



"The only irreplaceable capital an organisation possesses is the knowledge and ability of its people. The productivity of that capital depends on how effectively people share their experience with those that can use it."

Andrew Carnegie

Foreword

The University of Edinburgh is famous for the quality, scope and scale of its Library and for the leading position it has acquired in the provision of computer services and e-learning. Our reputation for successful leading edge innovation is such that we have secured funding for many important flagship UK projects. The University also is the base for very many Informatics researchers who have international recognition. Our various great strengths are set out in the main chapters of the Knowledge Management Strategic Plan that accompanies this strategic overview.

We can all be proud of the work that has already been done by those in the University concerned with Knowledge Management. The task for us now is to continue to build upon the achievements thus far, working collaboratively to take advantage of the continuing advances in information and communication technologies for the benefit of students, researchers and all staff. The Knowledge Management Strategic Plan will help us identify roadmaps and shared priorities, and will facilitate great enhancements to the resources we can offer all the learners and scholars in our community.

I encourage all readers of this document to engage in frank debate about what we must achieve in the near future and what is, in principle, possible for us in the next ten years if we take proper advantage of our great strengths. This document is a key tool in making University wide progress with Knowledge Management, and as such it will evolve and change in response to your contributions.

Timothy O'Shea

Principal and Vice Chancellor
University of Edinburgh

Introduction

The Knowledge Management Strategic (KMS) Plan has been developed within the context of the University's Strategic Plan, ensuring that the University's strategy is foremost in guiding the management of our knowledge resources and capabilities.

The University's mission is the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and understanding.

The KMS Plan outlines the strategy for knowledge management within the University whilst the internal document, the Knowledge Management Operational Plan, provides a framework within which information and knowledge goals and actions can be developed. The aim of these objectives and actions is to enable all members of the University to easily and seamlessly connect to information and knowledge whenever it is needed and wherever it resides; and to exploit it effectively for teaching and learning, research, and knowledge transfer. The Knowledge Management Operational Plan describes what the University does and what it intends to do in relation to information technology, information infrastructure, information creation, access, distribution and management. It aims to achieve a coherent approach to information and knowledge sharing initiatives.

"Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information on it."

Samuel Johnson

University Core Mission

- to sustain and develop its position as a research and teaching institution of the highest international quality and to benchmark its performance against world-class standards;
- to provide an outstanding educational environment, supporting study across a broad range of academic disciplines and serving the major professions;
- to produce graduates equipped for high personal and professional achievement; and
- to contribute to society, promoting health, economic and cultural well-being.

University Goals and Operational Priorities

The University has identified three core strategic goals in support of its mission. In turn, these goals are supported by three cross cutting goals and the University's operational priorities (see Table 1).

"A little knowledge that acts is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle."

Kahlil Gibran

Core strategic goals	Excellence in education	Excellence in research	Excellence in knowledge transfer and commercialisation
	Quality infrastructure		
	Quality services		
Cross-cutting supporting goals	Quality knowledge management		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting opportunity and diversity • Developing leadership and management • Advancing internationalisation • Engaging with the wider community • Building effective partnerships and collaborations • Effective governance and ensuring sustainability 		
Operational priorities			

Table 1 Source: University of Edinburgh Strategic Plan 2004-08¹

The development of the KMS Plan has cut across separate institutional groups and focused on those functions which are necessary to ensure delivery of the strategic objectives, and as such the aim of knowledge management within the University is:

To provide the knowledge management infrastructure and services that empower and promote the University's business.

In support of this, the following objectives have been identified which require the University to:

- Provide high quality, shareable, relevant and authoritative information that supports teaching, learning, research and management;
- Develop efficient and effective information and IT infrastructures, systems and services that facilitate and enhance the work of all users, both now and in the future;
- Enable a collaborative culture in which the sharing of knowledge and information is an integrated part of routine business

¹ <http://www.planning.ed.ac.uk/SP2004-08/StrategicPlan.pdf>

Strategies

To assist in the achievement of these objectives, the University has identified a set of strategies which include:

Scholarly Information Resources:

- acquiring and making accessible scholarly information resources including, in both digital and traditional formats, books, serials, archives and manuscript in response to the needs of learning and research.

Information Support Services:

- providing excellent help and support for users where and when it is required, supporting changes in methods of learning and research.

Support for Research Computing

- providing a world class research computing services, which will be based on a sustainable University-wide model

Educational Technologies and Infrastructure

- developing an e-learning support and infrastructure that encourages and enables curriculum development and diverse modes of learning

Transferable Skills

- providing training courses, support and resources that equip staff and students to acquire transferable skills to enable them to work more effectively now and in the future

Core Infrastructure:

- developing pervasive, advanced, reliable, resilient and secure network access systems, with links to local, national and international networks and services, able to deliver applications to users wherever and whenever they are required

Strategic Approach to New and Emerging Technologies

- constantly surveying the horizon for new and emerging technologies that may enable the University to improve its business

Administrative Support Services

- increasing integration and interoperability of administrative tools and improving end-user relevance to eliminate unnecessary duplication and work towards common systems and services

Management of Information Legislation

- ensuring that all activities and policies comply with relevant legislation, meeting quality assurance standards

Management of Information Resources and Services

- ensuring an effective and efficient approach to integrated information management in support of the University's mission

"Knowledge can be enormously costly, and is often scattered in widely uneven fragments, too small to be individually usable in decision making. The communication and coordination of these scattered fragments of knowledge is one of the basic problems- perhaps *the* basic problem- of any society."

Thomas Sowell





"He is wise who knows the sources of knowledge — who knows who has written and where it is to be found."

AA Hodge

Human Resources

- working in partnership with Colleges and Support Groups to equip all staff with the skills and knowledge to work more effectively to create and promote Knowledge Management in every contribution to the University's mission

Knowledge Transfer

- maximising the contribution of knowledge, ideas, skill and expertise generated within the University for economic, educational, social and cultural benefits for society as a whole

Behind these strategies are a set of drivers, key to the delivery of the Knowledge Management Strategy. These are summarised as follows [to]:

- Be a more efficient and cohesive organisation with easier user access to relevant and authoritative information whenever it is required, wherever it resides;
- Improve our business processes within the information environment, smoothing the interfaces, improving interactions and reducing duplication of effort;
- Support innovation and the acceleration of research and development;
- Encourage a collaborative culture where sharing knowledge and information is part of routine business.

Both the drivers and the strategies have at their core a basic set of principles, namely that:

1. Responsibilities relating to the creation, management and dissemination of information will be clearly defined.
2. All members of the University will have access to relevant information when they need it, regardless of where they are located.
3. Information will be shared, as far as possible, within legal, ethical or commercial restrictions.
4. Collaboration, cooperation and partnership will be promoted as it will add value to the University's teaching, learning and research agenda.
5. Information will be created once and used many times. "Golden copy" rules apply.

Staging and Timescales

Recognising the need for the KMS Plan to be in an advanced phase prior to the University annual planning round, the staging process for 2005/06 and beyond has been adjusted. In future years the draft text and milestones will be available for consultation from the end of November, with the University's top "Must Do" milestones published by mid-February of the following year.

"Each excellent thing, once learned, serves for a measure of all other knowledge"

Sir Philip Sidney

Strategic Priorities 2005/06

	Activity
1	Improvements are in place to the admissions, curriculum and student record services. There are improved joined up services for students, academic staff and central admin – the EUCLID project
2	Purchasing budget for print and electronic journals and books is maintained, in order to support research, learning, teaching and e-learning. E-journals remain free at point of use to users, whilst the Library pays. Quality of collection benchmarked against other Universities
3	Reporting for the Research assessment exercise is integrated into corporate services and systems
4	Activities that create the greatest duplication and additional cost to the University have been mapped. Priorities for rationalisation are identified and agreed
5	Research grant awards are integrated with other business processes eg financial management
6	Changes necessary to support pay reform are implemented
7	Central services work with College e-learning coordinators and with Schools to develop plans for implementing the University e-learning strategy
8	MyEd portal is available to all members of the University. Services are available anytime, anyplace
9	The new student record database project, EUCLID, includes information on 'reasonable adjustments' which are needed for every individual disabled student on the database (with students' permission). As a result DOSs, course organisers etc can see what each person requires.
10	Mechanisms established for managing publications for RAE through Edinburgh Research Archive
11	Administrative systems link to the major e-learning tools in use in the University
12	A full review of learning spaces
13	Key training and development priorities are identified by the University-wide Assessment of Development Needs Project, and inform the subsequent stages of the project
14	e-learning development and support strategy published
15	Library opening hours are reviewed annually and extended where resources permit
16	University wide Research Computing Committee (RCC) is established, charged with understanding, aggregating and presenting research computing support service requirements across the University. Terms of reference include reporting route, and relationship to other University structures.
17	Policies are established which include definitions of which individuals or groups hold the IPR for

	material that has been or will be created within the University. Guidelines are published which enable the policies to be followed.
18	Specific mechanisms are established to aid (new) Heads of Schools and other key staff to develop their strategic leadership roles
19	Model agreed for sustainability of University wide facilities which recognises that some are of University scale. Model includes mechanisms to ensure fair attribution of costs across the University, and mechanisms to ensure value for money to client research activities
20	Tools to enable the use of e-portfolio and personal development plans...
21	Co-ordinated plan of action published for transferable skills provision for staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students. Includes provision of high quality information about what is available
22	Stable and resilient VLEs and other tools are available
23	Data from balanced scorecard and benchmarking provided to CMG and PSG for planning purposes
24	Incentives are in place to encourage transfer to electronic purchase and use of information resources