Information Technology and Digital Services are vital enablers of the Securing Success Strategy
The future has never been so close, or as enticing as it is right now. The benefits of emerging technologies will continue to have a positively disruptive influence on the success and reputation of Western Sydney University and we will be seen as a leader in technology enhanced learning and research in the Australian sector over the next five years.

IT and Digital Services (ITDS) will pave the digital path, enabling the University’s success to be extended by the fantastic opportunities that technology can bring. This strategy brings together a number of elements:

- The direction and strategies of the University itself, which are embodied in the Securing Success strategy, the 2014 IT Strategic Directions paper and individual unit plans, which provide an emboldened perspective on how technology can be utilised to achieve these objectives.

- Proposed Higher Education policy and funding changes are an opportunity for reflection to ensure we are well positioned for competitive advantage as students’ perception of what tertiary education looks like continues to evolve.

- Prevailing digital trends are commonly referred to as Social, Mobile, Analytics and Cloud services. These trends also reflect the expectations of staff and students in terms of how they are engaged, the quality of services provided and their continuous availability.

- The capabilities, processes and measures needed within IT and Digital Services (and other units delivering IT capabilities) ensure operational stability, the effective deployment of solutions, and meeting the heightened expectations of stakeholders. Where we cannot or should not do it for ourselves, external partners should be utilised.

Operating across all campuses, IT and Digital Services is a vital enabler of the University’s Securing Success Strategy. ITDS provides and supports the applications, infrastructure, information and end user services which connect the University community locally, nationally and internationally.

The role of the ITDS is to be a leader as much as a service provider. ITDS implements digital environments built on solid foundations and enduring relationships that, when combined, drive productivity, creativity and discovery, enabling the University to make a difference. ITDS develops strong partnerships with all key stakeholders including external providers, in order to bring innovators together to quickly identify and respond to new and impactful technologies.

The ability of the University to maximise the opportunities presented by digital technologies is now a key organisational capability. To do so enables our academic staff, researchers and students to thrive, extending our reach to the local and international community, and to fulfil the potential of Western Sydney University graduates.

“The 2020 Western Sydney University will be globally renowned as an innovative, exciting organisation at the forefront of technology use in all areas of scholarly activity”
**Future Now:** Securing Digital Success 2015-2020 sets out 5 core objectives, each guided by 7 strategic digital principles that will ensure that Western Sydney University Secures Digital Success by 2020.

IT and Digital Services’ mission is to ensure that Western Sydney University is ‘consistently contemporary’. This will be achieved through simplifying our approach to core services allowing for increased and focused innovation in order to differentiate ourselves from other competitors.

The following seven strategic digital principles provide a framework of relevance for IT and Digital Services and the broader university that guide the objectives outlined in this document but also any new opportunities that are revealed as the technology and tertiary education landscape changes in the future.

**Table 1: Strategic Digital Principles – Guiding technology decision making across the organisation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service excellence</td>
<td>The technology is secondary to the overall user experience. We recognise that IT must be functional but it must also be easy to access, easy to use, available when it is needed and is well supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empower technology users</td>
<td>Automate – Orchestrate – Replicate. Technology automation reduces the need for manual intervention and speeds up access to services. Orchestration enables self-service, and replication reduces duplication of effort. Students, researchers and staff need to be able to personalise their digital experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITDS as a trusted advisor, broker, aggregator</td>
<td>With strong vendor relationships, corporate buying power, significant knowledge, experience and skills across all technologies and the broadest understanding of the digital landscape within the University, ITDS must be the first port of call for any IT service requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any device, anywhere, anytime</td>
<td>Supports the “Cloud first, always mobile” model. Leverage cloud based managed service offerings wherever it is possible and appropriate to do so. It reduces overheads, offers economies of scale, increases service agility and flexibility and improves our Green IT credentials. Solutions must always be agile, mobile and accessible across all common platforms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideate, collaborate, innovate</td>
<td>Digital technologies offer new opportunities to improve the way we teach, learn, research and engage. ITDS will initiate and facilitate conversations with partners within and beyond the University to encourage and nurture innovation wherever it originates in order to expand and enhance the Western Sydney University experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively simplify</td>
<td>The most effective solutions are often ones we already have. The University has a comprehensive portfolio of existing technology - much of which can and should be used more broadly. Simplifying, consolidating and streamlining our business processes and our portfolio of technologies reduces cost and risk, improves agility and, importantly, supports improvement of the student experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy, not build</td>
<td>Out of the box and off the shelf technology solutions are sophisticated, readily available, sustainable and usually have well established support and maintenance. We will focus on configuration rather than customisation to further reduce complexity. Our technology and processes should be fit for purpose, financially sustainable, scaled to suit our needs and support good practices and open standards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**1 | Globalising the Digital Experience**

**Students, researchers and staff will be able to learn, teach and work in a range of flexible ways using a streamlined portfolio of digital technologies, anywhere and on any device.**

Consumerisation of technology puts cutting edge capabilities in households across the world and it continues to transform the way we live, work and learn. Our students, researchers and staff are increasingly making decisions about their education and place of work based in part by the technology experiences that they can expect. They often come to the university already familiar and comfortable with modern IT facilities. It is essential that Western Sydney University adds to the appeal of study and work by delivering a connected experience that they can embrace and that fits with their lifestyles.

This strategic objective supports delivery of a distinctly student focussed experience but in addition supports all objectives of the Securing Success strategy. We will:

1. **Extend our existing designs to strengthen and extend our technology enhanced learning spaces, so that they ably support face-to-face, off-campus and multi-location teaching needs allowing students to study at their convenience.**

2. **Provide IT systems and infrastructure equipping the University to deliver collaborative, high quality, flexible educational programs and effective, accessible learning and teaching support.**

3. **Provide a compelling online experience, leveraging existing capabilities and identifying and delivering the new services required.**

4. **Provide enhanced and extended support to researchers and research management through easier access to appropriate computing capacity, facilities, systems and training regardless of location.**

5. **Ensure our online capabilities enable staff and students, including international students, to access the services they want, whenever they wish, from wherever they are, using any device they choose and in a manner that is personalised for each individual.**

6. **Deliver high-quality support services to staff and students via the IT Service Desk, self-help, campus support, and specialist expertise that encourage staff and students to seek support when needed, no matter where they are located.**

### Measures of Success

- Increased capability in international recruitment
- Improved global access to digital tools
- Increased number of innovative teaching spaces
- Increased student and staff satisfaction
- Availability and accessibility of online materials

“A **distinctively student-centred University**”

“A **unique learning experience that is innovative, flexible and responsive**”

“An **expanding international reach and reputation**”
By 2020, Western Sydney University will be seen as a leader in the area of digital research practice by leveraging easy to access digital services.

In partnership with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice President (Research and Development), the Library, and other key stakeholders, this strategy will support the objectives of the University’s research plan by helping to create an environment where digital technologies energise the collaborative conduct of high-impact, high-integrity research with minimal geographical and organisational constraints. It will support the transition to a research culture where digital technologies are integral to the entire research lifecycle.

Our aim is to work with stakeholders within and beyond the university to ensure our researchers have the digital resources, infrastructure, support and skills required, wherever they are on the path to an eResearch ready Western Sydney University. We will:

2.1 Extend and improve the University’s research data management, high performance computing and collaboration services, and ensure effective support for large data sets and analytical capabilities.

2.2 Take full advantage of cloud based research and authentication services in order to strengthen our ability to collaborate with the world’s best research expertise, especially those provided by sector-specific organisations.

2.3 Engage with and leverage the governance of eResearch projects, activities and strategy development to lead development of new services that can be broadly utilised.

2.4 Target ease of access to digital services that enable researchers to focus on their research rather than on technology.

**Measures of Success**

- Enhanced global research collaboration
- Improved global access to digital tools
- Increased elasticity of digital capacity
- Technology vendors contributing to research outcomes
- Improved researcher satisfaction with their digital toolkit and its accessibility

“A vibrant research-led University with regional, national and global impact”

“A dynamic and innovative culture that secures success”
By 2020, Western Sydney University will have maximised opportunities for its learners through technology partnerships, smart analytics and high quality constituent relationship management.

The rapid growth of the Greater Western Sydney region presents both opportunities and responsibilities that our University seeks to embrace through local engagement. At the same time, globalisation affords opportunities for us to extend its widening participation approach to students across the globe to encourage new talent into the region. Technology has never been more important in removing barriers to education.

Greater use of data is essential to allow the University to understand and personalise current and future domestic and international student experiences across a vibrant and diverse student population as well as support lifelong connection to the University community through our Alumni.

In order to support an expanded international profile, to enhance our engagement across all sectors within Greater Western Sydney and to develop robust outcomes from the overall engagement strategy, we will:

3.1 Develop a 360 degree view of our relationships with external and internal stakeholders that brings together all the disparate points of contact into a single perspective, leveraging the latest relationship management platforms and techniques.

3.2 Support the development of an effective communications strategy to deliver the right communications using channels that will engage, influence and promote our offerings with a strong emphasis on social media.

3.3 Identify opportunities to collaborate with the Higher Education sector, Business, Government and other external organisations so that we may jointly deliver the leading technology services that we could not achieve by acting alone. Leverage our strong industry links to further enhance research and learning activity.

3.4 Mature the IT Relationship Management function to ensure ITDS maintains productive strategic conversations with all areas of the organisation enabling innovation, service design and operational excellence.

3.5 Shape new approaches to customer focussed analytics, business and operational intelligence that allow personalisation of student experiences.

3.6 Actively encourage IT and Digital Services staff to participate in engagement opportunities.

3.7 Draw upon the talent of our students and staff to help drive technology use and shape our digital future.

Measures of Success

- Improved understanding of and reporting around relationships
- Increase in number of successful partnerships
- Opportunities for work integrated learning within ITDS
- ITDS seen as the provider of choice of new digital services
- Increased student and staff satisfaction
- Level of engagement of staff and students shaping our digital future

“A distinctively student-centred University”

“A leading advocate and champion for the Greater Western Sydney Region and its people”
By 2020, Western Sydney University will be adept at embracing new technologies, with all areas practiced in successful technology adoption, equipped with skills, knowledge and high quality support providing a high degree of confidence in existing and new technology use.

We acknowledge our responsibility to grow knowledge and skills in emerging technology use and support, both within ITDS and across the organisation to ensure our University is best placed to take advantage of new trends. This not only means embracing new technologies but also letting go of out of date technologies, improving business process and streamlining our technology architecture.

We will engage the business owners of systems to ensure that they meet requirements by:

4.1 Managing a governance framework that aligns our technology investments and roadmaps with University strategies and initiatives. The framework will support clear policy development and IT practices delivering value to the University.

4.2 Continually review and improve IT processes, knowledge and services to drive effective and efficient technology use that makes IT and Digital Services a trusted advisor, partner and enabler.

4.3 Utilise technology to reduce the time for staff and students to perform both routine and increasingly complex activities online, in conjunction with a thorough review of business processes and policies to simplify requirements as much as possible.

4.4 Continuing to introduce industry standard good practices in managing the information technology portfolio. Improving our maturity and capability in identifying and implementing the right services for our University, and ensuring the benefits are achieved.

4.5 Strengthen and enhance management of IT risks, focusing our efforts through project, operational, and IT governance assessments and striking an agreed balance between risk and innovation so that we can confidently deploy new capabilities.

4.6 Actively shape and evolve the IT and Digital Services culture to reflect the University’s requirements, so that we can be nimble enough to embrace change through a focus on technical capability, leadership skills and organisational flexibility.

4.7 Support the development of digital skills and capability across the University by working in collaboration with internal partners at all stages of digital services lifecycle.

Measures of Success

- Maturity and performance of ITDS processes and practices
- Continual improvement in effective use of technology for learning, teaching and research
- Spend on strategic technology projects per EFTSL
- Increased demand for and use of knowledge management
- Improving value by increasing the use of enterprise-wide technologies to drive effective and efficient use of existing assets

“A dynamic and innovative culture that secures success”
By 2020, Western Sydney University will be acknowledged as a leader in the use of emerging digital technology to drive innovative practice in the way we deliver learning, teaching, research and engagement.

IT and Digital Services will lead and collaborate in digital technology innovation; provide advice to University stakeholders and leverage proposals and suggestions for innovation from user groups and external providers. We will facilitate innovative ideas and encourage challenging conversations.

We will build a balance between real-world requirements, financial constraints and bold innovation. We will actively encourage experimentation and work with internal and external sources of expertise and ideas. We will collaborate with key departments to review our processes, policies and practices and seek opportunities to innovate beyond the use of technology. To this end we will:

5.1 Establish learning and teaching technology roadmaps and capabilities that align with organisational strategies and leverage technology to the maximum extent possible.

5.2 Facilitate strategic conversations across Western Sydney University bringing together expertise from a wide range of sources – both internal and external to capture and nurture ideas that challenge the way the University operates and drive a passion for improvement.

5.3 Model a culture of experimentation, thought leadership and knowledge sharing including learning quickly from failure.

5.4 Leverage our existing relationships with major local and global technology providers to explore new ways of working, build capacity, access cutting edge technology and ensure we are a leader in innovation, including how technology can enable new ways of teaching, for example exploring the use of gamification and immersive technologies to support advanced approaches to learning, teaching and research.

5.5 Design distinctive spaces (in collaboration with Capital Works and Facilities and other key stakeholders) that provide a richly connected experience, by making both obvious and subtle use of technology, and providing users with contextual information based on their location.

5.6 Regularly consult with and inform our stakeholders within and beyond the University on developing initiatives and emerging innovation.

5.7 Showcase innovation to further enhance the brand of Western Sydney University.

Measures of Success

Shift in ratio of spending from support to innovation
Acceptance of a risk management strategy that incorporates innovation
Number of successful initiatives that leverage disruptive technologies
Opportunities to showcase the deployment of innovative capabilities
Evidence of a culture of experimentation and iterative improvement

“A dynamic and innovative culture that secures success”

“A unique learning experience that is innovative, flexible and responsive”
QUALITY AND RISK

Our students, staff and community partners use technologies to communicate, collaborate, research, learn, teach and conduct business. Increasingly these activities are expected to be available at any time and any place, balancing the considerable challenge of privacy and security with flexibility and agility. Achievement of the Future Now strategy will require defined quality processes combined with measured risk taking through iterative experimentation, prototyping, collaboration and innovation. The seven strategic digital principles are designed to drive quality outputs supported by mature risk management approaches woven into the fabric of our processes.

IT and Digital Services (ITDS) have developed a solid reputation for service improvement and the introduction of best practice in the areas of project management, IT service management (ITSM) and cultural change which continue to promote high quality services. ITDS will build on this success to deliver practices and processes that ensure service reliability, cost effectiveness, sustainability, quality and security of our systems and technology solutions.

We will continue to implement and measure quality and risk by actively pursuing certification in staff’s skills, accreditation in work practices, engaging in benchmarking activities, participating in industry standard events and continually reviewing service performance. These activities are supported by a dedicated Service Management Office (SMO), a Digital Security and Risk portfolio and the ITDS Leadership Team providing accountability for delivery of quality outcomes built upon a consistent risk based approach to technology and technology services.