

## 2010 Report of the ISSS

### Introduction

This is the second annual report of the Information Strategy and Services Syndicate. The Syndicate meets 6 times per year. Members are listed in Appendix A

### Operation

An annual cycle of business is shown in appendix B

The ISSS has two subcommittees: the Business Committee (BC) prepares the agenda for the Syndicate and ensures proper preparation and presentation of issues; and the Information Strategy Working Group (ISWG) is tasked to anticipate and gather future information needs, provide a sounding board for new proposals, and to work with the BC in drawing up papers for formal discussion at the Syndicate. The Joint Network Management Committee (JNMC), also reports to ISSS.

The information systems activities of the Library, CARET have now be included within its remit.

An internal audit by Grant Thornton has produced a report which encouraged a shift over time from project governance to setting a strategic focus. This trend is one that the Syndics support, and has been addressed over this year in particular with the establishment of working parties to review the information strategy. All recommendations of that report have been dealt with (Appendix C)

The Syndicate approved in 2008 the establishment of a Project Office to assist it with the setting up and subsequent governance of major projects. Officer support will also be needed for the Syndicate's strategic role and this may also have to come in part from the Project Office. However, budget constraints have led to this position being held vacant.

### Reporting under Terms of Reference

*(a) to establish and keep under review, subject to the approval of the Council and the General Board and in consultation with the Senior Tutors' Committee and the Bursars' Committee where appropriate, an information strategy in support of the aims and objectives of the University and the Colleges;*

The broad information strategy for the University has been adopted and remains unchanged. However the Syndicate wishes to establish more detailed strategies focused on various areas of the University's activities

- campus experience and outreach
- management systems
- support for research
- teaching and learning

The ISSS has established three working groups (and included the Teaching and Learning Systems Committee, a joint sub-committee of the Syndicate and the General Board's Education Committee, as the fourth) to produce proposals which will be acted upon in the 2010-11 academic year. The remit and membership of these groups is attached as Appendix C.

*(b) to promote the adoption of the information strategy where appropriate throughout the University and the Colleges, and advise on developments in information technology and its implementation;*

A strategic implementation plan has been developed (Appendix D) .

*(c) to keep under review the information requirements of the University and the Colleges, and advise the Council and the General Board on priorities for and other matters relating to the development and application of appropriate information policies, facilities, and services in support of those requirements;*

The ISSS has identified various issues and has referred these to the ISWG for more detailed development. Areas covered include

- Identity management - proposals have been agreed and the UCS are finalising the implementation (this is seen as a key enabling technology for many other developments in harmonising the University's use of IT);
- Records management and data archiving - reports have been commissioned and ISWG has reported back to the Syndicate;
- Internal communications - discussions are on-going;
- Review on New Media - the ISWG has monitored the reports produced by this initiative;
- Funding issues - including advice on priorities for funding from the Technology Development Fund (TDF).

The ISWG has agreed to work on a way of pooling JISC bids and will also now receive reports on each TDF project when funding ceases.

*(d) to ensure that any such information policies, facilities, and services provided are operating effectively and are fit for purpose;*

This is ensured by regular reports of the Project Boards and Service Directors. Streamlined reporting has been introduced.

*(e) to oversee the direction and planning of the University Computing Service and Management Information Services Division and to approve general principles for the allocation of resources and priorities in the use of their facilities;*

The Directors of the UCS and MISD provide service reports to each meeting. As input to the planning round the ISSS reviews the Services' strategies in July and drafts of their submissions in October. The ISSS reports to the PRC advising on allocations in the planning round, including a 5-year forward-looking envelope of envisaged expenditure.

*(f) to be responsible for ensuring that appropriate project and budgetary management and control mechanisms are in place for such major information systems and technology projects as the Council or the General Board may from time to time determine; and to be accountable for the funds allocated for such projects;*

The ISSS has developed project governance guidelines for major projects. Three major projects that had been overseen by the ISSS: CHRIS, CAMSIS, and VOIP were last year transitioned to service status. Management of the systems is now undertaken by the HR Systems Committee and the Financial Systems Committee, both of which report to the ISSS as well as to the HR Committee and the Finance Committee respectively. A new project, to replace pFACT, has begun this year, under the guidance of the Research Systems Committee; the ISSS has taken steps to see set up a Project Board in accordance with the Project Governance Guidelines.

The ISSS manages the Technology Development Fund (TDF). Projects that have been deemed suitable for TDF funding by the ISWG during 09/10 include: a feasibility study for the replacement of the Pre-Award Financial Costing Tool; a feasibility study of improved financial management for Research Grants (Post Award); the GBN extension to Addenbrookes and the D-Space interface for the REF Support System.

*(g) to make, or amend, and publish rules, subject to approval by the competent authority, for the regulation and security of the use of information technology facilities within the University, and of such computing facilities in College institutions as may be designated for this purpose from time to time by the appropriate College authorities concerned, and to impose on a person infringing one or more of those rules either or both of the following penalties:*

*(i) the suspension of authorization to use computing resources for such a period as the Information Strategy and Services Syndicate shall determine;*

*(ii) a fine not exceeding maximum the prescribed by Ordinance.*

Review of the rules and guidelines is an annual item of business and the Syndicate is assisted in this by staff in the UCS.

*(h) to make an annual report to the Council and the General Board and to the Senior Tutors' and Bursars' Committees.*

This report.

## **Appendices**

A – List of Members

B - Annual Cycle of Business

C – Information Strategy - Remit of Information Strategy Working Groups

D – Implementation Plan

**A – List of Members (at 1 November 2010)** The Syndicate was constituted by Grace in November 2007

1.	The Information Strategy and Services Syndicate shall consist of:	<i>Appointment to</i>	
(a)	The Vice-Chancellor (or a duly appointed deputy) as Chairman	Professor P Littlewood	
(b)	Three persons appointed by the Council	Mr. James Matheson, Engineering	31 December 2011
		Mr. John Norman, CARET	31 December 2011
		Professor Christine Howe	31 December 2012
(c)	Three persons appointed by the General Board of the Faculties	SAH/SHSS: Dr Gavin Alexander (Dr Donald Robertson to 16 September 2010)	31 December 2013
		SPS/ST: vacancy	31 December 2011
		SBS/SCM: Dr. Carpenter, Clinical Neurosciences	31 December 2011
(d)	Three persons appointed by the Colleges' Committee	Sir David Wallace, Master of Churchill College	31 December 2011
		Dr. Stephanie Ellington; Senior Tutor, Lucy Cavendish (Dr Rob Wallach until 31 July 2010)	31 December 2014
		Mr. Ian du Quesnay, Bursar, Newnham College	31 December 2011
(e)	one person elected from among their own number by the officers of the University Computing Service;	Mr Jon Warbrick	31 December 2011
(f)	one person elected from their own number by the officers of the Management Information Services Division of the University Offices	Mr Andy Richardson	31 December 2011
(g)	two members of the University in <i>statu pupillari</i> , co-opted by the Syndicate, at least one of whom shall be a graduate student *	Vacancy (Clare Tyson to 31 July 2010)	31 December 2010
		Vacancy (*Siza Mtimbiri to 31 July 2010)	31 December 2010
(h)	not more than two persons co-opted by the Syndicate, provided that it shall not be obligatory for the Syndicate to co-opt any person or persons	Dr Robin Walker Professor Steve Oliver	31 December 2011 31 December 2012

2.	The Registry, the Librarian, and the Directors of the University Computing Service, and of the Management Information Services Division and the Finance Division of the University Offices, shall have the right to attend meetings of the Syndicate.	Respectively:	
		Dr Jonathan Nichols	
		Mrs Anne Jarvis	
		Dr Ian Lewis	
		Mr Paul Dampier	
		Mr Andrew Reid	
	To attend by right of Standing Invitation	Professor Steve Young, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Planning and Resources	
	Secretary:	Mr. Nick Wilson, Senior Assistant Registry, Academic Division	

**B - Annual Cycle of Business**

Meeting	Date	Business
1	Early October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preliminary planning round discussions about MISD, UCS, UL and Projects (taking account of financial outturn for previous year)</li> <li>2. Discussion of Information Strategy and annual programme of work.</li> <li>3. Annual Report</li> <li>4. Appointment or election of Syndics</li> </ol>
2	Late November	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Final planning round submissions for MISD, UCS and Projects (having received relevant financial outturn information)</li> <li>2. ISSS covering paper on planning round submissions under 1 including recommendations/priorities for resources.</li> </ol>
3	Late January/Early February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Initial annual review of guidelines (in first year those inherited from ITS)</li> <li>2. Annual Reports on Information Compliance and from MISD, UCS, Library [and CARET?]</li> </ol>
4	Late March/Early April	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Initial planning discussions</li> </ol>
5	Mid to Late May	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invite comments from Syndics on (a) operation of Syndicate (b) matters to be covered in annual report for consideration by BC in first instance</li> <li>2. Approve published rules, guidelines and disciplinary procedures etc</li> </ol>
6	July	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outline ISSS Annual Report including review of effectiveness</li> <li>2. In accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure (para v.) to appoint a Syndic to be the Panel Convenor of any Panel that needs to be convened in the next twelve months.</li> <li>3. Strategic Plans – first look</li> </ol>

## **C – Information Strategy - Remit of Information Strategy Working Groups**

The Syndicate's Information Strategy is published at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2008-09/weekly/6150/6.html>

The Syndicate has established three Working Groups on Information Strategy with the following remit and membership:

The Working Groups have been asked to develop an information strategy in their areas of remit by consultation with the appropriate stakeholders in the University. Each strategy should outline needs, customers, emerging trends and good practice, and use those to inform the implications for strategy and delivery within the context of current financial circumstances.

The strategy should look forward for the next five years.

These documents, after initial review by the ISSS, will be circulated for consultation as appropriate (including Colleges, Schools and the central administration) with an invitation to comment; the ISSS, having taken account of those comments, will incorporate the groups' strategies in the Information Strategy.

Group remits are not mutually exclusive and Chairs have been encouraged to maintain contact in order to ensure the appropriate approach to topics which more than one group might wish to consider.

(Service Directors, if not members, have a standing invitation to attend; the Groups may co-opt additional members.)

### **Campus experience and outreach**

Rob Wallach (Chair)  
Anne Jarvis  
Natalie Walker  
James Matheson  
Paul Dampier  
Steve Kearsey (Secretary)

### **Support for research**

Sir David Wallace (Chair)  
Chris Edwards  
Philip Guildford  
Martin Dove  
Dawn Edwards (Secretary)

### **Management systems**

Registry (Chair)  
John Norman  
Julia Collins  
Peter Haynes  
Julian Evans  
Michelle Finnigan (Secretary)

## **D – Implementation Plan**



**The Syndicate's Implementation Plan is published at:**

**[http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/committee/iss/strategy\\_plan.pdf](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/cam-only/committee/iss/strategy_plan.pdf)**