PILOT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND TEMPLATE

The attached template sets out the requirements for staff who wish to make suggestions and proposals for IT projects.

A pilot (also called a feasibility study) is normally undertaken when there is generally a high degree of uncertainty about the technology, cost, the resources required, and the operational capability. The main purpose of the pilot is to prove viability, not deliver an agreed outcome. It also enables the benefits to be tested and a more reliable investment appraisal to be created for the main project.

The pilot study will confirm viability and scalability and enable proposed processes and procedures to be tested. It will confirm the appropriateness of software/hardware proposed and also confirms that any working practices can be facilitated within College.

There is a small amount of budget available for staff who wish to propose projects for a feasibility study to help confirm that the underlying idea is sound.

The process for authorising pilot projects is as follows:-

1. The initial idea should be discussed with your line manager and have support in principle from an SMT member. This is to ensure that proposals are in line with the College Strategy and operational plans.
2. The attached Pilot Proposal form needs to be completed and sent to Anne Peden.
3. The Pilot Proposal form will be reviewed and approved/rejected by the IT & Infrastructure Advisory Group.
4. At the end of the pilot the proposer will complete a viability report and recommendation for next steps for the IT & Infrastructure Advisory Group to consider.

The Pilot Proposal form is a template designed to assist staff in setting out the reasons why a pilot should be funded. The sections are intended to set out - what is the pilot, who is involved, what will it achieve and what are the next steps.

The sections are:

The requestor information is basic details of the requestor but should also include the sponsor of the project. This is the SMT member who has agreed the pilot in principle.
**Pilot Description:**
This will include a brief description of the objectives of the pilot and its scope. That is what is and what is not included.

**Checklist for Pilot Description Section:**
- Describe clearly the purpose and scope of the pilot
- State who will be involved in running the pilot and how long the pilot will last

**Benefits Description:**
A pilot is used to assess feasibility before significant resources are committed to a larger project. This section needs to summarise the anticipated operational/financial and non-financial benefits of the project if the pilot is successful.

**Checklist for Benefits Appraisal:**
- Keep focused on the problem, need or opportunity addressed by your pilot.
- Are any of the benefits quantifiable? For example, improving operational processes, improving the student experience or saving costs over time?
- Include any intangible benefits and illustrate how they improve effectiveness of research and teaching.

**Cost Analysis:**
Give a breakdown of the anticipated costs and resources for the pilot. It would also be useful to set out the costs if the pilot is successful and is rolled out across College.

**Checklist for Cost Analysis:**
- What are the anticipated resources required Financial, Human, Software, and Equipment?
- Will support be required from IT, Academic Computing and other areas? If so have you discussed the proposal in detail with them?
- Will external bodies / suppliers be involved?
The template must include a date for submission of the viability report to the IT & Infrastructure Advisory Group and a brief summary of how the pilot will be assessed.

The pilot may have demonstrated that the proposal should not be taken forward to a full project. Alternatively the pilot may have proved successful and a recommendation made to make a business case for a full project and cross College roll out. The IT & Infrastructure Advisory Group must receive a viability report and recommendation for consideration. This report needs to include a summary of lessons learned, issues and potential risks as well as a route map for implementation if necessary.