaded at

<http://www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk/it-services/gettingstarted/imanchester/>

Alex Kalinowski states that students are concerned that all the printers may go offline again as happened earlier in the semester. John stated that printer memory has now been doubled and is confident that this will not happen again.

Cath Dyson presented a report for Elearning & Blackboard.

**Reported**

Where computer clusters are needed for assessments, that the Exams Office should be consulted during exam period, IT should be consulted during the rest of the year. Cath reports that external examiners still do not have access to Grademark but now have access to Blackboard.

**5 Web and intranet developments**

**Reported**

The next School for the web project will be identified shortly.

The Course Unit Database is due to change.

Mary Vogel asks whether the new web will provide a better search facility. Aubrey says the new architecture is designed with Search Engines in mind.

**6 Matters referred from the HISUG (Humanities IS User Group)**

It is agreed that this should be discontinued as an agenda item.

**7 Student Business**

Covered in earlier discussions concerning Turnitin and My Manchester Calendar.

**8 Any Other Business**

**Reported**

Geraint Howells would like to raise the issue of Student iPads.

Staff have raised the issue of Kindle/tablet provision to assist with online marking.

Cath Dyson to look into possible equipment.

John Smith states that excessive use of tablets may cause neck strain. Damaris to look into Health and Safety implications.

**Next meeting:** Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 1pm, Williamson 3.16