

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER  
FINANCE APPLICATION SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (FASIG)

A meeting of FASIG was held on Monday 20th May 2002 at 2.00 pm in the Senate Chamber, Northcote House.

**Present**

- Brian Allnutt ( Finance )
- Chris Austin ( Classics, AH & Theology )
- Carrie Baker ( External Relations )
- Mike Barnett ( Finance )
- Debbie Brett ( Finance ) - SECRETARY
- Annette Coles ( Dept of Lifelong Learning )
- Heather Crispin ( SMS )
- Pat Curgenvin ( Biological Sciences )
- Adrian Davey ( Finance )
- Paul Daysh ( Chemistry )
- Andrew George ( Domestic Services )
- Anne Gore ( Geography & Archaeology )
- Caroline Hampson ( Finance )
- Sally Heggie ( IT Services )
- Beverley Hughes ( Library )
- Jane Lawrence ( Physics )
- Dick Leitch ( Finance )
- Roz Pardee ( DLL/ SELL )
- Mike Phillips ( Education )
- Sally Phillips ( Biological Sciences )
- Karen Pope ( Engineering )
- Paul Sandy ( IT Services )
- Gabi Simons ( Drama & Music )
- Keith Stead ( Chemistry ) - CHAIRMAN
- Elizabeth Stewart ( Modern Lang )
- Karen Swanston ( Psychology )
- Denise Watts ( Physics )
- Keith Zimmerman ( SHiPSS ).

**APOLOGIES**

- Sally Bastyan ( Education )
- Lucinda Bennett ( Maths )
- Alan Binge ( Finance )
- Helen Clarke ( Psychology )
- Lana Cummings ( Finance )
- Angela Gardner ( Learning Teaching Support Centre )
- Peter Glazier ( Finance )
- Kathy Halsey (Camborne School of Mines )
- Sarah Hamlin ( Finance )
- Martin Henson ( Domestic Services )
- Jenny Hickman ( Dept of Lifelong Learning )
- Maureen Hill ( Geography & Archaeology )
- Liz Hodgkinson ( Peninsula Medical School )
- Mike Huggins ( Finance )
- Alison Husband ( Sport & Health Science )
- Ges MacDonald ( English )
- Cathy Maguire ( Sport & Health Science )
- Anna McFadden ( Arabic and Islamic Studies )
- Stephen Murphy ( Sport & Health Science )
- Hilary Olek ( Dept of Lifelong Learning )
- Barbara Powell ( Law )
- Liz Saunders ( Finance )
- Catherine Serjeant ( Finance )
- Ruth Stansfield ( External Relations )
- Alex Walsh ( IT Services )
- Marilyn Wills ( Centre for Rural Research )

02.00 Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone.

02.01 Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes were approved and adopted.

02.02 New Chairman

The Chairman was pleased to announce that Pat Curgenvan has agreed to stand as Chairman. This was approved by the Group. The current Chairman, Keith Stead, will hand over responsibilities with effect from the end of this meeting.

02.03 Update on Recoding

(a) The Group received an update from Brian Allnutt confirming that the workshops for the Schools had been held since the last meeting. Management Accounting have been responding to Schools, where there are queries or amendments outstanding. Most Schools had completed the required work now, and the information will be input into the system shortly : first into the “test” version, and then in July, into the “live” system. It was requested that each School be issued with specific confirmation that their new coding is acceptable.

(b) A full list of detail codes has not yet been issued. This is a conscious decision, as it is felt that a full list could confuse the issue by providing too much detail.

Management Accounting will identify the level of coding likely to be appropriate for each School ( for external reporting etc ) and then will issue a list to each School ( by end May 2002 if possible ). Schools will then have the opportunity to review their list and raise any issues with Management Accounting. In due course, the facility will exist to analyse below these levels, if required.

(c) It was noted that each cost centre code has both a 40 character narrative field to describe it and a 15 character “short” name. The “short” names are being allocated by Brian Allnutt and his team, but they can be changed at a later date if Schools should find better alternatives for particular “short” code names. The Group discussed the possibility of using a pro forma from the website for future requests for new codes.

02.04 Update on SAM and APTOS

( i ) It was explained that SAM is the Student Accounting Module within the SITS student record system. It will handle debts and accounts for students. The Income Section within Finance will use SAM to monitor student debt. SAM is a new module used in only three other universities ( and two of those have only used it since August 2001 ). These universities experienced problems as a result of a very short implementation period ( six weeks ). The University of Exeter will have a longer implementation period. Consultancy days are being used to assist with the setting up of the new system, and to resolve specific issues, for example, how SAM talks to PAMS ( the accommodation module ).

( ii ) The Group was advised that the introduction of APTOS remains on schedule and the updated position is explained within the report for Policy and Monitoring Group Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> May 2002 on the website. This can be accessed via the route “ITS/ Admin Computing”. It is recommended that Group members check the website periodically for future updates. Examples of issues covered include : interfaces between APTOS and other systems; Key Users for each major area; the Helpdesk that will be available for all APTOS queries for Finance and Student Records; the Project Accounting Module for Research Accounting; and the shift from impact printing of cheques to laser printing. Should any queries arise from the items within the report, please contact Brian Allnutt.

02.05

Training Timetable for APTOS

( a ) Dick Leitch confirmed that the introductory training sessions had started. Six of the eleven sessions have already passed, attended by 48 of the 112 people expected. A few additional sessions will be run later in the year for new entrants.

( b ) The detailed training courses have largely been scheduled ( 64 out of the anticipated 80 sessions ). Each School should have staff involved in this training. Dates and details will be published on the web within the next few days, listed in APTOS News 4, and circulated to FASIG members shortly. Staff will need to book specific courses, as training will be conducted in groups of seven. In particular, if a unit wants all its staff to attend together Dick Leitch should be informed urgently. The training will take place in the Babbage Suite in Streatham Court between 10.00 am and 1.00 pm, and 2.00pm and 5.00 pm. The broad timetable will be :

Purchasing and Accounts Payable	to start end June/ early July
Accounts Receivable and General Ledger	to start early July
EAS ( reports )	to start early August
Stock Control and Management	to start end June/ early July
Fixed assets	to start late Oct/ early Nov

A special demonstration will be offered for Heads of School, senior administrators, Finance Managers etc who will be doing minimal inputting but want to report on/ view material and/ or want to retain the authorisation of purchase orders. Special arrangements will apply for this session.

02.06

Year End

A draft paper titled “2001/2 Financial Year End Procedures – Closing Down” was circulated. The Group was asked to check through the draft paper after the meeting. It was requested that all feedback and queries be addressed to Brian Allnutt.

It was noted that APTOS and SBS will run side by side for only 4 – 6 weeks.

Finance Division will need to change the year of any “errors” arising from Schools involving large transactions in order to adhere to audit requirements.

Final instructions should be issued to Schools by end May 2002.

02.07

Any Other Business

( i ) It was requested that the new guidelines be confirmed regarding the use of “D” codes. No final decisions have been made, and the matter rests with the Directors of Finance and Personnel. It will be confirmed as soon as possible whether Schools need to create APTOS codes to replace the “D” codes. The Group were advised that a named member of staff will be required per code, and that each member of staff can only have one code.

( ii ) It was confirmed that payments to students are intended to be paid via SAM not APTOS. Future consultancy will determine if this is possible and the process required. This will mean that some Schools may need training on SAM in due course. Schools using SITS already should find SAM easy to adapt to. Also, it is possible that SAM may be able to take data from another system ( via SAM’s In Tray facility ) which could mean that Schools can process information via SAM but without actually using SAM as such. The intention is to avoid setting up students as suppliers as well as customers.

( iii ) Next FASIG meeting will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2002. Time and location to be confirmed via email to members.