

## The On-course applications Update – August 2019

Welcome to the **first issue** of the on-course applications monthly **update**. The on-course applications project (previously known as Student Progression, or GSO forms) replaces ten of the GSO forms with online applications, digitised approvals and workflows, making life easier for students, academics and administrative staff alike.



### An introduction from Andy Garlick, Project Senior User

This on-course applications project delivers long-awaited improvements to the procedures for managing on-course student progression. The work has been phased with ten GSO forms being replaced in the first instance, accounting for over 3,000 paper applications processed each year.

The introduction of digital applications will significantly improve the student experience. All key data will be prepopulated from the student records system, and students will be able to track the progress and outcomes of their applications online. Academic and administrative staff have been strong advocates for digitisation of the paper-based forms, and eagerly anticipating the outcomes of this project.

### What's in it for me?

- It's a **user-friendly** system and students, academics and staff will be able to complete and track the progress of applications easily and efficiently
- The system is fully **secure**, and data is managed in line with GDPR regulations
- All applications will be stored in **one place**, and applications can be accessed and approved wherever you are, as long as you have web access, via eVision or Student Self Service
- The move online will **reduce** paper-based communication, photocopying and printing, and applications will no longer go astray or get stuck in someone's in-tray
- The overall processing time will be reduced through online workflow **improvements**

### Who will use the new system?

- Students will submit applications online for **review** by their supervisor
- Colleges / departments will nominate pools of **reviewers** (to avoid conflicts of interest) to consider applications (typically Senior Tutors/Tutors for Graduates for colleges, Directors of Graduate Studies or Heads of Department for departments), and applications in Medical Sciences will be considered on behalf of the divisional Board
- Departmental Graduate Administrators who previously processed paper forms will have access to the system and will be able to monitor **progress**, **reassign** applications to different staff members, and record **decisions** on behalf of departmental reviewers
- Departments and colleges will shortly be asked to identify who will act as reviewers and which administrators require access to the system.

### Telling it like it is...

We had a great turn-out at the system demonstration in July, and here are some of the things you told us:

- “Great to see that that the system isn’t a one-way workflow, so that applications can be referred back and exceptions dealt with online.”
- “Being able to intercept, monitor and edit system-generated emails is vital.”
- “Glad that the system is using information contained in SITS. This gives students an opportunity to check the information being held about them [in SITS] and if it’s incorrect, it would prompt them to log on to Student Self Service to amend it.”
- “I was worried that information may be entered into the application by the student may not be checked or validated, and so it’s good to see that the system has several review stages built in.”

**When will the other GSO forms move online?** Checking that the online process works well and meets the needs of end-users is the first priority, and so the first ten applications provide this opportunity. Once everything has been reviewed - and a number of funding decisions have been made – decisions can be taken about moving additional applications online.

### Here are the **ten** forms moving online:

- GSO.2b: Defer transfer
- GSO.3: Appointment of examiners
- GSO.3c: Dispensation from consultation
- GSO.4: Change of mode of study
- GSO.6: Change of title
- GSO.8: Dispensation from residence
- GSO.14b: Defer confirmation
- GSO.15: Extension of time
- GSO.27: Appointment of examiners - law
- GSO.29: Withdrawal

### Will I be **trained** on the new system?

A range of training materials are being prepared. Booking for online and classroom training opens in October. **More details** in next month’s ‘on-course update’.

### When is ‘go live’?

The system will be launched and live by the end of Michaelmas term 2019. We’ll confirm the exact date in a future issue.

### Useful glossary

- **Graduate administrators:**  
Graduate administrators based in departments or divisions who process applications but without recording final decisions on the student record
- **Super users:**  
As above, but they do update the final student record and send formal outcomes to students
- **System administrators:**  
Divisional officers with super user access who can also provide departmental academic decision-makers (typically Directors of Graduate Studies), graduate administrators and super users with system access