

The ASID Project

Adapt, Support, Implement, Deliver

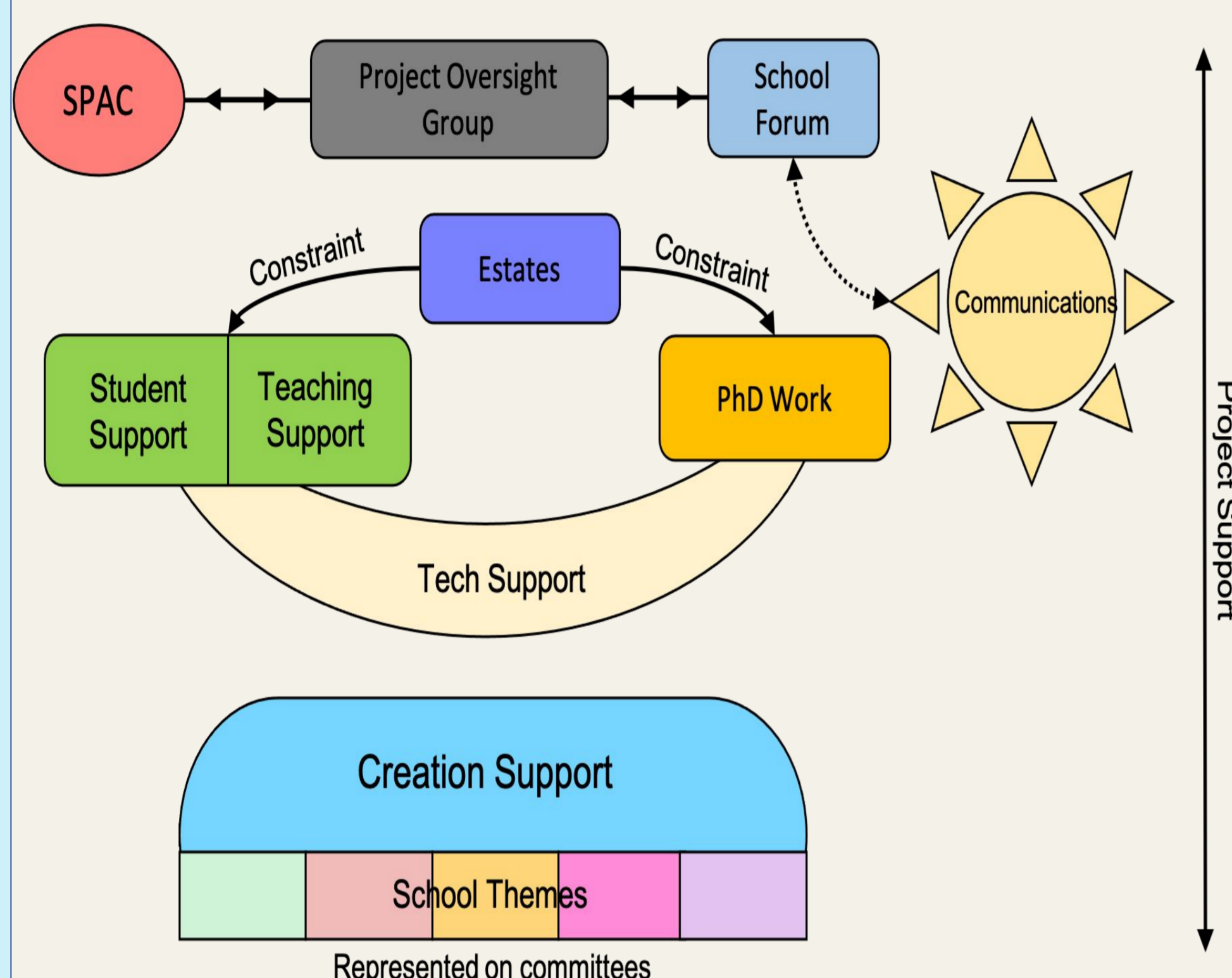
The School of Mathematics



Project overview

The School of Mathematics created what is known as the Adapt, Support, Implement, Deliver (ASID) project during the summer of 2020. This was an immediate response to the COVID-19 crisis and a short-term project with several groups working together to create an efficient way to facilitate online learning for students.

Structure diagram (see video for details)



The six working groups

The working groups of the ASID project were;

- PhD
- Student Support
- Teaching Support
- Technology Support
- Estates
- Communication

Each group had a unique focus in the ASID project and an Oversight Group was also put in place to ensure that the areas were working together smoothly. Microsoft Teams and Outlook were used to communicate, and a separate Teams group was made for this project.

Course Creation Support Group

The Course Creation Support (CCS) team including the CSS Assistants was created to deliver specific tasks for the school driven by the outcomes of the working groups.

The CSS Assistants handled a variety of tasks to improve online learning and student engagement. There were 48 students involved in total; 32 undergraduates and 16 PhD students.

ASID CCS Assistants

The CCS Assistant roles were a core part in the functioning of ASID. They;

- Provided a student perspective to staff throughout the project so implementation in semester 1 went well,
- Gave opportunities to students who may have a change of plans because of COVID-19, and
- Made use of students already equipped with much of the technical knowledge needed and with familiarity with staff and the School.

How tasks were organised

The CCS Assistants team was a large group and so needed an appropriate way to organise tasks.

The process was as follows:

1. School staff members who needed a task completed filled out an online form. This form contained important details on what skills were required and how long the task was expected to take.
2. The online form was automatically sent to an Excel sheet shared on MS Teams for all CCS Assistants to view.
3. Assistants then find appropriate tasks to complete, filled in their details and update to "in progress".
4. The requestor was then contacted for further details and to inform when complete.

The team also participated in regular group meetings to update on progress, call out any concerns and occasionally to have fun!

Tasks involved

The CCS Assistants completed over **120** tasks. There was a diverse range of tasks which were completed throughout the project. As each student provided their own unique skill-set, task were quickly and easily assigned.

Some tasks involved many weeks of effort with support with multiple Assistants. For example, writing up interactive quizzes (STACK) for a course, and subtitling course content. There were also smaller, one-off tasks, for example ensuring content is up to date on the School's web pages.

One of the most valued tasks were providing staff with feedback through workshop trial sessions. This emphasises the importance of a student's perspective while designing online study materials and workshops.

Challenges faced

There were some challenges throughout the project.

The School recruited undergraduate students in two separate cohorts of 16, with each cohort working 6 weeks with overlap over the next. Since the team was large, Excel was a great way to keep track of tasks. However, not all tasks were included in the Excel sheet. This was often because an extension of a previous task of an ad-hoc request. Some students could be faced with many tasks, while some found it more difficult to find free tasks and so had to be more proactive. This made it challenging for the support structure to track how every student was doing.

Other challenges included training and induction to the CCS assistants, communicating with central university, and the frequently updated government and college guidance.

Feedback and lessons learned

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive both from both CCS Assistants and the staff they helped throughout their placement.

It was interesting to see behind the curtains and give feedback to staff as well as being immediately involved in that feedback being implemented. (CCS Assistant)

Freedom to choose between many different tasks and the collaborative nature of the work (CCS Assistant)

Instrumental in keeping things running, keeping things organised, and making sure we were all in constant communication as a school. (Academic Staff)

There was this sense that the whole school was going to take this thing seriously, and continue to deliver online teaching at a top level of quality. (Academic Staff)

This summer, the School is employing a smaller set of students to continue to improve the teaching provided by the school.

Further details

School of Maths ASID webpages: <https://www.maths.ed.ac.uk/school-of-mathematics/asid>

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