

2014 -19 Strategic Plan



ISS Services

Academic Subject Support
Academic and Administrative Computing
Archive and Research Collections
Careers and Employability
Media and IT Support
ICT Infrastructure
Information and Statistics
Research Support Services
University Library

ISS Projects

Graduate Opportunities Wales
(GO Wales)
High Performance Computing
(HPC) Wales
JISC Regional Support Centre
Wales
Welsh Video Network

Academies

Swansea Academy of Learning
and Teaching (SALT)

Swansea Employability Academy
(SEA)

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Introduction

In the 1930's, University College Swansea decided to invest in the first permanent building beyond Singleton Abbey. Following a national competition, Verner O. Rees was selected to build the iconic 1937 Library. In the 60's and 70's the university expanded significantly, doubling in size and taking in most of the land to the west of the main driveway. Today, the university is again expanding, taking another beachfront location that will be home to several thousand students from Autumn 2015.

Leading up to the launch of the Science and Innovation Campus and the centenary of the university in 2020, ISS will support and enable Swansea to be a UK top 30 and world top 200 university. To achieve this, at a time when all universities are also working to increase their profiles, will be a challenge that requires the university and ISS to rethink our services in part or in whole. The Science and Innovation Campus will transform the university, and ISS will transform its services to meet the demands of our increasingly complex environment.

If there is to be a set of words that define this time for ISS they would be:

Composed	Collective
Digital	Open

As we approach these developments we will *compose* ourselves in a way that befits our collections, our services, our staff and their experience. We will work *collectively* to enhance all our services and investigate areas where new approaches will benefit our users. We will be *open* to benefit everyone from researchers to cultural and community activities and while we will recognise and celebrate our print collections, the future is and will be *digital*.

In the current transitional period, libraries are providing two parallel infrastructures, the traditional and the digital, both of which are essential for research purposes. To address these changes, especially in a time of crisis, we need to reduce the costs of traditional infrastructures and invest more in innovation, in order to sustain a comfortable and effective research and learning environment. This is not always easy because research libraries also have responsibilities to transmit our cultural heritage to future generations.

Tommaso Giordano, deputy director of the library at the European University Institute, Italy [Guardian interview]

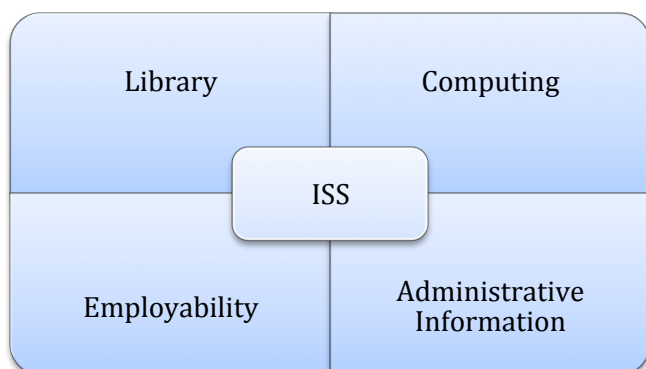
ISS will help our students navigate increasingly complex, digital and creative workplaces, where information literacy, digital fluency and initial professional development skills will help them succeed.

ISS will support university staff in their research, teaching, administration and management roles through secure and effective online services.

ISS will ensure all our users and visitors feel valued and supported as they seek to use our collections and services.

Information Services and Systems

ISS brings together four key service areas at Swansea University that are closely linked and will increasingly provide collective services to our users.



In addition, our collective and collaborative activities will span the whole university, as we work with colleges and professional services to deliver new and enhanced services.

In the 2014-19 period, ISS will:

- ✚ Enable our students to achieve academic, professional and personal success
- ✚ Provide effective information resources and services to students, researchers, academics, administrators and all our users
- ✚ Review, improve and reconfigure our services and systems
- ✚ Engage effectively with all our users and stakeholders
- ✚ Develop collective team-working, cross-functional collaboration, staff development and related activities

See *Summary of Strategic Plan 2014-19* at the end of this document.

ISS key activity areas

In the following pages we set out key aspects of our services and how we expect to see them develop over the planning period.

As outlined in the introduction, the opening of the Science and Innovation Campus in October 2015 will lead to significant operational changes within almost all ISS areas and, in the lead up to the opening of the campus, certain teams will be heavily involved in final design, planning, build and service transfer.

University Development

The university is entering one of the most exciting periods in its development. The opening of the Science and Innovation Campus, the investment in medicine, informatics and related areas on the Singleton Park Campus, and the increase in esteem of the university, demonstrated through research income and student applications, leads us to realise that Swansea University has not yet reached any plateau in its development and that as we head towards the centenary of the university there are increasing opportunities out there that we can, and we must, seize.

Within the planning period we expect to make progress towards enhanced provision for Libraries, Archives, Museums and Performance through an ambitious plan to consolidate services within purpose built facilities, shared with researchers, academics and visitors that will allow our collections to be more fully and openly available.



This will be necessary in part due to the closure of the Hendrefoilan site in the latter part of the decade, but the availability of space on the Singleton Campus also opens up the possibility of creating new facilities that suit the needs of the university as it is today, and not how it was in the 1960's.

The university, through this and other digital developments, will be able to fully celebrate its distinctive collections, including those in the Egypt Centre, Richard Burton Archives, South Wales Miners Library and Library Special Collections.

About three quarters of respondents from doctoral institutions rated “building and maintaining unique special collections of research materials,” “digitizing materials and making them broadly available to the public,” and “preserving digital materials” each as very important.

(Ithaka S+R US Library Survey 2013)

Student and Staff Engagement

Encompassing a mix of front-of-house and back office services, ISS has traditionally remained close to its users through direct contact with staff, students and visitors as well as making frequent use of surveys, focus groups and wider university meetings through which to engage with users.

Our commitment to benchmarking our services through external data provided by HESA, SCONUL and NSS as well as seeking quality improvement through engaging with

the externally assessed Customer Service Excellence Award remains in place and has provided valuable insight into our services.

It is time, following the embedding of College structures for ISS to review its engagement with the Colleges and other Professional Services to ensure that we remain effective and that we are addressing the needs of future staff and student cohorts as well as current needs. We must ensure that we are taking into account the diverse range of students we have on and off campus including international, welsh medium, mature students, parents, distance learners, part time learners and so on.

The Library with its subject teams has always forged strong links with College staff and students. During this period we expect the Library, Careers and Employability and Computer Services to review and enhance engagement and collective working with colleges and departments to inform service provision and development.

In addition, the ISS Management Team will also have its own responsibility to ensure engagement at a strategic and planning level across the Colleges and Departments.

Integrated Support Services

ISS helps our users make the most of the resources and information we hold through support, training and access to a range of skilled professional guidance services. We will continue to seek improved ways to guide and help students and staff in their use of all our services, systems and resources.

With the aim of continuing development, these services must meet the challenges and greater demands being placed on them by students and we must ensure that online, face-to-face and telephone support remains effective as our users change and become ever more technology-aware, and mobile, in their information use.

Our support services must operate longer hours and through more channels than ever before, and these needs should be integrated into a more flexible pattern of work encompassing all the service desks across ISS. These changes will enable a more streamlined approach to the Science and Innovation Campus when it opens in September 2015.

Out of hours support and cover for key services is an area that can no longer be ignored. Students study and staff research at night and on weekends. ISS will build on being open over the Christmas vacation and 24 hour during exams to work with the University to find ways to ensure key services are operational and supported during these extended hours and especially at critical periods over vacations.

Customer Service Excellence is both the name of the standard that ISS will seek to retain and help expand across the University through the Service Excellence Forum, and also a guiding value that we will follow. We expect ISS, Student Services and Academic Registry to work ever more closely together, and to continue to submit to joint CSE annual reviews.

While recognizing that our users range from students, staff and visitors to research councils, HEFCW and the Welsh Government, ISS will formulate a new set of guidelines for staff, backed up with on-going training, to ensure that all staff feel confident that they can contribute to service excellence.

Integrated information provision

Information lies at the heart of almost all ISS services as we are gathering, cataloguing, preserving and providing access to information ranging from staff and student records to research journals and learning resources. Increasingly this provision will be digital by preference across a wider range of formats, moving from e-journals to e-textbooks and printed paper to electronic records management.

ISS aims to provide the right information, in the right format to its range of users securely and efficiently. In order to improve services we have embarked with the University on a range of projects that will deliver further integration over the next few years: linking related groups of administrative services through Agresso Business World; providing students access to a range of academic and related information through Blackboard, providing a one stop online portal and through developing with Planning and Strategic Projects a new staff Intranet 'Collaborate' that will allow an online community to be built across the University.

These new systems will align with the externally focused web site to provide accurate and timely information to online visitors and prospective students.

SEA, SALT, SAILS: The Academies

As clearly outlined in the university strategic plan, the Academies will play a significant role in the key areas of inclusivity & learner support (SAILS), employability (SEA) and learning and teaching (SALT).

ISS will need to effectively deliver SEA and SALT objectives through staff engaged in these areas. In partnership with SALT, SAILS, and the Academic Success Programme, ISS will explore enhancing learner support services based on the rich set of training already offered to students under the Information Literacy umbrella.

Swansea Academy of Learning and Teaching

ISS has a number of key roles in Learning and Teaching Support including supporting SALT, providing access to print and online resources, operating and developing the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment(VLE) and providing training to students and staff in information literacy.

Supporting university teaching staff in their professional development lies at the core of SALT. We expect this to expand through supporting staff in achieving Fellowship, or

higher, of the Higher Education Academy, embedding online feedback and assessment, engaging with the Excellence in Teaching and Learning Conference and other related activities.

Swansea Employability Academy

Swansea University is the beginning of our students' professional journey, and not the final stage of formal education. We expect to see employability raised on the student agenda earlier and more clearly, and ISS will work in partnership with the Students' Union and Colleges to ensure that students are engaged with the idea of life beyond university from the early days of their university experience.

Through an enhanced Careers and Employability team and working under the umbrella of the Employability Academy, we expect to provide enhanced services and to work more proactively with staff in Colleges to further develop careers awareness and education opportunities for students. This should ultimately improve graduate employment destinations and related indicators.

In addition, work placement coordinators will engage with staff and students across the university to expand work placement and international mobility experiences for students.

We will also consider how to improve our employability and placement services for PGT/R students, targeting areas of most effectiveness and need.

Research and postgraduate support

ISS will continue to enhance support for research through subject team teaching and support along with improved access to research resources. Developments in Archives and Research Collections and our iFind Research portal will provide easier access to our catalogues of information, allowing researchers to more quickly find relevant collections. Alongside catalogue

information, digital access will increasingly be provided allowing online access to key sets of our collections.

Research Information System

ISS will continue the development of the Research Information System and its associated research repository, Cronfa. Cronfa enhances the opportunities for academics and other users outside Swansea to find Swansea based research. With the help of the Colleges and Marketing, we will further develop Cronfa to promote the use and citation of Swansea University research.

Working with the Academic Board we will extend the functionality of RIS and Cronfa to PhD theses, alongside our existing work with the British Library Ethos service. This will provide worldwide online access to our theses and help increase the visibility of our PhD research portfolio and our PhD students as they conclude their research and seek further employment.

Research Data

By 2015 Swansea University is committed to initiating a coherent approach to collecting, preserving and managing the research data gathered through individual or project work.

Linked to RIS and Cronfa a repository of Research Data will fulfil the expectations of the Research Councils to retain and make data available beyond any project. It increases the possibility of re-use of datasets in the same or related fields within or outside the University and links wholly into the idea that data sharing and collaboration leads to more interesting research outcomes.

Working with Colleges and other departments, ISS will continue to investigate and initiate activity within this area, looking at existing practice and platforms and extending an invitation to researchers to participate in pilot activities. In this area there may also be opportunities to work jointly with other universities across Wales or beyond.

Open Access

Finally in this area the University must consider the effect over the coming years of the Finch Report on Open Access and the HEFCE proposals for the post 2014 REF.

The adoption of the Finch report by the UK Government will mean increased costs to the university in publishing research in the short to medium term and possibly beyond. While ultimately widening access to publicly funded research output, Finch, through not mandating Green Open Access, has committed universities to this additional cost while overall funding for research is likely to reduce. However HEFCE/HEFCW have mandated that research outputs must normally be Open Access, from April 2016, to ensure eligibility for REF 2020.

ISS will seek with the university to implement a research deposit mandate that will ask staff to deposit a copy of their research outputs into the institutional repository, Cronfa. This will enable publicly funded research to be publicly available, a cornerstone of the funding councils' approach.

Cross Cutting Themes

ISS has been working towards new structures in managing its approach, delivery and performance reflecting the growth of the university to an expected £200M turnover in 2013/14.

During this planning period ISS will fully embed project management & reporting practices and structures across services and projects. For ICT services we will embed ITIL practices to ensure that our portfolio of services is being effectively developed, managed and retired.

ISS will seek to improve its communication with Colleges and Professional Services through the implementation and effective use of the new Intranet and with improved project reporting mechanisms, allowing staff

and students to be more aware of on-going and planned projects.

ISS will effectively manage and steward the resources granted to it to support the university's vision and aspirations. Financial management and allocation will continue to develop front-line services, research support and learning resources. ISS has played a leading role in shared services across Wales, from the JISC RSC Wales and Welsh Video Network to the Library Management System project and journal and e-book purchasing.

ISS aims to provide the right information, at the right time, in the right place. As our users are increasingly mobile, on smaller devices, ISS and the university will need to reflect on this change if we are to further enhance the student and staff experience. 'Living with mobile' is a theme of work that will touch many areas of ISS from Blackboard, which already supports mobile delivery through its app, to the range of web information and publications produced that currently do not scale well to smaller screen formats.

We will seek to further develop one-stop, mobile-friendly systems where students and staff can interact with and get access to all their key information simply, securely and effectively. Once information is in one place, or in a coherent set of systems, ISS can enable the wider reuse of relevant parts of this information simply – allowing for example research outputs held in RIS to be used in Professional Review forms.

Staff Development

Staff development activities will continue and we will invest in training and support activities for all our staff. In addition, eligible staff will be supported in seeking professional accreditation through CILIP, BCS, AGCAS and other relevant professional organisations. ISS will map its staff role profiles against UK professional standards frameworks so that there is clarity of role, expectation and development opportunities at Swansea and beyond.

Concluding remarks

In summary we have many things of which we should be justifiably proud, but we have our challenges to face as well. Satisfaction and NSS ratings have remained steadfastly around 78-80% over the past few years, and to meet the aspirations of the university this will need to increase to around 84% by 2015 and 87% by 2017. However, the opportunity to do this is presented through the new campus providing 24 hour study spaces, additional student computers and world-class facilities.

We began with the competition to build the 1937 Library, the first concrete structure of its kind in the UK. For reasons of space we have in recent decades introduced an infill floor that now begins to creak and groan. The tantalising prospect exists in the future to return the building to its original splendour, an iconic space for the university within which to work and study.

ISS recognizes the support provided from across the University to our staff and our activities. We especially are grateful for the considered approach colleagues take when we ask for advice, and when we have to make hard choices and changes that while in the long term we all agree are right, in the short term may mean that additional work must be done by ISS staff and colleagues across the university.

Finally we would like to thank all our staff for their dedication, hard work and insight. Truly it is the staff who ordain what any team or organization is, and what it can be.

The ISS Management Team will therefore unashamedly take this opportunity to say thank you to a great group of people.

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Summary of ISS Strategic Plan 2014-19

Swansea University, Information Services and Systems will:

- Enable our students to achieve academic, professional and personal success
- Provide effective information resources and services to students, researchers, academics, administrators and all our users
- Review, improve and reconfigure our services and systems
- Engage effectively with all our users and stakeholders
- Develop collective team-working, cross-functional collaboration, staff development and related activities

The development of our services will focus on four approaches:

- **Composed:** to address the challenges and make the most of the opportunities and strengths show above we must compose ourselves effectively to move forward
- **Collective:** at the intersection of our services and through collaboration and cross-team innovation we will find better ways to do mundane things and novel ways to do interesting things. We can do more together than individually
- **Open:** open access, open research, open data are important UK and EU themes. In addition opening up our collections further to users through physical access and the use of technology will enable our collections to be read by more users, locally and globally
- **Digital:** across all our services from research data to student help, digital delivery of services will increasingly be the normal, and often the preferred, mode of delivery

Strategic Themes

Enable our students to achieve academic, personal and professional success

ISS plays a number of key roles in ensuring the success of our students through: developing the awareness, skills and ability to succeed in their academic activities; developing the employability skills to achieve personal and professional success post university (SEA); ensuring that they receive high quality teaching and effective assessment and feedback (SALT).

Aims

- Effective delivery and support of information literacy, digital literacy and employability skills across the curriculum
- Enhanced package of employability advice and access to placement and other opportunities
- Access to effective and relevant learning resources
- Effective learning, teaching and quality enhancement activities, guidance and support
- Individual support for specific user groups through the Transcription Centre, SWML-DACE, etc.
- All undergraduate and postgraduate taught students offered information literacy support during their studies, normally during induction
- All postgraduate research students offered a session or one to one with subject team
- Staff and resources in place to deliver information and digital literacy resources, training, services and support

Review, improve and reconfigure our services and systems

Review, improve and reconfigure our services and systems to meet the needs of all our users and to target resources towards the University's strategic aims.

Aims

- Deliver the Science and Innovation Campus Bay Library supporting students and staff across the new campus
- Deliver key infrastructure (ICT) projects for the Science and Innovation Campus
- Procure and implement a new Library Management System that will aid resource discoverability and user experience
- Integrate discoverability across services (Library, Archives, Museums, Repositories)
- Investigate and implement suitable solutions to measure satisfaction and the utility of ISS services, systems and procedures
- Implement a central helpdesk facility to receive and track ICT and other user issues
- Programme and project management systems implemented to reflect the need of ISS services and projects
- Use industry standards to underpin our ICT services, workflows and processes.
- Review all service areas in line with Science and Innovation Campus and Singleton Campus requirements
- Satisfaction levels of key stakeholders regularly reviewed including PVCs, project owners, project stakeholders etc.

Information access and services

Provide the information resources needed by our researchers, academics, students and professional staff to effectively carry out their learning, research, teaching, administration and management activities.

Aims

- Enable streamlined online access to core materials and collections, including our research and archival collections
- Achieve a median position in our information provision spend with respect to our target group of institutions
- Seek to develop our learning and teaching, historical and research collections through an appropriate collections policy and active collection management
- Develop stronger links with international, national and local cultural institutions to support our strategic aims
- Provide an appropriate range of online, self-service, data, benchmarking and scorecard services for learning, research, administration and management services, and for external users
- Standardize our discovery and delivery platform where possible to improve the user experience
- Promote our resources effectively to all groups of users, monitoring uptake and effectively responding to uptake
- Expand our research support through the library and online services to cover full text deposit, REF 2020 systems and procedures, research data, and compliance with relevant RCUK and funder policies

Internal & external engagement and communications

Building on and learning from good practice, develop better internal (ISS) & external (University and beyond) engagement and communications from and between all ISS services and users.

Aims:

- A comprehensive set of activities that enable user engagement, communication and feedback in the development, implementation, delivery and maintenance of ISS services
- Improve engagement and communication of our activities and services to university senior staff
- A directory of all ISS services available to users
- Knowledge base/FAQ/Helpdesk services operational
- Further engagement with Colleges and Directorates beyond ISS in academic, research, employability and administrative support to ensure our services and system are effective and efficient

Develop teamworking, cross-functional collaboration, staff development and related activities

Invest in and ensure the professional and personal success of our staff. Staff engagement, training, professional development, team-working and related activities are intrinsic to ISS' and the university's success.

Aims:

- Ensure continued investment in ISS staff development activities, delivering internal training and events when relevant
- Provide support to ISS Line Managers in leadership, management, planning and operational activities
- Support team working, cross functional collaboration, communities of practice and social learning systems through enabling activities and flexible structures
- Use professional frameworks to structure professional development and where appropriate HERA role definitions (e.g. BCS SFIPlus for ICT, CILIP PKSB for Librarianship, HEA UKPSF for learning and teaching)
- Seek internal and external funding to support staff development activities
- Run an annual ISS staff development conference or equivalent
- Ensure staff engagement with university and ISS strategic and operational objectives