

## RESEARCH COMPUTING PLATFORMS WORKING GROUP

### NOTES

**Date:** Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012  
**Time:** 12:00 – 13:30  
**Venue:** Chadwick Building, Room 218

#### Members Present:

1. John Brodholt [JBr] – Chair
2. Richard Catlow [RC] – Executive Dean, MAPS
3. Eric Fraga [EF] – Engineering
4. Nora H De Leeuw [NL] – Thomas Young Centre
5. Christine Orenge [CO] – Structural and Molecular Biology
6. Nick Achilleos [NA] – Astrophysics Miracle Consortium
7. Mat Disney [MD] – Geography
8. David Jones [DJ] – Bioinformatics
9. Clare Gryce [CG] – ISD Research Computing
10. Bruno Silva [BCS] – ISD Research Computing

#### Apologies:

11. Jacky Pallas [JP] – Platform Technologies
12. Peter Coveney [PV] – Computational Life and Medical Sciences (CLMS)
13. Angelos Michaelides [AM] – Thomas Young Centre
14. Thomas Jones [TJ] – ISD Research Computing

#### Matters Discussed

##### 1. Approval of Minutes of previous meetings (Nov and Dec)

The draft Minutes of the previous meetings of the group were reviewed and approved.

##### 2. Update on status of Actions from previous meetings

The list of current actions from previous meetings was reviewed and updated (see below).

##### 3. ISD SmartIT Organisational Change

CG gave a presentation on the 'SmartIT' organisational change currently ongoing within ISD (see appended slides).

#### **4. Legion Resource Allocation Policy Framework – draft proposal**

A document outlining a draft proposal for a resource allocation policy framework had previously been circulated by CG<sup>1</sup>. This was discussed by the group. The main findings were as follows:

4.1 It was agreed where individual users are consuming a 'large' proportion of available resources, a threshold for percentage of available CPU Hours used should be set, with any researchers consuming resources above this level being required to report back on their research outcomes.

*ACTION CG – CRAG to discuss handling of 'large users; set appropriate threshold above which a report on usage will be required. Design report.*

4.2 It was agreed that it would be helpful for users to be able to monitor their own usage.

*ACTION CG – CRAG to give further consideration to allowing users to monitor their own usage and raise actions as appropriate.*

4.3 It was agreed that the researchers should be encouraged to make ambitious proposals for use of Legion that cannot be accommodated with the current 'default' resource allocation regime.

*ACTION CG – CRAG to give further consideration to how researchers can be encouraged to make proposals for ambitious use of Legion, how this might be managed, and report back.*

4.4 The group requested data regarding use of Legion by taught students.

*ACTION CG – To provide data regarding use of Legion by taught students, to next meeting.*

4.5 It was agreed that the framework outlined in the document should be taken forward.

*ACTION CG – To further develop Resource Allocation Framework proposal: detail steps for implementation, communication to CRAG, confirm whether sign-off from Research Information and IT Services Group (RIISG) is required.*

#### **5. AOB**

JBr reported that an EPSRC call on HPC software development was expected to be released within the next few months.

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<sup>1</sup> Legion\_ResourceAllocation\_Framework\_v0.1.pdf

## List of Current Actions

*Shaded Actions will be deleted after next meeting.*

No	Date	Minute	Owner	Action	Status and Notes
1	18/11/11			Review Membership	CLOSED 6/2 – agreed that current membership of group is appropriate to remit. To keep under periodic review.
2	18/11/11	1.2.1	R.Ch	Circulate RIISG minutes	CLOSED 6/2 – this has been done.
4	18/11/11	1.5.3	CG	To draft a document outlining future resource allocation policy, based on discussions.	CLOSED 6/2 – this has been done. Presented by CG at meeting on 6/2
5	18/11/11	1.6.1	LRAW	Establish policy for cluster/consortia leaders.	OPEN 6/2 – no progress
6	18/11/11	1.7.1	CG	Progress discussions within ISD regarding research computing use of Desktops.	OPEN 6/2 – this is in progress within ISD.
9	12/12/11	4	CG	To give presentation on SmartIT and RITS to next meeting.	CLOSED 6/2 – this has been done. Presented by CG at meeting on 6/2
10	06/02/12	4.1	CG	CRAG to discuss handling of 'large users; set appropriate threshold above which a report on usage will be required. Design report.	OPEN
11	06/02/12	4.2	CG	CRAG to give further consideration to allowing users to monitor their own usage and raise actions as appropriate.	OPEN
12	06/02/12	4.3	CG	CRAG to give further consideration to how researchers can be encouraged to make proposals for ambitious use of Legion, how this might be managed, and report back.	OPEN

13	06/02/12	4.4	CG	To provide data regarding use of Legion by taught students.	OPEN
14	06/02/12	4.5	CG	To further develop Resource Allocation Framework proposal: detail steps for implementation, communication to CRAG, confirm whether sign-off by RIISG is required.	OPEN

## Research Computing Platforms Working Group

6<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2012



### Agenda

1. 12:00 – 12:10 Approval of Minutes of previous meetings (Nov and Dec)
2. 12:10 – 12:15 Update on status of Actions from previous meetings
3. 12:15 – 12:30 ISD SmartIT Organisational Change (CG to present)
4. 12:30 – 12:45 Research Computing Platforms project programme update and associated Governance arrangements (CG to present)
5. 12:45 – 13:15 Legion resource allocation policy update – see draft Policy Framework Proposal document, attached
6. 13:15 - 13:30 AOB, next meeting date and agenda



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### Why is Smart IT important ?

- **IT enablement of Teaching & Learning and Research needs to be better**
  - Key missions of a world class Research led University
  - Historically low percentage of budget and staff in this area
  - Students will demand better experience with higher fees
- **IT services need to be more effective and efficient**
  - Too many IT Services at UCL have slipped behind modern external organisations
  - Too much old technology and duplication
  - Organisation not shaped for effective service delivery
- **We need a stronger customer focus**
  - More responsive to customer needs
  - Overcome the need for local IT solutions



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## Smart IT Vision



*World class IT enablement for  
Research and Teaching & Learning*



*Excellent common,  
standard shared services*

*Strong customer  
orientation*



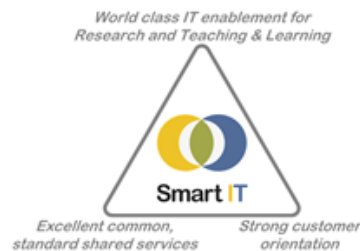
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## Approach we are taking



- 'Smart IT' is our programme to make the step change
- Striving for high levels of engagement throughout
- Taking a clean sheet of paper
- UCL wide approach
- Removing the blockers
- Not just organisation
  - Technology
  - Process & policy
  - Service oriented
  - Organisation
  - Culture
- Overall will be a multi-year journey



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## Technical transformation



- **World class IT for Research and Teaching & Learning**
  - Legion HPC
  - Large scale Research Data storage and management (Research Data project)
  - Lecture cast
  - Cluster rooms
- **Excellent Common Shared Services**
  - live@UCL email
  - Common PC & Mac Desktop
  - Full access wireless networking
- **Strong Customer Orientation**
  - Service Desk

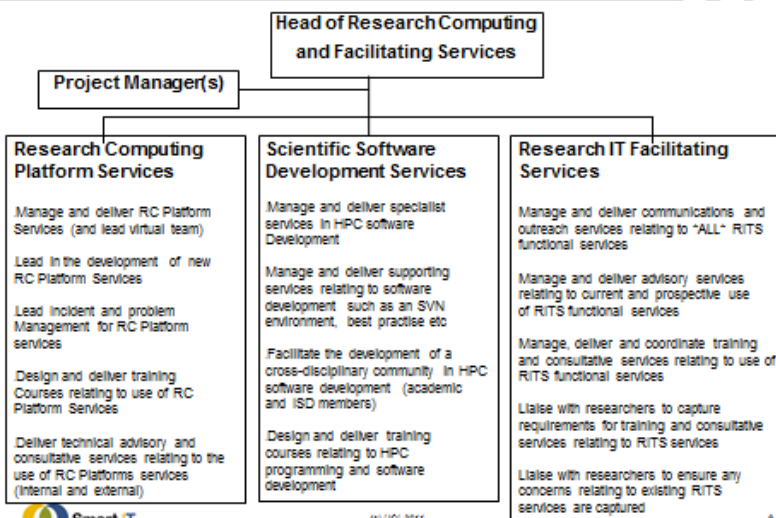


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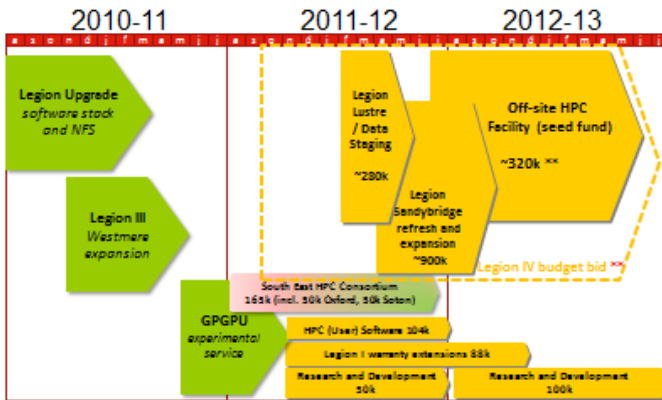
- **IT needs to see itself as a service provider – not a technology provider**
- **Examples of services:**
  - PC desktop service
  - eMail service
  - FIS finance service
  - Portico student management service
  - Etc.
- **The future is oriented around services rather than organisation or technology**
- **In designing the new IT organisation we are starting with service provision**

- **Cannot re-structure whole organisation in one step**
  - Heads of Department and Group Managers need to be appointed to lead work on structure in their areas
- **This leads to the three phase approach**
  - Phase 1: ISD leadership team (largely complete)
  - Phase 2: Group Manager structure (largely complete)
  - Phase 3: Rest of organisation (underway)
- **Existing organisation remains in place and active until all three steps have been completed**





RC Platforms Working Group – Recommended Project Programme



\*\* Figures based on current budget for 2012-13. Full programme will require additional funding 12/13 and 13/14.

**Project Board**

- Main Executive group for Project
- Agree Objectives
- Review progress and sign-off milestones
- Agree exceptions and changes in scope (Time, Budget, Quality)
- Includes
  - Senior Supplier
  - Senior User
  - Need representatives from Physical Sciences and Life/Medical

**Project Team**

- ISD RC led
- Academic involvement to inform design requirements

**Project to commence early March**