Worktribe™

Worktribe Curriculum

Service Definition G-Cloud 15

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1 Introduction

Worktribe is a UK-based company that helps the UK higher education sector build and manage curriculum programmes easily and reliably.

Founded in 2002 in Nottingham, we've established a reputation amongst universities for being reliable, innovative, and friendly. We currently supply our software to institutions of all sizes, including the vast majority of the Russell Group.

Worktribe's primary office is in Bristol, with a distributed implementation team that covers the whole of the UK.

This document highlights the key features of Worktribe Curriculum, with a summary of our approach to onboarding, support, maintenance, and technical matters.

2 Worktribe Curriculum – Key Features

Worktribe Curriculum is a proven, modern, robust, scalable, and intuitive system. It has been specifically designed to fit neatly into a typical university's existing IT provision and supports all stages of curriculum development.

Using this system, each programme can be managed throughout its lifetime, which stretches from the initial concept or identified opportunity, through the development and approval of the programme (including its modules, deliveries, and pathways), and onwards to include the external examination and marketing of the programme.

The management lifecycle also includes any subsequent modifications, revalidation and eventual suspension or withdrawal. Parallel workflows are also provided for marketing reviews, strategic reviews, facilities reviews, financial reviews, and External Examiner reports.

One of the benefits of this end-to-end approach is that, as the programmes and modules progress through their lifecycle stages, staff continue to work with one familiar interface – rather than with disparate tools which have different UIs and ways of operating.

The system is designed to be comprehensive and easy to use. Thus, academic and support staff can focus primarily on the learning content rather than its administration, while the University can easily collect the factual base for management information, external reporting, and demonstrable CMA compliance.

Below we describe the main aspects of the system in brief, with more detail provided in the subsequent sections.

2.1 Infrastructure

Each of the functional areas described below is supported by the Worktribe system infrastructure, which provides:

- User-friendly and secure web-based access for staff across the institution.

  The web-based user access requires only an internet browser. This removes geographical constraints on system access and avoids IT complications.
- Permission-based access control for users, groups, and systems, often authenticated via client-based systems, such as Shibboleth or AzureAD. This means that the system works well within the 'single sign-on' environment you may have in your institution.
- Context sensitive help for users, with functionality to upload further supporting documentation (e.g. your own internal procedure guides). Thus, users have any help they need, just as they need it.
- Automatic version control with fully accessible history and audit trail, so you can see who has done what and when. This can be especially useful when managing approval procedures.
- Open standard web services for third-party data exchange, so that Worktribe Curriculum synchronises seamlessly with your existing student information, website content management and other systems.

2.2 Brief Summary of Functionality

2.2.1 Programmes

- Programmes may be defined separately from modules, and linked later in the curriculum development process.
- A formal, multi-stage workflow-managed approvals process.
- Parallel reviews may be conducted, under workflow control.
- Fully configurable Business Case to capture information around the initial concept or opportunity.
- Programme Outcomes map to QAA and PSRB Benchmark Subjects and related Statements.
- Programmes can have multiple pathways.
- Programmes may be developed with variant deliveries for different campuses, various study modes (e.g. full-time, part-time) and multiple intakes.
- Admissions criteria can be recorded and vary by pathway and/ or delivery.
- Automated rule checking ensures that credit rules etc. are obeyed in all possible paths through the programme.
- Programme Assessment map can indicate student assessments for the modules in the structure throughout the academic year.
- Programmes may be copied, rolled over and rolled forward into later years to be modified as required (under workflow control, of course).
- Client configurable data fields to capture information specific to your institutional requirements.

2.2.2 Modules

- Modules may be developed separately to programmes, and linked later.
- Modules may exist as stand-alone entities (e.g. as free electives or as CPD).
- Modules may be part of multiple groups and pathways within a programme's structure
- Modules are developed within a clear workflow-managed approvals process.
- Modules may be rolled over into later years and modified as required (again, under workflow control).

2.2.3 Marketing

- Comprehensive marketing information and data is developed, approved, and managed via a separate workflow.
- Contents available for presenting via the UCAS website and the University website, as well as system-generated course handbooks.
- Marketing records are developed within their own clear workflow-managed approvals process.

2.2.4 External Examiners

- External Examiners may only see the content they've been assigned to review.
- External Examiner reports are created and stored within the system.
- External Examiner reports are completed and approved within their own clear workflow-managed approvals process.

2.2.5 Inbuilt Reporting

- Flexible user-defined data search and reporting facilities are built into the system, with report content exportable in Excel, CSV, and XML formats. Some reports also available in PDF format.
- Ability to create bespoke templates in Microsoft Word format to present curriculum data in your desired style – useful for documents such as course handbooks etc.
- Regular SQL data extract available for use in your Business Intelligence solution.

2.2.6 Reporting

The Reporting product provides a reporting server. This is an optional priced upgrade whereby the production of the SQL extract runs on a dedicated server. This allows it to be created at a greater frequency without risking latency within your live Curriculum system.

2.2.7 Integration with Other Systems

- Flexible REST API with HATEOAS features.
- All data exposed via the API for full CRUD access.
- Other integration options include:
  - Exports of data sets in CSV, Excel formats.
  - Bulk imports of data sets in Excel format.

3 Onboarding

As with any SaaS system, it is easy and quick for us to make Worktribe Curriculum available to new clients. However, your staff will need training on how to use and administer the system, and it needs to be configured to meet your needs. Any integrations with your existing systems will have to be created and tested, and legacy data imported if you decide to do that.

These onboarding activities constitute the implementation project. We have considerable experience of such implementation projects, so it has become a standard process.

3.1 Implementation

Worktribe has extensive experience in managing system implementations in HEIs, and consequently we have developed a reliable, repeatable implementation process. This means that implementation of the Worktribe system is safe, predictable, and smooth.

- We assign a named project account manager, implementation consultant and technical liaison for each project. These are consistent throughout the project. Worktribe has very low staff turnover, and as a result we maintain those personal relationships throughout the implementation project and beyond.
- We have an established process for dealing with any issues that may arise. Our commitment to a strong ongoing working relationship ensures that any issues that arise are taken seriously.
- We provide realistic costs and timescales for delivery, and consistently deliver within time and budget.

3.2 Training

Our preferred approach to training is to provide dedicated training to top-level system administrators and the project team as part of the implementation project. We use example case scenarios to make it highly relevant to the training delegates.

Worktribe Curriculum is extremely user-friendly, so our experience has been that end users become familiar with the system quickly, and do not require significant training. However, institutions have found benefit in performing their own internal training sessions as part of their communications strategy.

3.3 Documentation

Full documentation is provided, including:

- User Guides
- Administrators Guides
- API documentation
- Guidance on bulk data imports
- Guidance on use of the Templates facility

4 Ongoing Support and Maintenance

4.1 Support

We provide remote support during normal office hours, via our online support portal. The support is governed by a Service Level Agreement.

Typical support arrangements for ongoing support and maintenance are that the client provides first-line support in-house, with Worktribe providing second- and third-line support via our UK-based helpdesk.

Each support request results in a ticket being created on our portal to track the request through to resolution. The portal also manages the prioritisation of the item and tracks all correspondence relating to the request. Clients can use the portal to track support requests.

Our support team have continual access to the system developers. We have found that this not only makes our support highly effective, but it also provides a valuable feedback loop which influences future development of the product.

4.2 Client Services

Once live with Worktribe products your dedicated Worktribe consultant will continue to work alongside you. They will arrange regular meetings with client representatives to ensure that Worktribe is meeting your expectations. It is also another opportunity for clients to discover, and feedback into, the development of our products.

4.3 Software Updates

We typically release a major upgrade every 6 months. For major upgrades, we book a maintenance window outside normal business hours by mutual agreement.

Patches, typically for security patching and bug fixes, are released automatically in fortnightly cycles.

4.4 User Group

Worktribe is committed to the ongoing development and rollout of the product, and our User Group influences the product development roadmap. This ensures that the product keeps developing to accommodate changes in our clients' requirements.

We provide an online portal for our User Group to discuss proposed developments and client change requests, and we also hold User Group conferences – typically annually, but with other events as well from time to time.

Special Interest Groups

As part of our User Group activities, we also hold Special Interest Group meetings (SIGs) to gather requirements for specific functionality additions and changes. These are an excellent forum for focusing on the features which our clients consider to be most valuable. New clients are automatically invited to join the User Group and to attend any SIGs in which they might have a particular interest.

Annual Conference

Once a year, our clients gather together for our Connect conference, which gives an opportunity for users to engage face to face with our staff. This helps to build close relationships, and allows clients to see future development plans for both existing and planned products.

5 Technical Matters

5.1 Hosting, Availability, Backups, Disaster Recovery

Worktribe is ISO27001 certified, and the Worktribe system is provided as a SaaS cloud hosted solution, using secure hosting facilities in the UK.

Worktribe is accessible entirely via web browsers, using the secure HTTPS communications protocol. We never send any unencrypted data over public networks. All data-at-rest is encrypted and kept within the UK for data protection purposes.

Our standard availability is 99.8% uptime. Uptime is monitored and reported for SLA conformance using our own in-house tools.

We mirror our systems in near-real-time to a second secure data centre (also within the UK) for disaster recovery purposes. This means that if ever the primary site becomes unavailable for any reason, the switchover to the disaster recovery site is as quick as possible, with the most up-to-date data possible.

We also take hourly encrypted backups to local backup systems at our primary secure site. For 'defence in depth' these encrypted backups are themselves immediately backed up to a third secure hosting site, as a precaution against failure of the backup at the primary host site, and against failure of both the primary and disaster recovery data centres.

We use automated provisioning software that enables us to rebuild systems speedily at this third secure site. Thus, if a major disaster meant that all network connections to both the primary and disaster recovery site were severed, with a predicted downtime of hours or days, the system can still be up and running very quickly at the third site.

The presence of the hourly backups already backed up to this third site mean that any data loss would be limited to a maximum of 1 hour's work. And our 4-hour Recovery Time Objective (RTO) means that – even in such an unlikely and extreme disaster situation – you would still be up and running again within 4 hours.

5.2 System Environments

We provide three environments as standard - Training, Test and Live.

The Training and Test environments are initially set up with generic data, i.e. dummy organisation structure, and users with different permission levels in the system, and we provide a training script to your team to help them become familiar with the system.

5.3 Secure Access Controls

The system provides a set of user groups and roles which govern access to the various parts of the system. Each user is identified by a unique account (typically via Azure AD

or Shibboleth SSO), which is assigned to these groups/roles via integrations with third party systems, or manually by authorised administrators. Permissions are typically configured to organisational units, to map onto existing authorisation procedures within the Institution.

The system also manages permissions on an individual basis. This ensures that only users with the relevant access can view, create, edit, or delete data at any given point. Permissions are enforced at the lowest level of database access, and all actions taken are recorded in an audit trail.

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