IT within the University

Ronald Haynes (rsh27) – Institution Strategy, University Information Services
The University – A More Detailed Overview – (Q2)
The University – A More Detailed Overview – (Q3)
The University – A More Detailed Overview – (Q4)
Background: a timeline of computing in Cambridge

1209: University founded

1949: EDSAC built

1995: Mainframe shut down

(… with move to distributed computing & dedicated Computer Officers / IT staff)
IT Provision … fairly flat (*a bit like the landscape*)

31 Colleges
>150 Departments
Non-School Institutions
A large periphery
Central IT provider
In Cambridge - what is meant by an ‘Institution’?

- Schools
- Faculties
- Departments
- Research Groups
- Users
- Colleges
- Non-School Institutions
- Research Charities
- And many more…
Multiple Central IT providers … *many into one!*

- **UCS** — University Computing Service, grew out of Mathematical Laboratory. Background more toward an academic focus.

- **MISD** — grew out of IT support for Administrative Offices. Background more toward an administrative focus.

- **HPCS** — High Performance Computing (HPC) Service. Background more toward large HPC-using research community.

- **CARET** — Centre for Applied Research into Educational Technologies. Background more toward cutting edge and experimental.

- **UIS** — Has brought these together, and will continue to evolve as a central, integrated department
Counts of IT staff (first approximation)
Challenges of distributed model

• Difficulty of communication?
• Cost of duplicated effort?
• Concentration of expertise?

BUT

• Flexibility, proactivity
• Personal, area-specific focus
• Importance of local community
IT Committees & You – Current & Future?

• Some forms of IT Committees in most Colleges and in many Faculties/Departments

• College Bursars/Senior Tutors and the 6 University Schools also have IT Committees (and/or IT Coordinators/Managers)

• The University IT Review recommended greater sharing and coordination of IT practices and resources

• Strong recommendation also for greater professional development and career progression for the IT community

• Plans are developing with the UIS for increased interaction and support for IT staff & committees across the University community
Fostering community

Tech Link

Fast track through Service Desk
Mailing lists: ucam-itsupport ucam-dept-itsupport ucam-college-itsupport

Seminars and Events
Online resources: Wiki Blogs Skills database

Ask today about joining (or e-mail techlink-admin@ucs.cam.ac.uk)
Fostering community

Peer groups for networking between IT professionals.

CITMG: Topic groups including wireless, databases, strategy documents…

DITG: Monthly lunches, special projects, 3D Interest Group
Oxford have many committees, and a key annual event - ICT Forum Conference.

Inviting presenters and delegates from Cambridge University (and others)

A chance to meet up with direct counterparts.
Peer groups of University IT organisations and services.

**UCISA**: UK HE and FE — strong focus on teaching

**EUNIS**: EU HE — strong Europe-wide HE IT focus

**EDUCAUSE**: USA-based but with strong international focus
Fostering community

Aiming to help many independent IT teams …

… work better as a community
The TechLink Scheme

- Originally designed to help spread IT understanding and support
  - bringing it closer to users (1996)

- Also helps support crowd-sourced ideas and solutions
  - (e.g. piloted a ‘Bright Ideas’ idea management system)

- Working to further foster community and professional development

- Includes a programme of events, as well as courses, reports, the mailing lists, Service Desk priority, mentoring, …
  - considering whether to add ucam-itsupport-social

- Everyone here should already be a member
  - please help share and build up our IT community!
IT within the University - More Information

• Get started — IT Help & Support
  https://help.uis.cam.ac.uk/get-started

• How the University and Colleges work
  www.cam.ac.uk/univ/works
  - Alt. Glossary
    www.queens.cam.ac.uk/life-at-queens/about-the-college/university/the-jargon

• Induction — (HR Welcome to Cambridge)
  www.induction.admin.cam.ac.uk

• UIS: www.uis.cam.ac.uk

• Contact: membership@techlink.cam.ac.uk
Any questions?

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Thank you . . .