UNIVERSITY of York

SLC Episode IV: Some Hope

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A long time ago in a university far, far away….

SLC

Episode IV:

SOME HOPE

2011/2 (as it had been for years)

Registration Confirmation (SSAR)

Who: Fees Office & DPQ

Why: SSAR updated SSP, SSP was used to run fees; student matching done by DPQ as more ‘involved’

Attendance Confirmation (ACR)

Who: DPQ (Data & Process Quality)

Why: Process not user friendly; some background table maintenance

Change of Circumstances (COC)

Who: Student Records & Systems

Why: Followed BAU record maintenance process

2011/2 (in retrospect)

Good things:

- Limited time spent on ACR
- December data already good for HESES
- Nobody looked at tuition fees till end of year
- Happy staff ☺

Bad things:

- Had to contact the SLC to unpick issues
- No way to tell what the record looked like in real time
- Can’t help students directly
- Manual COCs
- Had to find a PC with a floppy drive*

*In the basement. Of your gran’s house.

2011/2 - SIS

- Long awaited SIS portal introduced in March for Attendance confirmation!

…but it didn’t work as expected

2012/3 Improvements

- More work into automating COCs
- Introduced an ‘SLC Eligible’ flag in SITS to identify H/EU students on designated programmes
- Colleges checked in students on SITS on the day of arrival (previously done over the next few days)
- Reporting to look for eligible students not yet ‘seen’ or registered, not yet confirmed to the SLC etc
- FAQs for reception staff
- Improved communication between different areas
- Problem cases recorded in a shared document for updates and follow up (no CRM)

Pop Quiz

Q: The UoY 2012/3 Plan™ was to do a Combined return. This would be processed by the team that did Registration. It was basically the same thing anyway, right?

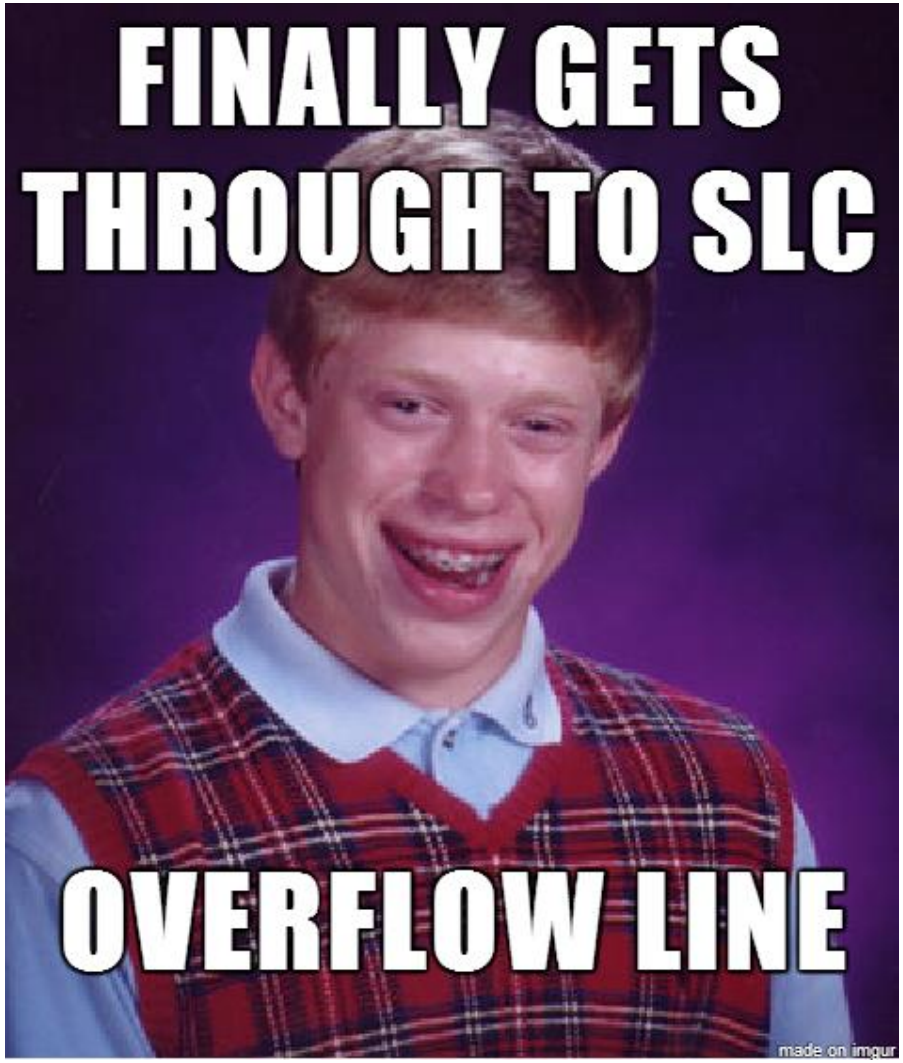
A: Wrong.

Process moved to DPQ end of September to make sense of what had gone through OK and what hadn't prior to term start (08/10). We then had three days to turn around first years before the earliest payment cut off date. We did!

2012/3 - What went wrong

- Work lists did not behave as expected (EU students could not be processed through Combined etc)
- SIS portal crashed on key dates
- Unhelpful error reports for failed files
- Deadline moved by two days by SLC
- Over 300 students missing from portal in York
- Clearing students couldn’t transfer in

…and more



...and more again

"Sam Lowry: Excuse me, Dawson, can you put me through to Mr. Helpmann's office?

Dawson: I'm afraid I can't sir. You have to go through the proper channels.

Sam Lowry: And you can't tell me what the proper channels are, because that's classified information?

Dawson: I'm glad to see the Ministry's continuing its tradition of recruiting the brightest and best, sir."

Brazil, 1985

2012/3 - What we learned

- Processes split too widely across teams (Fees Office, DPQ, Systems, Records) – no overall experts
- We had no useful way of knowing which students we couldn't see on SIS, until they told us (and then it was too late)
- A second wave begins after W1 – when students start querying why they don't have their loans (and doesn't stop till November)
- It's a year round process - you can't move on to something else
- Pick your helpline battles (sometimes just doing the COC is quicker)

What we also learned

"I assure you, Mrs. Buttle, the Ministry is very scrupulous about following up and eradicating any error. If you have any complaints which you'd like to make, I'd be more than happy to send you the appropriate forms."

Brazil, 1985

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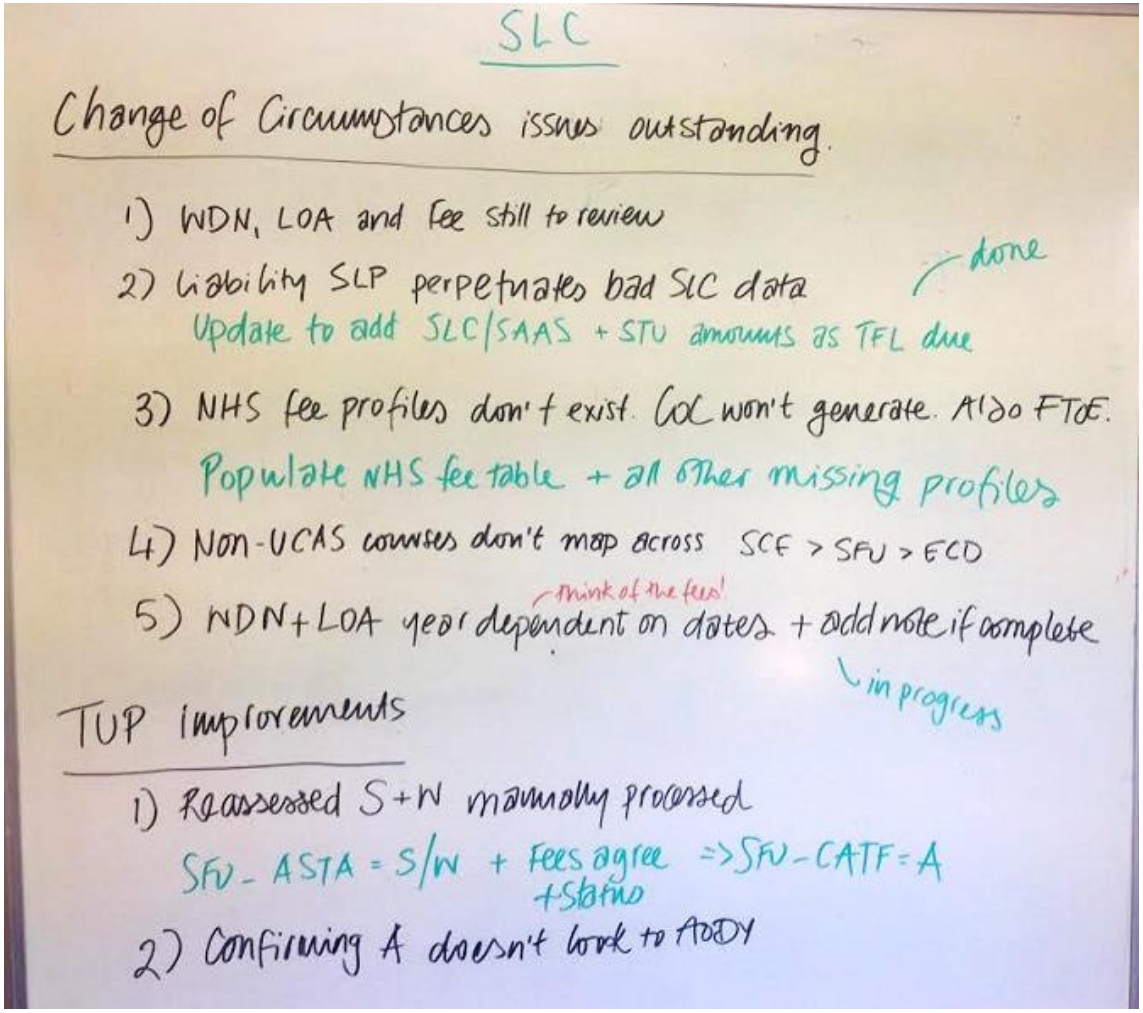
2013/4 Improvements (Customer Service)

- Data collected at Enrolment: ‘Have you applied for a Tuition Fee Loan?’ and ‘Have you applied for a Maintenance Loan?’
- Warning/Action emails to Clearing students and students who had not appeared on SIS that had indicated YES to either of the above before term start
- Face to face training for reception staff and anyone likely to have finance queries from students
- Downloaded from SIS and recorded CRN on SITS (STU) for ease of reference (SFSN not on all pages of SFE correspondence)
- Allowed all relevant staff to submit manual registrations to speed up release of Maintenance loans

2013/4 Improvements (DPQ whiteboard)

January 2014 →



2013/4 Improvements (Systems)

- Moved oversight of all SLC processes to DPQ, including system developments
- Reviewed and updated the Attendance matching process to minimise need for any manual intervention
- Utilised hidden fields in ECD screen (Course Database data)
- Documented extensively, including exceptions and coding logic
- Reviewed COC logic and timing (still like to pretend we'll eventually find the 'correct' way to submit a Suspension … or a Resumption)
- Gave up on separate work lists and used the SIS Extended File, manipulated and recreated internally before import
- Created Attendance exported files through ODBC Access, to use bespoke criteria (eg only A, only imported between dates)

Can you fix it?

“No, I can't. But, I can bypass it.”

2014/5 (already!?)

Things happening

- SLC Transformation Project
- SITS Working Group
- SIS User Group

Do you follow admin-slc@jiscmail.ac.uk?

- Questions?

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