

SKILLSET

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Learning analytics

Delivered for JISC

AT A GLANCE

- Development of the Jisc learning analytics service
- Ongoing support



THE CLIENT

Jisc is a not-for-profit company whose role is to support higher education and research institutions. It provides network and IT services, digital resources, advice, and procurement consulting, while researching and developing new information technologies and modes of working. Jisc is funded by a combination of the UK further and higher education funding bodies, and individual higher education institutions.

THE CHALLENGE

The Jisc learning analytics service development project is the world's first national learning analytics service developed to address the key strategic goals of HE and FE organisations. SkillSet CEO, Tim Stratton, was engaged in the early stages of this project and was tasked with managing the implementation of the service, even as it developed, in the "pathfinder" institutions.

These pathfinders included the very earliest adopters, such as the University of Gloucestershire and Cardiff Metropolitan University, who were very much involved in shaping the Jisc service.

Tim inherited a number of projects that had already commenced and implemented strong project management controls. He created project initiation documentation, planned and coordinated communication with the institutions and managed subcontractors.

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OUR APPROACH

Jemma Greener joined Tim on this project due to the number of pathfinder institutions (more than 20 concurrent) and the consequent volume of work. Tim and Jemma worked closely as a team, providing the main liaison between Jisc and the pathfinders. This enabled the Jisc technical team to spend much less time dealing directly with the institutions and more time on developing and setting up the service.

The project management team developed, or helped to develop and manage, several processes:

- Support, including the introduction of Freshdesk - a trouble ticketing system.
- User groups for Data Explorer, Study Goal, and the core Learning Records Warehouse set of products.
- Project set up and reporting.
- Implementation of Jisc systems (Data Explorer, Study Goal, plugins and data extraction) for each institution.

THE RESULTS

Both Tim and Jemma had considerable experience with relevant systems, particularly virtual learning environments, but throughout this project they have developed a deeper understanding of the technology and issues relating to learning analytics. For example:

- Data structures - helping institutions to understand how their data should be used to populate the LRW. The progression codes and assessment data fed in by the University of South Wales from its Quercus and Blackboard systems is a good example.
- Predictive modelling - explaining to customers how the predictive models constructed in OLAP and Tribal Student Insight work. Discussing data and model quality with Unicon and Marist College.

- Data protection - Tim helped to deal with queries from customers relating to both the original and new data protection/service agreements and for getting these extended/signed by the institutions. Tim and Jemma were also involved in some of the technical implications e.g. the withdrawal of consent by a student who had previously agreed to let their personal data be used for analytics purposes.

OUR CLIENT'S FEEDBACK

Jisc rated SkillSet as a 5 out of 5 on our annual customer satisfaction survey for project management and system implementation. They also provided us with the following feedback:

"Very pleased with our dedicated resource."

PAULETTE MAKEPEACE, Jisc

ABOUT SKILLSET

SkillSet has been designing, developing and delivering training programmes since 1992. We work closely with our clients to make sure we understand their needs and deliver the most effective solution. We work hard to develop long-lasting partnerships - that's why we have clients that we've worked with for more than 25 years.

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