

# ICTF Michaelmas Term 2013

## IT Services Report

- **IT Strategic Plan:** Comments are sought on the draft IT Strategic Plan. The IT Strategic Plan aims to support and facilitate the University's core activities of teaching, research, and underpinning support functions, reflecting the priorities in the University Strategic Plan. Feedback should be sent to [itstrategy@it.ox.ac.uk](mailto:itstrategy@it.ox.ac.uk) by 20 December 2013. A copy of the draft Plan is available via <http://www.it.ox.ac.uk/news/strategicplan/>.
- **Integrated Communications Project:** The Integrated Communications Project is nearing the end of the supplier evaluation process and recommended a preferred bidder to the ICP Board on 18 November. The project expects to enter into detailed contractual negotiations and, all being well, initiate the next phase of the project in HT 2014 (an initial implementation and pilot). The next phase will also decide the optimum rollout plan to ensure that the collegiate University benefits from as many functions of an integrated communications platform as early as possible.
- **Oracle Financials R12 upgrade:** The implementation of Oracle Release 12 (R12), the next version of Oracle Financials, went live to users on 11 November., as scheduled. There is an extensive support site at <https://www1.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/r12/>.
- **ADSS:** The new ADSS system is now live and supporting the 2013/14 admissions round. A dedicated SharePoint site, including a FAQ as well as contact details for support, is available at <https://sharepoint.nexus.ox.ac.uk/sites/AAD/UG/ADSS/>.
- **Student Systems Programme:** The original plan for the Student Systems Programme (SSP) was for the new student records system, Tribal SITS, to go-live in Summer 2013 but this proved unrealistic. Since April 2013 SSP has been undergoing a major period of redesign and replanning. This is now complete and since 1 August 2013 the programme has been keeping to the new plan and programme methodology. Progress within the programme has been positive. The Degree Ceremonies went live in 2012, has been upgraded since, and in September the Degree Ceremonies Documents and Certificates went live. Work is also progressing across the board on all the workstreams. Where issues have been escalated action has been taken to mitigate against the risk, and the programme is now resourced to its full requirements. The schedule now entails:
  - MT 2013 – complete all functional development, engage in a series of user engagement activities, start to do some formal integration testing of code.
  - January 2014 – cease all development/configuration.
  - Feb-July 2014 – go into formal testing mode ending with User Acceptability Testing.

There are some key areas we would ask appropriate members of the University and units (colleges, departments, business teams) to assist with:

- 1) This year will see a major series of user engagement activities – demonstrations of new functions, stakeholder groups, feedback sessions, testing, etc. We will need assistance



from people across the University in all of these and would greatly welcome your support.

- 2) We are looking to limit all development within the system (for now) to 'must haves' as opposed to 'nice to haves'. Again we would appreciate stakeholders' co-operation in this and assistance in looking for workarounds.
- 3) If there are any opportunities you can identify for members of the team to communicate further about the programme then please do let us know.

Stuart Lee, Programme Director, is happy to provide any further information, or answer any questions on the programme (stuart.lee@it.ox.ac.uk).

- **HRIS Programme:** Following the successful payroll implementation in May, the final deliverable of the programme – introduction of an absence recording service and decommissioning of the OPENDoor system – are underway with completion planned in January. A full benefits review will then be conducted. A separate project will ensure that the system has a fully documented and tested 'disaster recovery' plan in place.
- **TONE backbone network upgrade project:** IT Services has established a project to review the existing backbone network provision – The Oxford Network Evolution (TONE) Project. The existing network design, if not the current main components, was implemented in 1999. Expectations and requirements of networks have changed since then. The project is still gathering requirements and a User Group with college and divisional representation has been established (chaired by Stanislav Burlakov, St Hilda's College).
- **Whole Disk Encryption service:** The University is currently rolling out a central Whole Disk Encryption (WDE) service which offers centralised management and policy enforcement with a single web-based management console for users; easy passphrase and machine recovery; and audit trails of encryption and decryption. Following an initial trial IT Services will offer WDE as a service to the whole University (currently UAS staff are early adopters). See further, <http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/wde/>.
- **Maillist upgrade project:** IT Services is upgrading the Maillist service by replacing the underlying software. The upgrade is scheduled to occur by the beginning of Trinity Term 2014. The project, which started in Oct 2013, is currently reviewing user requirements and comparing with functional and non-functional components of a shortlist of replacement applications.. Further information will be communicated to Maillist list owners, ITSS and the wider University in due course.
- **HFS "Diversification" Project:** The HFS Diversification Project aims to review and refresh the HFS backup and long-term filestore service, in particular, to ensure that the service meets the diverse set of requirements within the collegiate University (from enterprise databases, local filestores, to working data of academic and postgraduate members). The first phase is a feasibility and project design phase, which will include the further articulation of key requirements for a University backup service.
- **Nexus: shared mailbox auditing and SharePoint MySites:** The Nexus service is enabling logging on mailboxes shared with multiple users via 'Full Access'. The extra logging will assist in diagnosing problems (e.g. how did an item disappear) and auditing access should an account be compromised (e.g. due to phishing). The Nexus team are also intending to enable SharePoint



“MySites” for all users, rather than having to be requested. The SharePoint My Site provides a range of functionality including personal profiles, private and shareable document libraries, task lists, and internal blog (most functions available in a normal group-based SharePoint site are also available in individual MySites).

- **Weblearn “mixed content”:** Recent updates to Firefox and Chrome browsers has mean that Weblearn is no longer able to serve content drawn from both secure (https) and non-secure (http) sites in the same page. This results in pages with missing content. Weblearn has been modified to address some of the problems with insecure content and staff have been informed of the implications and asked to update Weblearn pages. Users of Weblearn are warned that there may still be some items on sites that do not display, e.g. videos, social media widgets and others. See further, <<http://blogs.it.ox.ac.uk/adamweblearn/2013/08/firefox-now-blocks-non-secure-content-from-weblearn-weblearn-pages-may-need-to-be-edited/>>.
- **DARS Migration and Upgrade:** The ongoing programme of technical work to support DARS ( see <https://www.darscentral.ox.ac.uk/> for details) continues in 2013-14 with a major upgrade planned for HT 2014 and further college migrations planned. Over half of all colleges and department have now committed to joining DARS.
- **Service Desk Consolidation Project:** The project to unify the various help and support functions within IT Services following the merger is poised to move from design and planning into implementation. Processes for incident (when things go wrong), request (users asking for things we offer), problem (reducing incident occurrence or impact), and change (managing changes to improve successful delivery and reduce undesirable impact on the business) are designed, and a toolset to replace RT, ITSM, and Altiris Help Desk has been selected along with an implementation partner to guide our deployment. Karen Wells (Worcester) and Gerard Robinson (MSD IT Services) are the distributed ITSS who sit on the project board and have been keeping an eye on our work.
- **Windows 7:** the much anticipated upgrade of UAS and Bodleian Libraries desktops from Windows XP to Windows 7 has received funding. Planning and communication is underway for the project which will kick-off on return from the Christmas closure.
- **IT Services Web Consolidation Project:** a project is now underway to review content in the old central IT web sites and plan to migrate this into a new structure under [www.it.ox.ac.uk](http://www.it.ox.ac.uk). It is expected that content will be migrated in two distinct activities, one covering the “discovery and engagement” material such as who / where / what, and another for the “help and support” information relating to our services.

John Ireland, 2013-12-16