MPC Project

SITS Filter II / Moodle Block development

Enrolment Sync

**TECHNICAL NOTE**

Background

The current business requirements document suggests one of the benefits of the new SITS Filter (“SITS Filter II”) will be that it can run all year, without the need – as current – to stop it after a given point due to data synchronisation issues.

The current design of the SITS Filter II is such that it will continue to enrol and unenrol students from Moodle courses based on the mappings and, more the point, the enrolment in SITS of students in the mapped entities (be they modules, routes, departments, etc). That is, if SITS no longer considers a student to be enrolled in a module, they will be unenrolled from any mapped Moodle course.

This is compounded by the fact that the SITS Filter II works automatically against the current Academic Year in SITS. Therefore, at a particular point (typically 1st August), all student information for one academic year is stripped out and replaced (not necessarily immediately) with student enrolment data for the next academic year. This means immediate, mass unenrolment of students from Moodle courses.

Issue

The issue with the above requirement/solution is that Moodle course administrators may still need student enrolment data for any given period of time after the academic year rollover. This may be because there are still administrative tasks to perform on students in a course after the change in year during August or because a course is intentionally being left available for students for a period of time which overlaps the next session.

Proposals

The proposal is to allow manual start/stop (activation) of synchronisation of student enrolment for a given Moodle course. If synchronisation is active, students will be enrolled and unenrolled as per their association with the mapped entities. If not, the enrolment for that course will remain as is until synchronisation is re-activated.

This solution comes in three levels:

* At the lowest level, there would be an option in the block which would flag the course (in the sits\_management database) to turn syncing on or off.
* At a more global level, there would be an option available to ELE/LTA to reset all of the block-level sync flags to off. This would then require individual courses be switched on within the blocks.
* Again, at an entirely global level, an option to disable syncing which would also mean individual blocks couldn’t re-activate it but also preserved whether or not syncing was active for that course. Then, when global syncing was activated again, each individual course would return to the previous state.

Also discussed was the possibility of separating out enrolment and unenrolment as functions. This could be accommodated through an user option but also raises the slightly more untidy question of whether or not it would be available per course and the problem of it being, again, arguably less granular than required.

Take, for example, MSIN7001. This course may allow students to retain access for a year after leaving UCL. Turning off unenrolment would allow that group of student (say the 13-14 intake) to retain access despite not being on the course any more. However, it would also mean the 14-15 wasn’t being synced correctly, with students not being unenrolled despite, for example, having their selection rejected by the department.