

## RUBRIC Toolkit: Pilot to Production

### Planning

There is a critical point where you will make the transition from a project phase to a production system. This may involve:

- obtaining project signoff
- making final adjustments to hardware and software
- finalizing your marketing plan
- completing staff training
- updating FAQs or other public documentation
- finalizing policy documents

It is advisable to prepare a specific planning process to ensure that establishing a production system proceeds smoothly. Review the plan regularly to keep timelines in check and monitor whether planned timelines are still realistic.

The following checklists are a guide to areas of consideration:

- checklist used by RUBRIC Central when advising project partners
- The University of Newcastle checklist
- The University of Newcastle also developed a more complete planning document outlining key issues based on the planning checklist.

### Technical considerations

It is very important to maintain good communication with stakeholders at all times during the Pilot to Production phase. Communication lines between the IR manager and involved IT staff need to be established and well managed throughout the process. It may be useful to engage an independent third party to resolve disputes should they arise.

Technical considerations include:

- **Hardware location:** where is the production system going to be located?
- **Software requirements:** is the software supported by your institution? Are there any potential conflicts with existing site licence arrangements?
- **Space requirements:** calculate how much disk space will your repository might need over various periods, such as the next 6 or 12 months, 2 or 5 years. Discuss this with your IT support staff and make sure these needs can be accommodated.

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- **Server Administration:** Who will be responsible for patching software, repository upgrades, etc?
- **Administration Access:** What level of access will the IR Manager need to perform administrative tasks and has this been tested?
- **Reporting:** What reports can be produced for the repository? Who can produce them? What communication channels are in place between repository and IT staff? What priority will be given to requests for reports?

## Policy creation

Policy development should be well under way in the planning phase: now is the time to evaluate policies developed regarding managing the repository and its implementation.

The following questions may help guide policy evaluation:

- Is your policy useful? Does it fill an actual need and will it work?
- Does it target the right audience?
- Will it be publicly available?
- Will users of your repository be able to understand any conditions of use and submission?
- Is there a change management process in place for the policy? Is the process documented?
- Who signs off on any policy changes?
- Is the policy clear and concise? Is there a glossary? Future repository managers may interpret wording differently to the current manager.
- Are there any external factors which may impact upon guidelines for a repository? For example, the Research Quality Framework (RQF).

## Staffing requirements

A management structure will need to be established once the project moves into production. Evaluate the number of staff needed in production to ensure that your repository will continue to have the support it needs after the launch; including technical staff, data processing staff (for data entry, review, submission) and management-level staff.

Although staffing has also been addressed during the pilot phase, there are some key issues to address when moving to a production system:

- who will review the roles required for the production repository?
- will current project roles change with a move to production?

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- will staff need additional training?
- how will project roles be reviewed as the system moves from project phase to production?
- will some roles become redundant or change levels when the system is in production?
- will the same people from the project phase be available once the repository is in production?
- do existing position descriptions need to be reviewed to accommodate the new system?
- how will knowledge be transferred with staff turnover?
- is there a degree of redundancy in the staff structure to cope with the demands of a production system in the event of illness or unexpected absence.

## Institutional branding and concept

Branding your repository means giving it a unique look and feel. It is also referred to as 'skinning'. Branding should have been done throughout the pilot phase and it is advisable to avoid focussing on minor features in the repository skin. Heavy customisation of your repository interface adds complexity that may not be necessary, as oft times your repository will be accessed directly from a search engine, thus bypassing the front end screens anyway.

Always be concise in presenting your institutional repository branding and concept. The University of Sunshine Coast went through a process of belief dynamics with a third party marketing company when considering their institutional repository name: [Coast Research Database](#).<sup>1</sup> The following topics were considered:

- does the name describe your repository and purpose?
- is the name meaningful?
- should it include the institutional name?
- consider whether the name is too long or whether it is 'jargon'
- is the service being named or the product?
- look at other repository naming examples -
  - ePrints UQ
  - Nova: The University of Newcastle's Digital Repository
  - Flinders Academic Commons
  - USQ ePrints
  - e-publications@BOND
  - Demetrius: the institutional repository of the ANU
  - ANU ePrints Repository
  - University of Melbourne ePrints Repository (UMER)

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- Monash University ARROW repository
- [espace@curtin](mailto:espace@curtin)
- UNSW Research: capture, manage, discover
- Sydney eScholarship repository
- Research Online (Wollongong)
- [epublications@SCU](mailto:epublications@scu)
- UTS ePress Institutional Repository
- Swinburne Research Bank
- University of Adelaide Digital Library
- aCQUIRE (CQU)

## Presentations to stakeholders

Using the pilot repository for demonstration purposes is always a good idea, but ensure that there is genuine content in the repository that stakeholders can relate to. If you are demonstrating with a new production repository, it is a good idea to make sure it is already being harvested by discovery services such as [Google<sup>2</sup>](#), in order to show the benefits of appearing in search engines.

## Sustainability

While this should have been considered from the early stages of the project, it is essential to get plans in concrete while going from pilot to production.

- is there a handover plan in the event of staff turnover?
- will data management workflows change when moving to production? How?
- what guidelines need to be set in place now to prevent mismatched data in the future? For example, consideration of Handles – refer to Sustainability in Managing a Repository section

## Scalability

It is important to continue testing the repository during the trial phase and prior to 'going live'. The following guide suggests areas for regular testing:

- test from the perspectives of: user and administrator
- submission process
- standards
- user interface
- system administration
- system configuration/constraints
- system support
- archiving
- copyright
- additional factors to consider
- reference sites (list of URLs of sites currently running the software system)

## Evaluation

It is important to continually evaluate how your plan is going during the pilot to production phase. Ideas and plans that you had during the pilot phase may now be shown up as not realistic. Continually refer back to the plan developed at the beginning of the process.

Evaluation of external sources on a regular basis helps to ensure your repository will stay up-to-date and relevant.

## Keeping up to date with relevant information/blog feeds

[del.icio.us](http://del.icio.us)<sup>3</sup> is just one of many blogs that can be used to set up RSS (Rich Site Summary) feeds and keep you up to date with any topic world wide.

[AuseAccess](http://AuseAccess)<sup>4</sup> is a wiki 'devoted to open access repositories in the Australasian region'.

The Conclusion section summarises information on international toolkits, repository evaluation toolkits and informative websites which may also be useful.

## References and Further Reading

Refer to the Further Reading section at the end of the Toolkit for bibliographic details of works referenced in this section.

“RUBRIC Toolkit: Pilot to Production” produced May 2007



5

6

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- 1 <http://research.usc.edu.au/vital/access/manager/>
- 2 <http://www.google.com.au/>
- 3 <http://del.icio.us/>
- 4 <http://leven.comp.utas.edu.au/AuseAccess/pmwiki.php?n=Main.HomePage>
- 5 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/au/>
- 6 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/au/>
- 7 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/au/>
- 8 <http://www.rubric.edu.au/>