

Computer Services Department and DCU Library on the road to a Service Level Agreement



From Different Perspectives to
Partnership

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The starting point

- Semester 1 2003 for CSD

- No student printing available in the Library until week 9 of semester
- No clear idea of level of working equipment in staff and student environment
- No set expectation for when or if issues would be resolved
- We had full complement of staff and use of all technologies

- Semester 1 2003 for Library

- Library did not have satisfactory IT provision in the customer facing aspects of the business
 - Bad public perception
 - Unknown number of Student PCs out of order, no printing
 - Insufficient number of OPACs
 - Problems with student helpdesk
 - No means of reporting problems

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The Problem?

- Reliant on informal arrangements
 - Resolution of issues
 - Project delivery (particularly in the student environment)
 - Prioritisation
- Different perspectives of customer service
 - Library had been through external quality reviews
 - CSD were relying on personal relationships

How to move forward?

- CSD and Library needed a clear set of guidelines which would enable both parties to
 - Identify and log problems
 - Have confidence that calls were being logged, progressed and closed effectively
 - Remove the ‘blackhole’ syndrome
 - Set reasonable, appropriate and consistent response times to issues
- Needed to include all CSD internal teams
- The solution was deemed to be that CSD needed help

Help provided by e2e

Service Improvement Plan

- Structure

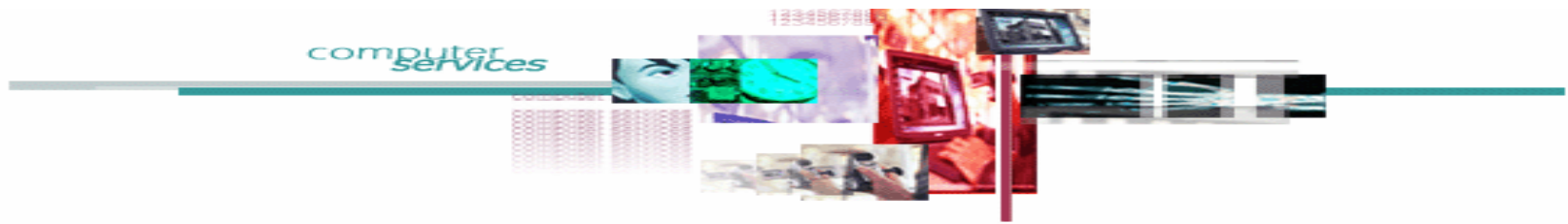
The Helpdesk had to be restructured with clearly defined roles and responsibilities

- Technology

The call logging tool (RMS) had to be reviewed to ensure it met business needs

- Process

CSD had to have some standard framework (ITIL) within which to provide a customer focused IT service



How did this help

- As part of the Service Improvement Plan, CSD sought to implement an SLA
- Library part of the SIP steering group for e2e review process
 - Library pleased to be partners in the pilot SLA
- CSD and Library used a template provided by e2e

What is a ‘Service Level Agreement?’

- A service level agreement (SLA) is a contract between a service provider and a customer that specifies, usually in measurable terms, what services the service provider will furnish. It is a document which defines the relationship between two parties.
- The quality of the SLA is a critical matter as it defines and shapes the relationship between the two parties involved

What does it mean for us?

- A document of agreement between the Library and CSD as to the service that CSD provide and what the Library can expect
- For the Library a clear understanding of what they are reasonably entitled to in terms of
 - Service
 - Turnaround times
 - Feedback (SLA reporting)
- For Computer Services it provided clarity around
 - What was in service
 - How to set customer expectations

SLA Working Group

- CSD
 - Paul Smith (IT services manager)
 - Chris Gregoriou (Service management co-ordinator)
- Library
 - Michaela Hollywood (Systems Librarian)
 - Miriam Corcoran (Sub Librarian - Planning & Administration Services)
 - Carmel Harnett (Public Services Manager)

Who Was involved

- CSD
 - IT Services manager would provide regular updates to CSD Management Team
 - Representatives from each of the support groups in CSD were involved in agreeing response and resolution times
- Library
 - PAS Sub-Librarian would provide regular updates to Senior Management Team
 - Regular updates at general staff meetings
 - All Library staff were consulted about the key services required by the Library

Process to get to where we are

- The Library agreed to work on a trial SLA with CSD in November 2003. Agreement began 1st July 2004.
- Series of meetings took place between CSD and the Library.
- Huge amount of analysis of service offerings and service delivery (3 –4 months)
- Priority setting for response and resolution times (4-5 months)
- Huge time commitment
 - Currently using 13th rewrite of our trial SLA

A Shared understanding of our Vocabulary

Response Time

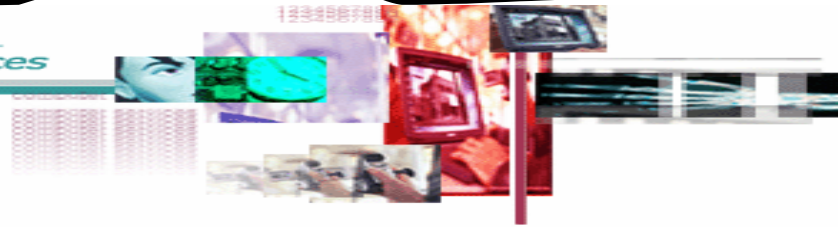
Resolution Time

Incident

Priority

Problem

SLA



If we had to do it all againWould we?

- The process is beginning to yield a positive result
- The process has built on, and improved, existing inter-departmental relationships
- Probably a great deal of “wasted time” but a necessary process to go through

The Answer is

YES but Smarter !!!

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Progress made

- Jobs are getting done
- Feedback happens on a regular basis
- Library has a clear picture of the service that CSD provide
- Less complaints from Library staff and students
- Better public perception with an ageing computer population

Issues to be addressed: Documentation

- Need to review the SLA document itself
- Quality of documentation is an issue. Technical people do not naturally produce easy to read documents. Someone needs to be charged with this as a single task

Issues to be addressed: Operational

- Calls affected by SLA are mainly Helpdesk calls
 - Still contacting CSD support teams directly
- SLA can be seen as a ‘helpdesk only’ issue by both customer and other CSD support teams
- SLA management is additional to the operational aspects of both areas responsibilities

Next Steps

- Incorporate the list of services into the body of the SLA rather than as an appendix
- Set expectations about the various mechanisms for logging calls
- Cover - Extended Hours
 - SLA only operates 9:15 – 17:15 not in line with business hours of the Library
- Priorities around non incident calls

It's a Verb rather than a Noun

- At the start of this presentation we tried to come up with a definition.
- Process rather than a “thing”
- Continuously evolving
- SLA document needs to be reviewed on a continuous basis (as we get new ideas!)