Future Now: Securing Digital Success 2018-2020

This strategy provides a framework to seamlessly support the decisions and operational plans of Information Technology and Digital Services (ITDS), a portfolio of the Office of the Vice President (Finance and Resources).

Our Purpose

The purpose of Information Technology and Digital Services (ITDS) is to advance the use of digital technologies, serving the needs of the Western Sydney University community with student experience, learning, teaching and research as our focus.

Our Vision

To create a future where we are known for service, excellence, insight and innovation.

Our Values

- **Act Ethically**
  - We will be Respectful
  - We will act with integrity and personal leadership
  - We will be transparent in our decision making
  - We will act in the best interests of the University

- **Be Responsible**
  - We will put people first
  - We will focus on quality
  - We will communicate and engage effectively
  - Take pride in our success, accept our mistakes and learn from them

- **Work Collaboratively**
  - We will build enduring relationships, based on respect
  - We will support, advise, enable and actively participate
  - We will share knowledge within ITDS and the University community

Our Service Promise

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 any place and all the time, balancing the considerable challenge of privacy and security with flexibility and agility.

Operating across all campuses, ITDS provides and supports the applications, infrastructure, information and end user services which connect the University community locally, nationally and globally.

IT and Digital Services (ITDS) have developed a solid reputation for Service Improvement and the introduction of best practices. 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.
Foreword

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.

This revised Future Now strategy includes our achievements since its initial release in 2015 and amendments generated by a mid-term review of the University’s Securing Success strategy, now phased for 2018 – 2020.

IT & Digital Services (ITDS) will continue to 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:

Existing Strategies and Plans

The direction and strategies of the University, which are embodied in the Securing Success strategy, together with the Divisional and Unit plans provide an emboldened perspective on how technology can be utilised to achieve the university’s objectives.

Changing Higher Education Landscape

Higher Education policy and funding changes require 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

Prevailing digital trends, which 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.

Capabilities, processes and measures

The capabilities, processes and measures needed within Information Technology and Digital Services to ensure operational stability, the effective deployment of solutions, and meeting the heightened expectations of stakeholders.

ITDS as a leader, enabler and partner

ITDS seeks to be a Leader as much as service provider. We build digital environments based on solid foundations and enduring relationships that drive productivity, creativity and discovery, enabling each of us to make a difference. We will continue to develop strong partnerships with all key stakeholders including external providers, so that we can bring innovators together to quickly identify and respond to new and impactful technologies.
Future Now Achievements 2015-2017

In the first three years of Future Now, ITDS have made significant improvements and innovated technology solutions that support our five objectives. Key achievements include:

- Innovative master plans resulting in the delivery of much-heralded technology-infused vertical campuses and immersive spaces
- Expanded use of cloud technologies for everyday purposes e.g. Office365, and the setup of a managed private cloud for system environments
- Robust foundations upon which digital services rely e.g. network, Wi-Fi, perimeter security and video collaboration capabilities
- Sector-leading teaching space designs, digital signage, way-finding and queue management services
- New services for Researchers including availability of an externally provided Research Cloud
- Improved maturity of security, risk and compliance processes and a robust systems integration capability
- New platforms for international recruitment, travel and expenses, learner analytics and many others
- Delivery of business-led projects of which the Western rebranding and the Digital Marketing Platform are key examples
- Seamlessly integrated new responsibilities into ITDS as a result of shared services and other changes
Strategic Context

Future Now: Securing Digital Success 2018-2020 sets out 6 core objectives, each guided by 6 strategic digital principles that will ensure that Western Sydney University continues to Secure Digital Success.

IT and Digital Services aspire to ensure that Western Sydney University is ‘consistently contemporary’ in its use of digital technologies. This will be achieved through simplifying our approach to core services allowing for increased and focussed innovation in order to differentiate ourselves within the sector and beyond.

We will continue to implement and measure quality and risk by actively pursuing alignment of work practice and good practice, participating in industry standard events to ensure currency, engaging in benchmarking to inform improvements and continually reviewing our service performance.

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 all learners.

Our Six Core Objectives

Our six core objectives align with the Securing Success 2018-2020 Strategic Plan with a focus on digital technology and service. They are:

1 Enhancing 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, on any device and at any time.

2 Facilitating World Class Research

Western Sydney University continues to be seen as a leader in the area of research practice by leveraging easy to access digital services.

3 Promoting University Engagement

IT and Digital Services strive to maximise opportunities for learners through technology partnerships, smart analytics and high-quality constituent relationship management.

4 Building Digital Capability

Through knowledge management, high quality support, self-service initiatives, training and capability opportunities, staff and students will be adept at leveraging existing technologies and embracing new technologies with a high degree of confidence.

5 Powering Up Innovation

Western Sydney University is 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.

6 Focus on the Business of Information Technology

This objective recognises the ongoing work required to sustain information technology and digital services to provide governance, operational support and improvements.
critical to ensuring ITDS continue to meet organisational priorities.

**Our Six Strategic Principles**

The following six 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.

**1 Service Excellence**

The technology is secondary to the overall user experience. We recognise that digital services must be functional but also easy to access, easy to use, personalised and well supported. ITDS plans for success through operational resilience, embedded security and effective risk management.

**2 Trusted advisor, partner and enabler**

With strong vendor relationships, corporate buying power, significant knowledge, experience and skills and the broadest understanding of the digital landscape within the University, ITDS seeks to partner with all stakeholders to achieve their digital ambitions.

**3 Actively Simplify, Adopt and Adapt**

Simplify, optimise, consolidate and streamline our processes and technologies to reduce complexity, increase agility and improve the student and staff experience. Adopt commercial solutions and adapt our business processes to suit.

**4 Ideate, Innovate and Iterate**

ITDS will engage with partners within and beyond the University to encourage and nurture innovation, delivering digital services in an agile manner that befits modern practices and expectations.

**5 Any Device, anywhere, all the time**

Solutions must be agile, mobile and accessible across all common platforms, and always be available where and when needed. Leverage cloud-based service offerings wherever it is possible and appropriate to do so.

**6 Collaborate Effectively**

Collaboration that’s focused on business outcomes but also aligns with the need for governance, transparency, accountability and fairness ensures the business of IT is properly conducted to maintain alignment with the university’s strategy and objectives.
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, on any device and at any time.

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 digital services. 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:

1.1 Evolve next generation learning spaces

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.

1.2 Optimise infrastructure for flexibility

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

1.3 Provide a compelling online experience

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

1.4 Provide flexible access to online services

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.

1.5 Deliver high quality support services

Deliver high quality support services to staff and students via the 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.
In support of Securing Success 2018-2020:

1 A distinctively student-centred University

1.1 Engage students in the development of a continually improving student-focused experience

1.2 Utilise research and data analytics to inform, test and optimise experiences leading to improved student outcomes

1.4 Continue to build the capacity of staff to support students as active participants by strengthening career preparedness and employability through internships and placements

1.6 Provide accessible and personalised support services that meet student’s learning needs at all stages of their study

1.7 Ensure that all learning and personal support services positively differentiate the Western student experience

1.10 Monitor and evaluate the quality of student learning and support to improve students’ engagement, impact, outcomes and satisfaction

4 An expanding international reach and reputation

4.1 Ensure on-shore international students have a seamless experience from their first enquiry through to graduation and alumni relationships

5 An Anchor Institution, Leading Advocate and Champion for Greater Western Sydney and its people

5.3 Work with industry, business and government to ensure program meets the needs of regional employers and are supported by work-integrated learning, internships and international placements

5.4 Offer a range of course delivery formats that increase access and student choice

6 A dynamic and innovative culture that secures success

6.5 Continue to invest in cutting-edge technology and equip and train staff to ensure excellence in contemporary learning, teaching and research
Western Sydney University continues to be seen as a leader in the area of research practice by leveraging easy to access digital services.

In partnership with the Office of the DVC (Research and Innovation), 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 a Research-ready Western Sydney University. We will:

2.1 **Extend and improve services to researchers**

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

2.2 **Maximise cloud-based offerings**

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 **Participate fully in Research Governance**

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

2.4 **Ensure easy access for researchers**

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

2.5 **Enhance Research Support**

Provide enhanced and extended support to researchers and research management through easier access to appropriate computing capacity, facilities, systems and training regardless of location. ITDS will collaborate with researchers in developing capacity and capability and providing the digital toolsets to aid in their endeavours.
In support of Securing Success 2018-2020:

2. A research led university with regional, national and global impact

2.1 Develop a comprehensive, long-term research precinct and infrastructure strategy to support and embed our researchers and partnership priorities

2.2 Build research-informed networks by engaging and partnering with industry, business, government and community at all stages of the research lifecycle

6. A dynamic and innovative culture that secures success

6.5 Continue to invest in cutting-edge technology and equip and train staff to ensure excellence in contemporary learning, teaching and research
IT and Digital Services strive to maximise opportunities for 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 **Establish a mature CRM**

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 **Develop an effective communications strategy**

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 **Establish wise partnerships**

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 IT relationships**

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

3.5 **Delve into data**

Shape new approaches to customer focussed analytics, business and operational intelligence that allow personalisation of student experiences.
3.6 Get IT staff involved

Actively encourage IT and Digital Services Staff to participate in engagement opportunities with students and the wider community.

3.7 Tap into Unlimited talent

Draw upon the talent of our students and staff to help drive technology use and shape our digital future through programs that encourage internships, placements and student participation in IT governance structures.

In support of Securing Success 2018-2020:

1 A distinctively student-centred university

1.2 Utilise research and data-analytics to inform, test and optimise experiences leading to improved student outcomes

1.4 Continue to build the capacity of staff to support students as active participants by strengthening career preparedness and employability through internships and placements

1.9 Encourage and promote student involvement in the university’s governance structures

4 an expanding international reach and reputation

4.1 Ensure on-shore international students have a seamless experience from their first inquiry through to graduation and alumni relationships

5 An Anchor Institution, Leading Advocate and Champion for Greater Western Sydney and its people

5.3 Work with industry, business and government to ensure programs meet the needs of regional employers and are supported by work-integrated learning, internships and international placements

5.10 Work with government, industry and community partners to advocate on issues that harness opportunities for Greater Western Sydney
Through knowledge management, high quality support, self-service initiatives, training and capability opportunities, staff and students will be adept at leveraging existing technologies and embracing new technologies with a high degree of confidence.

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 removing out-of-date technologies, improving business process and streamlining our technology architecture. An important strategy is the continued investment in the capabilities of our staff to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving technology landscape

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

4.1 Strategically aligning governance
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 Continual Improvement
Continually review and improve IT supports 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 Improving business processes
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 Improving management of IT portfolio
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 Balancing risk and innovation
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 Getting comfortable with change
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 with commitment to the on-going well-being of our staff.
### 4.7 Ensure a dynamic, innovative and respectful culture that is future ready

Support the development of digital skills and capability in IT and Digital Services and across the University by providing opportunities for growth and change in career progression to meet the changing needs of the IT workforce.

### In support of Securing Success 2018-2020:

**1 A distinctively student-centred university**

1.2 Utilise research and data-analytics to inform, test and optimise experiences leading to improved student outcomes

1.10 Monitor and evaluate the quality of student learning and support to improve students’ engagement, impact, outcomes and satisfaction

**6 A dynamic and innovative culture that secures success**

6.1 Ensure the highest standards of university governance and accountability and promote inclusive and participatory decision-making

6.2 Focus on recruiting, retaining and developing a high-quality workforce that reflects the diversity of the region

6.4 Deliver a range of relevant career development opportunities and training, particularly for early and mid-career staff, in the capabilities and skills required for the University to succeed in a competitive sector

6.6 Build a competitive, efficient and financially-sustainable organisation that strikes a balance between quality and affordability in a competitive higher education market

6.7 Foster a commitment to the health, well-being and safety of our staff and students

6.9 Embrace and embed sustainability within the University’s culture

6.10 Continue to be recognised as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality
Western Sydney University is 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 technology roadmaps and capabilities

Establish digital service and technology roadmaps and capabilities that align with organisational strategies and leverage technology to the maximum extent possible.

5.2 Facilitate strategic conversations

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 an innovative culture

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

5.4 Leverage technology providers

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.

5.5 Design connected environments

Design distinctive spaces (in collaboration with the DVC (Academic), the Office of Estate and Commercial, 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 Increase transparency

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

5.7 Showcase the University’s digital innovation

Showcase technology and digital innovation to further enhance the brand of Western Sydney University.

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This objective recognises the ongoing work required to sustain information technology and digital services to provide governance, operational support and improvements critical to ensuring ITDS continue to meet organisational priorities.

6.1 Information Security
Continue to invest in information security to increase awareness of the risks and strategies, the best practice tools and processes needed to protect the University’s digital assets.

6.2 Enterprise Architecture
Define and encourage adoption a University-wide enterprise architecture practice incorporating technical principles and standards in support of effective IT governance.

6.3 Shared Service Model
Continue to embed and consolidate shared services model and service delivery improvements.

6.4 Recognise the value of our data assets
Improve support for the storage, access, classification, management and compliance requirements for data across the University, including research data.

6.5 IT Workforce Development
Continue to invest in developing the IT skills, capabilities and experiences that will see our IT workforce able to meet the challenges of rapidly evolving technologies and ways of working.

6.6 IT Procurement and Vendor Management
Ensure end to end transparency and probity in relation to the selection and procurement of IT services and pursue opportunities to streamline and simplify IT purchasing.

6.7 Change Management
Improve our ability to deliver projects and programs to the University through best practices and training related to project management, change management and business process improvement.

6.8 Sustainability and Green IT
Support Western Sydney University’s sustainability agenda in the selection and operation of IT equipment and reducing e-waste.

6.9 Common Platforms and Foundational Strategies
In collaboration with the University business, academic and research stakeholders improve efficiency in enhanced use of information technology by building common platforms together and ensuring our systems are resilient.
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