

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
FINANCE APPLICATION SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (FASIG)

A meeting of FASIG was held on Tuesday 7th January 2003 at 10.00 am in Committee Room A, Northcote House.

Present

- Brian Allnutt (Finance)
- Debbie Brett (Finance) - SECRETARY
- Pat Curgenvan (Biological Sciences) - CHAIRMAN
- Adrian Davey (Finance)
- Andrew George (Domestic Services)
- Sally Heggie (IT Services)
- Mike Huggins (Finance)
- Beverley Hughes (Library)
- Alison Husband (Sport & Health Sciences)
- Dick Leitch (Finance)
- Jane McCartney (Buildings and Estates)
- Mike Phillips (SELL)
- Liz Saunders (Finance)
- Karen Swanston (Psychology)
- Denise Watts (Physics)

Apologies

- Chris Austin (IT Services)
- Carrie Baker (External Relations)
- Emma Baker (Academic Division)
- Mike Barnett (Finance)
- Sally Bastyan (Education)
- Lucinda Bennett (Maths)
- Alan Binge (Finance)
- Helen Clarke (Psychology)
- Annet Coles (DLL)
- Heather Crispin (SMS)
- Elaine Davies (SSHS)
- Paul Daysh (Chemistry)
- Janette Evans (SHiPPS)
- Alison Franklin (Chemistry)
- Angela Gardner (Learning Teaching Support Centre)
- Anne Gore (Geography & Archaeology)
- Kathy Halsey (Camborne School of Mines)
- Sarah Hamlin (Finance)
- Caroline Hampson (Finance)
- Jenny Hickman (SELL, Lifelong Learning)
- Maureen Hill (Geography & Archaeology)
- Liz Hulbert (Finance)
- Nela Kapelan (Music)
- Jane Lawrence (Physics)
- 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)
- Roz Pardee (DLL/ SELL)
- Sally Phillips (Biology)
- Karen Pope (Engineering)
- Barbara Powell (Law)
- Paul Sandy (IT Services)
- Catherine Serjeant (Finance)
- Gabi Simons (Drama & Music)
- Ruth Stansfield (Business Relations)
- Elizabeth Stewart (Modern Languages)
- Alex Walsh (IT Services)

Marilyn Wills (CRR, SOGA)
Stephen Woodcock (Finance)
Keith Zimmerman (SHiPSS)

02.00 Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone.

02.01 Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes were approved and adopted, with one amendment :
Item 02.01 (b) Purchase Orders should be clarified. Users can set up as many addresses per supplier as necessary, but only one field can be used on purchase orders so the user has to select which address they want to be applied.

Matters arising :

- (a) Purchase Orders : The meeting discussed the possibility that the APTOS system be developed so that the purchase order allows a user to select one of the list of addresses already set up for that supplier. This option will be investigated. The group also queried what would show on a printed purchase order, if the address was changed after the purchase order had been created but before it was printed. (It has since been established that the print will show the address that exists when you print the purchase order, regardless of the address the user used when creating the purchase order) .
- (b) Temporary Problems : The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section of the website is being updated to incorporate a section for issues that have been raised frequently but that currently remain unresolved.

02.02 Update on Training

Dick Leitch reported that a new training suite would be open soon within the Admin Computing block. The training environment will be significantly improved by this move.

A new training schedule will be issued shortly. This will include condensed “repeat” courses; Phase 2 implementation for some new users; and practical Question and Answer sessions within one of the lecture theatres (the latter offered on a “walk-in” basis).

Dick is also planning courses concentrating on the extraction of data from EAS and the manipulation of that data.

The next issue of APTOS News will follow shortly.

02.03 Update From Brian Allnutt

The meeting was advised that the Deputy Financial Accountant, Liz Hulbert, leaves the University on 17th January 2003. In terms of the APTOS project, Liz was heavily involved with Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable units. These aspects will be covered by Alex Walsh initially, as he will be working within Finance Division as a project resource. The job description for the replacement Deputy Financial Accountant includes specific reference to system development involvement. It is hoped that this person should be in post during May 2003.

The APTOS project has been allocated additional funding which has enabled us to retain Dick Leitch’s services until January 2004 to contribute to the training and

system development aspects. Alex Walsh is a new resource to the project, for a one year period.

02.04

Reporting

- a) Some users reported that Kathy Channing had warned of technical difficulties with Excel and EAS. Details were not known at the time of the meeting, but they would be investigated.
- b) Further to comments in previous meetings, the users asked for details of the reports already set up on the system. Adrian Davey agreed to respond in the near future so that users know what is available.
- c) Adrian Davey advised the meeting that the cost centre report was progressing and would be ready in the near future.
- d) The Chairman confirmed that the Reporting Sub-Group would consist of Mike Phillips, Jan Evans, Alan Binge, and herself, together with additional relevant staff from Finance Division. It was agreed that Finance Division would nominate an “organiser” to run the sub-group and to act as a catalyst for action. Details of the first meeting of the sub-group would be circulated to members as soon as possible. Any other users interested in joining should email D.Brett in the first instance.
- e) The priority for reporting, agreed by FASIG in a previous meeting, was to be able to produce reports equivalent to those available from SBS, with a small number of specified modifications previously discussed. Further development can be made over time. The new reports do need to be relevant and must reflect appropriate development of procedural issues, rather than automatically replicating an SBS document. However, this must be balanced by the users’ urgent need to be in a position to ascertain up-to-date balances.
- f) It is likely that the EAS reports would be written by Finance Division and then emailed to schools and other users, with instructions detailing for example, how to use pivot tables in order to report on the data contained therein. It will be important that Finance Division co-ordinate the timings of these reports across the various budget holders.
- g) There will be monthly “closing dates” or timetables for the input of salaries, journals, recharges etc. This is important so that reports remain accurate for the date they are drawn, rather than the figures being affected by transactions entered at a later date.
- h) The meeting heard that Buildings and Estates and Domestic Services are having difficulties reconciling APTOS records to those of their own separate systems because the periods and dates are different.

02.05

Any Other Business

- (a) Dick Leitch advised that the website is to be updated by separating the APTOS information from the SITS pages. Online forms and requests are being circulated to users now in order to obtain feedback. The online forms will provide a faster and more consistent system, which emails the documents to three generic email addresses for action. There will be increasing use of the web in future for circulating information.
- (b) The next stage of implementation for the project is “fixed assets and asset management”. This is due to go “live” on 31st July 2003. The areas of responsibility for Heads of School and Divisional Directors will be :

1. Maintaining a list of their inventory of items £500 or more – must define each asset, its location, owners, insurance value, and acquisition cost.
2. Items of £25,000 and over must be capitalised.

The “pilot” will use Finance Division as an example of an admin function and one volunteer School (preferably a scientific School) will also be needed to take part.

During the period from now until July 2003, Schools and Divisions will need to accumulate information about their University assets. Details of what will be required will be issued in the coming weeks.

(c) Users should note that the SBS system is no longer supported and so is not available to users.

(d) Balances should be brought forward from the SBS system shortly.

(e) NEXT MEETING : The next FASIG meeting will be held on Thursday 13th February 2003 at 2.00 pm in the Senate Chamber. An agenda will be circulated to members via email in due course.