Information Services Plan 2012-13

Executive Summary

This annual plan presents activities proposed for the final year in the Information Services Strategic Plan 2005-13. Over the course of this Strategic Plan, there has been a growing uncertainty concerning the financial situation of the HE sector as a whole. IS has worked closely with the Colleges, looking carefully at the services and facilities that we offer to the University community to ensure that the priorities are correct; and that we are running our business as efficiently as possible. There is now a greater sense of confidence in the University, resulting from the continued expansion of our business through increasing international student numbers and mergers. This drives a dual pressure for IS to balance the need for efficiency with the growth in use of our existing services and making investments for the future, driven by the needs of the institution e.g. distance education, personal tutors, research data, Chancellor’s Fellowships.

As in previous years, this Plan has been developed following consultations with EUSA, the Colleges, IAD and other Support Groups. During this process, they were invited to share their own plans for 2012/13 and to consider any impact these may have on IS. Six primary messages emerged from those consultations and these have informed the proposed direction of travel for IS over the coming year.

- The University community has grown significantly over the last few years as a consequence of planned increases in student numbers and mergers with other institutions. Given this growth, the Colleges have emphasised the need for us to now focus on the sustainability of existing core services, through adequate and transparent investment in key services;
- There is an immediate need to focus on PURE for REF2014, but the University community must not lose sight of the long term requirements of data storage, management and accessibility;
- Models used to purchase library materials must deliver best value for money and be as flexible as possible. They must also balance the needs of the research community with the demands of the growing undergraduate and taught masters programmes;
- There is a growing requirement to improve our management information to enable more agile and better informed decision making;
- Enhancements are required to the University website to allow easier, more flexible web publishing; and
- The Colleges welcomed the work IS has done on delivering greater transparency of the core budget and agreed that the on-going development of recalculating our services costs, with greater detail, was essential.

For 2012/13, IS will focus on investing to ensure that our core services are sufficient for the purposes of the University in delivering its expanding business. These services underpin almost all University activities, and without reliable provision of them, projects and developments will be less likely to succeed.

We will also continue to ensure that major university projects move ahead successfully, as these are key contributors to overall University business efficiency and effectiveness. During 2012/13 and beyond, IS will be involved in a significant number of developmental areas. We will work closely with the Colleges and Support Groups to ensure best leverage of our resources between existing services and new/on-going projects:

University projects with substantial IS input
- Systems for Personal Tutors – in-course marks, notes/meetings recording, expansion of e-portfolios;
- Shared Academic Timetabling;
- Research Management Administration - Research Publications Service, Finance-ERI interface;
- Technology base for Distance Education Initiative, including virtual classroom service;
- Main Library Redevelopment / KB Library / refurbishment of Darwin 1st Floor to modern study spaces & catering as part of expansion of student study space beyond libraries;
- Business Analytics / Management Information – core data are available on demand and assist key business issues and decisions;
- Mergers – MRC Human Genetics Unit, possible others;
- e-Recruitment System;
- University website – setting the future direction and technology choice.
**Major IS-led projects**

- Research data management & storage – policies, training, curation, preservation, baseline 0.5Tb/user;
- Implementing academic strategy for Library materials acquisition & retention;
- Supporting new modes of scholarly communications and open scholarship;
- e-mail & e-diary in the cloud for students;
- Designing new models of library materials acquisition in order to meet rising demand;
- Internships for employability;
- Consolidation and enhancement of the Learn9.1 and Moodle VLE platforms;
- MS Windows 7 supported desktop for PCs and laptops;
- SelectPrint – new service to standardise the fleet of printers and copiers.