



ctcLink Project Quality Assurance

Monthly Report – June 2020

Presented to:



**COMMUNITY AND
TECHNICAL COLLEGES**

Washington State Board

**Washington State Board for
Community and Technical Colleges**

By:



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Cover Letter

MTC is conducting regular quality assurance reviews of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' ctcLink Initiative. The ctcLink project will provide the foundation for the next generation of services to students, faculty, and staff in an environment that enables them to self-manage their data and experiences. It will leverage and enhance the inherent efficiencies of the 34 college system through the implementation of a single, centrally provided system of online student and administrative functions. This report is intended to provide an independent, periodic assessment of the key components of the major project initiatives. This report is based on in-person and phone interviews with key project personnel and our review of documentation uploaded by the various teams to the SharePoint sites as well as any critical items that we may need to follow up on based on the previous assessments.

If you have any questions about the content of this report, please feel free to contact me at the email address or phone number provided below.

Sincerely,

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Executive Summary

QA considers the ctcLink Project to be progressing very well. Project Management continues to proactively address concerns as they emerge and take corrective action. Lessons learned is an ongoing effort as the project continues to make changes aggressively as needed, rather than waiting for the next deployment group or other stage in the project.

The Overall Status remains YELLOW given the deployment schedules and project/support resource concerns for completing the remaining 24 colleges. The uncertainty of the Covid-19 virus and current and future impact on all colleges is continuing as a key factor in our assessment. QA has significant concern that the financial impact on the SBCTC colleges and agency could have a negative impact on continued success for future deployment groups.

With the deployment of DG3, ERP Support has had challenges in reducing open ticket counts. The current workload is exacerbated by the support required for year-end closing and other items. QA is concerned that without the additional 8-10 positions in the plan being filled, that DG4 will create too much work for the support organization to handle. QA feels it is critical to find the funding for these open positions in order to have continued on-going success of the ctcLink Project.

Future scope includes implementation of CampusCE, the new Online Admissions application and the Budget/Planning solution. These replacement solutions are being planned and scheduled for future ctcLink project delivery. Detail schedule dates are not firm, however, at this time, but significant progress is being made around planning.

The project schedule for DG4 has been compressed now for key activities. This means that the project does not have any remaining float in the schedule. Also, the implementation go-live schedule for DG4 may be slightly changed due to payroll dates for the colleges. A DG4A and DG4B preliminary schedule change was presented to the ctcLink Steering Committee at the June 30th meeting.

Project Status Scorecard

The following table summarizes the assessment of each of the critical areas included in the QA review with primary focus now on Deployment Group 4.

ctcLink Project Assessment Scorecard

| <u>Project Area</u> | <u>Prior Status May 2020</u> | <u>Current Status June 2020</u> | <u>Overall Comments</u> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Overall | YELLOW | YELLOW | <p>The Overall Status remains YELLOW given the deployment schedules and project/support resource concerns for completing the remaining 24 colleges. The uncertainty of the Covid-19 virus and current and future impact on all colleges is continuing as a key factor in our assessment.</p> <p>All deployment groups are now engaged.</p> <p>DG4 (7 colleges) Business Process Fit Gaps were completed. DG4 is targeted to go-live in February 2021.</p> <p>DG5 (8 colleges) Global Design work is underway. BPFs start in August.</p> <p>DG6 (9 colleges), the final deployment group is now in the Project Initiation Phase.</p> |
| SBCTC/ Governance | GREEN | GREEN | <p>The ctcLink Steering Committee held meetings in June to review the project. These meetings are documented. The Governance will be changing leadership in both the executive Leadership Committee and ctcLink Steering Committee.</p> <p>Gate 5 funding was approved in June by the State OCIO and State Office of Financial Management (OFM).</p> |
| Project Management | GREEN | GREEN | <p>The PMO and all Project support staff are continuing to work remotely. The project team and Customer Support staff have adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>The PMO continues making mitigation plans and taking actions to deal with the immediate issues caused by the Covid-19 virus. The PMO is planning for all future implementations to be remote.</p> <p>PMO is now focusing on DG4 workstreams and beginning support for DG5.</p> |
| Phase Scope | YELLOW | YELLOW | <p>Phase scope includes implementation of CampusCE, the new Online Admissions application and Budget/Planning. These replacement solutions are being planned and scheduled for future ctcLink project delivery. Detail schedule dates are not firm, for this reason, the Scope Status remains YELLOW.</p> |
| Schedule Status | YELLOW | YELLOW | <p>The Project team is focused on DG4. This included completing remaining few Business Process Fit Gap (BPFs) reviews and Data Cycle #2 conversion work. The project schedule for DG4 has been compressed now for key activities. This means that the project does not have any remaining float in the schedule.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Also, the implementation go-live schedule for DG4 may be slightly changed due to payroll dates for the colleges. A DG4A and DG4B preliminary schedule change was presented to the ctcLink Steering Committee at the June 30th meeting. For this reason, the Schedule Status remains YELLOW.</p> <p>DG5 Colleges have now started their Global Design Adoption activity. The development of a Schedule Baseline for DG5 is in the preliminary stage, pending black-out dates for the colleges.</p> |
| Training | GREEN | GREEN | <p>The QA team continues to include Training as a key area of the ctcLink Project.</p> <p>The Covid-19 impact on the colleges has elevated the importance of providing ctcLink training through remote learning and communication services. The ctcLink project has been working towards remote delivery of ctcLink courses.</p> <p>DG4 training has been restructured to support the UAT approach. The college testers are required to take pre-requisite training courses in order to participate in the UAT.</p> <p>The training team was very active in supporting daily Web-Ex sessions for the deployed colleges with their year-end processing.</p> |
| Testing | GREEN | GREEN | <p>QA considers this area as GREEN. College testing is a key factor in determining their overall readiness.</p> <p>PMO continues making improvements in approach to SIT testing for DG4 based on lessons learned with DG3. DG4 UAT approach has been revised to provide more training and support for college UAT participating personnel.</p> |
| Configurations /Data Conversions | GREEN | GREEN | <p>Project technical team has been supporting the DG4 Data Cycle #2.</p> <p>The PeopleTools Update 8.5.7 is now planned for Project use in late August 2020 to meet the schedule for DG4 SIT testing. This work responsibility is managed by the SBCTC IT Division.</p> |
| Organizational Change Management (OCM) | GREEN | GREEN | <p>Deployed colleges have an understanding of OCM challenges and are now adjusting to operating during Covid-19. All Community and Technical Colleges are facing significant budget cuts and continued Covid-19 impacts that will make OCM more challenging, requiring further adjustments in business operations.</p> <p>The Chair of the Executive Leadership Committee sent a priority email to the College Presidents in June to request that staff critical to ctcLink implementation be protected during layoffs.</p> <p>QA remains concerned that business transformation projects like ctcLink are under-estimated and understaffed by college executives. This ongoing concern began before Covid-19 happened.</p> |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| | | | QA currently considers the OCM area as GREEN. QA recognizes this could change in the months ahead as colleges and the Project make critical adjustments. |
| Project Staffing | GREEN | GREEN | <p>Additional project staffing (supplemental consultants or new employees) are being made for the Project. Six positions are Open on the project and 5 have been posted. The has been extending contractor SOWs to keep consultants on the project.</p> <p>SBCTC project staff are concerned about the potential for staff reductions based on SBCTC response to State financial pressures. PMO is reassuring the project team that their positions are funded.</p> <p>Given Covid-19 and the remote work environment, the project morale remains good. Based upon QA remote meetings with ctcLink staff, both Project and Customer Support teams continue to work well in the remote environment and remain focused.</p> |
| Technical Environment | YELLOW | YELLOW | <p>The support technical team is installing Peoplesoft updates (PUMs) and PeopleTools 8.5.7 with a target production date of August.</p> <p>SBCTC IT is acquiring a new software product (Sentinel) specific for PeopleSoft ERP that is intended to improve user management, auditing, and reporting.</p> |
| ERP Support | N/A | YELLOW | <p>QA is now reporting ERP Support as a separate item due to its increased level of importance. The new ctcLink PeopleSoft Customer Support organization has now been operational for 4 months. The increase in the number of colleges is beginning to put a strain on the closure of tickets. Pillar ticket volumes have remained steady which is concerning to IT leadership. SBCTC IT Leadership has indicated that there are plans for 8-10 additional support staff; however, there is concern as to whether the funds are available, and available in a timely manner. It's important that these positions begin being filled in August so that these staff are skilled and knowledgeable by the time DG4 goes live.</p> |

| LEGEND | GREEN | YELLOW | RED |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| Risk Description | 1) Low risks may be encountered NO immediate action needed | 2) Moderate risks may be encountered Serious deficiency and action item recommended | 3) High risks may be encountered Needs to be escalated and can impact project effort or cost |

Additional Quality Assurance Findings

Governance

- No additional findings at this time.

PMO and Staffing

- The PMO and Project staff are all working remotely. The SBCTC offices remain closed at this time. The PMO is concerned about precautions being planned for Project staff once SBCTC re-opens the Olympia office.
- The PMO continues working with the Requirements Traceability Matrix (RTM) to update status and validate original RFP requirements have been implemented, and end-users training provided on the business processes and functionality. This will be a work-in-process activity for the PMO. CEMLI Master will be linked to the RTM. QA does not view this as a critical issue.

Phase Scope

- DG4 consists of 7 colleges. A number of these colleges (the 3 Seattle Colleges) have large enrollments and require large data volumes. This creates some technical scheduling challenges for the go-live implementation which requires longer data conversions from the legacy system to load PeopleSoft. The technical approach will be evaluated and will require some changes to the DG4 detail schedule.
- There are a number of other in-scope items which will be implemented in future (most likely before or during DG4) and these are being closely watched by the QA Team, including:
 - **Continuing Education Solution/Software Product** – Master Contract is now signed. A number of Statements of Work (SOWs) are being developed with the vendor at this time. Schedule for implementing CampusCE is being planned. A place holder in the DG4 schedule has been added to the baseline schedule. It will be updated once the work plans are agreed to with the vendor. Note: Colleges have the ability to opt out of using the product.
 - **Online Admissions** - Contract with vendor is now signed. A schedule for implementing OAA is being planned at this time. A place holder in the DG4 schedule has been added to the baseline. It will be updated once the plans are finalized and detailed activities are coordinated with Kastech, the vendor. A demo of OAA was presented to the ctcLink Steering Committee on June 30th.
 - **Planning and Budgeting Tool** – The contract for this solution is signed. PMO is working with DG2 and DG3 colleges to participate in the implementation effort. Preplanning for the implementation is underway. Work to begin this summer.
 - **Accessibility** – SBCTC IT Division has decided on upgrading to PeopleSoft PeopleTools 8.5.7. Oracle has previously indicated to SBCTC and Clark that the Update 8.5.7 will improve accessibility, mostly by applying software usability designs that can be retrofitted into current PeopleSoft. Latest target date for production and Project use is August 2020.
 - **Dashboards and Analytics /OBIA** - The new hires for SBCTC-IT and the ctcLink project staff have expertise to implement this solution for dashboards and analytics. This work is currently funded in the ctcLink budget. Timing for inclusion in a specific DG implementation is not available at this time.
 - **Physical Inventory Software Product** - This product scope was planned to be in-scope for Deployment Group 3 but is now post- go-live. Vendor solutions status was delayed

to evaluate integration with asset tracking scanners directly with ctcLink PeopleSoft. Timing for inclusion in a specific DG implementation is not available at this time.

- **Guided Pathways** – The ctcLink Steering Committee approved an approach for gathering business requirements but defined Guided Pathways work as “out of scope.” This work is now underway and led by the SBCTC Agency. Colleges have selected and implemented a number of different CRM solutions to meet Guided Pathways at their colleges. The potential Deployment Group for implementation with PeopleSoft and scope decisions requires impact analysis on colleges and on the ctcLink project gates. The Strategic Technology Advisory Committee will be reviewing and approving the Guided Pathways solution(s).
- **Integration Broker (IB)** – A pilot approach for using Integration Broker (IB) is being developed by ctcLink technical team. The scope of the pilot involves extracting data directly from PeopleSoft databases using the IB tool. No Deployment Group or date for this has been established.

Schedule

- **DG4 Status**
 - The Baseline Schedule for DG4 has been adjusted. Target implementation dates have not changed. DG4 will involve two go-live dates. DG4A is targeted for February 8, 2020 and DG4B is targeted for February 22, 2020.
 - QA is concerned about the compressions in the DG4 timeline and will continue to monitor. The DG4 implementation schedule has been compressed with no remaining float.
 - Focus in June was on the Data Conversion #2. Functional teams were assisting the DG4 colleges with their data validation reviews. Data validation workshops being held by the Project teams with colleges. Some issues were identified during the validation reviews with the colleges and these are being worked with the colleges.
 - Data Conversion Cycle #3 snapshot is scheduled for July 17th.
 - The Business Process Fit Gap sessions with DG4 colleges were completed except for a couple that would be held in July after the colleges complete processing for Year-end financial closings.
 - QA is also concerned that the schedule for implementing OAA and CampusCE, as well as other changes (PeopleTools update) is not yet factored into the DG4 schedule. There are placeholders within the schedule. These will be updated with more detail once planning is completed. This work is ongoing.
 - Weekly scheduling meetings are being held remotely with the DG4 College PMs.
 - The ctcLink project team continues to work closely with the DG4 PMs to provide better explanation and clarity on upcoming activities so they can align their college planning/ local activities.
 - All DG4 College PMs are self-reporting their status as YELLOW based on the June 8-19th ctcLink Project Status Report. Issue impacting all colleges is resources and budgets.
- **Other Deployment Groups Status**
 - All colleges are now routinely reporting status.
 - DG5 kickoff was held in late May. It involves the Global Design Adoption (GDA) work activity which are self-paced Canvas courses supported remotely by the Project. A DG5

schedule has been provided to the colleges; however, it is viewed realistically as a 4 to 6 month workplan at this time.

- DG6 colleges are in the Initiation phase at this time.

Training

- Training team continued to be heavily engaged in production support for deployed colleges. Training is responsible for Tier 2 Support in the ctcLink Customer Support structure.
- UAT approach is changed for DG4 and has required restructuring of the training used to support UAT.
- Many of the training videos embedded in the PeopleSoft training courses were created in 2018 with the 9.0 interface. Training team has better clarity on which courses the PMs had concerns about and will be updating the videos after DG3B volume and criticality of support tickets are reduced.

Testing

- The Project Test coordinators are involved with all areas of testing.
- The Testing processes are being evaluated internally by the Project Administrators reporting to the PM responsible for project QA.
- SIT testing for DG4 will be performed by the ctcLink Project team. Preparation for SIT testing to begin in late June.
- A Project resource will be working with DG4 colleges to prep their work with Security Role assignments to reduce problems previously encountered with UAT and end-user testing.
- End-to-end and parallel testing approach is being improved for the DG4 colleges based on changes made for DG3B.
- Plans underway by the PMO to improve the UAT Sprints for use with DG4. Current plan reduces the number of Sprints to 2; and combines the execution with SME training. DG4 supporting materials are being built-out for use with the DG4 UAT.
- DG4 college personnel assigned to UAT will have to take the prerequisite training courses prior to their participation in the UAT work.

Configurations/Data Conversions/Development

- One week before DG3B was going live, a DG3B college identified a problem with their legacy Student Financials data. They requested help from the Project team to correct these problems prior to conversion. It was decided that the problems would be corrected after go-live and this work continued into June.
- The planning of DG4 go-live will require multi-week data conversions. DG4 number of colleges will possibly require different conversion approach. The multi-step, multi-week implementation approach, which involves converting historical data, would require further testing for potential use with DG4 colleges. The proposed split of DG4 into DG4A and DG4B deployment dates is a possible solution to this concern.
- Team was supporting DG4 Cycle 2 Conversions. DG4 Cycle 3 is now being planned for July snapshot.
- Project technical staff and ERP support seem to be working well together to resolve technical issues on post go-live implementations as well as preparing for DG3B conversions and cutovers.
- Project technical leads are currently challenged by a lack of detail ctcLink architectural information for the AWS environment. The Managed Services vendor, Burgundy, has not

provided the current AWS Technical Architecture for the ctcLink production and project environments. QA is concerned that this needs to be addressed to prevent impact to the DG4 schedule as well as overall management of the environment.

Organizational Change Management

- The 10 deployed colleges now have a real-life understanding of OCM challenges. This is being severely challenged by the Covid-19 and remote staff of college administrations. Now there is pressure at the college level furlough and or/ reduce staff.
- Covid-19 is changing many key aspects of the community and technical college programs and administration. It will impact college programs, enrollments, and funding. QA expects it will also change how the ctcLink project is implemented with more reliance on remote project and support delivery where possible.
 - The expanded use of WebEx sessions is the new norm for the project team and college communications.
 - DG4 plans include an increase of remote Workshops for supporting colleges.
- PeopleSoft Role Security, a continued issue for DG3 colleges, has been addressed and should be less of an issue for DG4 colleges. All “Security Workbooks” are now available online. This material should improve the ability of a college to understand how role security is intended to work.
- GP Strategies is developing an effective “boot-camp” training program for college staff assigned the role of College Business Analysts. All currently deployed and future colleges will benefit by selecting individuals to attend the course once available. No update is available at this time.
- Dual processing for Financial Aid has been a challenge for the deployed colleges and has required additional support. Colleges need refresher education on use of the PeopleSoft Financial Aid and Student Financials applications prior to starting their 100% reliance on Peoplesoft.
- The OCM/College Relations team continues to schedule and hold on-site “college readiness check-ins” for DG5/DG6 colleges.

ctcLink Customer Support and IT Technical Support

- The Director of ctcLink PeopleSoft Customer Support continues making changes and improvements in the support processes, including internal and external communications, status reporting and priorities of support tickets. A 4-tier level structure is being now used to track ticket responsibility, customer priority, and status.
- Customer Support is creating List-Servs for each PeopleSoft Pillar area in order to provide consistent communications with college staffs.
- Support tickets volumes are remaining steady for the 10 deployed colleges and SBCTC. This considers to be an ongoing QA concern since it was expected that the support needs would reduce somewhat after 1 month since DG3B went live.
- It has been reported to the QA team that a number of Remediation items were completed by the Project team, yet have not been deployed by IT into production. This is concerning since the Remediation report provided to the ctcLink Steering Committee indicates Remediation items for each pillar as completed in March but are still showing as Open Items.

Recommendations

The following shows the open and recently closed recommendations with current updates from the QA and Project Teams.

- QA 0159 Finding:** QA had previously recommended that month and year end close processes be well documented. The ctcLink Project Team has provided information to ERP support, which in turn supplemented with additional information, and provided that to the live colleges. While the basics of the original recommendation has been met, QA believes additional support is necessary for the colleges.

Recommendation: QA recommends that a Level 200 Training Course is developed to cover in expected detail, the documented steps required by both SBCTC Finance internal staff and by College Finance staffs to process Month End and Year End Financials. **Latest Update:** Training team is evaluating which training courses need to be updated from DG3 & DG4 feedback.

- QA 0163 Finding:** The area encompassing Internal Quality Control Processes becomes more important as more colleges are implemented with PeopleSoft ERP.

Recommendation: QA recommends that the ERP Support Organization builds/incorporates QC processes into most critical areas such as: environment changes, product updates, 3rd party interface changes, new functionality, testing, and delivered training. There are standard QC processes in use by large ERP support organizations that SBCTC should become familiar with and consider for use. This would move the SBCTC Support organization closer to meeting the SLAs objectives. **Latest Update:** New Tier definitions were developed and shared with DG3B Colleges.

- QA 0165 Finding:** The ctcLink PMO provides bi-weekly ctcLink Project Status reports that have evolved over time, and comprehensive. This level of transparency and reporting for a multi-year, large scale project is appropriate given the importance of the ctcLink project. The new Customer Support organization does not at this time routinely report status.

Recommendation: QA recommends that ctcLink PeopleSoft Customer Support develops and routinely (monthly) provides a Departmental/Operational type Support status report with identified metrics, issues, staffing, schedules, changes and process improvements. Note: A two- page report would be a great start in addressing this recommendation. **Latest Update:** The Project has shared this recommendation to the ctcLink PeopleSoft Customer Support Organization. The support organization is being evaluated for staffing sizing, processes, and communications to prepare for more colleges coming on-line.

- QA 0167 Finding:** The ctcLink OCM activity continues to utilize lessons learned from DG2 and DG3 deployment efforts. The schedule for OCM activity is within tasks incorporated for DG4/DG5/DG6. Program level visibility of these tasks should be highlighted and receive appropriate recognition.

Recommendation: QA recommends that the PMO/OCM function breakout the planned OCM activities and include these with future project status reporting in a more easily identifiable manner. **Latest Update:** PMO will consider this for Project Plans for DG4 and beyond.

- QA 0168 Finding:** The ctcLink Project Technical team has expressed a valid need to understand at the most detail level the ctcLink technical architecture as it is being implemented and controlled by the Managed Services contractor, Burgundy.

Recommendation: QA recommends that the ctcLink Project Technical team lead responsible for Environments is provided view level access to the ctcLink environments as managed by Burgundy. **Latest Update:** The ctcLink Technical Lead will work with SBCTC IT App Services Director to establish appropriate access to the ctcLink project environments for project success.

- **NEW QA 0169 Finding:** The DG4 schedule is now compressed and zero float exists. Schedule compression is always considered a risk area by QA.
Recommendation: QA recommends that the specific areas directly impacted by schedule compression are highlighted in the status report, and mitigation plans are shared with the ctcLink Project Steering Committee.

Risk Assessment

Identify potential barriers to meeting project objectives and milestones, their probability of occurring and impact if they occur, and recommended and observed mitigations.

The Top Risks are:

- Covid-19 and its continuing impact on finances and remote working environments.
- Development of a multi-college conversion plan for DG4 and beyond.
- Continued active engagement of colleges as they begin and continue preparations for future deployment go-lives. Strained budgets and remote work environments have increased this risk.
- Ability of ctcLink PeopleSoft Customer Support to be properly staffed and knowledgeable for the future, multi-college deployment groups.
- Unknown scope impact of 3rd party software solutions on future deployment group activities.

The PMO is taking mitigation actions for each of these risks within its control.

The QA team has reviewed and agrees with the risks as identified by the Chief Technology Officer - ctcLink Program and included in the Project Status Report.