UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Information Services

Establishing minimum standards of IT provision

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1   Background

At its meeting in May 2016 the Committee held a discussion, prompted by work in the School of Clinical Medicine. From the minutes of that meeting:

Dr Ferrar suggested that there would be problems in attempting to define "minimum standards" (which would also require continual update). The work to assemble the Information Services Strategy was expected to contribute to an understanding of requirements, and a maturity model could be developed to assist institutions to understand where their systems sat on that maturity scale. There was concern that a model might not in itself be sufficient and that there were some institutions which would struggle while others, with the money to invest, would find it easier.

The group discussed principles A3 and A4 from the IT Review and felt that with hindsight, despite the best intentions when written, these might now be difficult to unpack into useful work. Mr Edwards believed that a useful starting point would be the articulation of service levels for UIS services and confirmed that he would speak about the matter with Dr Bellamy.

Dr Ferrar also stated that work on the end user computing strategy and identity & authentication areas would feed into the definition of a set of core principles – a set of expectations that were the very minimum for a user's experience at Cambridge. There should be tangible progress in October 2016. Prof Blackwell also recommended that further guidance on user experience design should be provided, so that there was an aspiration for excellence in the design of new systems.

From the IT Review, Principle **A3** reads:

Every member of staff whose role requires access to information technology should have, at minimum, access to a system providing an appropriate level of service.

Principle **A4** reads:

Every student should have access to the computing facilities and network services necessary for their course.

2   Discussion

Members are provided an opportunity to discuss how, in partnership with UIS, the Committee can create actionable work to establish minimum standards of IT for the University. Potential areas for consideration are:

- emerging requirements from the development of the Information Services Strategy
- selection of appropriate maturity scales
- how the diverse Schools are able to invest in technology upgrades to meet appropriate levels of IT maturity
- how service levels can be defined, and monitored, to ensure that they meet defined minimal levels of service
- how user experience design can contribute