

## **SAAS MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2010**

Present: Tracey Slaven  
Bruce Nelson, NEBM  
Allan Forsyth, NEBM  
Dugald Mackie, NEBM  
Derek Smeall, NEBM  
Graham Gunn  
Audrey Heatlie  
Audrey Shimmons  
Maureen Shevas  
Linda Pender (Secretary)

### **Minutes of the previous meeting**

1. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 November 2009 were agreed.

### **Actions from the last meeting**

- Miriam was developing a communications plan.
- Ewhan would contact HESA as he was the manager for the attendance data project.
- The Management Board report was now in a new format based on the balanced scorecard.
- The Board would consider corporate planning this afternoon.
- A new tracking sheet had been added to the risk register.
- Dates for Board meetings had been arranged for the rest of year.

### **Balanced Scorecard Report – Q3 (Oct-Dec 2009)**

2. Tracey introduced the new report and asked Board members for any feedback on the format. She explained that integrating the 2 previous reports had highlighted areas where we would need to revisit the KPIs.

3. The Agency had dealt with an exceptionally large number of applications from students last session (approx 9,500 – 7% increase). 2009/10 applications had largely been dealt with by mid November but as CSU had concentrated on processing applications this had left a large backlog of correspondence to be dealt with and staff in CSU had to work significant overtime to clear the backlog.

4. There were concerns whether student numbers would continue to increase and the Agency were introducing a new IT system so it was expected that the 2010/11 session would be difficult. However, the Agency were doing what it could to mitigate any problems. Tracey had flagged these concerns with HELS but SAAS was a demand led organisation.

5. It was noted that the Funding Council had introduced new limits to the number of “fees only” students so overall student numbers may decrease next year.
6. The transition to the new StEPs system would start with performance testing on Thursday 18 February.

### Customer/Stakeholders

7. Our recent customer survey result had shown a decline in customer satisfaction ratings (although some changes were likely to be the result of changes to questions and delivery through Survey Monkey for first time) but the main issue of concern was the balance between processing applications or dealing with other correspondence and telephone calls.
8. Next session, the Agency will be clearer in communications with students and we will make it clear that if students don't apply by a set date they may not receive their funding in time.
9. SAAS also suffered from the problems at SLC which increased calls from concerned students. It was agreed that there was some confusion between the work of the two organisations.
10. Bruce Nelson said Edinburgh University had issued an e-mail to all students to advise them to apply early for funding and suggested other institutions could also do this to encourage students to apply earlier. The NUS and other student associations may also be able to assist SAAS with communications to students. The communications team were looking to see if we can provide link to SAAS website on institutions portals. The Agency were also considering using social networking technology.
11. Complaints - 39 complaints had been received this quarter. A large number of these complaints were about problems contacting the Agency by telephone.
12. KPI 9 - This may be the wrong indicator to use and Bruce and Tracey agreed to discuss this separately.

### Delivering Value

13. Student Programme – (Annex B) - £1.3m overspend projected at December was due to the increase in student numbers this session.
14. DRCs – (Annex A) – The forecast was over budget mainly due to depreciation and interest costs for the StEPs system.
15. SLA/concordate performance – current SLAs and concordats in place need to be reviewed and we were currently working with SDS and SLC to update them.

### Internal Processing

16. StEPs – performance testing would start on Thursday 18 February. The BSU would be restructured as development work was finalised. Once the session started it would be too late to move back to GRASS if there were problems with StEPs. A final decision would be taken at next project board meeting.

17. An additional complication was that 2009/2010 applications would still be coming in until the end of June which would be processed on GRASS and previous years student records would continue to be held on GRASS rather than transferred over to StEPs.

### Learning & Growth

18. KPI 22(a) – This target had been reviewed and changed to less than 10% rather than less than 20% as this was a risk to the business. Vacancies were generated if staff left mid session as we could not replace them with trained staff. We hope to deal with this by over recruiting before the start of next session instead of trying to fill vacancies with untrained temporary staff who could carry out full duties. The Board supported this decision.

19. The Staff Survey results were circulated to the Board and would be issued to staff shortly. 79% of all staff had completed the survey. Some of the results would be used for an interactive session at the staff awaydays on 11 March.

### **Moving from 2009/2010 to 2010/2011**

20. This paper explained the new policy changes for next session and changes in place for the new IT system as discussed earlier in the meeting. New closing dates for applications would be introduced next session and we would increase communication with students.

### **Minutes of Committee meetings**

21. The minutes of Health and Safety and Environmental Committee on 22 December 2009 were noted.

### **Risk Register**

22. Risk 5 – Reviewed had moved into a high priority category due to increased budget pressures. This risk was shared with HELs and was also in their risk register. There had been some small updates to other risks but no other changes had been made to the overall level of risk.

23. Risk 7 - A new mitigation factor was to develop an explicit fraud policy and protocols for exchanging information with other bodies.

24. Risk 8 - current control measures were good but after the move to StEPs we may need to expand mitigation measures. **Action:** Tracey/Graham to review risk in new of move to StEPs.

25. Risk 9 - The Agency will take action on staff survey results at the awaydays.

26. Risk 10 - While the Agency keeps a wide range of records we need to be able to find information more easily so some work needs to be done on records manage.

27. The Board said the risk register was an excellent document and an effective tool for the management board to maintain oversight of risks.

Date of next meeting

28. The next meeting will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

Chief Executive's Office  
17 February 2010