



Information Services Governance Committee

Wednesday 1st April 2015

MINUTES

Present:

Professor Michael Arthur (Chair)
Dame Nicola Brewer
Professor Nick Brook
Professor Steve Caddick
Professor Anthony Finkelstein
Professor Dame Hazel Genn
Mr Philip Harding
Professor Graham Hart
Professor Chris Husbands
Mr Rex Knight
Professor Alan Penn
Professor David Price
Professor Geraint Rees
Professor Alan Thompson
Professor Jonathan Wolff
Dr. Michael Cope
Dr. Tom Crummey
Ms. Bridget Kenyon (Head of Information Security, for the Information Security items)

Apologies:

Professor Mary Fulbrook
Professor David Lomas
Professor Anthony Smith
Professor Sir John Tooke

1 15/04/01 Minutes of the previous meeting

Approved:

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 19th November 2015 (paper **14/11/19**) were approved

2 15/04/02 Allocation of FY 15/16 IT Project Investment Funding to the domains

Noted:

2.1 The discussion paper on Allocation of IT Project Investment Funding to the domains in FY 15/16 (paper **15/04/02**) was noted.

Discussion:

2.2 There was a view that the importance of IT investment had not been recognised in recent budget processes and because of this we are slipping behind in the provision of IT services to researchers and students.

2.3 It was noted that project funds might be used to relieve pressure on the recurrent budget and the chair asked for confirmation that this was not the case. This was confirmed by the Director of ISD.

2.4 Several members of the committee noted the fragility of much of the IT infrastructure and the real pressure to address this. The Director of ISD that the domain leads had sought to maintain a reasonable level of investment in infrastructure but the constrained overall budget means this is probably less than needed.

2.5 It was noted that the trend in Learning & Teaching is in the wrong direction with investment going down year on year when the institution is growing and the learning experience is increasingly supported by technology.

2.6 The chair noted that our continued growth is putting strains on IT and this needs to be recognised in future budget setting to ensure sufficient funds are allocated.

2.7 Concern was expressed about the increase in costs for application packages where license fees are linked to our student or staff numbers. The Director of ISD explained that these arrangements do offer good value to UCL because the charges are linked to our size and therefore our income and of course we do negotiate to minimise any charges.

2.8 It was noted that the use of High Performance Computing across the institution was increasing significantly especially as medical research embraced computational techniques to a greater extent.

2.9 Some members were concerned that the recently increased Faculty contributions had not allowed for increased IT investment but it was highlighted that it had been agreed during the budget setting process that other priorities meant IT investment could be maintained but not increased. It was noted that IT spend does not influence Faculty contribution rates since they are not a driver in the TRAC methodology

2.10 It was noted that the estates materplan has catalysed investment in the estate and so perhaps an 'IT masterplan' would be a valuable tool for communicating IT investment needs over, say, a 5 year period. The Director of ISD agreed and will look into the development of such as masterplan.

2.11 It was noted that the financial situation will continue to be challenging in future years.

2.12 It was noted that not investing in IT at the appropriate level can increase costs elsewhere in the institution, for instance manual processes increase admin costs and insufficient management information leads to poorer management decisions.

2.13 The ISGC approved the proposed allocation of FY 15/16 IT project investment funding to the domains.

3. 15/04/03 Information Security Update

Noted:

3.1 The Information Security Update (papers at **15/04/03** (Highly Restricted)) was noted.

Discussions:

3.2 Discussion restricted

4. 15/04/04 Information Risk Governance Proposal

Noted:

4.1 The Information Risk Governance Proposal (paper at **15/04/04**) was noted.

Discussions:

4.2 The Head of Information Security summarised the paper

4.3 An example of poor information risk management at another institution was highlighted. This resulted in the loss of very sensitive data stored on a memory stick and subsequently senior staff left the organisation.

4.4 To be effective in an academic environment, any information risk management processes need to recognise the federated and autonomous nature of typical research groups and the responsibility needs to be made personal.

4.5 Linking information risk management to research integrity and ethics would be a useful mechanism. Information risk management needs to become just part of the way we undertake research.

4.6 Some members expressed initial concern about the extra complexity the new procedures but on reflection realised they were clearly necessary to properly manage modern research risks.

4.7 At senior management levels the level of abstraction in risk reports can make it difficult to understand the real underlying risks and therefore it will be important for the governance groups to understand this detail.

4.8 The parallels to Health and Safety policy were highlighted. Often seen as bureaucratic but necessary to maintain a safe environment and the improvements delivered are testament to the value of such policies even if they may seem burdensome at times

4.9 It was highlighted that effective adoption of information risk principles will mean changing working practices and this could be challenging and will take time.

4.10 It will be important to establish clear lines of accountability such as between PIs and HODs.

4.11 In the Civil Service it was noted that awareness was low but significantly improved through compulsory online training.

4.12 There is other sensitive information besides research data, for instance HR and student information and this must not be missed.

4.13 The ISGC approved the proposed Information Risk Governance Proposal as presented.

4.14 The next steps will be training of SIROs and coordinating the risk champion community.

5. 15/04/05 Update on ISD and IT developments

Noted:

5.1 The update in ISD and IT developments (paper **15/04/05**) was noted.

Discussions:

5.2 The importance of improved management information (MI) was highlighted

5.3 Besides improved MI systems, we should also recognise the need to improve data quality and management in many areas

5.4 The importance of assigning data owners was highlighted to ensure there was clear accountability for the quality of data in an area.

5.5 The improved project outcomes resulting from the introduction of the project delivery unit in ISD was welcomed and the efficiency of the project delivery approach was noted.

6. 15/04/06 AOB

Discussion:

6.1 There were no AOB items

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1st May 2015