THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Information Policy and Strategy Committee
held on 3 June 2008

Present: Professor M Smith (Chair)
                  Director of IT Services
                  Librarian
                  Dr T Arber
                  Dr K Leppard
                  Professor R Lindley
                  Professor A Neal
                  Mr P Ptashko
                  Professor D Singer

Apologies   Registrar
                  Dr S Allan
                  Professor A Caesar
                  Professor Y Carter
                  Professor T Docherty
                  Professor K Lamberts
                  Professor M Waterson

In Attendance: Mr G Bennett, Mr J Dale, Mr R Green

32/07-08   Minutes

            RESOLVED:

            That the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 7 April 2008 be approved.

33/07-08   Electronic Distribution of IPSC Papers (minute 27/07-08 refers)

            REPORTED:

            That a solely electronic distribution of Information Policy and Strategy
            Committee (IPSC) papers had been trialled for this meeting, noting that
            software that allows notes to be added to PDF documents was available to
            download at go.warwick.ac.uk/pdf

34/07-08   Computer-aided Summative Assessment (minute 9a/07-08 refers)

            REPORTED:

            (a)   That further to IPSC's recommendation to Faculty Board Committees to
                   issue a statement regarding the use of computer-aided summative
                   assessment,

                   (i)   the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the
                          Faculty of Social Studies at its meeting on 7 May 2008
                          RESOLVED that the Committee broadly supported the
                          proposals and would welcome discussion at the appropriate

University Committee as to the feasibility of a pilot (UFSS minute 28/07-08 refers)

(ii) the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies at its meeting on 13 May 2008 <u>RESOLVED</u> that the Committee was not opposed to the proposal, but expressed cautious interest with some reservations as to how widely the proposals would be applicable at postgraduate level in the Faculty (GFSS minute 35/07-08 refers).

(iii) the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts at its meeting on 13 May 2008 <u>RESOLVED</u> that it be noted that the Committee did not believe the proposals would be applicable to assessment patterns within the Arts Faculty (AGSC minute 33/07-08 refers).

(iv) The WMS Information Group at its meeting of 16 May 2008 reported that there was little support for use of summative e-assessment in DMAP as it was thought that few DMAP modules lend themselves solely to this kind of assessment (WMSIG minute 35/07-08(d) refers).

(v) The Science Faculty IT Committee at its meeting of 7 May 2008 reaffirmed its support for provision within the University of facilities suitable for on-line summative assessment of large cohorts of students (150 – 200) (SFITC minute 4 refers).

(b) That whilst it was recognised that there were differing levels of support from faculties for use of computer-aided summative assessment, and that it may not be appropriate for all departments, it was the view of IPSC that there was enough interest to warrant further investigation.

RECOMMENDED (to Academic Quality and Standards Committee AQSC):

That in light of the views from faculties, further work should be undertaken by an appropriate Committee or group to consider innovative methods of assessment (including computer-aided summative assessment), noting that it was felt unlikely that a single solution would be appropriate for all departments.

35/07-08   IT Services Update

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of IT Services updating the Committee on matters arising on the minutes of previous meetings, the status on the IT Services Five Year Plan and strategy roadmap, and the general situation on IT Services activities (IPSC.25/07-08, tabled at the meeting).

REPORTED: (by the Director of IT Services)

(a) Use of external storage media (minute 18/07-08 refers)

That although there was little evidence that the use of external storage media represented a significant general risk,

(i)   IT Services would organise a communication campaign to remind members of the University community on the issues of data management.

(ii)   IT Services security staff would be made available to work on data encryption and storage processes for departments with particularly sensitive data.

(b)   <u>Provision of support for foreign language sets</u> (minute 18/07-08 refers)

That the provision of foreign language sets was being considered by IT Services as part of the re-design of the standard desktop image.

(c)   <u>Mailbox quota issues</u> (minute 20/07-08 refers)

That it was possible to circumvent the Outlook mailbox feature that prevents users sending mail once a pre-set mailbox quota size was reached, but that it was not felt to be a significant issue and no additional policy was needed.

(d)   <u>The use of Blackberries or similar devices in the institution</u> (minute 20/07-08 refers)

That it was the view of IT Services that this should form part of a wider study to understand the needs of mobile workers, proposed to be carried out in the latter part of 2008 or early 2009.

(e)   <u>IT password case-sensitivity</u> (minute 25/07-08 refers)

That although some implementations of password access do not require case sensitivity, this was not currently perceived as a major risk, noting that dependent on resources available the issue would be addressed as part of a general review of IT security policies.

RESOLVED:

That IT Services undertake further work around the provision of foreign language sets, noting that a mechanism was needed to define what level and type of demand was appropriate for such foreign language sets to be provided, and that any short term provision in the meantime would not be viewed as setting a precedent.

36/07-08   <u>Hardware Failure on Campus</u>

REPORTED: (by the Director of IT Services)

(a)   That the recent hardware failure on campus had been caused by the failure of the uninterruptible power supply, resulting in a loss of power to the main IT Services Machine Room.

(b)   That improvement in Machine Room provision was already contained with the IT Services Five Year Plan.

(c)   That interim alternate measures such as external co-location were being investigated.

(d)   That an official out-of-hours service provision would have resulted in quicker recovery.

(by the Students' Union Education Officer)

That although it was recognised that IT Services were undertaking a lot of positive work, the student body as a whole retained concerns over the IT service levels provided.

37/07-08   Social Networking Websites

REPORTED: (by the Students' Union Education Officer)

(a)   That although social networking remained an important, it appeared that Facebook usage was declining in the student arena

(b)   That the Students' Union would continue to monitor developments in this area, with the work likely to be undertaken by the incoming Education Officer and Communication Officer.

38/07-08   Out of Hours IT Support

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of IT Services informing IPSC of proposals for out-of-hours IT Support, and proposing a variety of solutions offering differing levels of support with associated costs (IPSC.22/07-08).

REPORTED: (by the Director of IT Services)

That any policy implemented needed to be aligned with the Harmonisation project.

RESOLVED:

That IPSC strongly supported the establishment of out-of-hours IT support, and that it was believed that a strong business case could be made for option 6, which proposed the availability of support over all weekends and all evenings.

39/07-08   Proposal for the creation of Architecture, Standards and Co-ordination sub-groups of IPSC

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of IT Services, proposing the creation of Architecture, Standards and Co-ordination sub-groups of IPSC (IPSC.23/07-08).

RESOLVED:

(a)   That the Committee supported in principle the creation of sub-groups.

(b)   That further work be undertaken by IT Services to establish terms of reference for the proposed sub-groups, and to ensure that timings would ensure the flow of business through the Committee hierarchy was appropriate.

(c)   That the proposals be considered alongside the IPSC terms of reference at the next meeting of IPSC, in the first term of the next academic year.

40/07-08   Higher Performance Computing Facility

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of IT Services exploring the possibility of creating a Higher Performance Computing GRID (IPSC.24/07-08).

RESOLVED:

That further work on the proposal be undertaken by IT Services, including:

(a)   the exploration of closer links between IT Services and the Centre for Scientific Computing (CSC)

(b)   investigation into whether it would be appropriate for CSC to provide some of the services envisaged in the proposals, whilst ensuring that this did not impede their ability to retain their core scientific mission.

41/07-08   Composite Report on Library Matters

CONSIDERED:

A report on Library Matters from the University Librarian, including Research Support Developments, and Teaching & Learning Support Developments (IPSC.18/07-08).

REPORTED: (by the University Librarian)

That since the paper had been written, the number of hits on digitised resources had risen to 82,000, over 50% of which came from University halls of residence and 34% of which originated externally to the University.

RESOLVED:

That the WRAP Project functionality be demonstrated at a future meeting of IPSC.

42/07-08   Library Course Support in an Online Environment

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Deputy Librarian outlining the current delivery of Library course support, online learning environments and course support, and recommendations (IPSC.19/07-08).

REPORTED: (by the Director of IT Services)

That any further work on the provision of online learning environments should clearly investigate what the current issues or barriers to online course support are, and what tangible benefits would be gained by implementing specific policies and provisions.

RESOLVED:

That the Librarian, Deputy Librarian and Chair meet with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) to discuss the issue in more detail.

43/07-08   Minutes of the e-Learning Steering Group

CONSIDERED:

Minutes (unconfirmed) of the meeting of the e-Learning Steering Group (IPSC.20/07-08).

RESOLVED:

That the Director of IT Services provide a paper for the e-Learning Steering Group, confirming the current University policy with regard to collecting and using usage data and incorporating a recommendation to set up a working group, including representation from the University Legal Department, to further investigate the issue.

44/07-08   Minutes of the Faculty IT Committees

CONSIDERED:

Minutes (unconfirmed) of the meetings of the Faculty IT Committees (IPSC.21/07-08).

REPORTED: (by the Director of IT Services)

(a)   That it is possible to delete archived email if it was a legal requirement to do so, and that this could be achieved by contacting the IT Helpdesk.

(b)   That a broader investigation into the provision of University email addresses to those who have left the University (including alumni) was being undertaken.

45/07-08   <u>WATE Award</u>

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That the Arts Faculty IT Committee nomination for a WATE (Warwick Award for Teaching Excellence), Robert O'Toole, had been successful.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee welcomed the news and offered its congratulations to Robert O'Toole on a well-deserved award.