

**"Thanks for identifying the areas where we need to make changes to our testing"**

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## **BENEFITS**

- **Mismatched expectations identified**
- **Areas for improvement highlighted**
- **Testing process documented**

## **The University of Cambridge**

The Management Information Services Division (MISD) of the University provides business information services that underpin the critical management processes used across the University in research, teaching and administration.

One of these services is the University Student System which is constantly changing to meet the requirements of the students and the University departments. These developments are managed in house by a dedicated team and tested independently by another in house team.

There had been a period of rapid change in the system and the existing testing regime had struggled to cope with the volume of work. It is expected that the rate of change requested will only increase and therefore MISD wanted to understand how it could improve its testing processes.



## **Itica**

Itica was engaged to review the testing processes throughout the development cycle and make recommendations for areas where improvements could be made.

Itica planned the approach, taking the following steps:

- Identify the key stakeholders
- Document the current testing processes
- Interview the key stakeholders to establish their issues
- Identify gaps in the process against good practice
- Categorise the issues raised into areas to be addressed
- Report the findings and make recommendations

Each step was successfully completed.

The University of Cambridge is one of the world's oldest universities and leading academic centres, and is a self-governed community of scholars. Cambridge comprises 31 Colleges and over 150 departments, faculties, schools and other institutions. The University was formed in 1209 and is regularly ranked as the number one University in the world.

The University has research departments and teaching faculties in most academic disciplines, and has income approaching £1bn per annum. The University is continuing to grow and has made substantial investments in specialist new research facilities on various sites in Cambridge.

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## The Assignment

The key stakeholders were interviewed and the existing testing processes were documented in two separate ways:

- Written description of the process
- Process maps of the process

The documented processes were validated with the key stakeholders to ensure that they reflected the way testing was actually performed.

It was identified that there were four different types of “testing” in each release of new code, these are:

- Unit Testing
- System Testing
- User Acceptance Testing
- Regression Testing

The interviews with key stakeholders were documented and their key issues established. Other issues were identified by comparing the process with good practice for testing. All of the issues identified were collated into a summary document.

The individual issues were then categorized into areas that could be improved and recommendations made for each area.

## The Outputs

The key output was a report that contained the recommendations and also all of the information gathered throughout the review process.

The first issue identified was that there was a mismatch of expectations between the Development Team and the independent Test Team. The Development Team expected a “testing service” that the Test Team was not able to deliver.

The report identified four areas where improvements could be made, these are:

- Governance of the testing process – ensure that there is clear accountability at each stage of the process
- Skills and experience – raise the skill level of the people executing the testing
- Process – improve some of the process steps
- Documentation – create a consistent documentation set for testing

In addition to the formal report, key stakeholders were briefed on the issues identified and the recommendations made.



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