Welcome to the second edition of the 2008 Information Services department newsletter.

We seek to ensure that the services we deliver in cooperation with colleagues, provides you with the capability to undertake your duties on an every day basis. Whether it’s managing student exam results, checking your email or accessing and updating one of the Institute applications, this newsletter is aimed to give you the information you need on recent and expected changes.

We would like to wish you a Happy Christmas and a successful 2009!

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Enhancing the student services

The IS programme of work takes its direction from the DIT’s strategic priorities. This inevitably means that enhancing and developing student services is a large part of our work load.

Examples of past efforts in support of student service enhancement include the development of a new student email and portal facility, and the rollout of Endnote across the Institute.

Enhancing the student service remains a priority throughout 2008 and many projects are underway to deliver further enhancements in 2009.

For 2009 expect to see:

**Increasing number of wireless hotspots:**
This project which is in its early stages aims to double the existing wireless capacity that is currently available in DIT buildings. A tender has recently been published to select a supplier and over the next three years students and staff will enjoy the benefits of wireless hotspots in communal areas such as learning spaces, common rooms, canteens, & libraries.

**Extended support opening hours**
Given the urgency of our duties and the time constraints we are all subjected to, the IS Support Desk is now opened through lunch time on a pilot basis.

**DIT printing & imaging strategy**
The printing & imaging strategy was detailed in the first issue but giving the significance of the endeavour and the cost saving to the Institute, this is a reminder of the link which details the strategy document: http://intranet.dit.ie/ISPMO/ISSC/35th/ImagingStrategicPlan2008-2011.pdf
The Projects Process

Information Services Steering Committee (ISSC)

ISSC, as the name suggests is the steering committee for Information Services. The primary role of which, is to ensure that the Information Services strategy plan is linked with, and supports the Institute’s strategy.

In accomplishing this, IS undertakes an annual development programme which is coordinated through the IS Programme Management Office (ISPMO) to enhance, implement and upgrade DIT’s applications, infrastructure and services.

To ensure the success of the development programme it is imperative that all DIT stakeholders adhere to the programme.

The following few paragraphs aims to provide more information on ISSC and the development programme.

Who attends ISSC meetings?
ISSC represents the faculties and functions of DIT. It is important that ISSC attendees both represent the views of their constituent department and also communicate ISSC matters. To identify who your local representative is, please see the attendance list on the ISSC minutes at the following link: http://intranet.dit.ie/ISPMO/ISSC.html

Where can I see the minutes of ISSC?
ISSC minutes along with all presentations, handouts, are available at the following link: http://intranet.dit.ie/ISPMO/ISSC.html

What is the IS Programme Management Office (ISPMO)?
The ISPMO was set up to coordinate the selection, approval and delivery of a portfolio of IS projects in a given year. The ISPMO contact is: Jane Murphy
Tel: 402 3379
Email: jane.murphy@dit.ie

How do I propose an IS project?
If you require IS to conduct a piece of work such as provide upgrades/enhancements to infrastructure, applications or services you will be required to complete the project proposal template at the following link: http://intranet.dit.ie/ISPMO/templates.html
It is also advised to contact the ISPMO for further information, in advance of a project proposal submission.

What is the Standing User Group?
The Standing User Group or SUG is concerned with developing/enhancing student IT Information
The Projects Process (Cont’d)

New:

DIT Email & portal facility
Email enhancements played a significant role in the development programme for 2008. Firstly, in 2008 DIT students obtained the benefit of a new Email and portal facility. Feedback tells us that this new facility has simplified communications and made DIT information more accessible.

The second and final phase of email is scheduled to close at the end of the year, the product of which is a new email and portal facility available to all DIT staff.

This new facility not only provides staff with a new email interface but it allows for a range of DIT applications and information to be available from a centralised location.

For further information on the NEW DIT portal or email such as migration schedule or how to change over to the new email facility, please see the following link: http://www.dit.ie/services/ict/email/

CoreHR project 2008

CoreHR, is a project planned and managed by the Human Resources department in coordination with Information Services. The primary deliverables for 2008 includes the rollout of Coretime ESS to Maintenance, Library and support staff. This new facility simplifies how attendance, annual leave and other leave requirements is processed and managed.

The second key deliverable for 2008 is reporting capability. A number of reports have been developed within the IS team which will enable users to run reports without having to build these on each occasion. A number of reports have been rolled out within the Human Resources department and these will be rolled out to the faculties in the new year.
The Student Programme
The previous page has mentioned the structure of the Student programme in terms of the role of AISMG & SUG.

There are two elements of the student programme that progressed in 2008: the Diploma Supplement and the Electronic Grade Book (EGB).

Diploma Supplement
The Diploma Supplement is a formal document available to all students by higher education institutions on the successful completion of any higher education qualification.

It describes the qualification that the student has been awarded in a standard format that is designed to be easily understood and straightforward to compare. The supplement contains information on the nature, level, context and status of the studies that were undertaken.

We would like to thank our colleagues in the School of Computing and the School of Control Systems & Electrical Engineering for piloting the Diploma Supplement System which provides electronic access to the supplement for graduates, employers and other parties to whom the graduate grants viewing permission.

Electronic Grade Book [EGB]
Enhancements delivered as a results to the Electronic Grade Book are ongoing and academic and examinations staff will enjoy new benefits in the new year.

Infrastructure replacement 2009 –’11
Information Services operate more than 100 database, application and web servers running a variety of operating systems (OpenVMS, Windows, Tru64 Unix, Solaris and Linux). The primary existing database environment is based on the HP Alpha platform with Oracle on Tru64 Unix which has been in use for a number of years.

Given the increasing risk associated with ageing hardware, and the end of life approaching, Information Service commenced a Business Continuity project in 2008. The aim of which was to procure a hardware platform to support their database application layer.

The procurement process for this extensive piece of work is underway and database applications will be scheduled to migrate to the new platform over the next three years.

Mission critical applications such as CMIS [timetabling], Core Payroll\HR will be included in the schedule for 2009.

Launch of new IS Website
Information Services are due to launch a new website in 2009. This site will incorporate the latest information on IT projects, the Information Services Steering Committee, (ISSC) and details of all the latest services.

In parallel IS will launch a new technical website aimed at the technically inspired staff of DIT. This site is intended to be a hub of technical information and support. Other conveniences will include links to downloadable software and communications forums.

Mount St. benefits from Networking programme
The first of many sites to benefit from one of the important projects of 2008, is Mount St. The upgrade is now completed which with increase bandwidth up to 20 times the original speed.

Other site such as Portland row, Temple bar, Chatham Row, are due the same increase over the coming weeks.