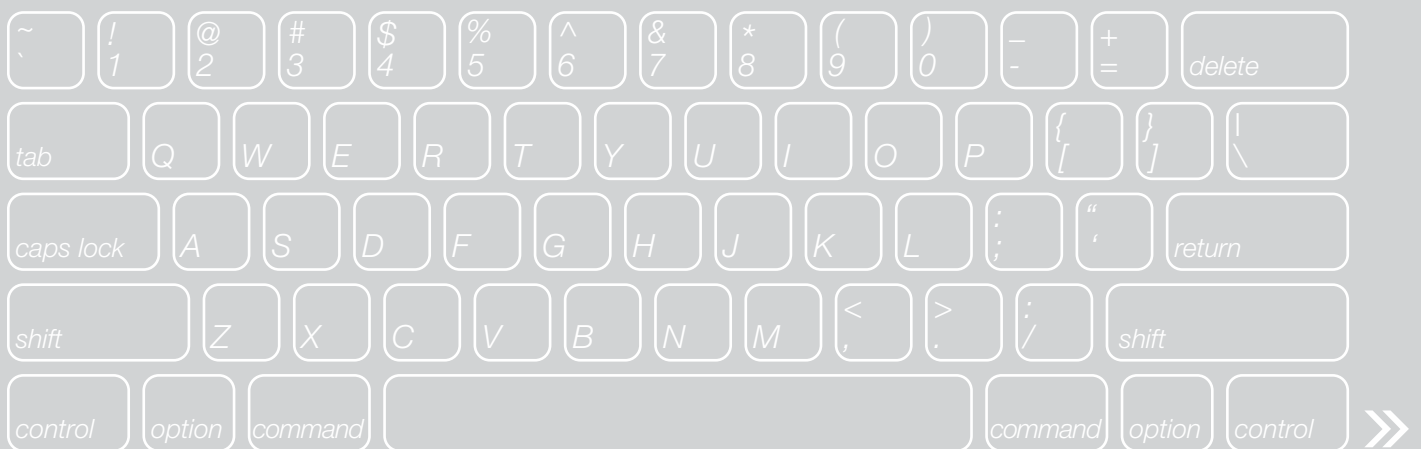




# Information Technology Services Framework

October 2003



# 1 Background

In 1997 the Information Technology and Services Policy and Planning (ITSP) Sub-Committee of the Strategic Planning Committee undertook a major examination of information technology and services provision in the University in the context of 'developing appropriate and at the same time sophisticated IT service policies that are transparently clear to all the so-called "client groups" – faculties, schools, departments, divisions, staff and students – aligned with strategic planning goals and, no insignificant matter, within their budgetary capacities.'

The aims of the Sub-Committee were to:

- define responsibilities for the management of IT resources across the University;
- decide funding methods to facilitate investment in support and in service development; and
- introduce the principle of accountability into IT service provision through funding being linked to service level standards.

The Sub-Committee benefited from advice provided by Professor Peter Ford of the University of Nottingham who was invited by the Vice-Chancellor to assist the Sub-Committee in its task.

The 1998 Report defined the major problems as:

- lack of clearly defined responsibilities for the management of IT resources across the University;
- insufficient investment in support;
- inadequate funding of service development to use the infrastructure effectively;
- lack of definition of service level standards expected by the University; and
- lack of corporate policy or asset management relating to purchase and replacement of IT resources sufficient to maintain and enhance the IT infrastructure.

A full Report was submitted to the Vice-Chancellor and provided the basis for the information technology services framework of 1998. The major recommendations of that framework have been implemented. As a result the framework has been updated in 2003 to reflect changes in organisational structure and policy since 1998.

# 2 University Responsibility

## 2.1 Policy Framework

Through the Information Technology Services Policy and Planning Committee (ITSP)<sup>1</sup> the University accepts responsibility for:

- defining responsibilities for the provision of the various ICT services;
- setting essential standards and policies for ICT service provision;
- consolidating and disseminating information to facilitate University management and to report to Senate and external bodies; and
- providing oversight of ICT planning, infrastructure and service provision.

The ITSP formulates policy and plans in relation to the issues outlined above. To assist this work ITSP undertakes regular consultation with the major organisational units of the University through the Information Technology Consultative Group (ITCG)<sup>2</sup>. The Library, ITS, the Administration Computing Policy Committee and working parties on web interface and eLearning provide reports to the ITSP about their ICT activities.

## 2.2 Information Technology Services

Information Technology Services (ITS) is a core central service of the University. ITS provides a set of University-wide services, directly funded or through service-level agreements with other organisational units.

The Director of ITS provides regular reports to ITSP on progress in implementing policy and maintaining service standards.

ITS provides advice on:

- technical IT standards that the University should adopt corporately (including LAN networks, software, security, systems administration, and cabling);
- technical solutions for the University's investment in UQnet infrastructure;
- mechanisms for the implementation and use of new technologies within the University framework; and
- the development and implementation of University IT policy including policy referring to the Net and IT security issues.

## 2.3 Infrastructure and information technology services funded centrally

The following infrastructure and services are funded centrally or provided centrally by ITS or other providers and charged to the relevant organisational unit or project.

### 2.3.1 Integrated information technology and telecommunication services

ITS is responsible for:

- managing telephone networks, satellite communications and services;
- managing the UQnet backbone, including data and video links between campuses;
- coordinating links between UQnet and external networks;
- providing access to the Internet and associated corporate services such as e-mail and the Web;
- controlling gateway access to UQnet (including communications protocols, security, and demand management); and
- providing corporate IT security services.

The costs of providing and operating the network infrastructure including switches, servers, caches etc. for core sites will be funded centrally on the basis of a 3-year plan reviewed annually by the ITSP. Use of that infrastructure in terms of traffic and where appropriate, line rentals, will be charged to user faculties and divisions. The charges in terms of traffic will be approved through ITSP.

### 2.3.2 Central procurement of ICT services

ITS acts as a central purchasing agency to negotiate with suppliers for the purchase or lease of hardware, software and services (including telecommunications). Agreements negotiated by the central purchasing agency of ITS will be passed to ITSP for ratification before they are finalised.

Any University entity wishing to negotiate its own large scale purchasing arrangement will inform the central purchasing agency so that other areas of the University may be invited to participate if they wish. Such purchasing will be co-ordinated by ITS.

All purchasing arrangements must be in accordance with the Queensland Government Financial Management Policy.

### **2.3.3 Website support, technology advice and expertise**

The Web Interface Working Party aims to enhance the UQ website and ensure development of staff and student portals and appropriate websites for external audiences. It reports to the ITSPP where web policy issues are determined.

- ITS and the Office of Marketing and Communications will continue to provide University-wide Web technology advice and expertise;
- Web content creation and maintenance will be undertaken by the area supplying the information;
- The University will identify information custodians for all Web-based information and services; and
- Implementation of UQ website corporate style and design will be the responsibility of the Office of Marketing and Communications.

Advice on design, standards, strategic web developments and intellectual property issues and legal requirements will be funded centrally.

University-wide content, services and strategic web developments will be funded centrally.

Organisational units, such as faculties, schools and divisions will fund design work where the design is to meet organisational unit needs.

### **2.3.4 eLearning management system**

The University will support an eLearning management system. This system will provide a means for staff to provide resources for and interaction with students in their courses and programs. The system will be integrated with other relevant administrative and communications systems.

ITS will provide technical support and advice for the maintenance and operation of such a system. This will be funded centrally.

TEDI will provide advice on the development of courses and materials using the eLearning management system. TEDI will be funded centrally to provide advice on course development and instructional design using such a system. Project and Faculty budgets will support the development of course and discipline specific teaching and learning resources as necessary.

TEDI will have the responsibility for co-ordinating access to multimedia resources, collaborating with academic staff in

the development of such teaching and learning materials (on a fee for service basis) and promoting the use of multimedia resources. The Library will continue to purchase and house commercially available multimedia resources.

Academics must comply with University standards, including authoring standards when developing their teaching resources and must take advice from TEDI and the Library with regard to intellectual property and copyright issues.

### **2.3.5 Information and communications technology support in centrally controlled teaching and learning spaces**

Audio-visual support in centrally controlled lecture theatres and teaching rooms will be funded centrally and managed through ITS, including operating a single call centre for all centrally controlled lecture theatre and teaching room problems.

Information and communications technology support in centrally controlled teaching and learning spaces will be undertaken through ITS.

Co-ordination of refurbishment and development in teaching and learning spaces is undertaken via the Teaching and Learning Space Committee (reporting to the Space Planning and Management Committee).

### **2.3.6 Support for administrative and management information systems**

Central administrative divisions will continue to provide, manage and fund core business systems including, finance and budgets, human resources and payroll, the student information system, research, assets and facilities, and management information and statistics.

The operation and technical support for these systems will be provided by ITS under a service level agreement.

The Administration Computing Policy Committee reports to the ITSPP on these systems.

### **2.3.7 Management and provision of student ICT facilities**

The Library will continue to provide general computer laboratory facilities for students and training in the effective use of ICT by students through its AskIT service. Software for student use is also provided.

A help desk service managed by the Library and a website will be provided and funded centrally to support students in their use of ICT for their studies.

# 3 Faculty and Divisional Responsibility

Where IT services integral to the core business of teaching and research or administration are not provided for specifically in this framework and cannot be provided more effectively on a University-wide basis they will be provided by faculties, centres or other divisions.

## 3.1 Reporting and Accountability

Faculties and divisions will be required to produce their own ICT management plans (either separately or as part of their operational plan) and report through ITSP on their planning for the future and implementation. These plans should address business continuity and disaster recovery where relevant.

ITS will coordinate the network of IT Liaison Officers (ITLOs) and members of the ITCG from across the university to exchange views and information about new developments and encourage the maintenance of University IT standards.

There are a number of issues that affect decisions about whether a service should be provided within an organisational unit by using existing resources or buying in new resources.

- Where faculties and other units wish to use their own staff, the full costs, particularly in staff time, should be identified and compared with the cost of engaging an internal or external service provider.
- Faculties and other units have a responsibility to recruit at an appropriate level and continuously update the skills base of their ICT specialists. Close liaison with ITS technology experts is imperative to maintain University standards.
- The University's IT purchasing processes as outlined in the Financial Management Practice Manual apply to standards in choosing ICT service providers and the presence of a negotiated central purchasing agreement may influence choice of service provider.
- Prior to seeking the services of an external service provider in relation to services currently being provided internally, it may be necessary to contact the Manager, Employee Relations in Personnel Services to ascertain whether engaging the service provider would constitute an outsourcing arrangement and should, therefore, be subject to the process outlined in the University's General Staff Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

Faculties and other units have the responsibility to ensure that the following services are provided from their own resources or from internal or external providers.

## 3.2 Management of workstations, laptops, servers and local networking and computing equipment

Faculties and other university units will ensure that their staff have adequate computer and network facilities and training in their use to carry out their duties.

ITS is responsible for the University network, UQNet, up to the wall socket. Some central funding is provided to support networking on core sites. Non-core sites will be supported on a cost recovery basis. Installation and support of the University network including switches and cabling must be undertaken by ITS unless the Director, ITS has agreed to delegate responsibility for a particular part of the network.

ITS is responsible for the overall security of the University IT infrastructure. Organisational units may undertake security activities themselves or may ask ITS to manage it for them on a fee for service basis. Security activities cannot be undertaken by a third party. Organisational units may choose to provide support themselves for their local computing infrastructure or may ask ITS to manage it for them on a fee for service basis. If units choose to undertake their own support or security activities they are responsible for ensuring compliance with University policies, standards and procedures and they are responsible for the professional management of their systems.

IT equipment requires support, maintenance and regular upgrading as well as an appropriate replacement cycle and faculties and other organisational units must make provision for these expenditures.

The faculties, autonomously or in conjunction with ITS, will provide on-campus such information technology facilities and services as are necessary for student teaching and learning needs in their programs. Where facilities are provided they should also give access to the University Library's electronic services.

Faculties will make IT access and support available to their students in accordance with the document *Private Access to Computers and the Internet by Students* (HUPP 3.40.4).

Desktop and server support is available from ITS for a fee under service level agreements.

### 3.3 Support for Library information resources and associated data base systems

The Library will continue to provide and fund support for access to and effective use of Library information resources and associated data base systems to meet the University's teaching and learning and research needs. The Library will retain control and responsibility for its own workstations and systems.

### 3.4 Management of ICT support and maintenance for high performance computing

With support from University Research funds, the faculties most involved in high performance computing will be responsible for funding the operation, support and maintenance of high performance computing facilities. This will be carried out on a fee for service basis by ITS under a facilities management agreement. Issues related to the operation of the facility and its upgrading will be under the control of a management committee to ensure grades of service are met.

Purchase of high performance computing equipment will be arranged through the High Performance Computing Committee according to the University IT Purchasing Policy and the State Government Purchasing Policy.



# 4 ICT Services provided to the Community

The University of Queensland is required under the Financial Administration and Audit Act to comply with the Queensland Government Financial Management Policy. If an area of the University wishes to be involved in ICT services provision to the community, the issues of competitive neutrality should be examined so that operations are structured appropriately.

## 4.1 UQconnect

The University's ISP service, UQconnect, is operated by ITS and principally provides services to students and staff of the university, however it also provides services to alumni, other educational institutions and the wider community where this is beneficial. UQconnect is a properly constituted Carriage Service Provider under the Telecommunications Act.

## 4.2 AusCERT

ITS operates the Australian Computer Emergency Response Team, AusCERT, which provides a single point of contact in Australia for the Internet community to deal with computer security incidents and their prevention. The Commonwealth Government has recently recognised AusCERT as Australia's National CERT. AusCERT's activities include incident response, training and education, an annual computer crime survey jointly conducted with several police forces and an annual security conference.

Currently AusCERT is supported from subscriptions from all Australian Universities, CSIRO, many New Zealand universities, federal and state government departments and a number of private companies. AusCERT activities in both incident management and its wider training and education program will continue subject to the continuation of subscriptions and other revenue at adequate levels.

## 4.3 Queensland Regional Network Organisation (QRNO)

ITS provides cost-recovery facilities management service to CSIRO and the other universities in Queensland and New South Wales to manage the Queensland Research and Education Network on behalf of the QRNO. QPSF runs its services across the QRNO networks.

## 4.4 ICT services provided to the community by ITS, the Library, TEDI, faculties and other units

TEDI provides multimedia services for outside clients and the Library has training packages that are available commercially. The Library also provides information access to alumni and to schools through its service UQL Cyberschool. These and similar activities carried out by ITS, faculties and other units may continue.



## 5 IT Training Responsibilities

### 5.1 Staff IT training

Faculties, administrative divisions and other units are responsible for ensuring that their own staff are trained and for funding of that training.

TEDI will be funded centrally to co-ordinate all ICT training for staff, reporting through the University Staff Development Committee. Coordination will involve an identification of the programs that are available and provision of a central enrolment point.

ITS and the Library provide some specialist training for IT staff throughout the University and will continue to do so.

### 5.2 IT training for postgraduates and research

The Graduate School will coordinate courses for postgraduates. The Graduate School will incorporate an IT information skills component into research and study courses where it is directly related to outcomes. Faculties will have the responsibility for funding such training.

### 5.3 IT training for undergraduates

The Library through its AskIT service will be responsible for general undergraduate ICT training.

Faculties will be responsible for the specialised undergraduate ICT training. Faculties will fund undergraduate training whether provided by faculty staff or by trainers outside the faculty.

ITS will provide some specialist ICT training for students.

### Footnotes

- 1 The ITSPP membership and functions can be found at <http://www.uq.edu.au/itspp/>
- 2 ITCG was formed in August 2002 by the ITSPP to improve communications and cooperation on IT matters across the University. It is a forum consisting of nominated senior IT staff from each major organisational unit of the University.

The group :

- i. shares information
- ii. considers IT issues affecting the University
- iii. members provide a link between University IT staff and ITSPP
- iv. identifies standards for access, ease of use and interoperability of systems and develops and benchmarks standards for submission to ITSPP

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