Exploring Reimplementation

From Black & White Decision Making to a Clear Blue Sky

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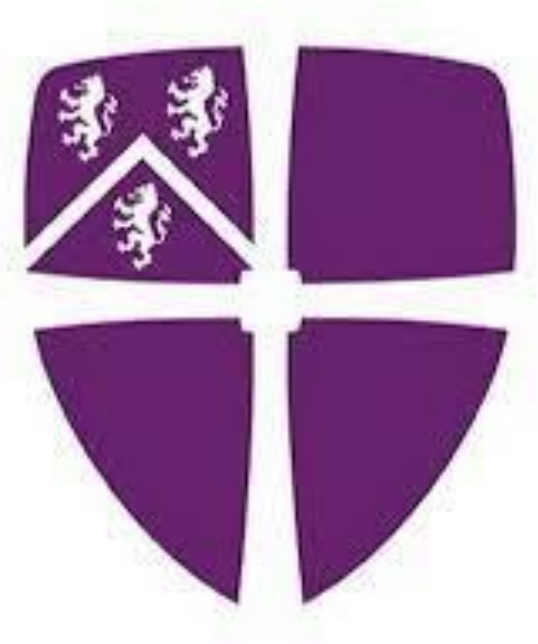
Durham University is currently undergoing a reimplementation, assisted by **eXplorance**, of our module evaluation process.

We’re here to outline how we found ourselves in this position, how we worked to correct it, and seek recommendations as we go forward.

Durham University

Durham University was one of the first HEIs to utilise Blue for MEQs

Part of a strategy to ensure reliability of MEQs throughout the University



Durham Policy

Change of Policy in 2017

Pedagogical: Utilise Blue to run four cycles of MEQs across UG & PGT modules

Progression: Includes the evaluation of teaching staff

MEQs not run centrally & resources not adequately provided.

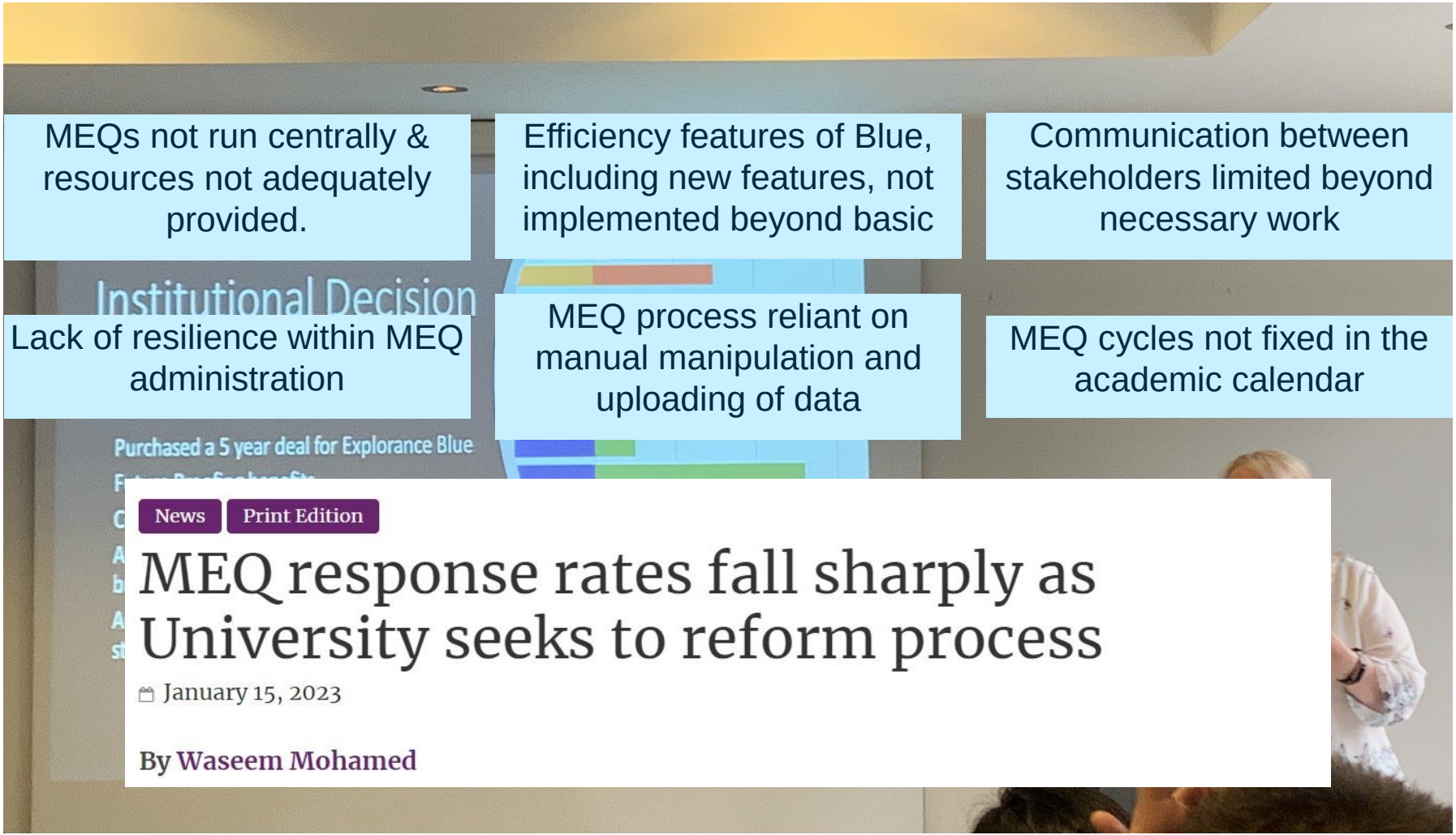
Efficiency features of Blue, including new features, not implemented beyond basic

Communication between stakeholders limited beyond necessary work

Lack of resilience within MEQ administration

MEQ process reliant on manual manipulation and uploading of data

MEQ cycles not fixed in the academic calendar



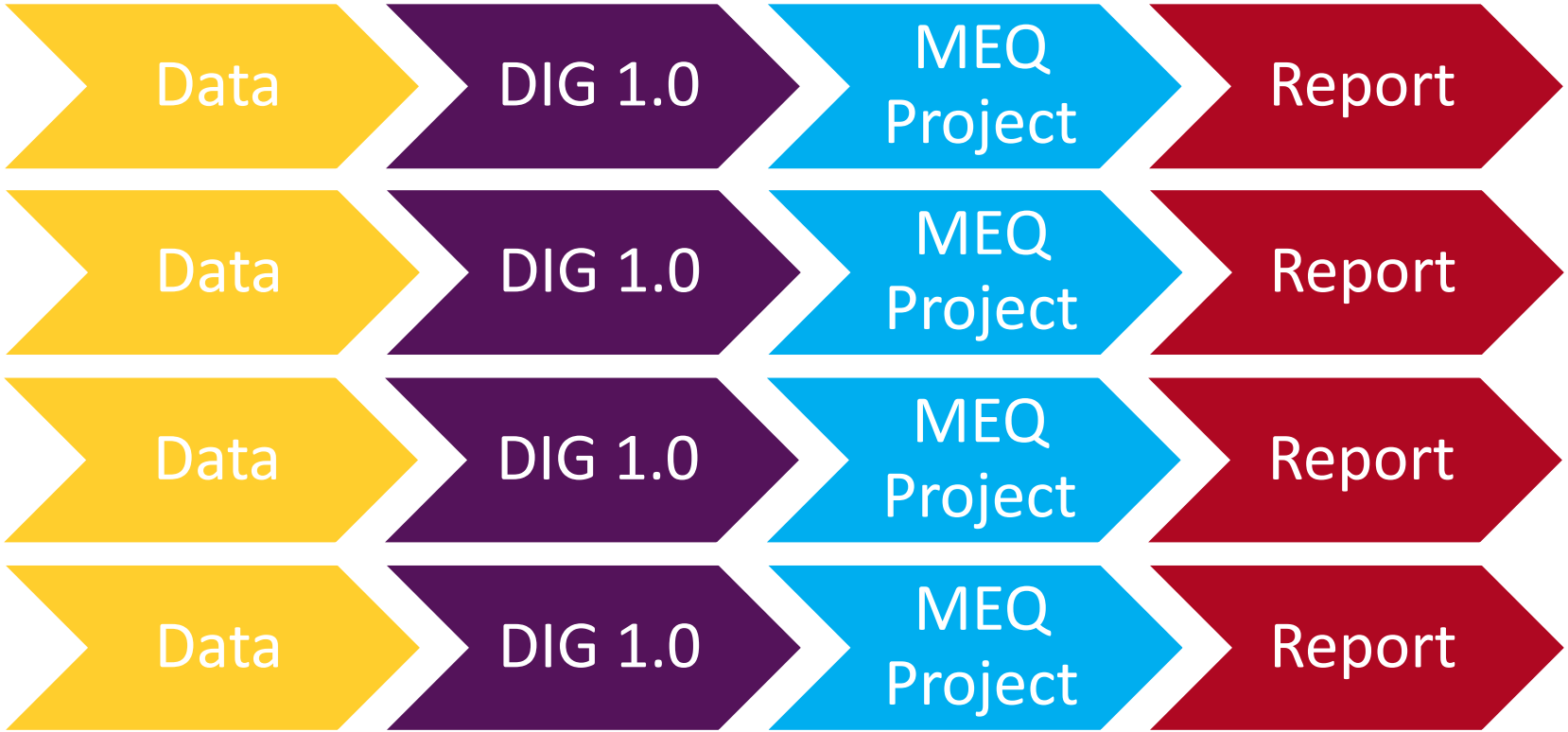
News | Print Edition

MEQ response rates fall sharply as University seeks to reform process

January 15, 2023

By Waseem Mohamed

MEQ 1.0 at Durham



Durham University

Datasources

Datasource List | Field Filter Mapping | Key List | Email Notifications

All Datasources | Login page datasource order

Datasource Listing

Filter by All [ ] Filter

Results: 1 - 10 of 166 Item(s)

	Datasource	Key	Import Status
○	01_Courses_UG_T32020		Configuration files saved.
○	08_DIGADMIN_2019T3UG_DIG		Configuration files saved.
○	1_COURSES_2019T3UG_DIG		Configuration files saved.
○	10_LEADERS_2019T3UG_DIG		Configuration files saved.
○	11_OTHERS_2019T3UG_DIG		Configuration files saved.
○	12_COURSES_COMBINED_2019T3UG		Configuration files saved.
○	12_SUPERVISORS_2019T3UG_DIG		Configuration files saved.
○	13_COURSE_COMBSTAFF		Configuration files saved.
○	13_DIGADMIN_2019T3UG		Configuration files saved.

Definitions List

Title | Contains [ ] Filter

Results: 1 - 10 of 22 Item(s)

	Definition Title	Creation Date
☐	201920 PGT Term 2 Evaluations	Saturday, February 1, 2020
☐	201920 UG Term1 Evaluations	Wednesday, January 29, 2020
☐	201920 UG Term3 Evaluations	Thursday, February 27, 2020
☐	202021 PGT Term 2 Evaluations	Monday, December 14, 2020
☐	202021 UG Term1 Evaluations	Tuesday, November 24, 2020
☐	202021 UG TERM3 EVALUATIONS (APRIL 2021)	Wednesday, April 14, 2021
☐	DIG Data Preparation - Postgraduate Taught 2019	Wednesday, May 29, 2019
☐	DIG Data Preparation - Undergraduate 2019 Term 3	Thursday, April 4, 2019
☐	DIG Module-PGT	Thursday, November 11, 2021
☐	DIG Module-UG	Wednesday, November 10, 2021

We currently have an dozen/hundreds of redundant DATASOURCES & DEFINITIONS whilst at the same time we do not utilise existing features to their full potential.

Durham University

We have a toolbox full of tools…

…but they've become rusty.

Reimplementation requires various phases from justification and resource acquisition, updating of the evaluation procedure, and reengagement with stakeholders to ensure success.

The process was not linear, but working with **eXplorance PSS** we have begun to implement a more efficient evaluation process.

Justification & Resource Acquisition

A review of the MEQ business processes and eXplorance Blue was initiated by Education Division in early 2021.

- Assess and document the status of the University's MEQ service [AS IS]
- Identify limitations, risks and opportunities in relation to system configuration, core data and reporting mechanisms
- Recommend appropriate enhancements
- Recommend a course of remediation that would deliver a more efficient, sustainable and secure service.

SUMS Consulting was contracted to conducted a desk-based review in August 2021.

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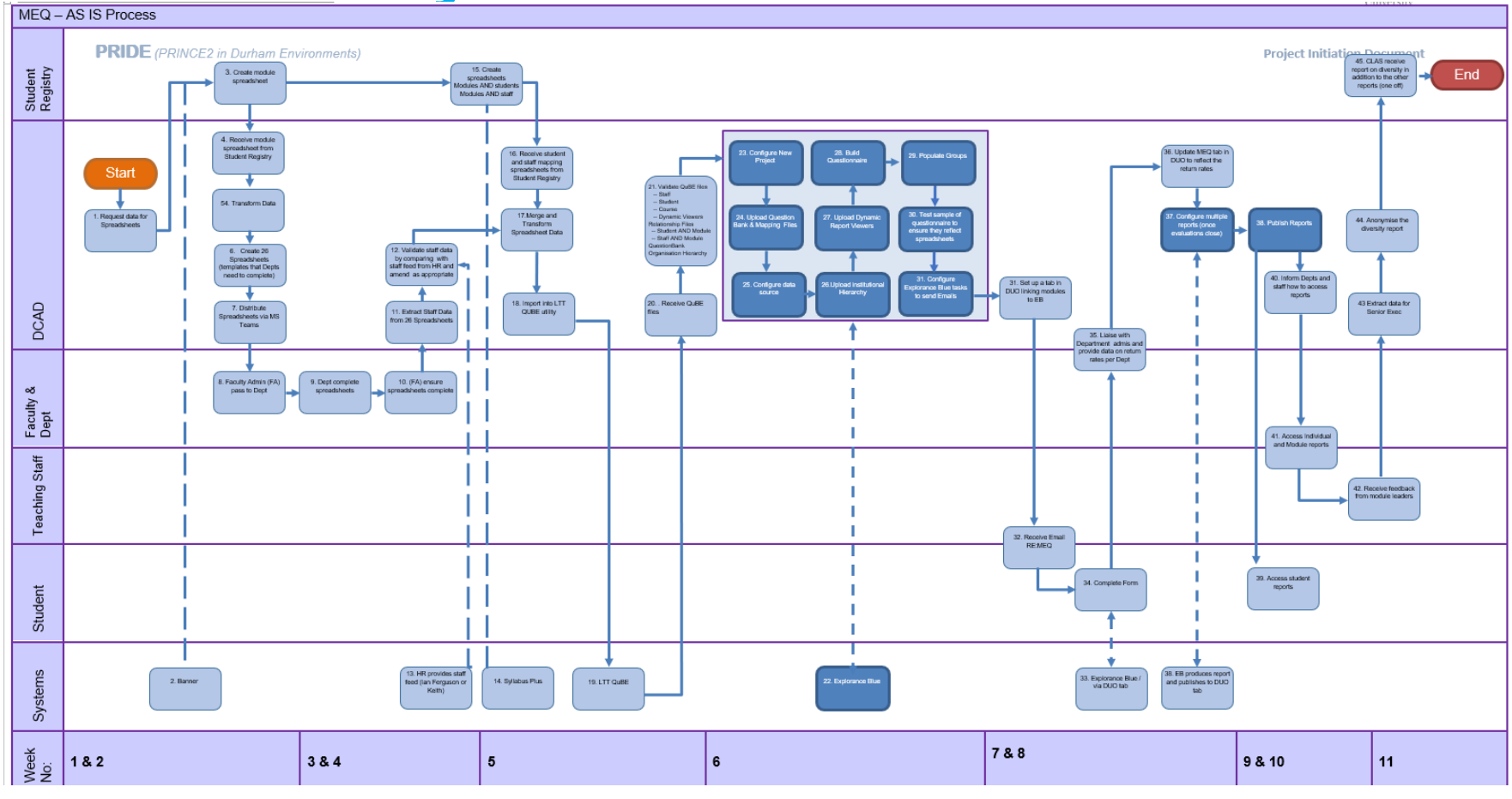
Outcome : Adequate Mandate for Change

AS-IS Analysis



Developing a Business Case for Investment

Definition of a realistic and achievable scope of change incorporating

- A new governance plan
- A service ownership transition plan
- Detailed TO BE MEQ service requirements
- Project budget and resource plan
- Project implementation plan

The business case was developed in consultation with PVC Education and Explorance (John).

Durham University

Strategic Approval & Acquisition Timeline

- Paper sponsored by Chief Information Officer (CIO) prepared for Operations Board secured approval for £132,924 investment in November 2021.
- Explorance contract renewed in May 2022.
- 1 FT Grade 6 staff resource requested for CLAS in the 2021/22 planning round and recruited in September 2022.
- 12 Month Professional Services Contract with Explorance initiated in September 2022.
- Project board convened to monitor project progress /outputs.

Evaluation 2.0

Working with Blue to re-format our software requirements:

- Addition of Testing environment
- Implementation of SSO & MFA
- Updated VLE integration
- Integration of auto sync between Durham data and Blue software
- Assistance with Project customisation
- Design of new Project and DIG set-up
- Migration from Question Bank Cascade Model to Question Personalisation
- Implementation of Blue Dashboard

Re-Engagement & Adoption

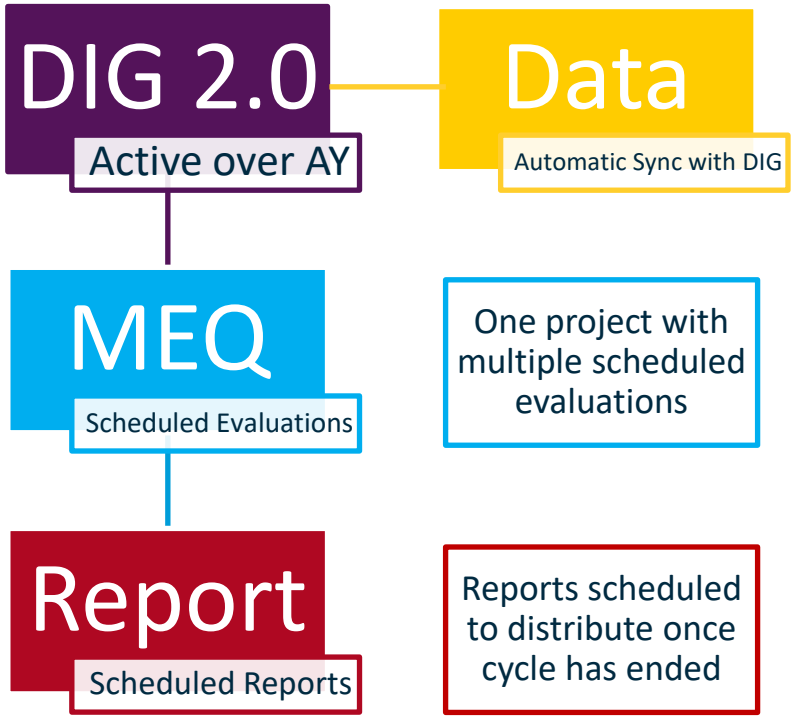
Securing adoption

- Co-creation of a Product Support Model
- Comprehensive process documentation
- Stakeholder involvement in User Acceptance Testing
- Relaunch of MEQ Service (May 2023)
- Provision of a training /adoption programme for Department/Administrative Colleagues
- Development of a MEQ Policy repository
- Establish a MEQ Community of Practice

Working with **eXplorance** we have developed a stronger foundation that will allow **Durham** to implement policy that has been active since 2017, whilst giving us the flexibility to expand our survey potential beyond MEQs.

Durham University

MEQs 2.0 at Durham



- Aware that this brings us on par with the majority of HEIs in the UK
- Reimplementation has been about creating a firmer foundation:
  - Process
  - Knowledge
  - Engagement
  - Resilience

To quote David Norenberg:

“We are here to give you the tools for your toolbox…”

Now that **Durham** have created this new foundation, we're aware that we can be doing more to make the evaluation process more efficient.

We'll keep working with **eXplorance**, but we look towards the **Blue Community** to provide helpful guidance on what else we can be doing.

We're here to listen to your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions.

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