



# Connecting and collaborating for success

UCISA Strategic Plan 2018-2022

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# Foreword

**UCISA (the Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association) exists to promote excellence in the application of information systems and services in support of teaching, learning, research and administration in education. Core to our purpose are our efforts to inform, promote and foster the expert community that underpins effective use of technology in delivering an excellent student experience and operational efficiency.**

While the technology matters, the skills, knowledge, agility and innovative thinking of those responsible for its effective application will always matter more. UK universities currently invest some £1.3billion in their technology infrastructure every year – but it is the knowledge of the many expert practitioners employed across the sector that helps ensure maximum return in terms of improved operational efficiency and optimum support for learning and research.

The depth of responsibility held by UCISA's expert community, the capabilities required of us to keep pace with digital technology advances and the increasingly varied and complex interaction of information systems should not be underestimated. They are fundamental to the success of our universities and their students – as the popularity of UCISA toolkits, best practice guides, surveys, workshops and other resources shows.

In supporting our collective priorities and our strategic and hands-on needs, UCISA's Strategic Plan to 2022 has an even stronger focus on reaching out and helping us as individual practitioners, at all levels, to better support our institutions. It's a focus that comes from all of us as a membership, and represents the culmination of our input through responses to consultation, feedback and market research.

Over the next five years, UCISA is placing greater emphasis on widening our reach to embrace and engage with all staff with an information systems interest – be they at junior or senior level. The strategy extends access, provides more opportunities to share best practice and opens up new opportunities to contribute to, and learn from, a much broader cross-section of our community for which UCISA acts as hub.

One of the acknowledged strengths of UCISA is its ability to channel the collective expertise of individual members for the benefit of all.

In delivering this Strategic Plan, UCISA also seeks to better channel collective expertise to the benefit of individuals and their personal contribution to institutional goals.

UK universities currently invest some £1.3billion in their technology infrastructure every year





**David Telford**  
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**Peter Tinson**  
UCISA Executive Director

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# Introduction

**UCISA’s five-year Strategic Plan for delivery over the period 2018-2022 is the culmination of our collective efforts to reshape and refocus the organisation to meet not only current members’ needs but the emerging issues that will face us in the future.**

As a member-led organisation, development of the Plan has been entirely driven by your input with priorities based on consultation, feedback, discussion at the AGM and market research among members of all categories and at all levels.

From your feedback, it’s clear that in many areas we are building together from a position of strength. UCISA is trusted in raising awareness of IT issues and acting as the voice of IT in the sector. Membership remains a priority for virtually all major UK universities along with a growing number of FE colleges.

In addition, UCISA’s provision of a network of contacts and expertise, toolkits such as that provided for information security management, best practice guides like that on establishing a project management office, surveys such as that on Digital Capabilities and the range of Benchmark reports we produce, are well regarded – as is UCISA’s ability to foster collaboration and act as an effective forum for networking.

Future challenges are seen to require, in the main, more of the same but promoted to a wider constituency. Your feedback will ensure continued relevance. There is also clear appetite for a stronger staff development offer, improved two-way communication reaching staff at all levels, more visible thought leadership and a stronger lobbying voice.

**UCISA’s Strategy to 2022 thus addresses real needs and priorities** – particularly in making content you already value more accessible via a new UCISA website and opening up new channels for interaction between members as well as between members and UCISA.

**As an organisation run by members for members, many aspects of the Strategy require your continuing input and collaboration to deliver.** In some cases, positive change will take place quickly but timescales are realistic in taking account of members’ other commitments and we thank you in anticipation.

Finally, may we also take this opportunity to welcome your feedback as the plan is implemented and to underline UCISA’s commitment to providing quarterly updates on progress.



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## Our Vision

UCISA aims to be acknowledged by all stakeholders<sup>1</sup> as the membership organisation that draws together and promotes the expertise of those leading and supporting digital transformation and services in education institutions to support operational effectiveness, research, teaching and learning, and an excellent student experience.

## Our Values

Achievement of our Vision is reliant on consistent demonstration of UCISA's organisational values. UCISA:

- **HAS TRUSTED EXPERT KNOWLEDGE:**  
Our specialist community represents the entire spectrum of information system and technology expertise supporting education
- **IS OPEN, SUPPORTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE:**  
We work together to combine and share our expertise. As a collegiate organisation run by members, we are reliant on everyone's active input
- **IS A MEMBER-DRIVEN MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY:**  
We exist for the benefit of our members and are led by their needs and aspiration
- **IS PROFESSIONALISED:**  
We act professionally and provide resources to advance the professionalisation of individual practitioners in support of institutional goals
- **IS CONNECTED:**  
We provide access to a unique network and promote and foster interaction for the benefit of all
- **LEADS:**  
We act in the interest of members in addressing common issues and providing the insight and evidence necessary to tackle sector challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities

1. Institutions, suppliers, individual practitioners, sector bodies, Government, and the education sector as a whole

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# Our Ambition to 2022

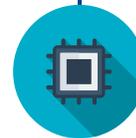
In pursuit of our Vision and supported by our Values, UCISA’s Strategic Plan to support our development Ambition to 2022 has four overarching goals. These are summarised below along with how we will now deliver against them.

The four goals all result from your input and your priorities as identified through consultation and feedback involving members from all categories and at all levels. Examples of some of the deliverables over the lifetime of the Plan appear on succeeding pages.

## OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS UCISA WILL:

### Goal 1: Become the expert voice in the use of digital technologies in education

This will be achieved by enhancing UCISA’s role as a central source of trusted guidance that helps all stakeholders make informed decisions about effective technology use in education.



### Goal 2: Grow the membership and make it easier to engage with UCISA

This will be achieved by promoting and spreading the benefits of UCISA engagement across all levels of IT staff and making it easier for all of us to share collective expertise, interact around common issues and take advantage of career-enhancing knowledge and opportunities.



### Goal 3: Offer further membership benefits

This will be achieved by continuing development of best practice resources and enhancement and extension of communication channels and forums to promote greater collaboration and wider use of UCISA insight and learning.



### Goal 4: Optimise the organisation of UCISA to support effective strategy delivery

This will be achieved by further development of existing opportunities for us all to contribute to, and support, strategy delivery alongside provision of dedicated financial, marketing and communication resource within the central UCISA team.



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# Overview of Strategic Goals and Deliverables, 2018-2022

Over the five years to 2022, UCISA will, through your involvement and our collective efforts, continue to add further value to membership through the achievement of the four Strategic Goals – each in themselves the result of your collective input.

Progress updates will be available for us all to see on a quarterly basis via email and website news and the Plan will be formally reviewed by the Executive and formally reported to the members at the AGM to take into account performance, feedback and any relevant changes in the external sector context.

Outlined over the next few pages are examples of initiatives which will be delivered in the period to 2022 in support of the four Goals.

Initiatives being delivered in the first year of this plan, 2018-19, are highlighted for ease of reference. As well as email and web updates, progress during 2018 will also be reported at the UCISA18 Leadership Conference in March.



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# Goal 1: Become the expert voice in the use of digital technologies in education

Enhancing UCISA's role as a central source of trusted guidance that helps all stakeholders<sup>2</sup> make informed decisions about effective technology use in education.

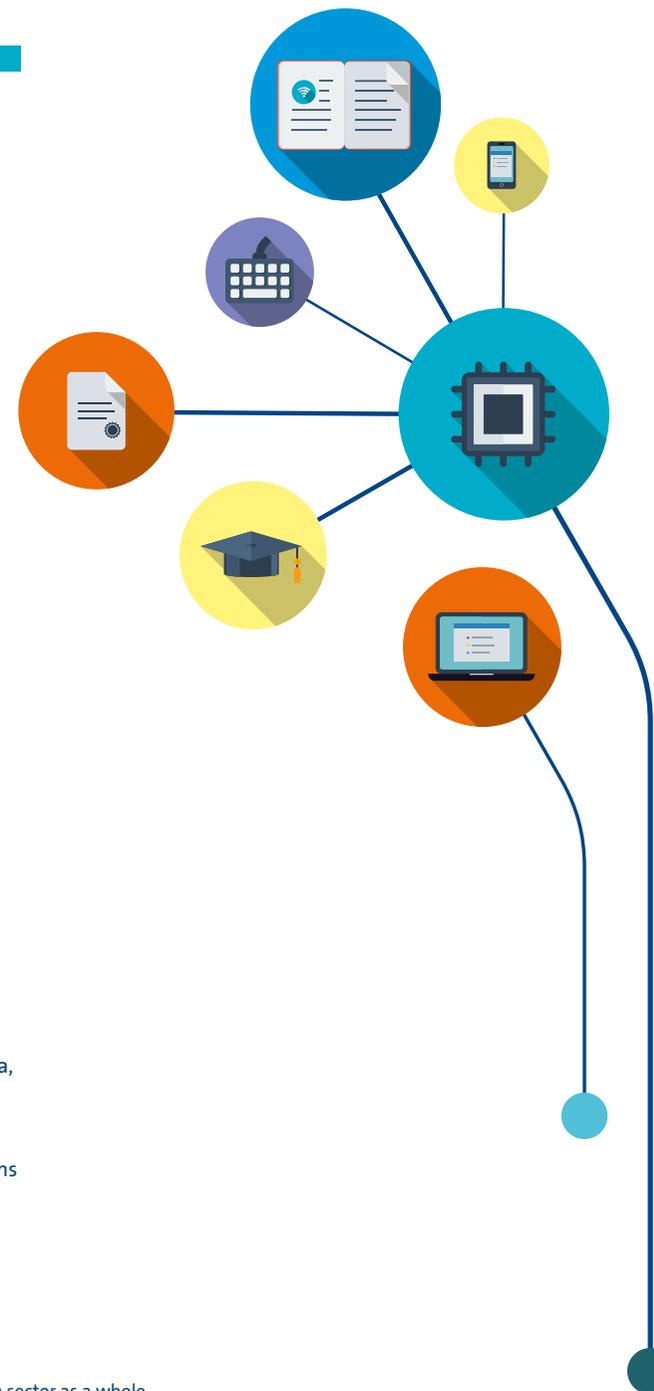
## DELIVERABLES DURING 2018

- We will lead insight, challenge convention and provoke debate and discussion to promote informed mutual understanding of the role of technology in education and the necessary expertise of the community supporting it.
- We will work collaboratively with other professional bodies/organisations in addressing common issues impacting higher education in which technology use is a factor.
- We will raise the profile of UCISA in relevant sector news media such as THE, WonkHE, University Business and the popular IT press.

## DELIVERABLES TO 2022

- We will highlight the expertise of the UCISA community and provide more opportunities for members to produce, individually, collaboratively and in partnership, impactful white papers, case studies and reviews which will be published and actively promoted both to other members and to interested third parties.
- We will actively promote UCISA and the UCISA community as the "go-to" source for informed opinion on technology systems supporting education among sector media, Government, think tanks, research bodies and other organisations with a sector interest.
- We will respond to sector-relevant technology consultations and sector consultations where technology and UCISA community expertise should be considered.
- We will raise the profile of UCISA at key education sector events/conferences and, where appropriate, at technology-related events where education is not the primary focus.

2. Institutions, suppliers, individual practitioners, sector bodies, Government, and the education sector as a whole



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## Goal 2: Grow the membership and make it easier to engage with UCISA

This will be achieved by promoting and spreading the benefits of UCISA engagement across all levels of IT staff and making it easier for all of us to share collective expertise, interact around common issues and take advantage of career-enhancing knowledge and opportunities.

### DELIVERABLES DURING 2018

- We will review membership categories to strengthen support for individuals, practitioners, apprentices and students in relevant study.
- We will develop a mentoring and coaching scheme.
- We will develop and maintain an accurate membership database and grow the number of members registering individually.

### DELIVERABLES TO 2022

- We will actively promote awareness of UCISA and UCISA resources beyond senior teams to all staff working in IT and digitally-related activities at all levels at member institutions and make it easy for them to engage with, and contribute to, content relevant to their role and career stage.
- We will work with partners to deliver clear career development pathways against defined professional standards required for progression.
- We will broker secondments and employment opportunities among members and also internships for students in relevant programmes of study.
- We will grow membership among other education providers, especially further education colleges, through active promotion of UCISA and UCISA resources and the opportunities to contribute and share learning around common issues.
- We will review the current membership subscription model to ensure it remains attractive.
- We will ensure UCISA meets our collective needs as members on a continual basis.
- We will work with corporate members to maximise partnership with institutional members to the mutual benefit of all parties.



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## Goal 3:

# Offer further membership benefits

This will be achieved by continuing development of best practice resources and enhancement and extension of communication channels and forums to promote greater collaboration and even wider use of UCISA insight and learning.

### DELIVERABLES DURING 2018

- We will develop and launch a new website and associated online collaboration and communication tools to enable all of us to better engage with each other and share information, ideas, questions, answers and solutions.
- We will continue the Bursary Scheme – with particular emphasis on support for junior staff to attend conferences and events in return for their commitment to share the learning they have gained with the wider membership.

### DELIVERABLES TO 2022

- We will continue to add to the range of UCISA tools supporting you in information sharing, collaboration and problem-solving, such as toolkits, benchmarks, survey results, case studies and training resources.
- We will support you in facilitating productive engagement with suppliers to obtain the latest product roadmaps, case studies, best procurement routes and most favourable contracts.



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## Goal 4: Optimise the organisation of UCISA to support effective strategy delivery

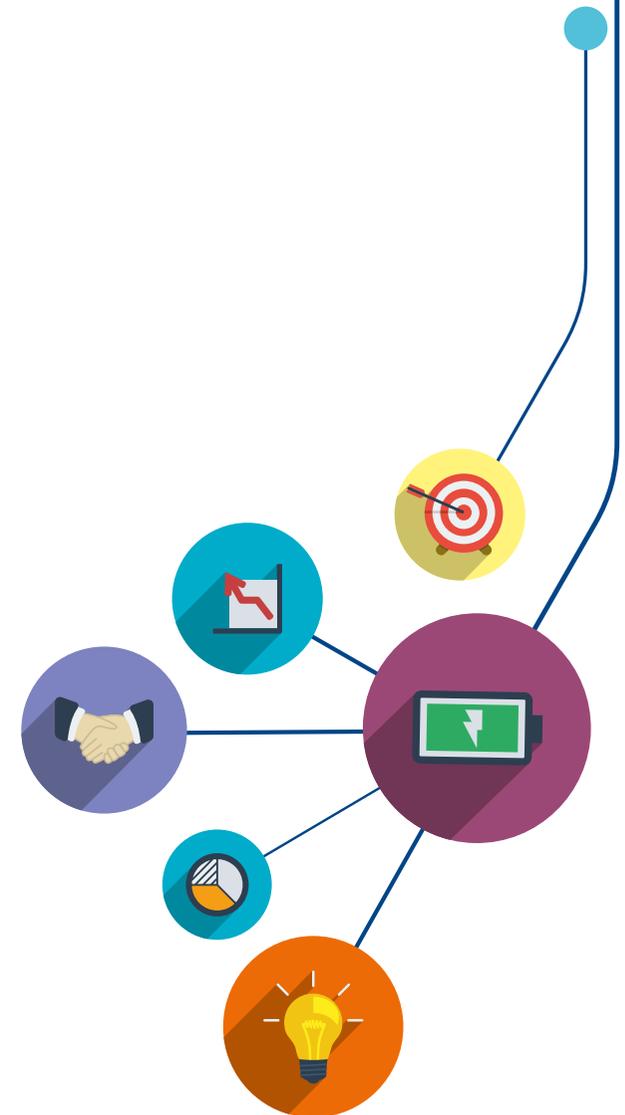
This will be achieved by further development of existing opportunities for you to contribute to, and support, the delivery of this strategy. The Goal is also supported by provision of dedicated financial, marketing and communication resource within the central UCISA team.

### DELIVERABLES DURING 2018

- We will recruit dedicated staff to the central UCISA team with responsibility for supporting the financial, communication and marketing requirements of UCISA and delivery of this Strategic Plan.
- We will review the support arrangements to ensure UCISA remains best-placed to develop and support the 2018-2022 Strategy.

### DELIVERABLES TO 2022

- We will build on the successful launch of UCISA's London Group and foster the establishment of additional regional groups to support you in interaction and sharing knowledge.
- We will encourage more cross-Group events and activities.
- We will establish "start and finish" groups to support particular initiatives or address significant common concerns.
- We will ensure financial reserves remain within prudent minimum levels sufficient to ensure maintenance of the organisation throughout the period of this Strategic Plan.



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## How UCISA works

**UCISA draws together the collective and individual expertise of the people leading and supporting digital transformation and services in education institutions to support operational effectiveness, research, teaching and learning, and an excellent student experience in education institutions.**

In this, UCISA relies on the input and expertise of member representatives like you across its range of specialist groups and committees – both in the production of resources and in determining the priorities for the creation of new knowledge.

Through collaboration and partnership in our common interest, UCISA acts as a unique member-driven hub to inform, promote and foster the expert community that underpins effective technology use in higher education.

### UCISA Membership

UCISA's categories of membership are designed to nurture mutual understanding and common interest among the key players in technology use in higher education. UCISA membership acts as a springboard to informed dialogue, evidence and information gathering as well as a firm platform for effective action in meeting collective sector challenges.

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# Resources designed for you

The focus of UCISA resources is entirely led by the real-world challenges and opportunities faced by members. From the day-to-day to the strategic, they help keep you up to date and able to make informed decisions on critical aspects of infrastructure, service, procedures, policies and staff development.

Through the range and quality of publications, surveys, events, webinars, case studies and toolkits, members are able to share best practice, gain advice and access new knowledge with UCISA resources acting as a catalyst for innovation, cost reduction and ever more efficient use of digital systems in support of learning and research.

Thanks to your continued input and collaboration, we look forward to adding to the resources we've published and shared so far – and to making it easier for your teams to access information relevant to their roles and career stage too.

## Examples of some of our current resources appear below:

### TOOLKITS

- Information Security Management Toolkit
- The UK Learning Space Toolkit
- PCMG mini-toolkits

### REPORTS

- Cyber Security Survival Guide
- Out of Hours Support Report

### SURVEYS

- Technology Enhanced Learning Survey
- Corporate Information Systems Survey 2017
- Digital Capabilities Survey Report 2017

### EVENTS

- UCISA events cover the full spectrum of technology use providing the opportunity to gain new knowledge, exchange ideas or simply meet new contacts with a common interest. View the events calendar for 2018 at [www.ucisa.ac.uk/events](http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/events)

### WEBINARS

- Collaboration at Cardiff University using Office 365 update
- Continuous improvement service – a journey from inception to reality in 18 months
- Seeing is believing – prototyping with Visio

### CASE STUDIES

- SharePoint case studies
- Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning case studies

To view or download, visit: [www.ucisa.ac.uk/publications](http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/publications)

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# UCISA Organisation and Structure

UCISA is a charitable company led and run by members, who give their time freely, for the benefit of all members. It is supported by a small central team of full-time staff. UCISA’s Executive Committee, its special interest and working groups, are all made up of fellow members. All have day-jobs leading institutional use of technology and all, like you, know the real issues and opportunities first-hand.

Together, our working group members are currently drawn from more than 60 institutions. Additional contributors are always welcomed. To find out more about how you can contribute, please visit [www.ucisa.ac.uk/groups](http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/groups)

## UCISA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

UCISA’s current Executive Committee is made up of the Officers of the Association, the Chairs of UCISA’s eight Special Interest Groups and three elected members and two co-opted members.

Together, they oversee all activities and are responsible for occasional workshops, UCISA’s website, mailing lists, and the series of conferences and events run each year, culminating in the annual Leadership Conference, which is held each March. The Executive Committee also organises responses to consultations and maintains relations with other relevant organisations in the UK and overseas. The Committee collects and analyses statistical information relevant to provision of information systems and technology services.

[www.ucisa.ac.uk/groups/exec/committee](http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/groups/exec/committee)



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## UCISA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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## UCISA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS AND THEIR CHAIRS



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## UCISA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### CORPORATE INFORMATION SYSTEMS GROUP (CISG)

The CISG draws on the experience and shared knowledge of staff in the areas of Business Change and Corporate Information Systems development

### PROJECT AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT GROUP (PCMG)

The PCMG provides a forum for the discussion, development and dissemination of information on best practice approaches to project management, change management and related activities

### DIGITAL CAPABILITIES GROUP (DCG)

The DCG promotes the sharing of experience and good practice in end-user IT training and skills development

### DIGITAL EDUCATION GROUP (DEG)

The DEG identifies areas of interest related to the use of learning technologies in support of learning and teaching activities in higher education. It also acts as a discussion and information exchange forum for the development and use of technologies in teaching and learning

### SUPPORT SERVICES GROUP (SSG)

SSG's remit is to help UCISA members get the most from IT, technology enhanced learning, and computer-mediated communication systems

### INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP (IG)

The IG focuses on the technology and services that sit between the network and applications. These interfaces facilitate delivery of applications and services to users

### NETWORKING GROUP (NG)

The NG raises awareness of networking, telephony and IT security developments, shares examples of good practice and acts as an expert voice on networking within the UCISA community

### LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE COMMITTEE (LCC)

The LCC arranges UCISA's annual Leadership Conference

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## UCISA ALSO FOSTERS COMMUNITIES OF COMMON INTEREST:

### UCISA LONDON GROUP

The London Group provides a forum for institutions across the capital to meet, share best practice and identify opportunities for collaboration and potential shared services

### COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

UCISA has established a number of communities of practice offering an alternative structure for sharing experiences and best practice, usually on a particular theme or topic.

There are currently three Communities of Practice:

- Digital strategy
- Enterprise architecture
- Supporting research

UCISA is always looking to establish more of these based on member-driven needs and any potential for shared services.

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## CENTRAL SUPPORT TEAM

UCISA's Office is staffed by a small team responsible for supporting day-to-day administration, marketing, events, publications, finance and membership data management.

The office is headed by Executive Director Peter Tinson who works with the Chair and Executive on the strategic direction of UCISA. Peter is also responsible for maintaining and developing working relationships with external agencies and key stakeholders as well as other professional and national organisations.



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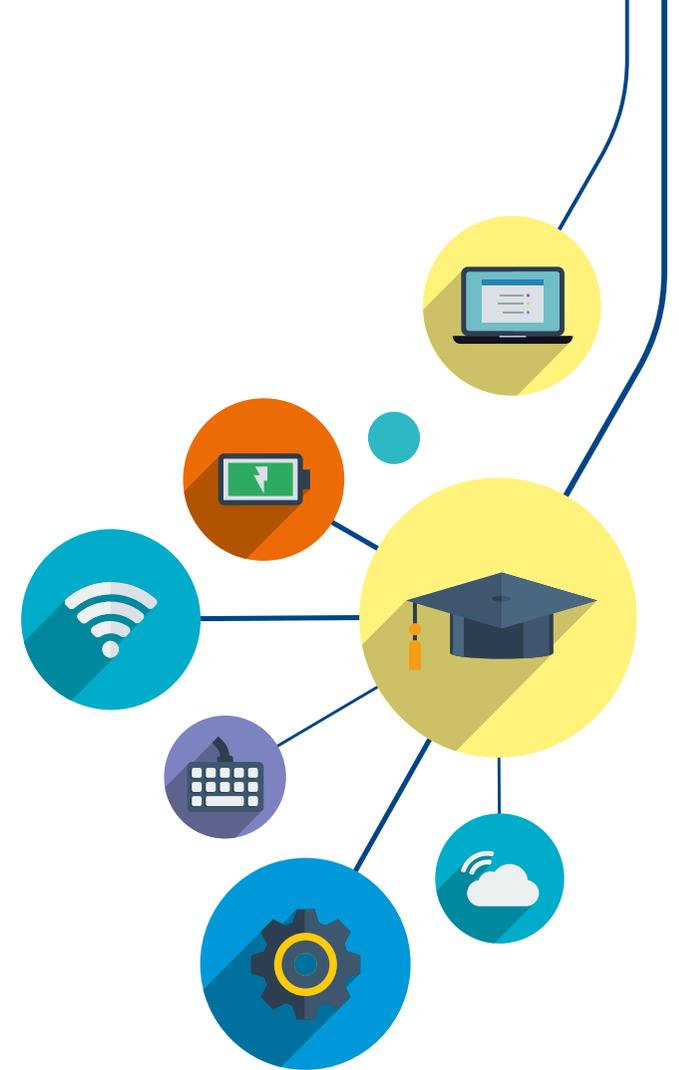


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The Strategy you have helped put together now provides a clear pathway to continuing our collective journey in the interests of all – and means everyone will benefit from the achievements ahead.

**We look forward to making progress together.**



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## Whether you...

support desktop applications and want to develop a peer network or gain new skills;

head up a project management office and want access to research on costs so you can make better financial decisions or find webinars that support the development of your team;

are a supplier wanting to bring new value into the sector and seek user views;

head up the IT function in your institution and want to avoid the mistakes of others, replicate their successes or simply want to collaborate with like minds; or

are a Vice-Chancellor or member of an institutional executive and need concise facts about how technology can enhance learning, drive down costs and drive up NSS scores...



**...you will find that UCISA's Strategy works for you as well as your institution.**



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