Queen's University Belfast
Qsis Staff Newsletter

May 2013

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Qsis Student Information System

A NOTE FROM PAUL MORGAN, QSIS PROGRAMME MANAGER

Qsis Programme Manager Paul Morgan joined Queen's in October 2012. Paul has spent the last fourteen years working for Lagan Technologies, a world leader in Enterprise Case Management software development and delivery. He has extensive experience in managing programmes and projects at both national and international level.

What is your involvement on a daily basis with Qsis?
As (Qsis) Programme Manager I have delegated responsibility from the Programme Sponsor and Steering Committee to manage the projects, outlined on the Qsis programme roadmap. On a day to day basis I am assisted in this activity by the Qsis Development team, consisting of five Functional Development Leads, a Qsis Programme Support Officer and the Qsis Student Advocate. Each day involves many differing activities including: meeting with stakeholders and customers; managing programme risks and issues; directing specific projects; implementing new methodologies; reporting progress and planning future projects. The Functional Development Team members are key to enabling this.

What do you think is good about Qsis?
Qsis is underpinned by a world class business application and provides the University with an exciting opportunity to enhance our business processes, student and user experience and to provide second to none services.

What do you find most challenging about Qsis?
The wide ranging functionality provided in the system coupled with the multitude of differing business processes to be implemented provides one of the biggest challenges; this requires a very structured approach to implementation. Another major challenge is ensuring that all stakeholder needs are catered for while keeping focus on the University's strategic goals

What are the major upcoming projects within your team?
The main focus for 2013-14 is on strategic or mandated projects including UCAS paperlight roll out; document management and workflow; statutory returns; postgraduate management; Finance phase 2; Qsis management reporting; examination management and student lifecycle.

What do you hope this newsletter will achieve?
The purpose of this newsletter is to engage and inform Qsis users. I would hope that it generates discussion and helps to stimulate ideas on how we can improve on what we are trying to achieve. The newsletter is a platform for gaining feedback on all aspects of Qsis.

Focus On Projects

Qsis Project Update

UCAS PaperLight Pilot
Aim: Removal of paper based application process.
Status: Project now live with Document Management
Go Live: Full implementation September 2013.

Student Finance Phase 2
Aim: Consolidation of Student Finance Project.
Status: Business requirements gathering underway.

Student Finance Reporting
Aim: Enable the Finance Directorate to report on tuition fee income.
Status: Live 17/04/13.

Qsis MIS Reporting
Aim: Provide capability for accurate management reporting and detailed analysis of the student data held in Qsis.
Status: On-going development.

Document Management Solution Pilot
Aim: To integrate Document Management into the Qsis environment.
Status: Live with UCAS 19/04/13.

E&R Wizard 2013
Aim: Continuous improvement of E&R for students.
Status: On track for September 2013.

Applicant Deposits
Aim: Enable the University to accept deposits from international students.
Status: Go Live 16/05/13.

KIS 2013/2014
Aim: To meet University obligations for 2013/14 return, facilitated by the capture of KIS data within Qsis
Status: On track for August 2013 Submission.

PGR Student Management
Aim: To address examination, and thesis management incorporated within Qsis.
Status: Business Requirements being developed.

Student Loans Company 2012/2013

For academic year 2012/2013 the Qsis Development team, working closely with Student Records and the Income and Student Finance office, undertook significant configuration to calculate and disburse SLC loans and grants to students' accounts. This included the processing of SLC files, the creation of files to be returned to the SLC via their HEI Portal and the design and configuration of calculations.

The successful implementation has enabled the receipt of £33.3m for 2012/13.

Applicant Deposits

Background Information

The University is seeking to attract increased numbers of international students applying to programmes at all levels. Experience shows that applicants often wish to pay a tuition fee deposit which may assist with their future visa applications.

Current Business Process
* Deposits are currently managed outside Qsis by spreadsheets on SharePoint.

Proposed Business Process
* Provide a mechanism for updating the CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) record for an applicant with the amount of deposit received in Qsis.
* Payment of deposits will be mandatory for international applicants enrolling on PGT programmes, and voluntary for those enrolling on UG and PGR programmes.

Business Benefits
* Facilitate the increase in the number of international students to postgraduate programmes.
* Improve the student experience.
* Support the activity of the University's in-country education agents.
* Ensure accuracy and automation of the CAS record submitted to the UKBA.
* Improve timeliness with regards submitting the CAS record and receiving the receipt of a CAS statement by the student.

"The project has presented some unique challenges which have allowed Queen's to begin to exploit new Qsis functionality without customising the system. Queen's is one of the first institutions in the world to do so. Lessons learnt from the implementation will be taken forward to further improve the usability of the system as a whole across all areas of the University."
Philip Wilkinson, Qsis Functional Development Lead

"The project enables the deposit paid by an applicant to be recorded at source on Qsis, removing the need for manual checks and interventions. This facilitates handling of the anticipated increase in volume now that deposits are mandatory for PGT applicants."
Cathy McEachern, Senior Administrative Officer (International) Admissions and Access Service

Qsis Feedback

In the previous issue you provided us with your feedback, here are some details on how we dealt with this feedback.

"You Said"

"We Did"

"Qsis still promises so much. The idea of a comprehensive online record for each student that could bring together letters, emails, scanned medical certificates and the like, would be a terrific boon." School of Creative Arts

"The Qsis team is implementing an integrated Qsis Document Management system. This system is currently being piloted through the Admissions and Access Services department and the UCAS PaperLight project. Through this pilot, documents can be attached to an application or applicant record and processed through the UCAS interface. Going forward, the integrated Document Management System will be rolled out to other Qsis Business areas and will help with the development of a comprehensive student record with links to supporting documentation."

"A specific cohort of international, distance learning, pharmacy students had raised the issue of being unable to take advantage of paying their tuition fees by instalments." *Finance Directorate*

"The Student Finance Framework 2013/14, approved by Planning and Finance Committee in March 2013, incorporates a new payment option, which will be made available for this cohort and additionally any other international and non UK EU distance learning students. The Qsis Development team is working with Finance to enhance the current system solution to further improve the student experience."

*"**For the future, we are talking about recording medals and prizes awarded to students within Qsis."*** School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences

"Following feedback from the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences, the Qsis Development team set about implementing an Honours and Awards project. This project provides functionality to allow Schools to record any honours or awards within Qsis against the student's record. Transition of this functionality will form part of the Qsis strategic and operational user group discussions."

"A live link to the exams system would be great." *School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering*

"A review of examination management is scheduled within the Qsis development plan. Outcomes from the review will inform decisions on the project schedule."

We want to hear from you!

The Qsis team is keen to engage with you, the user. Please complete our questionnaire and provide us with some feedback on how you think we can do this better!

If you have any questions or require any assistance accessing the questionnaire please contact qsisnewsletter@qub.ac.uk

Stakeholder Interviews

Oonagh Rooney, Student Records Supervisor

How long have you worked with Qsis?
I have worked with Qsis since its implementation in 2008.

In your new role what will be your involvement with Qsis?
In my new role as Student Records Supervisor, I am responsible for the administration of the key services (E&R, Graduation & maintaining the student record) within the Student Records Office - hence I use Qsis on a daily basis for a range of tasks.

What do you think is good about Qsis?
All information is maintained within one place making the communication between Student Records and Schools easier. With the introduction of the new Wizards (Registration, Graduation and Resit) we are able to manage the administration in Student Records much more effectively. Personally I feel Qsis has reduced the administration side of my role, particularly as the quality of data that we are working with has improved considerably in the past few years.

What do you find most challenging about Qsis?
In my new role, I suppose the most challenging part for me is learning all the new areas of Qsis and trying to build up my knowledge of an ever evolving system. Qsis is a very powerful tool and due to my new responsibilities, I am using much more of the system, most of which involves more complex interrogation.

What are the major upcoming projects within your departments?
The two major upcoming projects are Summer Graduation and Enrolment & Registration.

Frances Mercer, School Manager (History and Anthropology)

How long have you worked with Qsis?
I have been involved with Qsis from the outset of its implementation in 2008.

In your role as a School Manager, what is your involvement on a daily basis with Qsis?
My role involves overseeing the implementation of Qsis within the School of History and Anthropology. I would consider myself to be an intermediate user of Qsis. I use the system regularly with regards to Enrolment and Registration procedures and for reporting purposes within the School.

What do you think is positive about Qsis?
The most positive aspect of Qsis is the availability of information. Compared to when I first started as School Manager, the volume of information now available within Qsis is much more extensive and this helps me greatly in carrying out my role. There is a lot of potential and I look forward to future developments.

What do you think is challenging about Qsis?
Some of the procedures contained within Qsis are very complex and can have major implications for students if they are carried out incorrectly. For me the most challenging aspect is gaining an understanding of the information and procedures contained with Qsis.

What Qsis Projects are you currently involved in?
At the moment I am involved in the Qsis Management Reporting project. This project is currently being piloted with six Schools including the School of History and Anthropology. We are very excited about the possibilities this project will have for the reporting capabilities within Schools and are looking forward to the full implementation of the project.

Qsis Development Plan 2012-2015

What are the upcoming projects in the Development Plan for 2013?

- PGR Student Management
- Statutory Returns
- Data Management
- Student Finance Reporting
- MIS Reporting
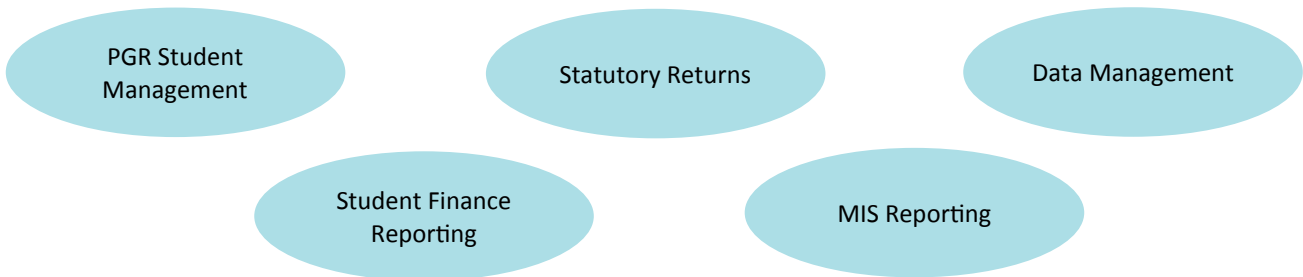
Next Issue
* Focus on projects
* Staff interviews
* Stakeholder feedback
* Development plan update

Feedback
If there are any stories or issues you would like to see in the next issue please email us.

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