PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Report on the evaluation of HRIS Programme

1. Summary

At the meeting of the HR Systems Steering Committee in November 2013, the evaluation of the HRIS (Human Resources Information System) Programme was considered. The purpose of evaluating the work of the Programme is to establish the success of the Programme and provide all parties involved in the management of HR Systems with information on where emphasis should be placed in future. It was agreed that evaluating the work of the HRIS Programme required an approach capable of capturing the experience and feedback of the wide range of stakeholders in the Programme. Different mechanisms for capturing this information have been used, each intended to suit the different purpose or stakeholder group.

This paper provides a summary of the evaluation process itself, an explanation of what was delivered by the HRIS Programme, how that has been received by the user community, lessons learned, post Programme governance arrangements and the methods for building on the platform the Programme introduced.

2. Action requested of the Committee

The Personnel Committee is invited to:

   a) note the contents of this paper; and,
   b) decide how often they would like to be updated on HRIS progress (see section 5).

3. Background

The HRIS Review began in 2008 and the HRIS Programme in 2009. The Review was commissioned by the Registrar and focussed on establishing the requirement for a new HRIS, understanding our business process needs and performing a product selection and procurement exercise. The business case for the HRIS Programme was approved by Council. The work to implement standard business processes and the new supporting system was a major and very complex programme with many components.

The following overarching aim of the Programme was agreed through consultation across the University, which involved stakeholders and representatives from departments, divisions, and central teams:

"Applicants, employees, managers and administrators will benefit from online systems which support the electronic flow of information through the University in support of smooth, efficient and streamlined HR business processes. As a result, system users across the University will be released from time-consuming paper-based administration and provided with easy-to-use tools to manage staff effectively throughout the employment lifecycle in order to satisfy institutional objectives. The systems and HR business processes will embed university personnel policy and practice and strengthen financial control. Data monitoring, reporting and analysis capabilities will match the needs of the institution."

The accompanying Blueprint for the University can be found at Annexe A.
4. **Detail**

4.1 **Evaluation process**

Many people across the University were involved to some extent in HRIS over its five year lifespan, and each will have their own view of what went well and what could have been improved. It was in recognition of this that it was agreed to adopt an evaluation approach comprising a range of different methods to ensure that the experience and feedback of the wide range of stakeholders in the Programme was captured. The methods took the form of:

- a survey completed by the Programme sponsor (Julian Duxfield);
- a lessons review undertaken by the Portfolio Management Office (PMO) in IT Services (this is a standard exercise which is carried out following, and sometimes during, projects. Views are obtained via a mixture of meetings with key individuals, group sessions and surveys and are concerned with the management of the Programme and individual projects therein, intended to establish what worked well for use in future projects);
- an analysis of the benefits obtained from the Programme;
- user feedback (HRIS User Group representatives, using a standard questionnaire, worked via their local consultation mechanisms to provide a divisional view of the Programme); and,
- the feedback provided during the course of the Programme, which in most instances, have been received previously by the HRIS Programme Board (e.g. following recruitment pilots, applicant surveys, personnel pilots and the survey of early adopters of the personnel module in September 2012).

This paper summarises the information gathered via these different mechanisms.

4.2 **What was delivered**

The principal driver for the programme was the need to replace an HR system which was no longer supported. In summary, the programme delivered the following:

- replacement of the OPENdoor HR system;
- replacement of the Midland Trent Payroll system;
- introduction of an e-recruitment facility to replace the manual recruitment process; and,
- provision of a central training administration system.

A number of key processes were standardised as a result (including recruitment and personnel administration), key manual processes were automated, and some of the responsibility for payroll and personnel activities was devolved from the central teams. The modules were all delivered without major issues, and the successful implementation of the personnel module provided a strong foundation for improving HESA and REF submissions.

The programme was complicated by the need to ensure that Core, OPENdoor and Midland Trent were all maintained following the December 2011 data migration of Personnel. Running all of these systems in parallel during the rollout of Personnel was challenging and on a scale that went beyond the previous experience of the University.

The programme was subject to a number of delays, and had to make provision for new pensions auto enrolment legislation and HMRC Real Time Information reporting.
requirements during the implementation of the Payroll module. Timescales eventually overran - the original plans show the programme was due to end in June 2012 and it is still ongoing (the final element to be undertaken under this banner, the decommissioning of OPENdoor, is expected to complete in July 2014) - and the budget overran by 20%.

A number of elements were not delivered by the programme:

- the Self-Service functionality expected to enable a number of benefits could not be implemented owing to the incompatibility of the Core software and the University Single Sign-On system;
- budgeting and forecasting (rebranded during the course of the programme to ‘pay forecasting’);
- absence management; and,
- profound interface for pensions (since delivered).

These requirements are included in the planning for the ongoing work of HR systems projects.

The 2009 business case set out the benefits expected of the programme. These are set out in full at Annexe B along with an indication of which have been achieved.

4.3 Departmental and divisional user reception of the HRIS Programme

4.3.1 e-Recruitment

This module was generally better received by users than the personnel module. Users’ top three benefits are that: they consider the online recruitment system presents a positive shop window for the University; it supports a streamlined, standardised and more efficient process with less requirement for data capture in departments and fewer inappropriate applications; and, the capability for managing activities in bulk e.g. group emails for ‘regrets’ and shortlisting packs.

Users also consider that: the shortlisting packs require improvement (they take time to produce, poor formatting, lack of page numbers); the system doesn’t support reference requests adequately; and, they regret the lack of flexibility with regard to automating interview scheduling.

4.3.2 Personnel

Users like the access they have to view and amend details e.g. contract end date, right to work information, costing and personal details; the generation of letters from standard templates; and, having a single, secure source of data on which to report.

They find, however, that the system contains multiple screens which are complicated and not intuitive, and they find the approach to their use to be disjointed; they have queries over the accuracy of some of the data and there are no prompts if data is missing; and, they would like the ability to customise reports.

Data migration for personnel prompted some comment. Users felt that OPENdoor data should have been circulated for checking ahead of time and some are still unclear on what data can be trusted. Payslip addresses, cost centres and service dates were referred to. It was considered generally though that the data for main payroll was satisfactory.
4.3.3 Payroll

Users see the benefits in: payroll seeing the information that has been input locally; the ease of access and ability to check data; and reduction in double handling of data and paperwork.

They consider, however, the approvals and audit facilities to be poor, with a shortage of supporting information on the approvals screens and some actions not requiring approval such as leavers; advance processing is not as expected; and the new payslips lack the previous level of detail on breakdown of pay.

4.3.4 Business process definition

Views varied but generally the work on recruitment was viewed more positively e.g. the ability to see the whole process and understand progress through it. Some people felt that the personnel process work was IT focussed and did not adequately cover the more complex employment scenarios faced at the University. Academic recruitment was identified as an area people would have liked to have seen included in the recruitment implementation.

4.3.5 Reporting

The provision at go-live for both recruitment and personnel reports was considered to be poor. Improvements were made later and recognised. The lack of ability to develop and customise reports locally is considered to provide issues for local ad hoc reporting. A Reports Review Group is currently meeting to work through and improve the reports further to enable greater flexibility.

4.3.6 Training and documentation

Training was well received although some people felt that making the adverts and job descriptions training a mandatory session for all users of recruitment was unnecessary. The majority of users are pleased with the QRGs (quick reference guides) and find them very useful and easy to use. The number of updates made to the QRGs, however, particularly during the period post-personnel go-live, was not well received. These were made to reflect refinement of processes, correct errors and incorporate the availability of new functionality.

4.3.7 Communications, business change and implementation support

Views on communications ranged from excellent through to overly positive and not reflecting the real issues. There was a common view that the delays in the payroll project were not well communicated. Some people felt expectations should have been better managed. Some people felt that pilot sites were better prepared than the rest of the user base. The ‘buddy’ system of support introduced for personnel rollout was well received but participants in the later waves felt that their ‘buddies’ were not able to spend as much time with them as departments involved in earlier waves, due to ongoing support commitments.

A widely reported view was the extent to which adoption of the new system and processes had added to the workload of departments. It was felt that this had not been properly recognised by the centre and some departments reported that they have had to recruit additional staff to cope with the additional burden.
4.3.8 Programme governance

There were mixed views on the transparency of the structures, their roles and responsibilities. A concern was expressed that the views of operational staff were not adequately represented, governance felt distant, and decisions were being made by people who did not possess hands-on experience.

4.3.9 Programme approach

There was consensus that a staggered rollout was the only way such a programme could have been managed. A 'big bang' approach would not have been workable. The approach taken felt very long-winded however, and the decision to implement the payroll module last was questioned. Many felt it should have been implemented first. A further consequence of staggered rollout is the extent to which users were required to learn, unlearn and relearn processes and system actions, to accommodate the introduction of additional modules and additionally for some, the approaches testing in pilots. This was time consuming and difficult for many staff.

4.3.10 Adoption of ‘pilot’ approach

Pilots were generally considered to have been useful exercises, although of too short duration and not scheduled at peak times, with the result that not all scenarios were tested. For those directly involved it was a good opportunity to get to know the system. Others, however, found they were receiving off-putting, negative messages from some pilot participants which put them off Core before they went live. There was concern that issues fed back during the course of the pilots had not been acted upon and were still causing problems for users so questioned why the feedback had been sought. Departments involved in the pilot reported that taking on the role added considerably to their workload.

4.3.11 Opportunities missed by the HRIS Programme

Users were asked for their views on this. Their responses included the following:

- A data quality exercise before migration
- Self-service
- Appropriate segregation of duties
- Thinking of ways to save time
- Involving users in decision making rather than just the selected few involved in pilots or process groups
- Improving the job search facility on the University website
- Enabling manager prompts for probation reviews, appraisals etc.
- Absence recording and reporting
- Involvement via secondment of departmental representatives in the project
- The capability to send automatic alerts to users to advise when an employee’s fixed term contract is finishing, end of probationary periods etc.
- Academic recruitment
- Reporting functions should have been available earlier
- Up-skilling of personnel staff in the underlying process of the system along with data protection and data quality
- Annual data quality exercise built-in.
4.4 Lessons learned

The PMO ‘lessons learned’ report was undertaken to capture lessons from a range of perspectives, from members of all of the process groups, the programme team and programme board, and record recommendations from the programme which may be of use to future projects and programmes. The recommendations from these lessons are attached at Annexe C.

4.5 Post Programme HR Systems governance arrangements

The governance structures supporting the HRIS Programme have been dismantled and replaced. Work to review and improve the system continues, with the oversight of the HR Systems Steering Committee and the HRIS User Group. A summary is provided here but full details on the remit, membership and the minutes of meetings are available here on the ‘Using HRIS’ website.

4.5.1 HR Systems Steering Committee

Reporting into Personnel Committee, the primary role of the HR Systems Steering Committee is to provide governance and oversight of improvements and changes to HR systems. The central HR software used across the University is the CoreHR Information System (HRIS), although other software systems link with HRIS.

The Committee is also responsible for reviewing centrally determined administrative processes which are impacted by the above and ensuring that these are efficient and effective.

The Director of HR is the chair of the steering committee and will be responsible for reporting back to Personnel Committee on the work of this group. This group has close links with the HRIS User Group. It is populated with one representative from each of the divisions, as well as representation from IT Services, Personnel Services, Finance Division and the HRIS supplier, Core International.

Members of the group should be able to provide strategic direction. In addition, it is intended that the representation from across the divisions should provide a full range of perspectives i.e. divisional, departmental, users and non-users.

Depending on the portfolio of projects underway, the Committee may co-opt members from other departments, or invite the Chair of a project board to meetings of the group as required.

4.5.2 HRIS User Group

The role of the HRIS User Group is to: provide guidance to the HRIS team on priorities for attention; act as an expert forum and reference point for the HRIS team; act as representatives of the user community and ensure that their interests are put forward to the HRIS team; provide help and guidance to the HRIS team e.g. volunteering (as appropriate) to assist in reviewing changes or enhancements, user acceptance testing etc; and, to act as a “sounding board”, providing feedback on planned changes or enhancements.

The Group Chair is currently Dr Roni McGowan, Department Administrator, Plant Sciences. The Chair is a member of the HR Systems Steering Committee.

The group includes a divisional and departmental representative from each of the four academic divisions. In addition there is a representative from each of ASUC, Continuing
Education and UAS Personnel as well as from central departments. Members may send others in their place if necessary. “Guest” attendees will be invited as required.

The user group aims to be representative of the HRIS user community, and will include both frequent system users and departmental administrators. To ensure that those without direct membership of the group have the opportunity to contribute, divisions are invited to put in place a structured mechanism to gather feedback from users prior to each User Group meeting. The method of achieving this is left to departments and divisions to decide, but might include a local meeting with users within the division, with a member of the HRIS Support Centre in attendance if required. It is the responsibility of members of the User Group to ensure that feedback is collated from users based in their division/area of work.

4.6  Methods for building on the platform introduced by the HRIS Programme

4.6.1  System enhancements

A new approach for managing user requests for system enhancements has been drawn up and discussed at the May meeting of the HRIS User Group. This new process will provide users with visibility of the enhancements that have been requested, the status, the time of delivery of their request and whether it might be included in a future project. This list will be reviewed by the HRIS User Group and will be included as a standing item on the user group agenda.

4.6.2  HR Systems projects

The HR Systems Steering Committee is responsible for overseeing the HRIS development budget allocated to IT Services. It will also decide the priorities for HR Systems projects.

Projects completed outwith the HRIS Programme are:

- Auto enrolment;
- HMRC RTI (real time information) reporting;
- REF 2014;
- HESA staff return 2012/13;
- R12 data conversion and data restructuring in CoreHR;
- Interim IT solution for Temporary Staffing Service;
- HRIS Service Recovery project.

Projects currently running are:

- The principal current project is the upgrade project which consists of both a database upgrade and a move from version 16 of the application to version 19. A separate paper (PC(14)28b) outlines the purpose of this project and its current status;
- Temporary Staffing Service permanent IT solution;
- HESA staff return 2013/14.
Future projects identified for prioritisation by the HR Systems Steering Committee currently include:

- Single sign-on;
- Employee self-service;
- Academic recruitment;
- Manager request;
- Pay forecasting;
- Improving audit controls;
- Correspondence upgrade;
- Process review and improvements.

5. **Recommendation**

It is recommended that reports on progress with HRIS developments are provided to the Personnel Committee on an annual basis, with additional reports provided in the event of any significant issues arising.

AH/JD

23 May 2014
Annexe A

HRIS Programme Blueprint

The Blueprint statement is a high-level description of what the University aspired to achieve in terms of its business processes, people, information systems and facilities, and data following a successful implementation of a new HR system.

The process groups (comprising departmental and divisional stakeholders, charged with reviewing and, if necessary, changing and streamlining existing HR processes) reported into the programme board and worked to ensure that this blueprint was implemented across each of the five process areas.

- The University, throughout its devolved administration points and central services, and linking with colleges where appropriate, will provide a smooth, efficient and consistent employment and recruitment experience for all staff and applicants.

- Administrators and line managers will benefit from a reduction in the burden of routine paper-based administration through the capture of data at source, the electronic transfer of information, and the elimination of duplicate data and processes. A review of HR business processes will be a key component of the implementation project, seeking to build on existing best practice and standardising processes designed to streamline employment administration as appropriate. The HR/payroll system will be fully compliant with current and future employment law, regulatory requirements, and university policy. Usage of the system will be mandatory where appropriate.

- Over time, through the deployment of user-friendly on-line self-service facilities, staff will be able to keep the University informed of changes in personal information, actively manage their own personal development records, arrange their annual leave, record absence, etc.

- Applicants will benefit from a more timely recruitment experience through the deployment of e-recruitment facilities. The data input by applicants will become the starting point for the employee record, and will support comprehensive equality and diversity monitoring.

- Through the provision of a powerful and easy-to-use reporting technology, managers at every level of the University will be able to access the data they require - both for internal and external reporting - in the appropriate format, confident of its accuracy and relevance. Business intelligence tools will support the monitoring and analysis of institutional performance.

- Roll-out of the system will be phased at an appropriate pace in line with an agreed and published implementation plan. All those working with HR information will receive timely and relevant training and on-going support from a dedicated process and training team based in Personnel Services. This team will be responsible for providing clear guidance on the practical application of HR policy as regards use of the new technology. IT user and system technical support will be provided by Business Services & Projects.

- The new system will be capable of offering a bureau payroll service and other HR services to colleges and university subsidiary companies.
Annexe B

Benefits outlined in 2009 HRIS Programme Business Case
The HRIS Programme worked to implement the CoreHR system and associated business processes in a series of 5 tranches. At the point the business case was presented to Council, the duration of the Programme was expected to be 2 ½ years and so the plans for tranches 3 – 5 were to be developed later.
The following tables are taken from the 2009 business case and the benefits since delivered by the HRIS Programme are highlighted by use of a ✓

### Tranche 1

| ✓ | Prototype standardised e-recruitment process and supporting technology for specified staff groups and pilot in selected departments |
| ✓ | Proven HR portal giving easy access to recruitment system |
| Not delivered | Use of ‘single sign on’ to reduce need for multiple logins and passwords |
| ✓ | Security profiles agreed |
| ✓ | All process groups formed with agreed terms of reference |
| ✓ | Agreement on organisation structure e.g. for managing reporting, workflow authorisations, security etc. |

### Tranche 2

| ✓ | Further recruitment processes (including authorisation to recruit) agreed and use of recruitment extended in departments and divisions |
| ✓ | Piloting of new starters entered directly by departments |
| Not delivered | Discussions underway with colleges around improved administration of recruitment to joint appointments |
| ✓ | Basic HR record and payroll costing available to all departments, with associated reporting |
| Not delivered | 'HR Portal' user interface, providing access to pilot run prompts and alerts on key employee contractual events by administrators |
| ✓ | Organisation structure extended and maintained aiding HESA and comprehensive recruitment equal opportunities reporting |
| Delivered in part | Continuing review of processes implemented by process groups |
| ✓ | Critical HR data migrated to new HR system |

### Tranches 3 to 5

Building upon and extending the benefits obtained in tranches 1 and 2 to provide:

| ✓ | Wider adoption of well understood standard processes |
| ✓ | Fully integrated recruitment with HR enabling realisation of data input by candidates, reducing administration and aiding full capture of equal opportunities data for staff |
| ✓ | Exploitation of potential for online advertising, reduction in print media advertising and costs, reduction in paper associated with recruitment administration |
| Not delivered | Extension of system prompts and alerts to support processes and employment activities |
| Not delivered | Online access to payslips |
| ✓ | Removal of use of paper forms by employing departments and quicker
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivered in part</td>
<td>Training administration, booking and reporting supported by system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not delivered</td>
<td>Management of annual leave via manager and employee self-service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement of OPENdoor functionality only</td>
<td>Data held on sickness absence for at least some categories of staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not delivered</td>
<td>Maintenance by staff of their own personal details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underway</td>
<td>OPENdoor decommissioned with provision for reporting on historic data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not delivered</td>
<td>System supporting robust financial controls and improved salary forecasting and commitments against grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Fully integrated HR/Payroll/Financials/Grants &amp; compliance with research council requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial benefits**

The potential for achieving some financial benefits from the implementation of a new HR/Payroll system was included in the original business case. However, it was recognised that these were not going to cover the costs of the implementation nor ongoing support. It is recognised that a robust HR information system providing a single source of HR data is necessary for any complex modern organisation such as the University of Oxford. The OPENdoor system required replacement and financial benefits were not the drivers behind this implementation. The principal area in which the potential to make savings were identified was in the move to online recruitment and exploitation of the University's own website, instead of the traditional dependence on print media. The University has seen a significant reduction in recruitment advertising costs as a result of the programme, but these must be weighed alongside the reported need for additional staff to support use of the new system and processes. Through the work of the HRIS Programme, the University has implemented a platform on which to further improve in the future.
Annexe C

Recommendations of the IT Services HRIS Programme Lessons Review

These recommendations are recorded as a result of both positive and negative aspects of the HRIS Programme. (NB: A key lesson which the Portfolio Office is taking from this exercise is the need to capture lessons learned periodically throughout a programme while the experience is fresh in people’s minds, and to encourage the programme to learn from its own experience along the way.)

1. Supplier and Product Selection

- Make available to all stakeholders the information around the choice of a product, especially those who may be disadvantaged by the choice. Explain the benefits to be delivered. On a long programme, this may have to be repeated so that new stakeholders are aware.

- Ensure that the selection process includes input from specialists in all areas the system will cover.

- Where possible, ensure product demonstrations cover standard day-to-day processes as well as the more advanced features.

- Map “as is” and “to be” processes in the early stages of projects and use these to inform the later development of the system.

- Small suppliers should still be considered but there are risks so allow extra time for due diligence and request information on future plans for the product.

- Develop a comprehensive benefits realisation plan so that it is clear when benefits will be delivered and what these are dependent upon.

2. Business Case

- Allow time for preparation of a realistic business case on a major programme and develop a benefits realisation plan so that the impact of de-scoping can be easily understood.

- Business cases need to be tested thoroughly before approval and then revisited regularly throughout a project or programme to see whether still valid. While it may not be possible to move away from a system once selected, it may be possible to de-scope to save costs or to focus on actions to ensure that benefits are realised.

- Use a gateway process to release funds over time, to force a periodic programme review and to provide better control of the budget.

- Prioritise benefits, identifying which are the most important to achieve. This will help decision-making later on.
3. University Processes

- Senior staff need to consider the implications of streamlining processes and evaluate the costs and issues against the benefits of perpetuating multiple approaches to common processes.

- Wherever possible, implement new business processes prior to the development of a new system. This will give them time to bed down and ensure that the programme has a clear set of processes to work with.

- Prior to the start of a project, clarify which elements are system-related and best dealt with by systems specialists, and which are subject related and are best dealt with by those with expert subject knowledge. The plan needs to provide for the additional resourcing needed in both the project and the subject matter expert teams.

- Work with users departments to assess the impact changed processes and responsibilities will have and to ensure that resourcing is considered by those departments and the overall programme.

4. Programme Planning and Control

- When implementing dependent aspects of a package, expert advice from the supplier about the most effective implementation order should be sought and their normal mode of implementation should be followed.

- Where project staff raise concerns, these should be given proper consideration.

- Plan programmes so as to deliver benefits as soon as possible.

- Identify and implement “quick wins” for all users.

- Be prepared to take on additional resources to overcome major delays and maintain momentum of programmes. Programme plans may need to be revised to deal with this type of issue and resource plans and budgets updated accordingly.

- Examine the impact of plans and new processes on the user units, and secure agreement from the Senior Users before finalising.

- Where possible, sample data early on to identify potential issues with quality.

- Data quality issues are the frequent cause of overruns against plans. Include contingency in the plan to cover for data cleansing and validation.

- Keeping the programme board well-informed of progress against the budget and of any factors which might cause variation builds confidence between the programme manager and Board, and allows the Board to make informed decisions.
5. Programme Organisation

- Staff and leadership changes can introduce risk to projects and programmes; this needs to be considered when allocating resources.
- In order to ensure focus and good control, programmes should be split into projects, each of which has its own project manager, board, plan and budget.
- Sponsors need a good understanding of their role and accountabilities, and will need to allocate sufficient time to carry out an active role.
- Sponsors need to set out a clear vision and ensure that it is communicated to everyone – and on a long programme, this will need to be repeated.
- Involve an external expert to provide assurance throughout the programme lifecycle.
- People issues which could derail a project or programme need to be addressed as soon as they become evident.
- Identify those whose role will change extensively as a result of the new system and related processes, and spend time securing their buy-in.
- Project governance and auditing needs to be agreed at the outset and allowance made in the budget and plans for this.

6. Consultation and Stakeholder engagement

- Develop a clear plan for consultation across all user groups.
- Departments need to ensure that they have the right level of representation, including those who will use the system day to day.
- Maintain communications throughout the lifecycle of a programme or project, and include messages about any aspects which will not be delivered and any future plans.
- Consider how best to make use of the experience of those in user groups and ensure that terms of reference are drawn up and understood by all.
- Tailor project documentation for those who are not familiar with project terminology.
- Build in opportunities for feedback throughout the project/programme and show that those providing feedback are being listened to.
- Be open and honest when providing messages that are likely to be unpopular.

7. System Design

- Make a decision as to whether to buy or to build the solution. Customise only where unavoidable and with awareness of the future implications of doing so.
• Where the scope has to be reduced in order to meet budget and timescale constraints, focus on extra communications to help manage expectations.
• With de-scoping, it is important to reconsider the business case to understand the impact on benefits.
• Ensure that suppliers provide a view of where their product is going over the next few years. Share plans for the future of the application with users to help manage expectations.
• Programme Boards should make it clear why far-reaching decisions were made, especially where this means that expected benefits are to be delayed.

8. Implementation

Preparation and piloting

• Running a pilot is advisable as it allows the project team the chance to test the implementation processes in a real situation with tolerant users.
• Carry out a survey of the data in the existing system. Wherever possible, cleanse the data well in advance.
• Set out clear acceptance criteria for go live.

a) Training

• Where trainers are not experts in the area being covered, include process experts in training sessions as well as systems trainers where there are major process changes or users who are new to the processes.
• Ensure that the trainers are included as members of the project team so they have a strong understanding of the context for the new system.
• Consider tailoring training to the needs of groups of users where possible.
• Piloting training is essential to ensure that the level is appropriate.
• Support training with high quality reference material and with details of where to get support.

b) Rollout

• Walk through implementation plans with those who will be supporting the implementation, and schedule plenty of downtime in the implementation plan. This will allow for catch-up where rollout takes longer than expected and
refinement of implementation processes and also gives project staff a chance to recover from what is inevitably a stressful activity.

- Implementation plans need to allow user units sufficient time to complete preparatory activities.
- Allocate individuals to support specific groups of users – this helps ensure that users’ particular issues are understood properly and prioritised appropriately.
- Review the implementation plan to identify any bottlenecks and likely resourcing issues, and allow for extra resource where implementation is complex.
- Include briefings and training for local IT staff as part of the rollout plan.
- Include a survey of the user environment in project plans.
- Be clear on which versions of browsers, operating systems etc have been tested and are supported.
- Consider the roadmap for software which the system is dependent on and agree an approach for dealing with changes to this.
- Provide clear communications for users as to what will happen on implementation day, quick reference guides for the system and information on how to request help.
- Include support for new processes as well as IT systems in implementation plans.
- Recruit expert user staff to assist with support in the early stages.
- Change management activities are needed which emphasise early on in the programme that this will have a major impact on users.
- Additional resources need to be planned for in departments to help them to manage the changes effectively.

**c) Programme Transition**

- The implementation of critical systems should not be authorised without evidence of a successful disaster recovery test having been carried out supported by adequate documentation.