IT Strategy Broad Action Plan
November 2011, v1.3e

Dr Seán P Duffy

IT Strategy Themes

1. Advancing the University

Approach:

For Research, Learning and Teaching, and Student Experience, the general approach is to work with the relevant executive champions to progress the vision and deliveries in each area. In addition, the creation of the IT Innovation Centre, together with the innovation management approach (Innovation Panel etc), will help identify next generation service offerings, particularly in the core mainstream areas.

Key milestones:
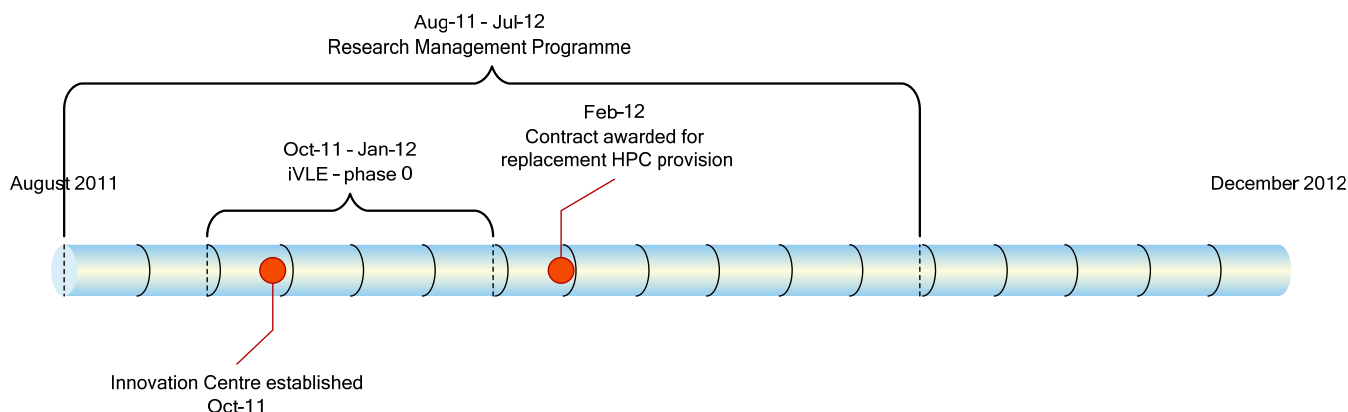
Quick wins:

✓ Replacement HPC cluster scheduled for spring 2012 with enhanced services to follow, tailored for the main usage communities
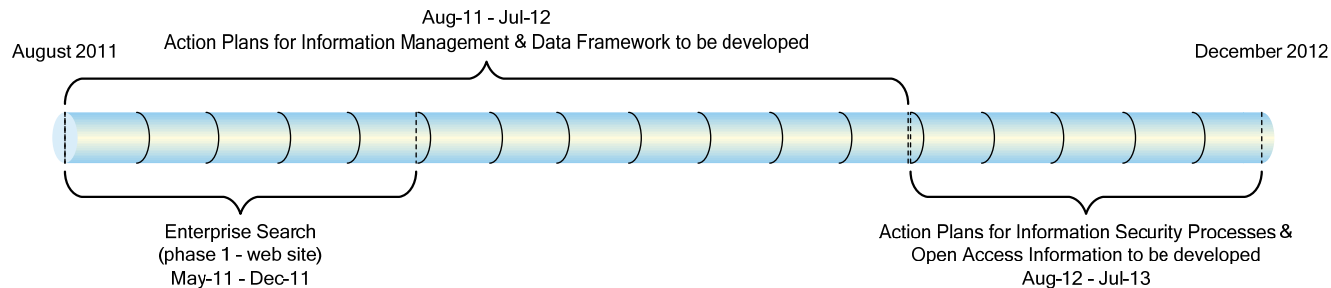
Long-term initiatives:

✓ Supporting the establishment of a set of research management capabilities, in particular to support the REF process
✓ Supporting the iVLE 2.0 initiative, to determine the next generation platforms for learning and teaching
✓ Supporting the new library initiative, and the associated replacement of the Library Management System
✓ Stimulating progressive IT innovation, both centrally and across the University

2. Effective Information Stewardship

Approach:

A step change is required in how information is managed, particularly research information. The approach is firstly to make existing information more visible and accessible within the University. The greater challenges of (i) providing effective utilities and processes for common-sense management of information, and (ii) providing a seamless, multi-source set of data repositories (internal and external) aligned for the appropriate data types will be addressed.

Key milestones:

Aug-11 - Jul-12
Action Plans for Information Management & Data Framework to be developed

August 2011

December 2012

Enterprise Search
(phase 1 - web site)
May-11 - Dec-11

Action Plans for Information Security Processes &
Open Access Information to be developed
Aug-12 - Jul-13

Quick wins:

✓ Enterprise search – will be expanded to provide enhanced search capability across a wide range of existing data repositories
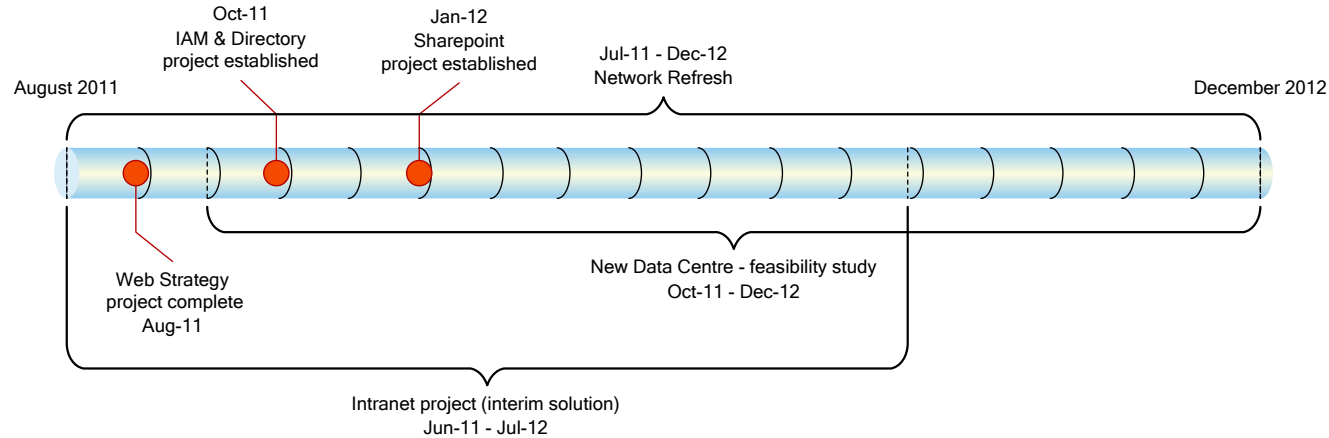
Long-term initiatives:

✓ Establishing a multi-source set of data repositories, with easy-to-use access mechanisms
✓ Establishing a set of utilities to enable effective information management by practitioners across the University
✓ Selective adoption of ISO 27001, in areas where formal information security accreditation is essential

3. University Operational Excellence

Approach:

This theme is a combination of initiatives focusing on (i) competitive catch-up in key technology areas, and (ii) selective advancement to state of the art solutions in key areas.

Key milestones:

Quick wins:

✓ Instant messaging/web conferencing now available ('OCS') for staff. A full launch is being prepared
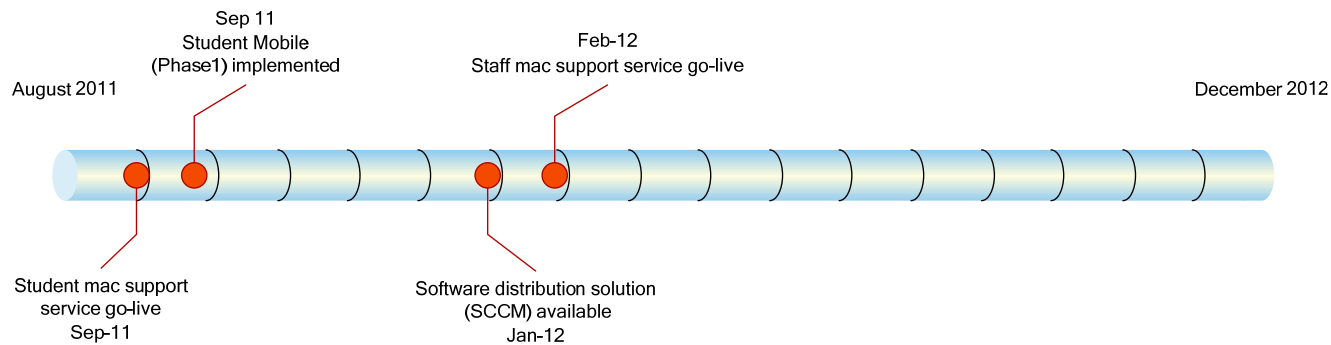
Long-term initiatives:

✓ Fundamental review of Identity and Access Management – focusing on sustainability of the service/capability, but also providing the step change in capabilities to support social media and collaboration ("Web 2" and "Web 3")

✓ Establishing comprehensive collaboration platform; supportive of social networking, team rooms, workflows etc

✓ Building and migrating to a cost/carbon effective, resilient provision of core computing/network/storage services

✓ Continuing the progression to highly virtualised services (both internal and external)

4. IT Complexity Reduction

Approach:

This theme seeks to reduce the extensive diversity and complexity of IT applications and infrastructure solutions. For infrastructure, a key focus is reducing the huge diversity of end-user devices, introducing 'standard desktops' for non-specialist areas, whilst expanding end-user support services to encompass Mac, Linux and mobile devices. For applications, the focus is towards facilitating reuse – both in using a reduced set of applications for a wider range of business needs, together with providing effective 'plumbing' between applications to (i) ensure greater information accuracy, and (ii) to facilitate more response, ad-hoc assembly of various information sources into new end-user applications.

Key milestones:

Sep 11
Student Mobile
(Phase1) implemented

Feb-12
Staff mac support service go-live

August 2011

December 2012

Student mac support
service go-live
Sep-11

Software distribution solution
(SCCM) available
Jan-12

Quick wins:

✓ Launch of 'student mobile apps' suite in September 11
✓ Launch of 'Cluster PC availability' in September 11, with bookable PCs later in 2011
✓ Launch of Mac support for students in September, with staff Mac support and Linux support to follow in early 2012
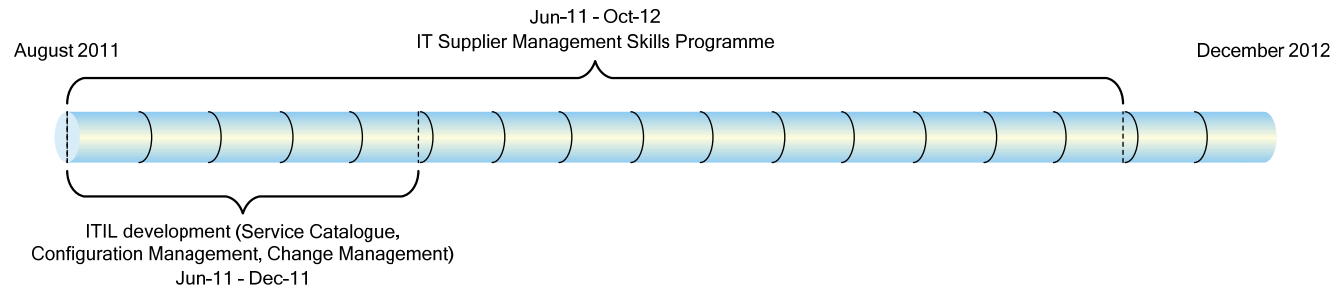
Long-term initiatives:

✓ Establish 'standard desktop(s)' for widespread adoption – enabling enhanced service/support and contingency
✓ Establishing a 'middleware' service, providing an 'enterprise service bus' between applications to facilitate more effective data management and flow between applications
✓ Building the capability for 'web services' – to enable the creation of new 'mash-up' applications – and in doing so resulting in a much more responsive application development and delivery capability
✓ Through strengthened governance and review of major IT investments, to simplify progressively applications systems landscape

5. IT Functional Excellence

Approach:

This theme concentrates on developing the internal IT capabilities towards best in class IT provision. A key aspect of this is developing the internal skill bases to become (i) more effective at managing externally provided IT services (outsourced services), and (ii) more effective at managing the provision of composite services made up of both internal and external (cloud) service components.

Key milestones:

Jun-11 - Oct-12
IT Supplier Management Skills Programme

August 2011

December 2012

ITIL development (Service Catalogue,
Configuration Management, Change Management)
Jun-11 - Dec-11

Quick wins:

✓ Continue the usage of Service-Now, in particular to expand it into more effective (and semi-automated) configuration management

Long-term initiatives:

✓ Delivering a set of staff training programmes – focused on (i) external provision service managers, (ii) IT advisory input into major procurement, and (iii) best practice advice for minor IT procurements

Governance

- Launch of IT Innovation Panel - October 2011
- Launch of Information Management Steering Group by the end of 2011
- Re-launch of ITIG with more representative key stakeholders
- BSSG and ITIG to continue with refinement, and the establishment of the Major Investment Review Group (MIRG)
- New IT architecture framework and principles to be introduced progressively

Resource

- Quick wins delivered using existing resources – significant effort in regrouping and assembling small task forces to deliver quickly and effectively
- Additional purchasing resource to support 25+ IT procurement initiatives over 12-18 month period
- Appointed interim IT Architect – now developing (i) IT architecture management processes, and (ii) clear roadmaps for key systems/services
- Initiating recruitment for resources: collaboration, innovation, and data architecture
- Agreed and completed transfer of EPS IT support staff to IT Services – April 2011
- Transfer of Telecoms team to IT Services – December 2011
- IT Innovation Centre location established. Recruitment initiated for 2 resources
- Ongoing review and adjustment of current staff resource
- IT Senior Management will review on an ongoing basis the forecast spend of strategy capital, together with the normal recurrent IT capital for infrastructure sustenance

Communication

- A simplified version of the strategy document is now available on the website and intranet
- USF presentation of key themes in July 11
- Overview of strategy included in September 2011 IT Newsletter (available to all staff)
- Progress updates for new services to be included in staff e-newsletter and Buzz
- Various updates to individual College and Corporate teams
- New initiatives publicised to students – for example Mac support - publicised on the student portal and by email

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