



ICT Strategy

2008

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Overview

Aims

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy defines the technical direction and framework for College wide technology based developments, services and risk management. It is envisaged that this strategy will act as a guide for the development of local strategies for use and management of ICT.

The aims of the ICT Strategy are to:

- Define how ICT will be deployed to support teaching and learning.
- Define the technical direction and framework for developments in the infrastructure and administrative & academic applications that involve use of information technology.
- Define the principles and standards that permit data sharing, integration and devolvement of systems that will lead to efficient and coherent working.
- Cover issues such as security and disaster recovery

Vision

The vision centres on

- Supporting research, teaching and learning, administrative and student needs
- The role of technology very much as a means of enhancing college activities rather than transforming them;
- Tracking and applying trends in technology rather than being at the leading edge which can be costly and risky;
- Building on and enhancing current use of technology in response to needs and feasibility;
- Keeping services running, secure and available being as important as innovation and development.
- This relatively conservative approach will nevertheless, over a 5 year period, lead to significant changes. E-mail, Wireless networks, video conferencing, web based systems, development of secure personalised access to core college facilities, and adoption of open standards will enable:
- Easier access to publications, global collaboration and use of computing power for modelling and analysis
- Establishment and maintenance of Managed Learning Environment (MLE) and Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) thus facilitating e-learning and distance learning
- Better integration between central and departmental systems leading to better quality of data and appropriate authorised access (devolved/"self service") via standard browsers • Greater choice in devices and technology used to support communications with internal and external colleagues
- Access to appropriate College IT facilities for all staff, students, authorised users of partner organisations (eg SNEC) and those attending short courses and conferences from a variety of devices including laptops and palm tops

- Remote access to College IT based facilities thus facilitating remote working and varied working patterns.

Strategic Threats

- Use of, and dependency on technology will continue to grow. This has many advantages especially in terms of speed, efficiency, flexibility and mobility. However, technology brings its own threats and consequences - namely those of security, loss of personal contact and threats from other institutions being able to exploit their reputation to attract our potential student base.
- As our competitors apply technology to give them competitive edge and external agencies put increasing pressure on us to communicate and transfer data electronically, we cannot avoid advances and changes brought about by technology. We intend to understand the consequences so that we can exploit the potential of technology to enhance the mission of the College.

Overarching Principles

- The strategy is based on the following overarching principles:
- The College will adopt and develop network and services based on “Open Standards” so that interoperability is supported for a portfolio of agreed hardware and software.
- Access to be extended to appropriate IT facilities for all staff, students, authorised staff in partner organisations (eg WLC, SNEC) and visitors.
- Core College IT based facilities needs to include access to email, Intranet, VLE, Internet, and ability to open attachments based on defined open standards. In order to facilitate this client IT desktops need to be capable of using the core IT facilities. Since technology changes rapidly and often without ‘backwards’ compatibility it is likely that desktop technology older than 4-5 years will need to be upgraded on a rolling basis.
- Remote working and devolved/”self-service” access to be supported.
- Wherever possible, interfaces to central systems should be via standard web browsers that are independent of client machine hardware and software.
- Availability of IT services (email, Intranet, Internet, MIS systems) is crucial to the efficiency of College activities, therefore, security and risk management will be key factors for ongoing maintenance of services and introduction of new services.
- Collaboration with external organisations (eg. EaStMAN, IT hardware and software vendors) is essential for efficiency of service delivery and reduction of risks.

Strategic Goals

Strategic goals are drawn from the College Strategic Plan and analysis of current IT issues and activities.

- Develop and continue to maintain the network to support research & collaboration, teaching & learning and administrative functions.
- Develop specialist services and support for students with special needs and the wider college community
- Support College Communication through ICT (e-mail, web, intranet, VLE, etc.)
- Develop and integrate core Management Information Systems (MIS).
- Develop plans and services to manage IT related risks, ensure information security and enable appropriately timed recovery from disaster (avoidance of loss of service)
- Develop College staff IT competence
- Develop central ICT functions & staff

Implementation of the ICT Strategy

The ICT Strategy is under the overall direction of the Assistant Principal (Resources). Operationally, it is managed by the Team Leader, IT, Audio-Visual and Resource Centre, reporting to the Vice Principal. The strategic goals defined within the ICT Strategy are linked to a more detailed annual operational plan.

Influences

External Influences & Drivers

Rapid Changes in technology

The fundamental driver for change will remain the continued growth in computing power. This enables the IT industry to provide a constant stream of innovations that the college needs to evaluate and deploy to its advantage. The Internet, wireless networking, broadband, data/telephony integration, video conferencing, “mobile” and “intelligent” devices are already influencing the way in which HE delivers and supports its core services, placing IT departments under constant pressure to accommodate a diverse range of devices, software and services. Consequently it is important for IT departments to anticipate future demands for infrastructure capacities, IT skills and service delivery models.

Usage of Technology in FE sector

The rising usage and importance of ICT generally in the HE sector in UK and internationally is now influencing teaching practices directly across the sector where:

- ICT is beginning to play a direct role in teaching through e-learning delivered across networks managed by virtual learning environments blended with traditional teaching methods.
- Web access to library resources and public information is becoming the norm.
- Course organisation is being improved through a combination of dedicated applications and generic uses of e-mail and the web.

- ICT is facilitating greater flexibility in the way learning opportunities are accessed and combined from many sources during a lifetime of learning. This is an important driver for the College's ICT through:
- The rising expectations of students, researchers and staff for access to ICT services.
- Increasing dependence on ICT for administration and operations.
- The increasing use of ICT by our competitors to attract and retain students and staff.

Changes in Sourcing IT and Service Delivery

The IT industry is innovating in the way services are provided. Outsourcing, managed service agreements, offshore development, utility based charging are becoming common options for acquiring IT services. The College will constantly assess and adjust its IT provision to optimize its sourcing arrangements.

Risks

The inevitable increasing use of the internet and accommodation of access to user owned devices (laptops, tablets, PDAs, etc) from remote and unknown locations create security risks that can severely disrupt ability of the college to function normally. In particular, virus attacks are becoming more pervasive and sophisticated requiring rapid responses to contain and remove them. Thus the maintenance of a stable infrastructure is now as important as new developments.

Internal Influences & Challenges

The College's Strategic Plan also contains specific directions for ICT. These include the development of high quality management information systems and to utilise ICT for learning and collaboration.

Significant emphasis is being placed on distance learning and collaborative working with partner organisations. The need for the integration of data and systems across the College is becoming urgent as is the need for MIS systems to support flexible learning/course structures and devolved access. The increasing use of ICT in learning and collaborative working with partner organisations will generate impacts on ICT

Infrastructure and organisation.

The use of the Internet and e-mail is continuing to grow rapidly. Thus the Internet and the College intranet feature as the delivery vehicles for many future initiatives across the College. Expectations amongst users of the potential for ICT continue to stretch the ICT functions, particularly in areas of risk management, web based developments, remote access and support of personally owned computers.

In keeping with other aspects, the College is paying particular attention to its financial position. ICT operations and investments over the coming period will need to reflect this. Indeed, ICT will need to demonstrate value for money and not miss any opportunities to improve its operating costs. It must be diligent and commercially robust in negotiations with IT vendors when making new ICT investments.

Future paths

Introduction

As growth in computing power and bandwidth continues and developments in personal computing, wireless, telephony, video and web based technologies progress, ICT will increasingly have an important role in supporting the College's, teaching and administration. Effective deployment of both emerging and mature technologies, continued excellence in maintenance of secure and reliable infrastructure and development of integrated systems will enable the College to meet rising expectations for access to and availability of ICT based resources. Use of technology to support communications, distribution of information and day-to-day transactions will continue to increase with the norm being an ICT competent College community able to readily access core services, particularly email, the college intranet and Internet.

The emphasis of the ICT Strategy is on effective deployment of technology and open standards to support the different activities of the College and provide a supportive and flexible environment for staff and students to work and learn in

Learning & Teaching

Learning by students will not be transformed by access to ICT. Instead it will be enhanced. Virtual learning environments and virtual library systems will provide new options to promote learning for both campus based and distance learning students. Video over the internet will enrich the interfaces for remote learning. Learning management systems will make it easier to administer courses and provide new levels of flexibility. Students will increasingly be able to blend learning opportunities and self manage their development. ICT will allow increasing integration between courses and modules, potentially with other institutions. New groups of students will be reached through ICT and new sources of income developed.

Administration

ICT based applications will continue to support the efficient management and administration of the College and improvements to processes and procedures. ICT will help contain the time spent on routine administration and enable managers, administrators and staff to take on the additional workloads arising from growth and change.

Access

Increasingly the College will access information and services through web based technologies. The network and intranet will be a critical component to the development of this wider access. Considerable challenges will be addressed in areas such as bandwidth, video, wireless technologies, integrated telephony (e.g. VOIP), wireless devices, third generation (3G) phones and security. Growth in usage of mobile and personal devices (eg palm tops, 3G phones,) is expected bringing with it the need to synchronise across multiple devices. Ultimately, College resources will become accessible from anywhere via the fixed line and mobile technologies - remote access will be as easy as access whilst on campus.

User Support

The College community will demand support for the linking of an increasing variety of devices to the College network including laptops, palmtops and mobile phones. Wireless connection will become a common need. The support of personally owned devices will come from respective vendors. However, the ability to link and access core college services for devices using agreed standards will be supported. Thus User Support will become increasingly focused on an explicit portfolio of agreed hardware, software and protocols. This will protect quality and cost effectiveness whilst allowing support to be extended to those Departments with specialised support requirements critical to their function.

Increasing Challenges from Technology

ICT will no doubt remain a major area of essential investment in time, funds and management attention across the College. Computing power will continue to grow exponentially, spawning a continued supply of new devices, software and uses, which will need to be investigated, evaluated and appropriately deployed. Network capacity, developer time and budgets will continue to be constrained and the shortages of key skills will remain. Security concerns will undoubtedly increase as the dependency on ICT rises and the range of abuses and threats grows. Perhaps the greatest challenge may be that ICT impacts the structure of FE globally with new competitors, changes in demand and threats to traditional values. The need to address these challenges successfully is a necessary accompaniment to the benefits and opportunities from ICT.

Review of current ICT Infrastructure, Information Systems and Support Services

Summary

Academic, support and administrative functions are supported by staff from the IT & Resource Centre team. IT staff support the college backbone network providing external connectivity to the national JANET network. It also provides a range of services to academic & administrative staff and to students that includes infrastructure (including email, internet access & telephony), and central server based services.

Service Level Agreements (SLA) with individual departments are not envisaged as these can be resource intensive with little benefit. However, good practice standards are generally in place on a best endeavours basis and a few simple measures for determining service quality will be developed.

The College is involved with various initiatives various initiatives such as Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), wireless networks, remote access to email, file store, halls of residences networking, on-line student feedback, etc. being either planned, partly accomplished or being piloted. The next few years are likely to see these initiatives being consolidated and progress towards Student Information Systems

(SIS) within a Managed Learning Environment (MLE) context including Admissions & timetabling, portal development, web based applications, and extended hours of service.

Overall the IT environment is complex but robust, needing variety and depth of skills to support it. A range of technologies is in use which leads to individuals or small teams developing specialisms. There is currently a good retention record for IT staff and the range and depth of IT staff skills is generally very high. Generally systems work well with few crashes on the centrally provided services and there is a good record of recovery on the few occasions failures happen. Although no formal survey has been carried out, the satisfaction level amongst users is deemed to be generally high judging by the relative low levels of complaints.

Central IT Service Aims

The IT & Resource Centre team has a remit to support college-wide infrastructure and services including supporting core college administrative systems. The general aims are to develop IT services that have the following broad characteristics:

- Fit for purpose
- Reliable
- Resilient
- Affordable
- Secure
- Accessible from appropriate locations and at appropriate times
- Simple to administer
- Limiting complexity
- These are achieved through a set of operating norms:
- Using standard systems and open standards to enable interfacing of systems and sharing of data
- Conservative sizing
- Using proven technologies and suppliers
- Authentication to protect critical resources
- Proving “cutting edge” technologies in limited usage (typically in a single department) before College-wide deployment
- Using separate servers for major systems to improve flexibility (i.e. systems can be moved easily)
- Physically dispersing equipment to avoid the impact of problems/disaster
- Encouraging innovation in the use of IT within Departments
- Maintaining an understanding of the developments (both general business developments and specific information/IT developments) across the College.
- Monitoring developments in the field of IT

Role of ICT Support

The current ICT infrastructure is capable of and does support the College in many ways although some areas need further investment of effort and budgets:

- Improving teaching and learning:

- Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) including CPD
- Administrative Systems for course tutors and administrators
- Help desks and user support to enable students to use ICT
- Extending the access to learning:
 - e-Learning support for distance learning
 - Access to the College network from student residences
 - Using portal technologies to provide easy access to information and IT services
- Supporting research/study:
 - Making it easier for staff and students to access on-line resources
- Administrative efficiency:
 - Integrating administrative and MIS systems
 - ICT support for major developments in administrative systems
 - Provide office productivity tools and facilities for the synchronisation of diaries and use of shared calendars.
- College as a community:
 - Improving communications using web and mail services
 - Creating better connections with partner organisations such as the West Lothian Council, SNEC
 - Extending IT access to all members of the College, particularly staff such as support staff who do not use computers as part of their work
- Keeping IT services running:
 - Ensure services are running
 - Developing service capacities in line with demand
 - Keeping IT equipment and software up to date
- Protecting against the loss of IT services and data:
 - Backing up data and systems and maintaining archives
 - Physically protecting IT assets
 - Ensuring standby systems for core services
 - Running trials and prototypes of new technologies
- Ensuring security of information and IT operations:
 - Ensuring authentication of users
 - Maintaining up-to-date status on services
 - Limiting potential for damage through networks design, firewalls and other
 - security measures
 - Reviews by internal security team and by auditors
- Protecting against fraud and damage to reputation:
 - Clear lines of authority and delegated responsibility
 - Policies on acceptable use and disciplinary procedures
 - Proactive limitation of damage from abuse of IT service Immediate follow up and action on incidents

Initiatives Needed

- Personal computer systems such as notebooks, PDAs, etc. need improved integration into the College's ICT services and some new services, such as synchronization, will need to be created.

- As e-mail and the intranet become the primary means for College communications, access to these services must be made available to all staff including support staff whose work does not require PC access.
- Procedures need to be scrutinized and re-engineered using developments in IT.
- Management structures and competences need to be developed for outsourced IT services.

College IT Services

The following are the main services provided:

- Central authentication – provides usernames and passwords for staff and students
- Network file storage for all staff & students
- General web access
- Hosted web pages
- Web access to databases eg library catalogue, student records
- E-mail – mailboxes; e-mail distribution; e-mail submission
- Anti-Spam and Anti-Virus filtering
- Domain Name Server
- Software installation & licencing
- Back up services
- The following services are missing or require development:
- Shared diary facilities
- Support for laptops
- Improved mirror services for continuous service availability
- Further development of Anti-Spam and Anti-Virus measures
-

Student IT facilities

- Student IT facilities are made available from dedicated machines located in the Resource Centre and in dedicated teaching labs.
- Each workstation has a managed desktop and student files can be stored on fileservers.
- Spare server is kept so that it can be swapped in if there are any problems.
- All critical files are stored in mirrored volumes for immediate recovery, and are backed up to remote location.

The current student services arrangements face several challenges:

- Student services will need to be integrated with e-learning environments.
- The service needs to extend to allow the use of students' own machines, eg laptops in hostels

Network

The College's core fibre optic network runs across the campus in a mixture of trenches and cable runs within buildings and is capable of 1 GBits capacity across all of the core network. A firewall is incorporated into the core network and provide secure protection from the wider Internet. The core network is standardised on the IP protocol. Virtually all copper cables are Cat6 with 1Gbit capacity. The current core

network still has considerable working life, but new installations of fibre plant between campus buildings will need to be of a standard that will allow for bandwidths in excess of 1 Gbit.

Developments to the network include:

- Increasing resilience. Multiple connections between key components. Also there is a plan to install a second connection to the Internet (2008).
- A plan to enhance the core network to allow for >1 Gbit between switching centres so that 1 Gbit links can be provided when required.
- Plans to widen the scope of service that the network can provide for applications such as telephony, building security, and remote sensing).
- The introduction of authenticated WiFi networks in public spaces.

Telephony

Telephones across the main College campus connect directly to the College IT network and through onto the public telephone system. Phones away from the main campus are provided by exchange lines; Suntrap and the Golf Course have ADSL broadband. As the opportunity arises (eg due to building/development work) the plan is to connect further outlying parts of Oatridge to the core network which would bring efficiency and cost savings.

Learning Applications

Currently the College has a number of e-learning initiatives underway across several Departments. These include the use of software tools in teaching, web-based learning resources and e-learning environments such as Moodle. Coordination of e-learning policy/strategy would be useful in creating a coherent approach to VLE, IT and software use within the curriculum.

Administrative and Management Information Systems

The College's core administrative systems are:

- Student Records System including Admissions (Unit-e)
- HR/Payroll systems
- Finance system (Sage)

Other major administrative/MIS systems include:

- Admissions
- Library systems (Eclipse.net)
- Timetabling system (Celcat)
- Trainee information management system (MAYTAS)
- Key external agencies which either supply data or to whom data has to be supplied are:
 - HEFCE
 - BACS

Several areas of administration are still unsupported by systems such as:

- Enquiry/contact management
- Event Management
- Conference/Room booking
- Asset register (IT asset register is in place)

The major issues facing the College's administrative systems include:

- Poor integration between the central systems
- Inconsistencies between data held centrally and locally in departments
- Duplications in data entry
- Historic focus on the needs of the central service stakeholders combined with functionality based on existing processes (rather than pursuing the re-engineering of processes)
- No integrated view of administrative information/data or a data warehouse to support MIS
- Limited Web based access to systems

IT Risk Management and Information Security

The use of IT in teaching & learning, administrative processes, processing of information and communication is now so pervasive and interwoven with the operations of the college that disruptions in availability of IT services often have immediate and crippling impact on the ability to continue with normal activities. The College has developed policies and procedures to help manage the risks to information and information systems in all forms.

Other relevant documents are:

- Disaster Recovery
- Backup

ICT Policy Areas Summary

General IT Access

To support the full College community and support principles of inclusion, the IT services must cover all its stakeholders:

- Students
- Academic staff
- Administrative and support staff
- Contractors
- Staff of partner organisations (eg SNEC)
- Short course and conference attendees and other accredited visitors
- Residential users

IT Based Facilities & Device Types

Access to core IT based facilities via registered accounts will be extended to all staff. It is envisaged that core facilities for college staff will include access to email, College intranet, the Internet, file store and ability to open attachments based on defined open or de facto standards.

Availability

The aim will be to meet “out of work hours” needs for IT based resources commensurate with need.

Remote Working

The College supports the need for remote working, whether this is from home or off main site or in partner organisations, and will be working to extend remote access via secure and effective methods.

Interoperability

Standard “desktops” for central administrative functions and open access facilities will be the norm as this is necessary for interoperability. A consistent standard hardware, and software platform is required so that information can be freely exchanged between departments. In order to ensure ongoing interoperability, it is likely that most IT equipment will need to be no more than 5 years old.

Networks

- *Network Backbone* – The College network will be upgraded so as to allow all parts of the campus to access applications and information without significant delay.
- *Telephony over College Networks* – ICT will use the network for telephony (i.e. VOIP) wherever this is economically advantageous.
- *Access to the Internet* – A connection to the Internet will be maintained with sufficient bandwidth so that there is no significant degradation of performance.
- *Wireless Networking* – ICT will provide a wireless network in appropriate areas, across the main College campus in the near term with the longer term

objective of providing ubiquitous wireless throughout the main campus provided sufficient funding is available.

Servers

- *Standardisation* – ICT are responsible for providing advice on server specifications to Departments and will endeavour to help the College achieve the benefits of compatibility, accessibility and lower support from a coordinated approach. Departments should liaise with IT staff when server purchases are envisaged, so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place for server management (secure location, access, backups etc.) and maintenance.
- Server management will typically be provided by IT staff but in some cases some or all aspects of the management may be outsourced. IT staff should be included in all technical discussions around new projects to ensure appropriate management and integration

Applications

- *Web Publishing* – The College will promote organisation of information and services through a College intranet. The College will develop its intranet as the main access point for sources of information across the College community and with partner organisations.
- *Development & Procurement of Administrative Applications* – The general policy is that the College will acquire or develop systems that support interfaces with a range of connectivity and data transfer standards so that interoperability between systems and wider access is supported. IT staff should be involved in all major systems initiatives to represent the cross-College implications and to advise appropriately.

Support

- *General* – Support for all IT and networking equipment will be provided by the IT & Resource Centre Team. Details of day-to-day support procedures for staff and students are available from the intranet.
- *Support for Staff and Students* – IT staff will provide first line support for general questions on using the PC's and on all supported core software and on connectivity issues for client machines complying with open standards. Eg laptops.
- *Specialist Departmental Applications* – Departments are responsible for the introduction, use and support of specialist, applications unless agreed otherwise

Security

- *General* – IT staff will act as a centre of expertise and support all areas of the College as needed for IT disaster recovery, backing up and IT security.
- *Passwords & Sign On* - Users will experience the minimum number of usernames and passwords possible commensurate with good authentication and security practice. ICT will work towards the situation where users are

authenticated when they first log on and that all services used after that grant access without further sign-on.

- *Disaster Recovery* – IT staff will develop and maintain disaster recovery plans for infrastructure, services and systems for which it is responsible. Contingency plans for the recovery of local systems not connected to the main campus network and business continuity plans are the responsibility of departments/institutes and should be reviewed regularly. IT staff will fully assist departments on this as requested.
- *Backups* - ICT will carry out the backups for College-wide IT services and core systems. Departments are responsible for managing the backup procedures for all local systems which are not connected to the main campus network.
- *Firewalls* - The College network has appropriate protection against external security risks using firewall technologies. IT & Resource Centre team has primary responsibility for network security.
- *Encryption* - Encryption will be used whenever confidential data is passed across open networks by College staff. IT staff will assist users with encryption.

Competencies

- *Staff IT Skills* – In order to fully use the available technology, staff will need to develop appropriate levels of IT competencies. Departments will need to assess the IT skills of staff and encourage staff to avail themselves of appropriate CPD opportunities. Where a widespread CPD need is identified for IT skills updating, the IT & Resource Centre team leader will arrange suitable training.
- *ICT Staff Skills* – In order to meet developments in IT and changing needs, technical skills of IT staff will continue to be developed in networking, server administration, and desktops through a variety of learning means.

Legal Requirements

- *General Policy* – The College will comply with all legislation relating to information and IT. All staff and students are required to understand College policy relating to legislation and apply them in all instances.
- *Health and Safety* – The use of computing equipment is covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act with specific requirements included in the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations, and detailed procedures set out in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations. All Departments must ensure that these requirements are adhered to.
- *Data Protection* – All users must comply with data protection regulations as advised by the College's Data Protection Officer.
- *Equal Opportunities & Access* - The College will ensure equal opportunities to use ICT services. Particular attention will be given to the needs of special groups, including disabled staff and students, mature students, and part-time students.
- *Software Licensing* – The College requires all users to satisfy themselves that they have valid licenses for all software that they use. It is the explicit policy of the College that no illegal software or unlicensed software may be used on

College machines or used on personal equipment connected to the College networks.

- *Computer Misuse Act - Acceptable Use and College Policies* – The College has developed an Acceptable Use Policy for ICT and Internet & E-mail use. These are published on the College intranet. Users are required to confirm acceptance of the terms of the AUP before web browser use is allowed.

Strategic Goals & Key Objectives

The following strategic goals are drawn from an analysis of current ICT issues and activities. For each strategic goal, key objectives have been identified which will then inform and guide the development of ICT annual plans.

Develop and continue to maintain the network to support teaching & learning and administrative functions.

Aims to provide the necessary infrastructure and capacity for Teaching & Learning (MLE, VLE, Distance Learning), and access to College resources for staff located at sites in partner organisations.

Key Objectives

Upgrade the infrastructure in order to provide a high capacity network with redundant links to provide a robust, fault tolerant network. Develop infrastructure, standards and services to support departments in their plans to implement distance and on-line learning.

Develop and support access to College IT Based Resources and Services

Aims to address increasing demand for remote, flexible and mobile working and inclusion of disadvantaged staff (without direct access to computers) and access for transient authorised visitors.

Key Objectives

Extend access to core IT and information resource services to members of College working at a distance and to those on campus without regular access to a computer. Provide a facility for staff, students and authorised visitors with laptops on campus to access appropriate resources. (Implement Wireless Networking)

Develop specialist services and support for students with special needs and the Wider College Community

Aims to support needs of disabled, disadvantaged and wider college community e.g. External Partners, Visitors.

Key Objectives

Make improvements in services to meet the needs of disabled users. Extend access to the internet and subset of IT services to other groups e.g. conference facility users, visitors etc.

Support wider language options where appropriate.

Supporting Communication through ICT (e-mail, web, intranet, etc.)

Aims to support greater information sharing through the use of technology.

Key Objectives

Develop a portfolio of supported standards, email clients and office software that will support college wide communication. Provide the infrastructure for the development and delivery of web-based applications.

Develop and integrate core Management Information Systems (MIS)

Aims to support data sharing and achievement of consistency of data and avoidance of duplication and multiple data entry.

Key Objectives

Develop a MIS applications development plan that supports data sharing and achievement of data consistency. (includes development of applications architecture and standards to support integration of core systems).

Develop an MLE context to replace the current Student Record System (SRS) and admissions system.

Develop web based access for staff and students to their own restricted data for checking and/or updating as appropriate.

Develop plans and services to manage ICT related risks, ensure information security and enable appropriately timed recovery from disaster

Aims to avoid loss of service, enable authorised access and recovery of services.

Key Objectives

Provide a platform that gives greater security to college systems from external and internal threats.

Ensure all usage and access to resources is appropriately authenticated.

Ensure the Disaster Recovery Plan is up to date.

Explore and implement collaborative arrangements for the mitigation of risk associated with IT networks.

Develop College staff IT competence

Aims to develop IT skills of all College staff so that technology can be used effectively and efficiently.

Key Objectives

Carry out an IT Skills Audit in conjunction with HR department.

Provide IT skills training courses in line with departmental needs and recommendations arising from the IT Skills Audit.

Develop central ICT functions & staff

Aims to develop the IT support models and IT staff skills needed for the delivery of effective, user focused, secure services.

Key Objective

Explore service delivery models to meet College needs.

Explore integration of some library and computing support services.

Identify IT skills & experiences needed and develop IT staff profile accordingly.