

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF EXISTING LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMSs)

Name of institution: Upper Bann Institute.....

Type of institution:.....Further and Higher Education.....

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URL:..www.ubi.ac.uk.....

Name of training manager:(Optional).....

LMS used:....ITCampus.....

URL of LMS:.....

Language of LMS:.....Python.....

Number of years in use:.....1.....

Other LMSs used:.....Plato and Destinations.

Number of students in the system:.....4000 approx.....

Number of courses available:.....50+.....Typical duration:.....34 weeks..

Number of tutors in the system:.....120+.....

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?

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 it is very flexible

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

The interfaces are similar to Microsoft, so most people can adapt quickly.

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?

The system has an integrated question maker, marker, recording system for both tutor marked and computer marked assignments.

2 Student support tools

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

The system has discussion forums with granularity down to class level and has a virtual classroom (chat with a webcam link to the tutor).

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?

See previous Q. All users have fully integrated email, discussion forums, instant messaging and chat rooms. (we have found it better to restrict use of instant messaging and chat rooms, but facility is available)

2.3 *Online student to tutor/institution communication (synchronous and asynchronous).* What facilities does the LMS provide for student communication to the tutor ion 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?

See previous 2 Q. Staff do not work weekends.

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?

The system can be linked to library and research websites.

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

This is totally dependent on the 'quality' of the tutor. The Institute has no support policies/procedures in place. The Institute does not have any pedadgogical policies/procedures for staff in place at this time, but is developing these.

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?

Very userfriendly!

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

Group email, group summary reporting of attendance, logins, results.

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?

It is successful.

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?

Automatic sequencing of student paths through learning material is not at present available.

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

Email, electronic file transfer, voice mail etc

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?

The interface is not yet implemented.

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?

We have had very few problems so far.

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

There is room from improvement.

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

This is under investigation with accrediting bodies.

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

The system has a complete timetabling facilities that maintains all details.

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?

The system runs on its own servers.

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

It is not Microsoft or Oracle based so this is an unknown.

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?

Fully scalable.

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?

Yes.

6 Price

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

N/A

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

N/A

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?

N/A

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?

Approx £15,000 per annum

6.5 *Training of teachers and learners and system users.* What costs are involved in staff and student training to use the LMS system?

N/A

Conclusion: Overall evaluation:

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

Full enrolment and student record system.