

University of Wollongong
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
STRATEGIC PLAN
DECEMBER 2005

University of Wollongong Vision

To advance our international reputation as an outstanding research and teaching University distinguished by excellence, leadership and innovation in the quality of our research, in student learning and achievement, and in engagement with our communities.

The University will achieve its Vision by promoting:

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| <i>-Excellent and Innovative Teaching</i> | <i>-Productive Community Partnerships</i> |
| <i>-Excellent and Innovative Teaching</i> | <i>-Equity and Diversity</i> |
| <i>-A Rewarding Student Experience</i> | <i>-Quality Service to Clients</i> |
| <i>-International Perspectives</i> | <i>-Skilful and Responsible Stewardship of Resources</i> |
| <i>-Staff development and Recognition</i> | <i>-Lifelong Learning</i> |

**A VISION FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG**

The Vision and supporting Goals and Objectives that are presented in the University of Wollongong Strategic Plan (2005-2007) require that its technology resources be effectively used in support of a range of outcomes.

To meet this need, the University will continue to identify technology initiatives that support its research, teaching and business activities. These initiatives will be implemented with the objective of achieving high quality and appropriate outcomes, while concurrently maintaining a supporting technology infrastructure that is reliable, sustainable, meets current industry standards, and can rapidly adjust to changing needs.

The University's ability to effectively harness technology to its advantage will be a key factor in achieving its Vision. This Plan commits the University to appropriate use of current and future technologies, and sets out its intention to be a leader in the use of technology for research endeavours, teaching activities, and business and support purposes.

PLANNING CONTEXT

External Factors

The education sector is highly competitive and Universities rely heavily on technology to achieve leading edge outcomes. The extent of this reliance is such that the loss of even minor services could bring substantial disruption, reduction of reputation, and financial loss. A further complication is that University based technology usually encompasses the full set of technology infrastructure components (network, servers, desktop, etc), and much of the Sector's activity is completed using diverse and developing technologies.

Internal Factors

In addition to the external factors affecting technology planning, the University is dealing with a transition period that is changing the way in which these services are being accessed and utilised. This has led to contention where staff and Units seeking to retain the ability to separately specify and maintain their own technologies, must deal with increasing corporate pressure for central mechanisms. Examples of the corporate pressures being exerted include:

- The need to achieve economies of scale.
- The increasing complexity of technology delivery and management mechanisms, and the need to achieve effective integration of services.
- Business and legislative requirements for secure and reliable operation.

Providing for Internal and External Factors

The University recognised the importance and complexity of its technology environment in its previous Information Technology Strategic Plan. In that document, it noted that specific outcomes were required if teaching, research and broad business objectives were to be achieved. These outcomes continue to be the focus of the University's technology plans and activities, and are focused upon the following:

- The University must proactively identify and implement technologies that improve research, teaching, and business outcomes, and give it a competitive edge within the Education Sector.
- The University's technology infrastructure must be maintained to current industry standards, ensuring reliability, secure operation and rapid recoverability where breakdowns occur.
- In deploying its technology infrastructure, the University must;
 - Make best use of available funds, selectively deploying appropriate new technologies without wasting resources on ineffective initiatives; and
 - Properly and efficiently support newer technologies in their transition from innovative developments to production systems.
- Wherever possible, the University must also take a leading role in the use of technology across its local region, seeking to share the benefits of its developments.

Current Position

The period spanning the beginning of 2003 to the end of 2005 has resulted in significant improvements to the University's technology infrastructure. Most aspects of central infrastructure management have been upgraded in line with prevailing industry standards, and security, machine and data redundancy arrangements have been significantly improved. Several service models have been developed, implemented on a limited basis, tested and refined, and these are now ready for wider deployment. IT planning is now completed in the annual Faculty Business Plans and the Information Technology Services (ITS) Division maintains a comprehensive planning structure. ITS is well placed to assist Faculties and Units to improve their overall technology outcomes.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

To support achievement of the University of Wollongong’s strategic and operational goals, the three technology objectives set out below, will need to be achieved. They are aimed at encouraging ITS, Faculties and Units to make best use of existing and emerging technologies, while ensuring a robust, secure and sustainable technology infrastructure that is capable of supporting leading edge performance.

Objective	Strategy	Performance Indicators
<p>1. To provide appropriate technology support to Faculties and Units and assist them to acquire and operate technology to the benefit of the University.</p>	<p>The University will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Encourage identification, adoption and use of innovative technologies; b) Support Faculties and Units to make effective choices in their technology direction and tools; c) Assist Faculties and Units to effectively deploy selected technologies; and d) Increase and maintain useability, reliability and availability of the adopted technologies. 	<p>Success will be assessed by the extent to which the University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Tests technology choices and use against the needs of the University; ii. Corporately provides professional advice and technical support to Faculties and Units; iii. Tests technology choices and use, against that of other institutions and businesses; iv. Seeks internal and external expert review of its technology choices and use, and reacts to the outcomes of those reviews; v. Works with Faculties and Units in a team format to identify and successfully apply new technology to the University’s benefit; vi. Supports Faculties and Units in reviewing their technology spending options; vii. Achieves economies of scale through “whole of University” technology activities; viii. Adopts and utilises professional processes to support introduction, initial development and use of emerging technologies; and ix. Effectively integrates Central, Faculty, and Unit technology activities.
<p>2. To ensure that the University’s technology utilisation is appropriate and capable of development and upgrade, as required.</p>	<p>The University will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensure that it implements and uses chosen technologies in the most appropriate fashion; b) Closely monitor its chosen technologies and adjust them to meet changing needs; c) Ensure that it adopts appropriate policies and processes for managing technology use; d) Work with Faculties and Units to integrate their technology choices into the broader University infrastructure, where possible and appropriate; e) Work with Faculties and Units to apply industry standard management arrangements, where possible and appropriate; f) Make best and most appropriate use of available funds; and g) Effectively transfer mature development projects into the operational infrastructure. 	<p>Success will be assessed by the extent to which the University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Effectively utilises technology to meet its research, teaching and business needs. ii. Selects technologies that are “scalable” and durable. iii. Hardware and software policies are developed, maintained and enforced; iv. Industry standard management arrangements are applied; v. Integration of technologies is achieved; vi. Manages costs; and vii. Adopts and utilises professional processes to support introduction, initial development and final “maturation” of emerging technologies. viii. Performance Indicators i to v against Objective One above also will be applied to this Objective.

Objective	Strategy	Performance Indicators
<p>3. To ensure that Infrastructure operation is reliable and appropriate.</p>	<p>The University will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Constantly review its needs, systems and functionality; b) Ensure that its systems are reliable and available to meet service delivery requirements; c) Ensure that it makes optimum use of technology for business purposes; d) Maintain appropriate business continuity arrangements; e) Ensure that systems and data are secured, backed-up and recoverable, so the University's operations are protected; and f) Maintain its technology infrastructure to levels that match the accepted industry standards. 	<p>Success will be assessed by the extent to which the University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develops, implements and reviews IT Faculty IT Plans; ii. Maintains its ITS planning structure and review processes; iii. Maintains its technology infrastructure to levels accepted as industry standards; iv. Maintains and upgrades as appropriate, its consultation activities; v. Measures reviews and adjusts its performance in technology delivery across the University Community; vi. Establishes, tests and upgrades as appropriate its technology security, back-up, capacity planning, facility management and disaster recovery activities; and vii. Prepares forward cost forecasts, reviews performance against those forecasts and adjusts expenditure as a result of its review process.

CORE VALUES

In meeting these objectives Faculties and Units that are responsible for technology management, delivery and support, will:

- Employ management strategies, policies and processes that meet recognised industry standards, ensuring appropriate service levels and minimum exposure to business or legal risk;
- Effectively utilise all appropriate, available resources when making new technology development/adoption decisions and investments;
- Strive to employ reliable, appropriate technologies that provide a “professional and competitive edge” for on-going teaching, research and business activities;
- Ensure that the technology infrastructure is kept secure, is appropriately backed-up and is recoverable; and
- Comply with the policies and directions of the University, and will abide by the prevailing Australian and International laws.

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The University will position its core technology management activities by taking the following steps:

- All business critical technology infrastructure elements, will be moved under central control where appropriate, and will be subject to prevailing best practice management, operation and development arrangements.
- Policies will be developed to govern the operation of technology within the University and these will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- Three year business plans will be developed for the centrally controlled technology infrastructure elements as appropriate, and will be reviewed and upgraded annually to meet changing circumstances.
- Faculties will develop and review IT Plans within their annual business Plans.
- Forward funding and management of centrally controlled technology will be based on the planning projections. ITS will report monthly on expenditure against infrastructure projects.
- A fully coordinated approach will be applied to the identification, funding and monitoring of new major technology initiatives, including the use of business cases to measure their perceived importance in line with the University’s strategies;
- Where appropriate, ITS, Faculties and Units will work closely in order to improve their development and utilisation of technologies; and
- Move to implement appropriate Service Level Agreements and customer service arrangements that effectively support and improve service outcomes without unacceptably increasing the University’s overall costs.

IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Implementation

In collaboration with Faculties and Units, ITS is responsible for facilitating the implementation of this Plan and for ensuring that most of the identified tasks are completed. It will initiate the actions identified in the Objectives and Strategies section, and will activate processes by which performance indicators can be used to measure outcomes.

In consultation with the Information Technology Policy Advisory Committee (ITPAC), its Sub-committees and the IT Forum, ITS will develop and present three-year business plans for each of the major technology infrastructure elements. Timetables for implementation activities will be drawn up within each three-year business plan, and cost forecasts will be provided.

ITS will report to the Vice-Chancellor on progress achieved against all IT Plans. Progress will also be monitored by the ITPAC structure, which will advise the Vice-Chancellor on aspects of performance, as appropriate. ITPAC's standing agenda items require ITS to provide regular progress reports.

ITS will work closely with Faculties and Units in implementing this Plan and will assist them, where appropriate, in the adoption and development of current and emerging technologies that can assist their research, teaching and business outcomes. Faculties and Units will develop and implement appropriate processes for managing use of technology for their specific purposes.

Communication

ITS will consult with the University Community via the ITPAC structure and the IT Forum. From time to time, ITS will provide presentations to and consult with relevant groups (such as Council, its Sub-committees, Senate and other forums) on specific issues associated with development or implementation of technology across the University. Where necessary, ITS will utilise formal communication arrangements (such as email, web pages, etc), to provide information concerning major changes resulting from, or affecting planned activities.

ITS will also work directly with representatives from Faculties and Units to progress aspects of the Strategic Plan, that directly affect them. ITS will seek support from working parties, focus groups and other University Community forums and committees as required, to achieve the Plan's objectives.

Communication activities will comply with the University Communication Strategy for all corporate plans and policies.

REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

Review and Improvement

This Plan will be reviewed annually by ITS, in consultation with the University Community, through the ITPAC structure and the IT Forum. Recommendations for change will be provided to the Vice-Chancellor. Progress on each of the technology infrastructure three-year business plans will be reported on a twelve monthly cycle.

ITS will revisit and upgrade this Plan, in the light of the cyclical reviews that are conducted, on a twelve monthly basis. Plans and activities aimed at improving outcomes will be approved by the Vice-Chancellor after advice from ITS and the ITPAC committees.