APPENDIX A

Transcript of Baseline Design Episode of Empirical Investigation

0:00 Researcher: That's recording…

00:01 PM: We are going to review the Graduate Development Programme specification which is a change to ISIS. Let's just get the form filled out. There you go, that's one. OK, so right then, shall we just start by having an overview what GDP is all about?

01:12 BA: Yes.

01:13 PM: Let's look at what we are trying to achieve with the changes that are requested.

01:29 BA: Looking at the background of the GDP is all about is to do with providing support to students through their study at UWE and providing a number of activities that would enhance the student experience during their time. There is a couple of key components to the GDP that will be required, one is that the student actually needs to attend sessions and they need to achieve 75% attendance rate and they need to complete a 2000 word report at the end of each level or at the end of year. At the end of their study at UWE they would end up with a certificate, so all of this would need to be captured in ISIS against the student record so obviously it could be recorded, managed within each faculty and school.

02:47 PM: OK, in relation to level or year it kind of ties up with their degree programme?

02:54 BA: Yes, normally if level 1 then that is year 1 of study and so on.

03:02 PM: Nothing for placements?

03:05 BA: No not at the moment there is no requirement for placements.

03:10 PM: In essence, what we are doing on the basis of what you said, there is a number of things: ticking boxes of students attending, we are not having to look at recording attendance, we will leave that for the university to sort out. We are recording the fact that attendance was 75%, tick box and also recording the fact that a 2000 word document was submitted in each individual year. That's essential to what we are about. That would lead to some kind of success or not success?

04:07 BA: What do you think? Fine then, so that was how it was presented with requirements in a very high level board format and then the customer required some

requirements of their understanding of GPD and then again the knowledge of ISIS to provide what they thought was required.

04:34 PM: What form did they take?

04:37 BA: So, we had a couple of sheets of workings which came through and if we look at the first one then you can see down the left hand side the different numbers with different levels so that you have GDP level 1, GDP level 2, GDP level 3 and for each level a number of criteria was required so, e.g., attendance statement review, and additional column was put in originally called AL's accredited learning and I'll explain what all this means in a minute. A completed column and it was anticipated that once a student had passed that level this would be ticked. The date and the user ID of the ISIS user would then be stamped on the system on the actual student record and so on.

05:51 PM: You're recording who actually entered it?

05:54 BA: Yes.

05:55 PM: Just to clarify the completed column there the rules would be applied automatically by the system?

06:06 BA: It was again part of the requirements that this was again student facing. It would sit on the student record for each individual student. Each individual student would have a new frame that we would be able to see what was required of each level and if they satisfied the attendance then the user can tick that box and if they handed in their statement and then again tick that. The review column is something where they may have not completed their full attendance and may or not submitted their statements so it gives the faculties the opportunity to invite that student in for a review and if they deem to have sufficient reasons why then there may extenuating circumstances then it allows the faculty user to tick that box. A number of business rules were put in place which said that if the student attended they pass their assessment and handed in their statement then they would be marked as complete for that level or if they attended and didn't hand their statement in but completed their review then again they would be marked as completed.

07:40 PM: That's automatically by the software?

07:45 BA: Yes. Alternatively again if they hadn't had full attendance and handed in their statement their 2000 word statement plus they have had a review why they didn't attend their full 75% quota then again they would be completed, then there is this thing of accredited learning which again is where the student can present sufficient reason why they don't need to do the GDP so they may be in part time employment something

like that and it is contributing to what would have been their GDP outcome. If the faculty user then thinks this is the case then they can set the AL tick box so that means the student passes.

08:39 PM: Any type of non credited university GDP would count?

08:48 BA: Yes, so that is one requirement that came through which was about having it based against each student. There was another requirement that was looking at being able to bulk updates of groups of students that maybe here on a primary award within a faculty. This example, so that another frame was devised and required. This would allow the ISIS user to select though another of predefined criteria such as the faculty so now that it is the school through faculty restructuring, through their primary award, their primary targets, their RAG attachments, their RASPS attachments.

10:05 PM: RAG being their reporting attachment group and RASPS being the other one. (PAUSE) Reporting study period?

10:14 BA: Two of these fields were mandatory, this being primary award and the RAG but obviously this is using existing ISIS functionality so if you selected a kind of award say BA Business Studies, that would automatically filter the results within the other search frame so primary targets will then be filtered and you would only have primary targets that related to Business Studies.

10: 51 PM: Can I just check one thing: you say that this student facing and this frame is linked to what they are studying to some extent so this is a filter so is the GPD data stored actually at the student level or is it stored against the primary awards they are studying?

11:14 BA: Stored against the student level.

11:17 PM: So once you've done it once you've done it?

11:20 BA: Yes. Going back to the example having this bulk update group of students, all you are using the frame for is the search facilities to go and find all those students on BA Business Studies for example bring back all of those students and then you can then set the attendance to the statement of the review the AL accordingly for those students. If you know that all of those students have attended then you can quickly bulk update all of those students. The function how it was specced in the requirements changed as we went through the specification and looking at the actual how we can do it. These same rules apply once you've attended and you've done your statement then your mark is complete etc. and that is marked at complete again on the student record itself.

12:40 PM: OK

12:45 BA: The third requirement is just to have an ability to be able to report on a set of students to have their status on GPD looking at each level of their attendance, statement review etc and who have completed. Originally it was required that through the bulk update frame, the one which we have just been talking about that a report would be able to be generated from that but it was devised that there is an issue there, it was probably going to get to complicated how the development could work so we came up with potentially a new way of doing it within the ISIS application called the GRT which is a generic reporting tool, and what again we've done we've added new fields to that reporting tool so that allows users, so that anytime they can full out criteria based on award, faculty and they can see a list of students who have completed their GPD.

14:11 PM: The outcome with GRT you can get into Excel anyway? Yes to do some analysis.

14:13 BA: So that's the requirements at very high level, no additional background to that and that is how we started.

14:29 PM: So the user is quite familiar with the existing system? This is an enhancement of the existing system then able to express what they want partly in terms of a solution. I think I've understood that. I've understood it from the point of view that there are three main elements. There's the recording of the GPD outcomes on an individual basis, the potential to be able to it on a bulk basis, the requirements to do some reporting potentially analysis.

15:12 BA: We had to take the requirements and progress then to something that we could relate to the spec. and obviously develop right down to the developers to the program so I've liaised with the customer and spent some time going through their requirements, looking at ISIS capabilities to see what was feasible and what was not, where the logical place was to locate all this all the requirements and actually how we could deliver the functions required to support the faculties. So again because it is student facing then the logical place to place it is in the student record itself so an ISIS user would go into a student record and from that be able to select a new application in which we were designing to bring up their GPD outcomes and having selected that application would bring up what tick the frame that is required with a few tweaks within it.

16:38 PM: Did you catch all this in the specs. here?

16:39 BA: Yes.

16:40 PM: I'll have just have a quick look. I've noticed that the requirement here is a link to a question mark, need to confirm the software, production of certificates and I've noticed in here that you've specced it out.

17:02 BA: Again the requirement was to have a link to the conferment software when the student has come to their final year and as well as getting a certificate of credit that they would also get a GPD certificate to say that they have attended etc etc. It was deemed that due to the time scale implications and other technical difficulties that we would actually not include this as part of the specifications and so this was omitted from this specification and would probably be picked up at a later date because obviously there isn't going to be needed until later years, to link to this software.

18:00 PM: Are they introducing it now to year one students and then work its way through?

18:11 BA: It's is my understanding but there isn't a reason why that it cannot be done for final year students now once this has been developed.

18:30 PM: So that covers pretty much of it on page one?

18:35 BA: Yes.

18:40 PM: So, the GPD outcome frame.

18:42 BA: Yet again we looked at the frame on how we can take the requirements of this one and progress it to what was a useable frame itself so when you selected GPD outcomes from a student record it bring up a new frame which would have contained within it the student number, the surname and the forename of the student and then that would be non updateable so that would be taken from the student record itself. Below that would be the GPD outcomes, then again with each level in a table format, again with the column headings, attendance statement, review RPE which is the requirements of the AL which actually stand for recognised prior engagement and then there is the computer column the user ID is the staff member who is entering that detail and obviously the date which is just date stamped of today's date of when it was entered.

19:51 PM: Once the completed flag has been set, can you go back to change it?

19:57 BA: Yes you can the completed flag is non updateable by the user, it is triggered by setting the other four columns of attendance review and setting the RPE to true and then using the rules that we have identified before and once the rules are satisfied, completed is set to true and at the same time the user ID and the date will be populated, subsequently changed, if the user can go in and say that I made a mistake and I need to

take out one of the ticks. If you took out the statement tick for example and only left the attendance then the computer.

20:53 PM: The user ID is only stamped when it is completed?

20:55 BA: Yes. There is also an option on there where we came up with a notepad within the frame. This was again to allow the user to enter miscellaneous comments, which then again could be entered once and then deleted from the record so it was just allowing a bit of information to be then again it just gets stored in it's frame.

21:38 PM: Then what else have you got?

21:40 BA: Then we looked at how we can do the bulk update for a number of students. There is existing applications within ISIS that allows the user to be able to search for students against the school, primary award etc so we wanted to keep this existing functionality and obviously a) the user is familiar with it and secondly the system development side, the coding is already there. We did add an additional field that wasn't on the requirements that was the GPD level itself so that would allow the search to be filtered down that level. Having obviously inputted your requirement what you wanted to search for, then clicking to bring back all those students that match the search criteria so if you are on this primary award etc.

23:07 PM: So it's quite flexible, isn't it? It's giving you the option; it is building on existing functionality. Its fitted into the menu and goes on the student record and the fast status has changed so this is something that we are familiar with and it is five, six, ninth application in terms of fast status updates. Quite familiar to people in terms of what they are doing. It fits into an existing framework.

23:49 BA: What it does is all students match the existing criteria and it allows the user to bulk update against the whole list so what wasn't in the requirements and after doing some initial investigation we worked the best way of trying to achieve this below is a table field to have a tick box for each of the criteria attending, statement review and RPE and if the user wanted to bulk update all of the students in the list then they would highlight all of the students in the list select all button and then they would click on the attendance statement etc tick boxes and then is the value they want and then just apply to selection and then that would update all of the students and the students in the backend of their student record so that if you then went into one of those students individually and not through this fast application then you would see that those have been updated . Obviously once you have saved the record you've saved it. Same rules

apply the completed is non-updateable, apart from by the system, and is only completed when the rules have been satisfied.

25:42 PM: I've noticed on this screen the user ID and the date haven't been included?

25:46 BA: Yes, again it wasn't stated in the requirements and the screen was getting too congested so we decided to leave it off and it would still be populated within the student record so there is still are record of who's done what.

26:07 PM: This is about bulk updating and if you are looking at an overall of a student's GPD individual frame. Looking at this frame you said that you are building on a standard functionality. You can pull up a list of students and it will give you a list of information and of those you can select individually five or six and set them to one thing so you can mix and match within that frame as well and apply the criteria to them. You can also invert the selection if you want to.

26:54 BA: One issue that was identified was where a student was on a part time award, or when students belong to one faculty, but are owned by another faculty. So for example, if they are doing BA Business studies on a part time basis and they are doing another award with CEMS and CEMS are the people who actually own the award the business school when they update would do this bulk update you could save the record away, it would tick the attendance to complete and statement complete etc but if they haven't completed it within CEMS then there is an issue with CEMS, the ISIS user would come in and say how come this student hasn't been updated and that was an issue. It was deemed that due to timescales and the number of instances that this would actually occur that a list would actually be managed within academic registry and given to the faculties.

28:23 PM: If it was important that the GPD was related to their individual award then it would be designed that way. To be established to the student. It is interesting that it is a softer element to what we are doing we are being ask to take into account that if a student is studying more than one award how the GPD is managed for one individual student, I'm sure that they would be indicating that they would be unhappy in producing a 2000 word assessment. It's out of scope but it has been considered.

29:02 BA: It doesn't fall into part of this that the working practices from each faculty which maybe slightly different. The requirement was put forward to try and cater for the majority of working practices again they may not cover all .

29:22 PM: If students come back and they do then they would not necessarily wish to do their GDP again?

29:29 BA: No.

29:30 PM: I see that, ok. To match the initial requirement. Is there anything else that covers that? No.

29:56 BA: Moved on now to how the reporting element would come into effect and how the faculty user could print out a report.

30:08 PM: This is on the business stage when you hit confirm?

30:14 BA: Yes, a standard functionality within ISIS, obviously if you try to make changes without closing the frame a prompt occurs do you wish to save data?

30:32 PM: So you have got the option to discard changes?

30:38 BA: Yes, until you've saved it, it's fine. At that point you could also export it to Excel. If you want to report on that set of students then you have the option to export it quickly to Excel and again you can play around with that. However, if at a later date and the faculty administrator or the faculty head wanted to find out about their GPD outcomes and levels and which student achieved and who hasn't then again a bit more functionality is required. ISIS has this generic reporting tool GRT built into it which allows it to interact and interrogate ISIS using on a whole a standard set of search criteria, some use ISIS student record, some use ISIS, others use ISIS field board decisions. So there's a number of ways that you can get the information out. We deemed two of these areas would be appropriate to add new criteria to. We looked at the student faculty view, which allows to you search for student information by faculty, and we looked at the student primary award view which allows you to look at student primary award and academic year.

32:41 PM: By faculty you mean school now?

32:43 BA: Yes. In this is was felt that a number of criteria would be needed to capture the GPD statement review, the RPE and if the student completed. These have been added into the available fields that the user could use and if they wanted to they could cross forward them, some of them, one of them into their query and then it would allow ISIS to generate a report into that query. If we look at the student faculty query which is the ISIS, there's a number of set criteria which is already contained within this report which is faculty, student number, surname, forenames, primary award code, primary award registration status, the RAG code, RASP enrolment status and the academic year.

34:03 PM: Right.

34:05 BA: Those are already in the query review and then you would add the additional fields that you want. You would have GPD level and completed level. Similarly the

student primary award view which looks at their primary award and academic year which has the student number, surname, forenames, primary award code, primary award registration status, the RAG code, RASP enrolment status and the academic year, so again very similar codes as before. You could add additional fields into your query. The output would be a list of those students that matched the criteria.

35:08 PM: If you didn't restrict for example the number of student's award by default it is going to be restricted to primary award, academic year which is part of that view.

35:21 BA: Yes.

35:22: So, can I report that they have completed out or just the criteria?

35:31 BA: You would have to transfer from the available list the criteria that you wanted for your query, you would drag across that you want the GDP completed outcome over and then again that would be another column within your Excel output.

35:52 PM: OK, Sorry, I'm with you. Yes it can be a criteria as well as being on the thing? If a student has completed 2 years of GDP then you would see 2 records?

36:08 BA: Yes.

36:10 PM: You can do it that way round which is by award or the overall faculty, so you could do some analyse for example how many of our students have completed?

36:25 BA: Yes.

36:26 PM: So they are happy with that?

36:28 BA: Yes.

36:32 PM: So is there anything else that we need to consider? I know you've spoken to the users and we would need to refine this if necessary.

36:48 BA: Yes.

36:51 PM: In which case we can accept that with no changes and sign it off with no development. Job done, there you go.

37:02 – end of recording