

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF EXISTING LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMSs)

Name of institution: Oaklands College.

Type of institution: Further education College

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LMS used: Granada Learnwise

URL of LMS: oakwise.oaklands.ac.uk

Language of LMS: English

Number of years in use: 1

Other LMSs used: TekniCAL Virtual Campus

Number of students in the system:0.

Number of courses available:0. **Typical duration:**Various

Number of tutors in the system:3

This analysis is divided into six parts.

1 Course development tools

2 Student support tools

3 Tutor support tools

4 Administration (student database and records)

5 Technology (quality of software)

6 Price

1 Course development tools

1.1 Course creation. How satisfactory was the LMS for course creation?

Very easy – well structured IMS/SCORM compliant

1.2 *Structure and didactic flexibility - openness.* In the creation of course materials did the LMS permit didactic flexibility? Was the structure open to differing didactic possibilities?

Yes

1.3 *Teacher userfriendliness.* How easy was the LMS to use by teachers and course developers?

Too early to tell

1.4 *Support for graphics, audio and video, moving image.* Did the LMS support the provision of graphical materials, moving images, audio and video in the course content?

Yes

1.5 *Questioning, assessment, assignments.* What provision was made by the LMS for student questioning and assessment and the design of student assignments?

Excellent and because it is standards based it can cope with content from other suppliers output (eg Questionmark perception)

2 Student support tools

2.1 *Interactivity possibilities.* What provision does the LMS make for student interaction?

Synchronous and asynchronous

2.2 *Online student to student communication (synchronous and asynchronous).* What facilities does the LMS provide for student communication to other students and how successful is it? Is both synchronous and asynchronous communication between students supported?

Peer to peer and peer to tutor in both modes

2.3 *Online student to tutor/institution communication (synchronous and asynchronous).* What facilities does the LMS provide for student communication to the tutor or to the institution's administration and how successful is it? Is both synchronous and asynchronous communication supported? Are these support services available 24 hours a day?

Technically yes available 24 hours – intention to offer such but culture change in college yet to happen

2.4 *Resources, library, references.* What facilities does the LMS provide for student acquisition of resources required by the course, especially library resources and references to required readings?

If its web its available – other resources only available if interoperable

2.5 *Feedback on work and assignments.* What is the quality of provision of feedback to students on their work and assignments?

This is excellent but again a culture issue exists here (training mentors taking place)

3 Tutor Support tools

3.1 *Tracking students - database questions.* How user friendly is the LMS for tutors wishing to track their group(s) of students and retrieve data from the student database?

Reporting is good (if limited in present version 1.2) This is due to change radically in version 2

3.2 *Group management tools.* What facilities are provided by the LMS to the tutors for managing their group(s) of students?

3.3 *Preparation of questions and assignments by tutor.* How successful is the LMS in providing tutors with user friendly and didactically successful tools for the design of student questions and assignments?

Both in the VLE and by using specialist tools (5 types in VLE) more in perception)

3.4 *Course planning for students (monitoring pace).* What tools are provided by the LMS to tutors to enable them to monitor and plan student progress?

3.5 *User-friendly administrative systems between tutor and institution.* What provision does the LMS make for successful tutor to institution communication?

As this is an interoperable product (IMS and SCORM) interoperability between the VLE (LMS) and Student Record Systems (SRS) is 'relatively' easy for all commonly used ones in the sector. Between Capita systems and the VLE these are highly developed for interactive communication

4 Administration (student database and records)

4.1 *Enrolment procedures and fee paying.* What facilities does the LMS provide for student enrolments, course allocations and payment of fees?

None

LDAP is used and links to SRS and other systems is furnished

4.2 *Passwords and security.* How successfully does the LMS handle student access to the system and the security of all student interactions with the system?

Single sign on to be developed. Initial login (linked to LDAP) and password allows access to what is required.

4.3 *Student records database.* How successful is the system's student database, especially for data storage and data retrieval.

Separate interoperable system

4.4 *Examination and certification records.* What structures are provided for recording of data and results leading to examination and certification?

Separate interoperable system

4.5 *Course, class and tutors database.* What facilities are provided for administration of courses, classes and tutors?

Internal to the VLE – Administrator required

5 Technology (quality of software)

5.1 *Server - hardware and software options.* What is the quality of server hardware and software options? How is the system integrated with existing software?

Extremely well – hosted locally on server

5.2 *Client - hardware and software options.* What is the quality of client hardware and software options? Does the system permit metatagging?

Yes metatagging

5.3 *Flexibility of didactic structure; updating, adaptability.* Is the didactic structure flexible or is it determined by the technology? How adaptable is the technology to updates and to new technology that becomes available to the market?

Very – but in depth knowledge of system is really called for to understand the possibilities. Quite different learning styles can be supported

5.4 *Limitation of size (number of students, courses, tutors..)* How satisfactory is the LMS for handling varying numbers of students, courses, tutors? How does it cope with 100, 1000, or 10000 students and large course databases?

Not known

5.5 *Speed of system.* How is the speed of the system and student satisfaction? How does it cope with downloading courses and high bandwidth materials?

Unknown

6 Price

6.1 *Cost of the LMS (Learning Management System).* What is the cost of the LMS to the institution?

Refer to supplier for costs. The cost to the institution is much bigger than the cost of buying the vle. Huge development costs are required to get the culture change necessary to take on such technology. This is not unique to this system it is true for all.

6.2 *Annual fee.* What fees have to be paid annually for the system by the institution?

Refer to supplier for costs.

6.3 *Student Enrolment fee (100 students, 1000 students, 10000 students.)* How do fees to use the LMS vary when the student base is 100 students, 1000 students, 10000 students? Is online invoicing available?

6.4 *Maintenance costs: staff involved in management, IT specialists, trainers, etc*
What is the maintenance course to the institution of the LMS and what staff resources are need to maintain it and keep it functioning?

Staff resources

VLE Administrator (Online Systems Engineer) is the only one dedicated to the VLE itself. However a specialist content team and mentoring team are required as well as management. I'm currently writing a case study for BECTa on this.

6.5 *Training of teachers and learners and system users.* What costs are involved in staff and student training to use the LMS system?
Enormous – how long is a piece of string!

**Conclusion: Overall evaluation:
Excellent**

What features would you like to see included in this LMS in the future?

The system is the issue – culture change to support it is.