

SEPT 04

STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

INFORMATION STRATEGY

And

ACTION PLAN 2004-2007

1. **Introduction**
 - 1.1 **The Context**
2. **Guiding Principles**
 - 2.1 **Information access**
 - 2.2 **Information quality**
 - 2.3 **Responsibility for information**
3. **Strategic Aims**
4. **Action Plan and Responsibilities**

(Approved by Board of Governors on 16 September 2004)

1.1 The Context

Central Government is emphasising Information Management as an essential tool for all organisations who need to comply with the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act, E Government and other information legislation. Section 46 of the FOI Act places responsibilities on all Public Bodies to manage their information and records according to a code of practice issued by the Department of Constitutional Affairs.

While the Information Strategy must focus on institutional priorities it has to take account of changes occurring at a national level. Among those identified by the JISC in its strategy for 2001-2005, are:

- A change in government priorities to place greater emphasis on the needs of non-traditional and non-residential learners.
- The ubiquity of the Web as the way of delivering information electronically and its widespread use throughout the whole community.
- An increasing priority to widen participation in further and higher education.
- Increasing globalisation in the research process made possible by faster, more resilient networks.
- A rapidly expanding set of research resources which are available electronically and, in many cases, only electronically.
- Growing awareness of the need to ensure that electronic resources are preserved for the long term.
- The development of systems that support joined-up applications within institutions and across educational sectors, particularly to aid student progression.
- The development of e-commerce applications with concomitant developments in security products.
- The globalisation of learning and the early emergence of alternative suppliers.
- The development of regional and other partnerships to provide better integration of work and learning activities.

While this document does not seek to address all of these changes specifically, it has set the context for the development of an Information Management Strategy.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The overarching principle is that *the information strategy exists to support the University College's mission*. It seeks to articulate the importance to this mission of the effective and efficient use of information in achieving the University College's key strategic aims relating to research, learning and teaching, the student experience and the contribution to the community; and in the corporate planning and management which underpins these activities.

JISC, in its *Guidelines*, argues that an information strategy should create an environment in which:

- Any information that is available for sharing is well-defined and appropriately **accessible** (information **access**).
- The **quality** of information is fit for purpose (information **quality**).
- All staff understand their **responsibilities** towards information management.

2.1 Information access

- a) All members of the University College should have access to the information they might reasonably need to perform effectively as students or in their various roles as members of staff.
- b) The University College should provide access to appropriate information to external stakeholders including prospective students or employees, the local and regional community and current and potential partners and funders.
- c) Information should be made available in the most appropriate format(s) and in a timely manner.
- d) Information created or acquired by the University College should be capable of being accessed through a user-friendly interface.
- e) All members of the University College should have access to appropriate computer systems and the hardware required to access those systems and the information they contain.
- f) All member of the University College should be helped to develop the level of competence required to access, and use effectively, the information they need in support of their University College's activities.
- g) All information access must carry a level of security proportionate to the level of risk associated with unauthorised access.

2.2 Information quality

- a) All information made available for use by the University and wider communities should be fit for its purpose, that is, accurate, current, relevant and complete.
- b) Information that is held in a University College database should be stored in one place only, and as far as possible, entered directly into the database at the point at which it is collected, rather than as a separate data entry process.
- c) Information should be updated on the relevant database as soon as changes are notified to the University College.
- d) Information should be deleted or disposed of appropriately when it is no longer required by the University College.

2.3 Responsibility for information

- a) All members of the University College bear a responsibility for the information they generate, manage, transmit or use.
- b) The senior management of the University College carries a particular responsibility for the creation of an institutional culture which promotes the effective exploitation of information.
- c) Responsibility for the quality of the information in the University College's central databases rests with the management of the administrative functions which they support. (In some cases, for example the Student Information System, this responsibility is shared with QUB).
- d) Responsibility for originating, approving, maintaining and assuring quality of all information sources must be clearly defined.
- e) All members of the University College are required to respect the legal framework for the use of information including relevant legislation relating to data protection, copyright, freedom of information, libel and obscenity.
- f) All members of the University College are required to respect University College policies relating to the use of information.

3. STRATEGIC AIMS

3.1 The University College will acquire, through generation, purchase and retrieval, the information that staff, students and other stakeholders need, subject to budgetary considerations.

Information is defined here in its broadest sense and its uses will include: assisting learning and research; conveying agreed messages; and supporting decision-making. To be useful it will need to be accurate, accessible, current and comprehensive.

3.2 The University College will ensure that material which has been acquired is stored and organised in such a way as to facilitate its use.

There is little point in acquiring information if it is not accessible when required. This will involve the storage of information, both electronic and print, for as long as it is required. In addition, the information will have to be arranged and indexed in a way that allows ready retrieval of information from where it is stored, whether in databases, libraries or archives.

While aiming to facilitate access, the security of data remains an over-riding concern. This is addressed in the documentation relating to Information Security.

3.3 The University College will encourage appropriate exploitation of the information and communication technologies (ICT).

The University College believes that ICT has reached the stage where as much information as possible should be held electronically and accessible through a networked computer. While the value of personal contact is not questioned, these technologies should also be viewed as the system of choice for the use of information in support of communication, whether in research, learning and teaching, administration or our relations with the wider community.

3.4 The University College will meet all its legal requirements in relation to the use of information.

Like many other aspects of life, the use of information must increasingly occur within a strict legal framework. The University College must ensure that all its staff and students are aware of this framework and that it has in place the policies and systems that ensure compliance.

The Legal Information Service of JISC identifies a wide range of topics relevant to the legal framework within which ICT, and its applications, must operate including:

- Data Protection
- Freedom of Information
- Intellectual Property Rights
- ISP (Internet Service Provider) Liability
- e-Security (Regulation of Investigatory Powers)

However, the University College's 2004-07 Information Strategy will focus on Freedom of Information, Data Protection and e-Security.

The University College is obliged to ensure that the activities of its computer users are conducted in accordance with the statutory regulatory framework. There must be proper procedures in place to ensure that those who use ICT are aware of the regulatory framework and of the importance of abiding by that framework.

There is a clear need for the University College to address further a range of issues relating to the monitoring, surveillance and security of e-mail, telephone and Internet usage, especially in the context of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. This legislation which applies to businesses, education establishments, charities and any group operating a communications system, permits monitoring of communications only under certain circumstances.

Since the Act came into force, various supporting regulations have also been enacted in the form of statutory instruments. The purpose of the Regulations is to allow exceptions to the basic principle as stated in the Act and to allow interception without consent in certain instances.

The JISC Legal Information Service suggests the following as examples of what might be regarded as permitted interceptions:

- To check the content of e-mail to ensure that the institution's standards are not being breached or that externally imposed standards, for example the JANET acceptable use regulations, are being adhered to.
- To check that the system is being used for legitimate purposes only.

Monitoring (but not recording) may also be permissible to ascertain whether a communication is business or personal. The University College may need to check e-mails or voice mail for example in the absence of staff, and this is permissible under the regulations as long as the organisation in question has taken all reasonable steps to inform users (senders and recipients) that interceptions may be made. However, apart from automated monitoring which rejects or returns unacceptable messages for security reasons, messages that are clearly personal should only be opened in exceptional circumstances, for example where a worker is suspected of using e-mail to harass other employees. Further information and guidance in relation to monitoring is contained in the University College document entitled 'IT Systems: Regulations

for Acceptable Use'. It will also be necessary for Disciplinary Policies and Procedures to take cognizance of the legislation relating to information access, data protection and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.

INFORMATION STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN

STRATEGIC AIM 1

The University College will acquire, through generation, purchase and retrieval, the information that staff, students and other stakeholders need, subject to budgetary considerations.

	WHERE WE ARE NOW	WHERE WE WOULD LIKE TO BE IN 2007	Responsibility	Target Date
1.1	<p><i>Library Resources and Research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talis, the Library management system, is fully operational. • The Library catalogue is available on-line via the web. • The issue, recall and reservation of library materials are fully automated. • Users can check their personal borrower information, renew loans, and place reservations on-line. • Users have access to a wide range of ejournals and subscription databases on-line. • Students are automatically issued with Athens usernames which validate their access to a wide range of electronic resources, including those subscribed to by Queen's University. • Staff do not have the same access to Queen's resources as are available to students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have implemented the use of Prism, Talis's new resources discovery tool. This will combine searching the Library's catalogue with other electronic resources. • To have switched to using email for most communications with users, especially the issuing of overdue and recall letters. • To be fully integrated with QOL, allowing a seamless link from module resources to Prism and the other Library resources. • To have solved the problem of staff access to the appropriate range of electronic resources available to students. 	<p>WMcC</p> <p>WMcC/C R</p> <p>SMG/ WMcC</p> <p>SMG</p>	<p>Sept 04</p> <p>Sept 05</p> <p>Sept 05</p> <p>Sept 05</p>

	WHERE WE ARE NOW	WHERE WE WOULD LIKE TO BE IN 2007	Responsibility	Target Date
1.2	<p>Teaching Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All teaching staff can now gain access to Queen's Online VLE for teaching and learning purposes With the exception of a few academic areas, there is currently limited use of Queen's Online VLE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an e-Learning Strategy for the University College Populate all modules within the Learning and Teaching Environment of Queen's Online Queen's Online should be developed to be an integrated learning environment within which students interact with the University College, each other and external users Pedagogical understanding of e-learning will be developed to the extent that is recognised as a significant developmental resource for courses and students 	<p>MW</p> <p>Prog Leaders/ Elearning Officer</p> <p>Prog Leaders/ Elearning Officer</p>	<p>Oct 04</p> <p>Sept 05</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited provision has been made by DE/DEL for students/staff to have access to C2K Managed Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All ITE students have full access to a C2K Learning Environment and subsequent upgrades within the University College, in professional preparation for School-Based-Work and employment 	<p>SMG</p>	<p>Dec 04</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full access to the Stranmillis email system is available to all staff and students from any location on the internet. There is limited provision either in fixed location or through a borrowing pool, for access to networked data projection and Internet facilities for teaching purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stranmillis email system integrated into the QUB Online environment (and possibly the C2K system as well). Complete a rolling plan of improvements to teaching facilities through increased provision of computer presentation systems in teaching spaces 	<p>CR</p> <p>MW</p>	<p>Sept 04</p> <p>Commence June 04 - ongoing</p>

	WHERE WE ARE NOW	WHERE WE WOULD LIKE TO BE IN 2007	Responsibility	Target Date
1.3	<p><i>Corporate Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to develop and consolidate a co-ordinated (and integrated, where possible) approach to management of corporate information, both in terms of software applications and of records management practices. (HR and Payroll already achieved) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated software packages in use, where appropriate Training provided to IT users to familiarise them with their roles and responsibilities in terms of use of software, Data Protection & Freedom of Information issues Adequate resources in place to support information management processes 	<p>LS</p> <p>UD/BE</p> <p>LS</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
	<p><i>Financial Management Information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly management reporting packs are provided to the Senior Planning Group and respective budget holders for review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of management information for relevance and usefulness; Redesign of reports 	<p>LS</p> <p>LS</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

STRATEGIC AIM 2

The University College will ensure that material which has been acquired is stored and organised in such a way as to facilitate its use.

	WHERE WE ARE NOW	WHERE WE WOULD LIKE TO BE IN 2007	Responsibility	Target Date
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No practical corporate mechanism for the control and management of information Information Security Guidelines in place – specifically related to IT Records Management Policy (in draft form) Integrated software applications in use where appropriate (eg HR/Payroll) Selected sources of information are supplied and edited through third party providers Responsibility for records management is not formalised by department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision and Extension of Information Security Guidelines to all types of information – paper-based or computer Establishment of Information Security Forum Full secure access to personal storage areas available from anywhere on the Internet Wireless access to appropriate data available throughout the campus Implement Records Management Policy to ensure efficient management of computer records, to include development of information retention schedules as appropriate for each department/type of information Establishment and implementation of Records Retention and Disposal document Register of information storage by department identifying responsible personnel and controls Review service level agreements to ensure that the College responsibility for information is clearly defined and that all personnel are aware of their responsibility. Roles and Responsibilities for information management should be reviewed to ensure that each department needs are allocated to a named individual at an appropriate level to enact change 	<p>MW/CR /UD</p> <p>CR</p> <p>CR</p> <p>CR</p> <p>SMG/M W</p> <p>MW/UD</p> <p>UD</p> <p>NH</p> <p>Info Mgt Group</p>	<p>Dec 04</p> <p>Sept 04</p> <p>Sept 04</p> <p>Sept 05</p> <p>Sept 05</p> <p>Sept 06</p> <p>Sept 06</p> <p>Sept 05</p> <p>Sept 05</p>

	WHERE WE ARE NOW	WHERE WE WOULD LIKE TO BE IN 2007	Responsibility	Target Date
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised website developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development of University College website • Exploit fully the use of the web as an information and communication resource for the University College 	TM	Ongoing
2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of staff trained in risks associated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data protection ○ Freedom of information ○ Strategic Importance of Data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training needs assessment for all personnel to include requirements for information use; • Staff to have completed the relevant training. 	UD/ Dept Managers	Ongoing

STRATEGIC AIM 3

The University College will encourage appropriate exploitation of the information and communication technologies (ICT).

	WHERE WE ARE NOW	WHERE WE WOULD LIKE TO BE IN 2007	Responsibility	Target Date
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most staff unfamiliar with Queen's Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Queen's Online training programme for all staff 	Elearning Officer/B E	Sept 04
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student skills on entry insufficiently audited and used as guidance for future development Student skills policy in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of self-diagnosis tools Clear evidence of successful implementation and monitoring of student skills policy 	Course Teams	Ongoing
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rolling programme of IT training sessions to enhance users' competencies with the software applications available to them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote use of library digital resources Accelerate the transition from reliance on print to electronic journals Continuation of staff development programme relating to IT as software is upgraded, replaced, developed etc. Develop "value added" network information services for staff and students Make full use of the Northern Ireland Regional Area Network (NIRAN) for audio visual communication 	WMcC WMcC CR CR/Dept Managers MW/CR	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

STRATEGIC AIM 4

The University College will meet all its legal requirements in relation to the use of information.

	WHERE WE ARE NOW	WHERE WE WOULD LIKE TO BE IN 2007	Responsibility	Target Date
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication Scheme as required by the Act prepared in draft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication Scheme placed on website 	NH/MW	Jan 05
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Security Guidelines in Draft Internal audit of General Computers Controls carried out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development of guidance for staff on standards required in use of ICT Review of records management practices Established Information Security Forum Continue to review the circumstances under which electronic communications may be monitored or intercepted and ensure that users of the University's data and telephone networks are made aware of these circumstances 	CR MW/UD MW/CR MW/UD/ CR	Jan 05 Jan 05 Jan 05 Ongoing
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Protection and IT training ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Data Protection and Information Security training/refreshers, to include training elements aimed at ensuring that retention and destruction decisions can be appropriately taken and justified 	UD/BE/ Dept Managers	Ongoing