

Executive Information System Project (EIS): Current Development and Future Plans

Briefing to VCAC, 20 September, 2004

Purpose of the EIS

The EIS project is being undertaken in response to the PWC Scoping Report in which the development of processes and systems to ensure the timely provision and ready accessibility of relevant, reliable, accurate and quality-assured management information emerged as a significant priority.

The aim of the EIS is to develop a system using the business intelligence application 'COGNOS' which can deal adequately with standard management information reporting as well as more complex institutional research questions.

Benchmarking of UWS against the sector, our competitor institutions, and other institution groups has been built in as an essential parameter, when available.

Components of the EIS

The EIS project has the following components:

- ❖ Cognos Business Intelligence Package
- ❖ Cognos cubes (built using Cognos BI and allow multi-dimensional analysis)
- ❖ UWS Web portal through which targeted users can access cubes and perform their own reporting and analysis
- ❖ High level graphing and data visualisation modes

Current developments & successes

The EIS currently offers the following cubes:

- ❖ **UWS Load and Enrolments**
- ❖ **UWS Weekly Load Reports** (based on DEST submissions)
- ❖ **Completions, Load and Enrolments data 1997-2003** – allows UWS to be benchmarked against national and institution group data
- ❖ **UWS Course Experience Questionnaire 2001-4** including item and composite scale scores, and measures of “explicit” and “broad” satisfaction
- ❖ **National CEQ data 1998-2003** (average scale scores and measures of explicit and broad satisfaction) – allows UWS to be benchmarked against national and institution group data
- ❖ **UWS Graduate Destination Survey 2001-4** which provides indicators of graduate employment and study destinations. Some benchmarking data available
- ❖ **Staff indicators 1989-2003** – allows UWS to be benchmarked against national and institution group data
- ❖ **UWS Staff data 1998-2004** – provides a greater level of detail for UWS
- ❖ **Student Outcomes** – including student *progress rates* (indicator of proportion of units successfully completed), and *retention to UWS* (indicator of the proportion of students retained at UWS from one year to the following year)
- ❖ Course demand and preference data is currently under development

Common analytical categories built in include:

- Equity groups (low SES, rural/isolated, ATSI, disability, NESB)
- Greater Western Sydney indicator
- Course-related elements (college, field of study etc.)
- Unit-related elements (CGS funding clusters, discipline groups etc.)
- Demographics

Future Developments

i. Short-term

The following developments will be undertaken over the next 3-4 months:

- ❖ Making the transition from a 'development' to a 'production' system – involves IT architecture issues and solutions
- ❖ Identifying target user groups to provide feedback on existing cubes
- ❖ Identifying other UWS information to include in cubes (eg: finance, research, HR)
- ❖ Building on existing work (eg: UAC demand data)

ii. Longer term

- ❖ Developing and implementing training package in association with PDU – to begin next year
- ❖ Roll-out of Cognos access to larger groups of identified users
- ❖ Work with users to optimise the EISs capability to provide information suited to most users' requirements
- ❖ Develop the system further to enable disparate data sources to be meshed in order that a cohesive mechanism for answering higher-level "institutional research" questions is provided (eg: analyse nexus between student load and finance, analyse relationships between course retention patterns and demand/preference/UAI data etc.)
- ❖ Develop a comprehensive and quality-assured data warehouse and accompanying data dictionary

SUMMARY

Over the past 6 months the EIS project has developed into one which has delivered on a range of key reporting and management information indicators required by the University. The potential of this project to continue to synthesise data sources, both internal and external, and to provide a system capable of providing insights into bigger institutional research questions is clearly demonstrated.

Anne Barrie
Senior Information Co-ordinator
Office of Planning & Quality
15 September 2004