Teaching Admin Meeting 02/08/2018

- Gillian Bell (GB)
- Tim Colles (TC)
- Vicky MacTaggart (VM)
- Ian Stark (IS)

Background, Remit and Agenda

Stuart requested the formation of a Teaching Admin working group at the Computing Strategy meeting a few weeks ago. We are the membership. This group will investigate what we can do to improve/optimise administrative processes now that local School services (Theon, Webmark, etc) are used less and more needs to be done using central services, many of which are barely fit for purpose.

There are two remits, short term and long term. The short term is to look at things that can be done for next session - this might be to find quick wins using simple local scripts, reworking certain aspects of Theon eg for local availability of particular datasets, helpful BIS reports or even just providing written procedures could all make life easier for ISS. The long term is to look more strategically at how we will use and interact with central services in the future. In the latter case the timescale would be for the working group to report back to the next CSG (in about six months). In the former the working group would be expected to just get on with doing whatever it deems necessary.

I propose focusing on the short term remit for now.

So I would like to have a first meeting where the agenda will be to work through the specific admin jobs that currently cause ISS strife and to think about ways we can improve things. In this first meeting the onus will largely be on Gillian/Vicky to bring things to the table.

Coursework Events

Important dates associated with coursework (submission deadline obviously, but also handout date) used to be held in Theon but are not represented in APT so have been lost.

- GB: Having a report of pending/past deadlines important for chasing up staff (coursework submission is an engagement point for T4).
- IS: They are useful for all teaching staff and in particular PT's.
- IS: Spoken to Alex (Burford) about adding them into the Learn template in a standard way to encourage entry - however this data cannot then be extracted into a report.
- TC: We pull down coursework automatically from APT to drive submit.

Conclusion: Re-instate the Theon handling for Course Work events.

Actions:

- TC: Re-instate the reports associated with Course Work events, including the presentation on the course/student landing page.
- GB: ITO to annotate course work with the necessary data.

Course Group Mailing Lists

Contact lists for tutorial/lab groups are in Learn but are not proper mailing lists and do not expose an email address - the Web interface must be used, so mailing multiple groups simultaneously requires each be done one by one.

- TC: We will still have whole course mailings lists generated from Theon.
- IS: These are nice to have but not a priority.

Conclusion: Drop locally generated tutorial/lab group mailing lists.

Actions:

- TC: Ask IS if Learn can provide proper mailing lists.

Spreadsheet Proliferation

ITO have a proliferation of spreadsheets for tracking data which is no longer held in one place or at all.

- GB: Used for tracking extensions, at risk students, T4 engagement.
- GB: Used for schedules of adjustments - used together with extension tracking - upstream disability system can't do suitable reporting and the data does not go into BIS.
- GB: Used for attendance (tutorials) monitoring (T4), can maybe do this in Learn or use EUCLID (has the functionality but we don't use it).
- GB: DI students don't take Inf courses - how to track.
- IS: Can we use O365 for shared spreadsheets to minimise risk.

Conclusion: Either migrate spreadsheet functionality into Theon or migrate to O365 so that sharing works properly - case by case basis.

Actions:

- TC: Liaise with GB and review current spreadsheets, determine which to move into Theon and how.
- TC: Check whether (and how) O365 keeps a document history (backup).
- GB: See what Learn offers for attendance monitoring, e.g. for IRR.

Submit

We still use Submit for the majority of course work submission, the back end functionality remains superior.

- IS: How many actually use the scriptable mark collation functionality?
- IS: Ideally, I would like to see Computing Help inform staff and students that there's submit (what it offers and how to use it) and also XYZ (what it offers and pointer to something elsewhere on how to use it). The problem this might fix is that right now Informatics materials for staff and students describe "submit" and nothing else. I don't think we necessarily need any single default system, rather than a list of things known to be suitable.

Conclusion: None - wait and see, see also T/C agenda item.

Actions:

- TC: Identify and document at least one additional submission systems (e.g. Learn).

Portal Reports

IGS and ITO Portal reports will have gone stale over the last few years (some no longer in use, some could be enhanced).

Conclusion: Review reports.

Actions:

- TC: Liaise with VM to review IGS reports.
- TC: Liaise with GB to review ITO reports.

Other Items

Discussed without any real conclusion/actions.

Tutorial group changes will move to center for 2019/20 - so we will go from instant response to a 2 day turnaround.

Projects:

- GB: paper submission of project is a logistical nightmare.
- GB: retention is an issue.
- GB/IS: paper submission is purely for markers.
- IS: physical confirmation used to be important, seems not now parallel soft-copy submission is well-established.
- TC: we are reviewing project material submissions documentation to reduce massive unnecessary submissions.

VM raised EUCLID PGR scholarships. We are going to try and use it, but doesn't do half of what Theon does. No requirement to use as yet.

- IS - Useful to see student funding data but not critical.

-- TimColles - 30 Oct 2018

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