Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
Our Vision

“To provide a contemporary and integrated technological environment, which sustains and strengthens the University’s ability to deliver its strategic objectives, facilitating collaboration, world-class teaching and research, and efficient business processes.

We aim to deliver an environment which will support students, researchers and academics by providing an empowering platform and functionality for knowledge creation and exchange.”
Preface

We will develop, maintain and make available an ICT infrastructure and information management environment, which is “best in class” while remaining aligned with the University’s requirements. This will provide a robust, technologically rich, yet focused environment that supports teaching, research, learning and administration across a dispersed campus. ICT will support existing and anticipated business requirements, while also influencing and shaping future developments and innovation across all of the University’s functions, supporting change and organisational transformation as appropriate. This ICT Strategy is fully aligned with the institutional Strategic Plan.
Introduction

It is recognised across the organisation that ICT is one of the key enablers for the University to provide the underlying mechanisms that are essential to successfully respond to the challenges facing us currently and over the coming years.

It is essential that our investment in technology continues to be based upon sound academic and business decisions that result in cost-effective solutions being implemented.

Our stakeholders continue to demand high quality, sophisticated and reliable ICT provision – in part influenced by their experiences in the wider world. This presents the University with a challenge – how to satisfy expectation and demand, while balancing the costs of delivering those services with competing economic interests within St Andrews. Successfully addressing these competing interests is a growing imperative, given the highly competitive nature of the Higher Education (HE) market place.

The current economic climate means there is an ever-increasing demand to continually create efficiencies in the way we work. This means smarter working opportunities must be embraced by us all.

The previous ICT Strategy sought to implement basic ICT provision. This strategy seeks to build on this and place the University as a leader in the use of IT, ensuring new investment creates new services and further efficiencies, and reduces costs.

The primary function of IT Services is to support and facilitate the University in the delivery of its mission to students and staff. The key strategic challenges which face the University over the next five years include increased financial pressures and the need for greater organisational efficiencies without sacrificing quality. To achieve this, the University will have to become leaner and more efficient in the way it works and technology will play a key role in this transformation process.

The Chief Information Officer (CIO) and the IT Services team will establish and provide the highest level of programme, project, risk and financial planning and management, supported by an effective governance framework, to ensure that the University’s ICT infrastructure remains fit for purpose. In terms of supporting the University’s business transformation the CIO and the IT Services team will provide leadership and drive for organisational and business transformation through the appropriate deployment of technological and information governance solutions to deliver the efficiency agenda.
Strategic ICT priorities for the University

• Address user demand for sophisticated, high quality, ubiquitous and reliable ICT provision whilst recognising economic constraints;

• Promote a culture of customer focus in all ICT structures;

• Identify a long term, sustainable and accessible solution that addresses increasing demands for storage and the integration and interoperability of our ICT systems;

• Enable capacity to meet increasing network bandwidth demands and reduce single points of failure that would threaten the availability of network connectivity;

• Create additional business efficiencies, whilst improving service quality through centralisation of core ICT provision, reducing duplication and the complexity of multiple systems and services where these exist at local level;

• Improve information security provision i.e. the confidentiality, reliability and availability of ICT systems and the information processed by those systems – reducing the likelihood of data breaches and/or the loss of confidential or personal data;

• Significantly reduce the ICT carbon footprint in the face of rising energy costs.
Our mission statement

“IT Services will be recognised as an innovative and influential function, playing a core role in the operation and ongoing development of the University. We will work hard to be respected by the University community and regarded by our peers as a leader in the HE sector, delivering excellent, customer-focused services.”
ICT Strategic aims

Aim 1

Research

“To help facilitate our position as a distinctive, internationally renowned, research intensive institution.”

- Provide a flexible, expandable and secure infrastructure and an Information Governance framework to support and sustain an excellent research base at the University, so that institutional requirements and aspirations can be met;

- Support the research community by providing technical support and guidance, drawing upon governmental and research networks and funder requirements, and working with others to apply these throughout the research lifecycle;

- Engage with the research community, alerting others to significant developments in ICT, information processing and governance that could support and enhance research activity.

What does this mean?

Providing convenient, secure and reliable access both on campus and “in the field” to all ICT platforms and services that support research, such as:

- Databases
- Storage
- Websites
- PCs
- High Performance Computing (“HPC”)

Re-focus our relationships with suppliers and technological partners to identify where additional services and enhancements can be delivered to the research community.

Planning, designing and implementing infrastructure and information management processes that take cognisance of potential future HE and research requirements that facilitate growth.

Providing guidance and expertise on:

- Network requirements
- HPC
- Data retention, information security and classification
- Whole-life costs
- Research data management.

Establishing a communications strategy that facilitates:

- Closer links with the research community
- The timely dissemination of external developments, technological trends and information governance standards that will inform and assist the research community.
Aim 2

Learning and teaching

“To provide the technology to facilitate all modes of learning and teaching”

- Provide a flexible, expandable and secure infrastructure and an Information Governance framework to support and sustain excellence in learning and teaching at the University, so that institutional requirements and personal aspirations can be met;

- Ensure as far as possible that the University ICT infrastructure is agile and capable of change so that future requirements of the University and those of individual learners can be met with minimal impact on the University;

- Facilitate seamless communication in support of learning and teaching;

- Identify and bring to the University’s attention technological innovations that could enhance the learning experience;

- Work with academic staff and students to understand learner needs.

What does this mean?

- Provisioning for future requirements;
- Provide access to services independent of geographical and time boundaries;
- Enhance and implement fit for purpose solutions within all learning spaces to support formal and informal learning;
- Allow the University to re-provision existing space, creating more flexibility where teaching and learning may take place;
- Improving communication with students through the use of multiple channels.
Aim 3

Enhancing the St Andrews experience

“To provide stakeholders with the technology and information to facilitate learning, communication, collaboration and a unique and personalised experience.”

- Provide tools that support intellectual, social and community engagement;
- E-enable business processes;
- Consolidate and integrate the current platforms to provide consistency of user experience;
- Provide an uncomplicated and consistent experience;
- Provide opportunities to develop practical skills in the workplace.

What does this mean?

- Expand our use of social media to allow for greater and more flexible levels of engagement with the University;
- Expand wireless provision beyond campus boundaries;
- Engage with our technological partners and suppliers to bring enhanced ICT services and technologies to the University that we otherwise could not make available;
- Deploy technological solutions to enhance and/or eliminate inefficient business processes;
- Provide tools that make a student’s engagement with the University in terms of the administration and management of their education as simple and seamless as possible, thereby reducing the inconvenience factor to them without unduly losing the customer facing elements that our students value;
- Provide sophisticated and secure identity management services that support effective resource management dependent on the roles occupied by individuals;
- Provide opportunities for internships within IT Services.
Aim 4

Support

• Provide the technology, infrastructure and expertise to enable University staff and those engaged by IT Services to be effective in their jobs;

• Contribute to the effective operations of the University through the appropriate deployment of technologies to enable business change and drive efficiencies;

• Provide an ICT and information management infrastructure to fully support existing and future requirements;

• Provide an effective, trusted management information system infrastructure that allows business units to collect and process information in line with their strategic and operational requirements;

• Ensure that the confidentiality, reliability and availability of information systems and the information held and/or processed by those systems are protected and maintained.

What does this mean?

• Develop staff so that they can fulfil their duties by providing appropriate guidance, support and awareness of current and emerging ICT and information governance approaches, solutions and standards;

• Help ensure that staff are aware of the potential opportunities for improvements that may be realised by exploiting advances in technology and information management;

• Ensure the staff engaged by IT Services are sufficiently knowledgeable, skilled and motivated, and capable of supporting the University’s and this Strategic Plan and delivering IT Services operational plans – with a focus on customer needs and technical excellence;

• Promoting adherence to an agreed set of technical and information management standards – seeking to minimise the cost of regulatory compliance without placing the University at undue risk;

• Implement Asset, Software and Information Lifecycle Management;

• Ensure that ICT services are planned, subject to appropriate project management and quality control protocols and those services can operate unhindered within an operational environment;

• Reduce the requirement for in-house developments, looking to rely upon “off the shelf” solutions that can be maintained and supported either in-house or by a third party;

• Implementation of further business intelligence tools to provide access to real time and historic data through a consistent user interface;

• In our design and implementation of services we will make adequate provision for protecting and maintaining the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our information systems and information;

• Develop plans to mitigate the impact of minor disaster and ensure continuity of core services.