

ucisa Annual Review June 2020 – June 2021

connect share transform



Welcome from the Chair

As we look forward to our AGM on 10th June 2021, I am delighted to introduce this Annual Review of ucisa's activities over the past twelve months.

At the beginning of the year in January 2020 I looked back at 2019 with a degree of satisfaction and a level of comfort knowing that we had worked through 2019 to achieve a significant amount of change and transformation. Entering 2020 ucisa had become a self-sufficient independently operated organisation employing all its staff, had created and recruited to the new role of Chief Executive, and had set up a new office, IT infrastructure and website.

Little did we know what was shortly to hit the world and the unprecedented level of change and transformation to the way we all went about our working and personal lives.

Despite, and in many respects because of, the change the pandemic brought about, ucisa has continued to develop at a rapid pace and achieve significant progress against all 4 of the strategic plan goals.

As with every one of our members we had to respond very quickly to the first lockdown and create a very different operating model for ucisa. Following the decision to postpone the Leadership Conference in March, the ucisa team and ucisa Groups rapidly transitioned to a fully online operating model.

A programme of events was created and has continued throughout the year, including on-line conferences, webinars, peer-to-peer CPD, study tours and round table events covering a broad range of topics to address the challenges facing the education sector.

To illustrate the progress against goal 4 to optimize the organisation, goal 3 to offer further membership benefits, and goal 2 to grow membership and engagement, the comparison between 2019 and 2020 is stark. As an example, in 2019 ucisa hosted 16 events reaching 1,177 delegates. In 2020 the number of events more than trebled with 54 on-line events reaching over 4,100 delegates. This work has also contributed to a rapidly growing bank of resources. All of this has been provided at no additional cost beyond the membership fee to ucisa members.

In furtherance of goal 1 to be the expert voice in the use of digital technologies in education, we have significantly increased the level of representation activity working with corporate members, other vendors, and a range of organisations within and beyond the sector to support ucisa institutional members to meet the challenges and opportunities presented by the pandemic environment. We have also increased the level of collaborative work with sibling organisations within the UK and internationally. The most recent example of this being the collaboration

between CAUDIT and ucisa on the HE Reference models which builds on the work of the capability model first published in 2018.

ucisa continues to be a thriving organisation making very good progress against the 5-year strategic plan. The structural and administrative changes made during 2019 have directly contributed to our ability to rapidly respond to events last year enabling us to offer unique opportunities for members to **Connect, Share** expertise and **Transform** digital approaches, as well as enhancing ucisa's ability to work with a range vendors, sibling and other organisations to improve the use of digital technologies for the benefit of students and staff within Higher and Further Education.

The Trustees are pleased to report that ucisa maintained full business and service continuity throughout the year and would like to record their thanks to the ucisa staff team for their hard work and dedication in bringing this about.



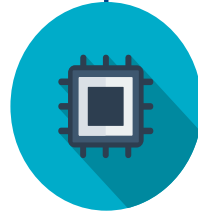
**Drew Cook, ucisa Chair
and Director of ICT,
University of Lincoln**

Our four Strategic goals 2018 - 2022

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 make informed decisions about effective technology use in education.



Goal 2:

Grow the membership and make it easier to engage with ucisa.

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

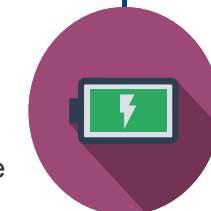
Continuing to develop best practice resources and enhancing and extending communication channels and forums to promote greater collaboration and even wider use of ucisa insight and learning.



Goal 4:

Optimise the organisation of ucisa to support effective strategy delivery

Developing opportunities for members to contribute to, and support, the delivery of ucisa strategy. Provision of dedicated financial, marketing and communication resource within the central ucisa team.



Working with and for our members

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 toward an excellent student experience in those education institutions.

We rely on the input and expertise of our member representatives, our 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, we also act as a unique member-driven hub to inform, promote and foster the expert community that underpins effective technology use in higher education.

The focus of our activity is entirely led by the challenges and opportunities faced by members. From the day-to-day to the strategic, our resources and services help keep members up to date and able to make informed decisions, whilst our representation work ensures that our members collective voice is amplified and heard.

Through the range and quality of our publications, surveys, webinars, case studies, toolkits and showcases available on the [website](#), members are able to share best practice, gain advice and access new knowledge with our resources acting as a catalyst for innovation, cost reduction and ever more efficient use of digital systems in support of learning, teaching and research.

Our events and Special Interest Groups 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.

One of ucisa's key strengths is our ability to channel the collective expertise of individual members for the benefit of all.

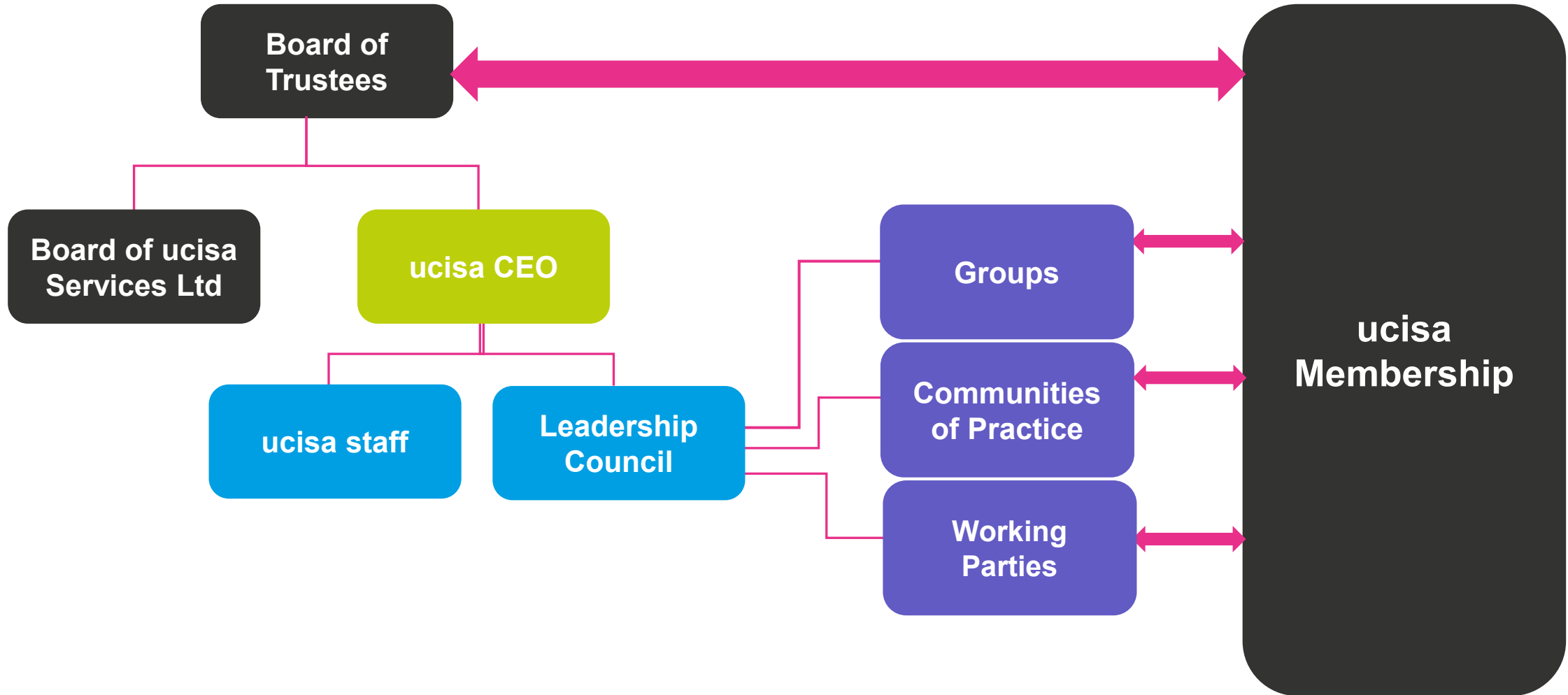
Likewise, we also seek to better channel collective expertise to the benefit of individuals and their personal contribution to institutional goals.

“If the biggest part of digital transformation is changing the way we think, then there is no better place to do that than within ucisa’s community of professional digital practitioners”

Paul Reardon
ICT Senior Advisor
Technological University Dublin



ucisa Governance Structure



Board of Trustees June 2020 – June 2021

Office Holders



Drew Cook
Chair of Board of Trustees
Director of ICT Services,
University of Lincoln

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Adrian Ellison
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Associate Pro Vice-
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Dean Phillips
ucisa Treasurer
Assistant Director, Digital
and Information Services
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Board of Trustees June 2020 – June 2021



Sarah Cockrill
ucisa Trustee

Director, IT Service
Management & Security
Operations
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Systems Services
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Claire Priestley
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Former Director of IT,
City, University London



Arthur Clune
ucisa Trustee

Assistant Director, Research
and Innovation IT
University of Sheffield



Darren Tysoe
ucisa Trustee

Former CIO, Regent's
University London

Meet Team ucisa



Deborah Green
ucisa CEO
ceo@ucisa.ac.uk

Deborah is responsible for delivering ucisa's strategic plan and vision, drawing together and promoting the expertise of our members and developing our relationships with external agencies and key stakeholders, as well as other professional and national organisations. She works closely with members to ensure that we are proactive and responsive to changing member needs.

Deborah is a fan of The Killers and has a fondness for ducks.



Lynne Newbitt
Membership Services Development
Manager
membership@ucisa.ac.uk

Lynne manages external relationships relating to infrastructure and systems and provides technical support, advocacy and advice needed to facilitate representation work

Lynne enjoys EMO music, and her favourite animal is a pig.



Catherine Tack
Finance and Operations Manager
accounts@ucisa.ac.uk

Cathy manages operational support along side managing the finances for both ucisa and USL.

Her favourite animal is her Jack Russell Dog , Gypsy. Cathy has seen the 1975 in concert several times and loves their music



Nik Cutler
Administrative Officer
admin@ucisa.ac.uk

Nik manages the day-to-day running of the ucisa website, along with providing administration and membership data management support.

Nik is a huge fan of David Bowie and is owned by three cats.

Meet Team ucisa



Caroline O'Shea

Executive Support Officer
execsupport@ucisa.ac.uk

Caroline provides administrative support to the CEO, support and assistance to the Board of Trustees, and Leadership Council.

Caroline is an 80s girl and loves music that makes you want to dance. Her favourite animal is an elephant.



Sian Thomas

Events and Membership Officer
events@ucisa.ac.uk

Sian oversees planning of ucisa events and has day to day management of our corporate membership.

Sian's favourite animals are cats – she has two of them. Sian is a rock chick at heart and the Foo Fighters are one of her favourite bands.



Brid Field

Events and Membership Officer
events@ucisa.ac.uk

Brid oversees the planning of ucisa events and surveys.

Brid loves any music she can dance to. She has a fondness for Labradors especially her crazy black Lab, Jerry.



Richard Stone

Events and Membership Assistant
events@ucisa.ac.uk

Rich looks after ucisa's corporate mailings, helps with the drafting of member communications such as the weekly digest and supports Sian with the events programme.

His favourite creatures are Octopuses. Dadju is currently his favourite artist.

ucisa Services Limited



Adrian Ellison
USL Chair and Associate Pro
Vice-Chancellor & CIO,
University of West London

ucisa Services Limited (USL) was incorporated as a wholly-owned subsidiary of ucisa CCLG in order to trade in support of ucisa's Charitable Object, as set out in its Memorandum and Articles of Association. Any surplus made by USL is gifted back to ucisa, the parent charity.

USL is overseen by a board of directors (see next page) and receives business cases for the running of events and other trading activities, supporting those it believes best meet ucisa's Strategy, aims and objectives. The board also ensures that USL operates in the most tax efficient way to maximise its charitable gift back to ucisa, reporting at least annually on USL's activities to the ucisa Board of Trustees.

The past twelve months have been particularly busy as the USL board supported the remodeling

of our sponsorship and events offer to ensure members had access to our full online events programme at no additional charge beyond their institution's membership fee. We have been delighted to see the success of this change, particularly the increased engagement that it has generated for staff at all levels in our sector.

Thanks to the generous support of our sponsors our on-line events programme has been frequent, varied, stimulating and has ensured that we were able to continue to ensure ucisa's financial stability in a difficult period. On behalf of the board of directors, I would like to thank the events team for their dedication and determination to ensure that members could continue to access relevant training to support their personal development throughout the difficult Pandemic period.

Such is the success of our new events model that the ucisa Board of Trustees have asked USL to implement a blended events offer in 2022 continuing to ensure a full programme of on-line events to augment our traditional conference event programme and thereby best meet the needs of our community. I very much look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our first face-to-face event in 2022 our ucisa22, Leadership Conference which takes place on 29th-31st March 2022 in Manchester.

"I think these short, focussed sessions are really helpful and far easier to fit in than in the old face to face days (much as I miss them!)"

Ian Wild,
Director of Programme and
Project Delivery,
IT Services, University of Oxford



ucisa Services Limited Board



Adrian Ellison
USL Chair

**Associate Pro Vice-
Chancellor and CIO,
University of West London**



Simon Bracewell

Marketing Executive



Paul Butler

**Director of Information
and Library Services
University of Greenwich**



Deborah Green

ucisa CEO



Dean Phillips

**Assistant Director, Digital
and Information Services
University of Aberdeen**

Our events programme

“InterSystems sincerely appreciate ucisa’s efficient, gracious customer service, the level of detail and accountability demonstrated on each project, and the way you conduct business as a whole.”



Enzo Brienza
Higher Education Partner Manager
InterSystems

In Autumn 2020 ucisa introduced our CPD programme, delivering eight peer-to-peer CPD events to the community. Led by talented ucisa members, these events are a great way to learn directly from the experiences of peers.

With the onset of remote working last March, the ucisa events team quickly shifted to a virtual model. This change has been highly successful, with 82 events delivered since then to just under 7500 delegates – reaching a greater cross-section of the membership than ever before.

These events range from our annual conferences such as DIG20 or CISG-PCMG20, to standalone webinars organised by our Special Interest Groups, ucisa HQ or sponsored by our corporate members.

Virtual events will remain the status-quo throughout 2021, with our first face-to-face conference scheduled to be the postponed Leadership Conference taking place 29th-31st March 2022 in Manchester.

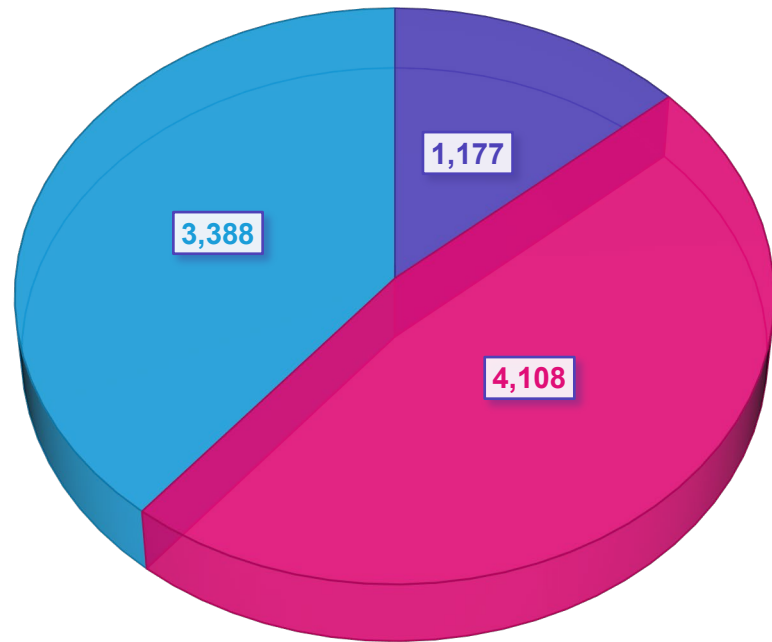
“I found the talk to be really informative [...] As HE institutions we are all trying to grapple with similar problems and sessions like these are invaluable to provide those little sparks of creativity to tackle a problem in a new way, or provide that reassurance that you are on the right track”

Simon Browning,
Implementation Officer,
Cardiff Metropolitan University



ucisa events statistics

Attendee numbers comparison



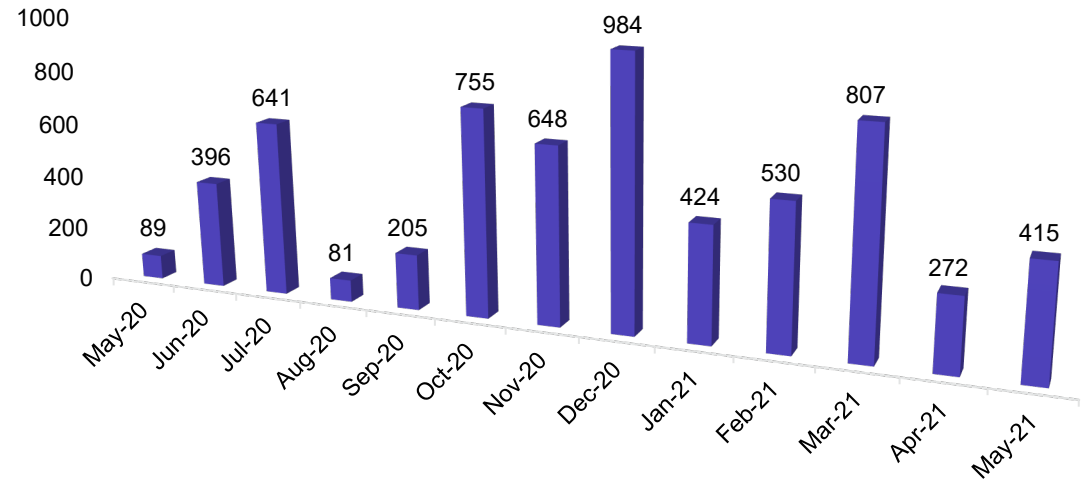
■ 2019 (16 face-to-face*)

■ 2020 (4 face-to-face and 54 virtual*)

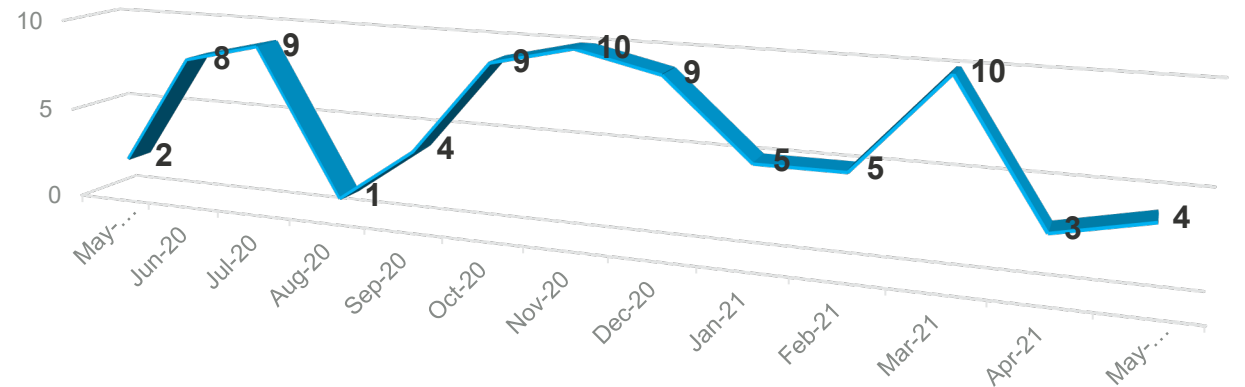
■ 2021 (27 virtual up to May 2021*)

* Multi day events count as one event

Attendee numbers by month from May 2020 to May 2021



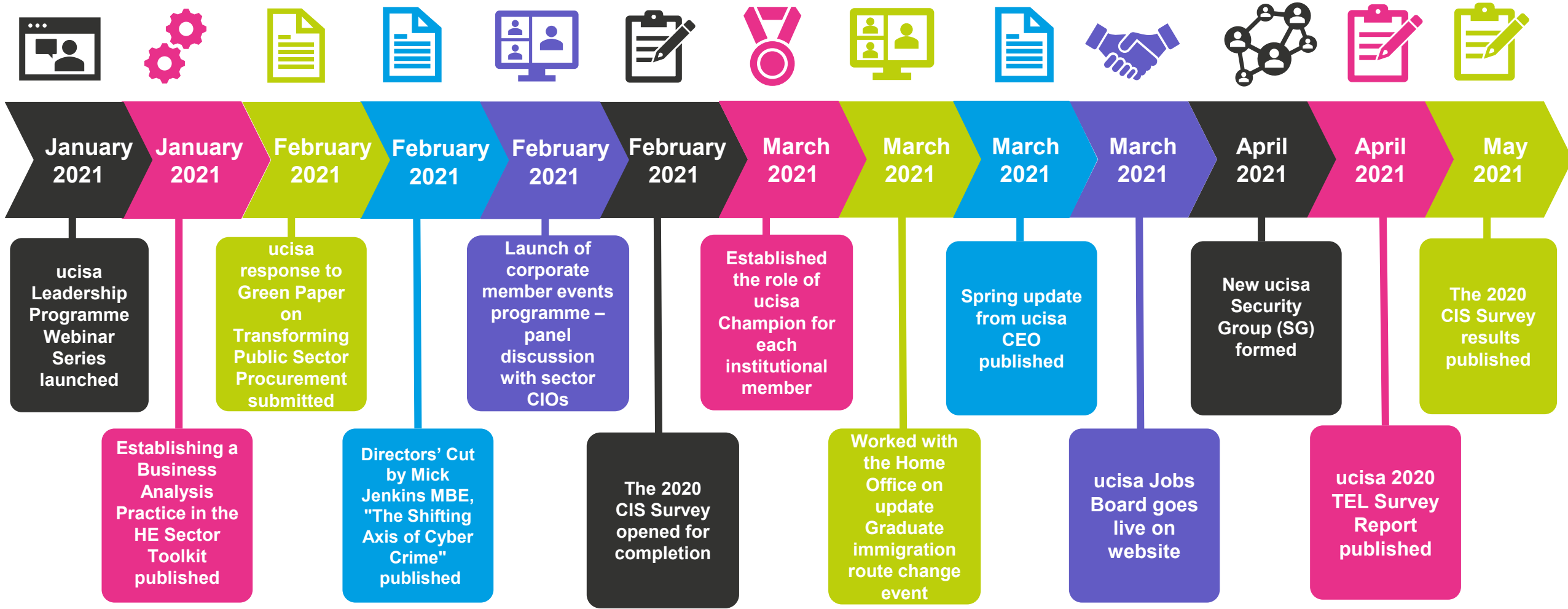
Number of events held by month



Review of 2020



Review of 2021



Introduction to the Groups



"It has been an absolute pleasure and an honour working with the (DCG) group and ucisa over these past years. I am grateful for the opportunities it has brought me and the opportunity to promote the digital capabilities agenda. I would/will strongly recommend membership of the group and ucisa to anyone"

Gillian Fielding,
Former member of the ucisa
Digital Capabilities Group

ucisa's activities are underpinned by our Special Interest Groups (SIG), Communities of Practice (CoP) and our Ad-hoc Working Groups. Drawn from the ucisa membership, they are the voice of ucisa. The work of our Groups is overseen by our Leadership Council which is made up of the Chairs of our Special Interest Groups and Communities of Practice and chaired by our CEO.

The purpose of the Leadership Council is to define and propose activities that meet our charitable purpose in line with the agreed strategy and direction as determined by the ucisa Board of Trustees and membership, to act as a focal point for engagement between ucisa and its members and to maintain relationships with other relevant organisations in the UK and abroad

"In a year when committee members faced many calls on their time due to the unprecedented challenges, they were required to overcome in their substantive roles it is a testament to their dedication to the ucisa community that they still found time to deliver a full programme of Group Activities. We would like to record our thanks to them for all that has been achieved."

Deborah Green
ucisa CEO



Corporate Information Systems Group (CISG)

The Corporate Information Systems group drives networking, collaboration and thought leadership in the support and use of corporate information systems in education.

In 2020 & 2021 committee members and the wider CISG community continued to respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic, supporting our institutions in providing critical services to students and staff. We successfully ran our popular annual conference with the Programme and Change Management group fully online and issued the annual CISG survey, which is a valued resource in the sector.

Our other achievements in 2020 included:

- Providing expertise to ucisa working groups
- Contributing to the HESA Data Futures project as a member of the HESA Technical Design Authority

2021 sees us starting to plan for the 2021 **CISG-PCMG Conference** which will explore, amongst other things, the highs and lows of working and supporting remotely during a pandemic.

We also hope to deliver a series of webinars on hot topics within the sector and run several community led events.



Digital Capabilities Group (DCG)

The Digital Capabilities Group promotes sharing of experience and good practice in IT training and skills development for both staff and students in UK higher education institutions.

The past year has been incredibly challenging for education and our members. We welcomed two new members in 2020, Ben Gill and Nedelin Velikov and said goodbye (and thank you) to Gillian Fielding. Gillian was a long-standing member and contributed a great deal to DCG and ucisa during her tenure. We aim to support our members by providing a space for practice and experience to be shared. Our Spotlight 2020 conference was replaced with a webinar series and our programme will continue in 2021.



Our **webinars have been attended by 483 ucisa members**. Webinars to date include:

- Co-creating through staff-student partnership to increase student employability skills
- Virtual Stratified Medicine Lab – intro to basic lab skills. (Designing a virtual lab tour to promote the learning and teaching of Stratified Medicine)
- Fluency with Teams and Office 365 - Next steps
- Wellbeing pedagogies: practices to improve the student experience online

Our Spotlight 2021 conference: "Is the future blended? The future of work, teaching, learning and the 'university' in a post-pandemic world", took place in May, focussing on the future of education and work and how we prepare students and staff for an uncertain future. With 210 registered attendees, delegate feedback shows the conference was insightful, engaging, informative, enjoyable and full of productive discussions.

Digital Education Group (DEG)

The Digital Education Group acts as a bridge between IT provision and Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) in support of education and aims to identify areas of interest related to the use of technology in support of teaching and learning activities.

This has been the busiest year that our committee members have ever known. Responding to the pandemic at our individual institutions left little time for many of the group's planned activities so we are delighted to have been able to continue to support our member community this year.

Our **achievements** during 2020 include:

- Working with the ucisa-DCG on a series of Spotlight on Digital Capabilities webinars
- The 2020 Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) survey was launched, completed by members, analysed by the Committee with the full report being published in April 2021. The findings were presented at the [ALT Online Summer Summit](#), through an interactive format based on the popular TV show "Have I Got News For You".
- Participating in the Jisc Learning and Teaching Reimagined initiative, to scenario plan for the mid-to-long-term future of technology enhanced learning in HE.

Plans for 2021 include:

- TEL survey follow up - recorded video panel sessions to be published in summer 2021. Concentration on four areas, The Learning Technology Toolkit, Team and Organisational Structures, Culture and Institutional Drivers and Teaching Models.
- Update VLE Review Toolkit to include accessibility and data privacy content.
- Planning for TEL survey 2022.



Digital Infrastructure Group (DIG)

The Digital Infrastructure Group helps connect infrastructure and network colleagues in HE and FE.

2020 and lockdown saw infrastructure and network colleagues from across HE & FE rise to the challenge to enable and support their institutions shift to a new way of teaching, learning & working. In the same way, DIG played a significant role in helping ucisa respond to the challenges that COVID-19 presented. One of our key achievements was reimagining our very successful annual conference to be delivered virtually and still provide the same benefits and value to our HE, FE and corporate members.



Our other achievements in 2020 included:

- Co-hosting an Information Security Workshop with SSG
- The creation of the new DIG following the merger of the Infrastructure and Networking Groups.

What we will be doing in 2021?

- We have already made great progress in planning this year's DIG21 conference, which will take place virtually on 2nd to 4th November.
- We will be collaborating with the new ucisa Information Security Group to deliver a 1-day event later this year.
- Two members of DIG have delivered sessions at the recent ucisa London Group event 'Education and the cloud'.

The role of HEIDS is to promote high standards in the provision and development of academic, management and administrative information systems throughout the Scottish Higher Education Sector.

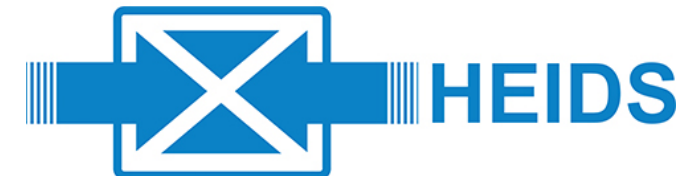
HEIDS is a recognised Regional Directors' group of ucisa. As such, it furthers the overall aims and regional service provision of the Association. HEIDS operates within ucisa's charitable objects, actively engages through the ucisa annual planning process, membership of the ucisa Leadership Council and may request funding from ucisa to fulfil its objectives.

Achievements

- Contributed to a review of the Scottish Funding Council's approach to alleviating Digital Poverty / Exclusion during the pandemic
- Completed 4 institutional case studies on Digital Capability training
- Moved to Teams based meetings using ucisa tenancy to host regular, well attended meetings
- Provided a forum for APUC to test demand for shared services in a variety of areas, several of which have been stood up through HEFESTIS
- Provided Jisc with a forum and feedback on the redesign of the national JANET network

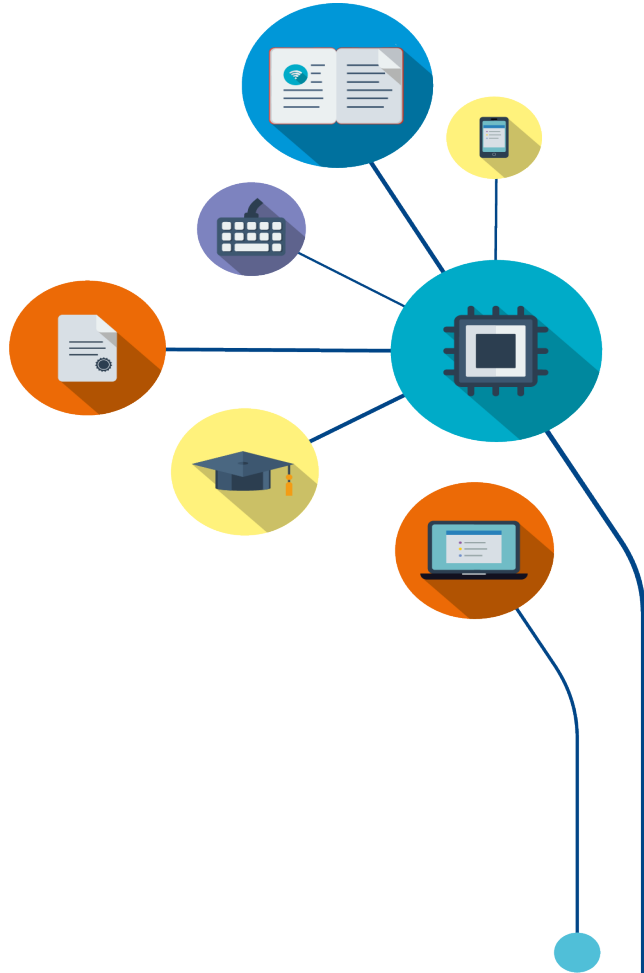
Priorities

- Contribute to Scottish Funding Council review of Digital with particular focus on platforms and suppliers
- Provide case studies to Universities Scotland in respect of how the sector IT functions performed and innovated during the pandemic
- Completion of a planning document to maximise benefit of relationship with ucisa



HEIDS InfoSec sub-group

The role of HEIDS is to promote high standards in the provision and development of academic, management and administrative information systems throughout the Scottish Higher Education Sector.



Achievements

- Regular sharing of information security good practice, challenges and successes via HEIDS IS group
- Recent focus of ransomware controls following increased instances across wider HE and FE sectors.
- Helped reduce direct impact limited to partner institution under attack.
- Improvements underway in all institutions with attention on multi-factor authentication, user awareness, ransomware mitigation as recommended by ucisa, HEFESTIS and JISC.

Priorities

- Continue to work through the HEIDS Info Sec Group to improve the sector information security and compliance posture.
- Continue to communicate that Information Security risks remain a key challenge and to improve practice across the sector.
- Help institutions seeking re-certification for CE/CE+ under new assessment regime
- Explore new ways of working and explore new security challenges as they arise.

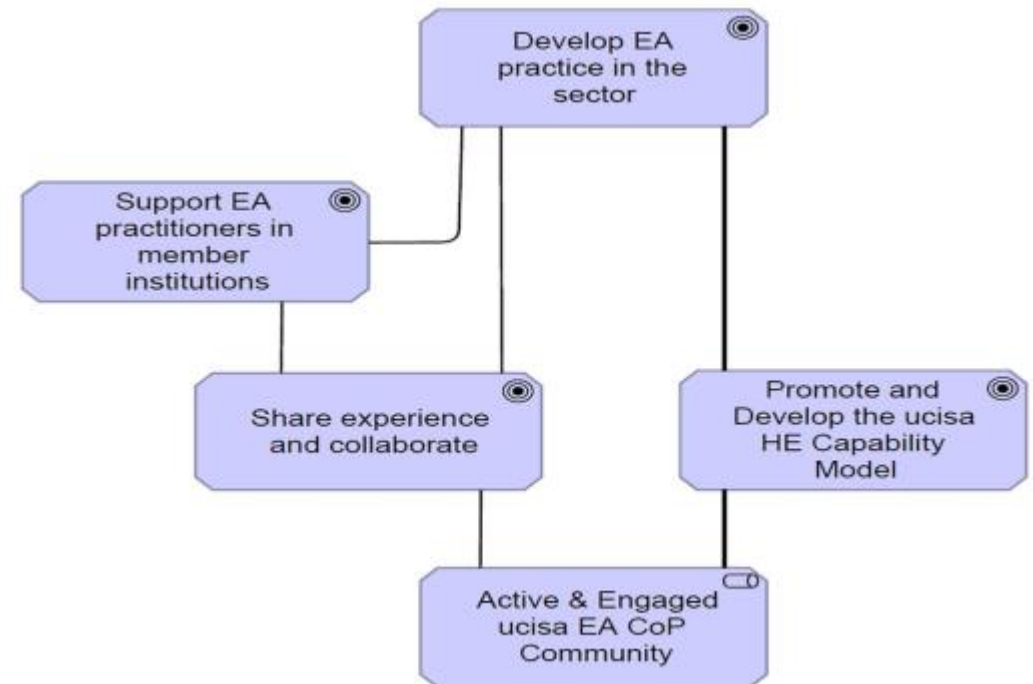
Enterprise Architecture Community of Practice (EA CoP)

The Enterprise Architecture Community of Practice seeks to promote and develop Enterprise Architecture practice in individual institutions and across the sector through the sharing of knowledge, experience and good practice.

The ucisa Enterprise Architecture Community of Practice (EA CoP) has around 300 members from over 100 different institutions.

During 2020 and into 2021 we have

- Hosted 'open-mic' meetings with ucisa EA CoP members to enable collaboration and discussion
- Hosted webinars to showcase and share examples of practice with the ucisa EA community
- Conducted an annual survey of EA CoP members, sharing findings to surface trends and common issues or concerns
- Established a collaborative working relationship with CAUDIT and agreed to work together with the aim of harmonizing our Business and Capability models



Software and Procurement Group (S&PG)

S&PG acts as a forum for the HE and FE educational community wanting to promote the specific requirements of the sector to software suppliers.

2020 brought a new way of working for the Software and Procurement Group and a new vision as we began the journey to move to becoming a group in our own right. As a small sub-group, we only met 3 times a year and did not have posts such as vice-chair etc. The group now meets monthly and a volunteer for vice-chair has been welcomed to the group.



Moving forward next steps are:

- Set up of group email list
- Building up of resources on the ucisa Software and Procurement Group website
- Call for new members

One of the exciting developments during 2020 has been the proactive creation of working groups to look at specific problems, usually with a key vendor to the sector. Work continues to establish how to ensure effective engagement between these working Groups and S&PG to maximise effectiveness and ensure that ucisa presents a coherent and united message to vendor community.

We hosted our first ever webinar in May, **Frameworks 101, for corporate members**. Spring boarding from this into the group planning its schedule for the forthcoming year.

Project & Change Management Group (PCMG)

The Project and Change Management Group aims to support better management and execution of projects and change initiatives so that greater value is obtained for our community.

In our first fully online Annual Conference '**Storming & Performing In the new normal**' with CISG, we sought to explore the new environments and landscapes that Covid-19 had necessitated. We wished to share our experiences and wanted to celebrate the success stories and look at the lessons learned. The feedback on the speakers and sessions was extremely positive with the below quote encapsulating the feeling from the conference:

“For me it was finding out how other institutions have coped in a year that has been so thoroughly different and challenging. It is wonderful to see how institutions have diversified and really gone all out to make a success out of an unprecedented obstacle. “



Our other achievements in 2020 included:

- Hosting a webinar for Portfolio Management
- Releasing the Toolkit for *Establishing a Business Analysis Practice in the HE Sector*

2021 sees our planning commence for CISG-PCMG21 where the theme is following on from last year.... **Transitioning to a Hybrid workplace.**

The Committee is also looking at expanding our numbers and with that the ability to refresh the PMO Toolkit and finalise the Benefits Realisation Toolkit. We also plan to hold Webinars/Panel Discussions in Resource Management and Business Analysis.

Security Group (SG)

*The newly formed Security Group
aim is to support and advise the community*

Following a year of heightened activity and focus on security matters throughout our sector, ucisa was proud to launch our new Security Group in April 2021.

Under the chairmanship of Dave Thornley, Head of Digital Architecture, at Sheffield Hallam University, a committee has been formed and a programme of activity is already underway including:

- The group's first event on June 24th on Effective Communications and Public Relations after a Cyber Security Incident, with Dr. Jason Nurse
- Formation of a working group to develop an Effective Communications toolkit for HE.
- Run further webinars with Mick Jenkins MBE, Chief Information Security Officer Brunel University London, following on from the success of the webinar - The Shifting Axis of Cyber Crime, in February 2021.
- Work with DfE and Metropolitan Police to host simulation exercise.
- A high- level event aimed at University Leadership Teams to raise awareness of issues with speakers from NCSC, Jisc and ucisa member universities

The group will also add to the continued focus on this important area by providing

- Directors Cut/ IT Contemporary articles
- Blog posts
- Annual Security 1 day event
- Quarterly open members' meetings



Support Services Group (SSG)

*The **Support Services Group** helps connect IT Support services in FE and HE. We produce an array of tools and events, empowering our members and encouraging peer support.*

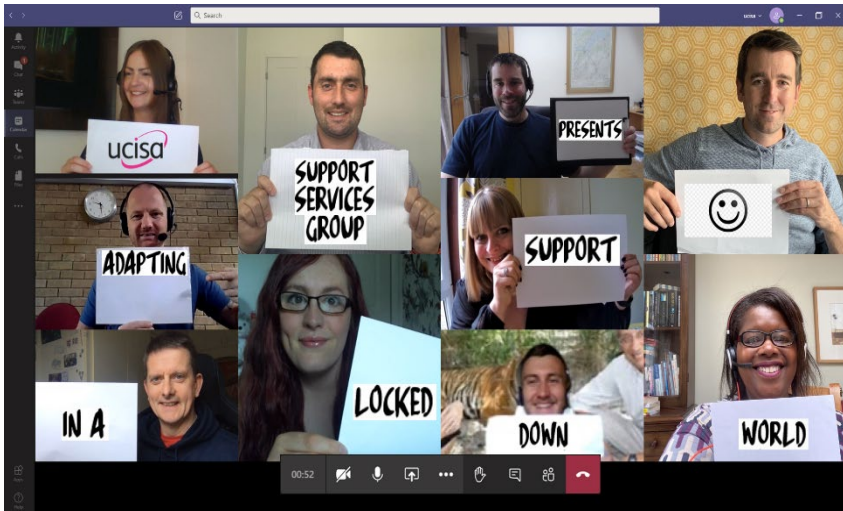
2020 and 2021 sees us still responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic, but that hasn't stopped us from running a number of community events including our Annual Conference SSG20 which closed off the year by looking at the opportunities and challenges of delivering blended support.

Our other achievements in 2020 included:

- Co-hosting an Information Security Workshop with DIG
- Delivering a Webinar on 'Adapting Support for Users in a Lockdown World'.
- Promoting peer support through support themed discussion on our new MS Teams channel

2021 sees our planning commence for **SSG21** where we'll focus on the New Student Experience, following our virtual student, Sam, from Open Day to Graduation, showcasing the varied themes of Support Services.

We also hope to deliver a webinar series and Director's Cut feature on 'Support and Start of Year 2021/22' and we want to continue to promote Wellbeing in the Workplace in an upcoming Webinar.



The ucisa London Group is open to anyone from member institutions in the capital at all professional levels. It offers a strong focus on networking and information sharing..

During June 2020 to December 2020 the ucisa London Group delivered 11 online Events attended by 159 delegates. The programme was initially aimed at members of the ucisa London Group only, but later invitations were widened to include all ucisa members. In 2021 we shifted to delivering monthly events and to date there have been 5 webinars with 432 attendees.

Back in June 2020 we discussed education exiting lockdown whilst the topic for September was ISO 27001: Everything you need to know. In November, the challenge for education was discussed. From January 2021 events moved to monthly topics covering a range of differing subjects including, Augmenting the reality of Education, The potential of organisational frameworks, Leading and Developing people in a rapidly changing world of technology, Education and the cloud and Information Security

Looking forward to the rest of 2021: In June we will talk about Service Desks and Service Management, following with a discussion on digital poverty in July. August will cover audio-visual systems. September leads the way into the WIT annual conference later in the year by discussing Women in Technology. October and November's topics will be project planning & agile and apps & education. Christmas fun in December will then end a busy year for the Group's events programme.



Women in Tech (WiT)

ucisa's Women in Tech Group highlights the success of women already working in IT roles in HE and FE. The Group offers opportunities to network and share experiences and challenges as well as identifying best practice approaches to improving diversity.

The past year saw the second full year for the group. Changes to the membership of the committee saw us welcome the return of Sandra Gillham and we said goodbye to Lynne Newbitt as she joined the ucisa central team.



Our first ever group conference saw us adapt to embrace the online conference platform, following the postponement of the event from its original date of May 2020 instead taking place on Aida Lovelace day (13th October 2020). **Attended by 291 ucisa members**, it was a great event focussing on the following areas:

Supportive- "I can't be what I can't see"

Positive role models, career challenges at different life stages and challenging societal stereotypes.

Disruptive - "Pay it forward"

Showcasing successful change initiatives, behaviours and culture worth challenging.

Resilient - "Thrive, not just survive"

Mental and physical wellbeing, work-life balance and connecting support networks.

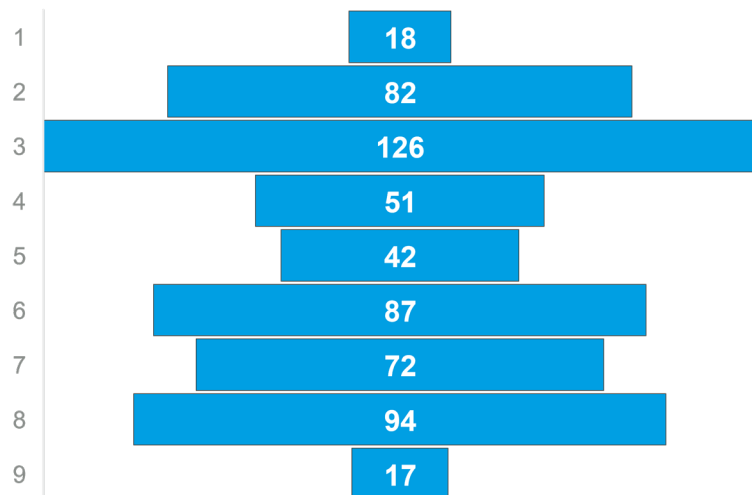
Meeting members' needs

"The work of ucisa has been of huge value to the IT Team and the College as a whole this year. In particular the focus on representation with suppliers has enabled us to negotiate more effectively and start to leverage the collective power of the sector in ways we haven't been able to before."

Michael Johnson,
Chief Information Officer
Royal Holloway, University of London



Representation Group Membership



Our representation work continues to grow in volume and coverage with working parties and representative groups currently coordinating active discussions with a wide range of suppliers. We now have a model for such work that is proving popular with both institutional members and suppliers .

Perhaps equally importantly, ucisa has been able to unify representation activities from a range of interested parties and has been proud to work with bodies such as HeLF, DDF, CUBO, CASE, BUFDG, Home Office and Jisc, ensuring suppliers receive a clear and coordinated approach and can address any issues raised effectively and efficiently.

Our work in this area is both valued and well supported by both institutional and corporate members. We have held regular open members' meetings to underpin our representative work, many of which have provided a platform for senior leaders from supplier companies to address members, respond to concerns raised, and hear their experiences first-hand. All suppliers involved have welcomed the opportunity this creates.

"Being a member of ucisa brings huge added value to us, as it gives us insight into what the market is doing, the challenges and opportunities. We learn so much from the webinars and events - more than we would from reading material online. In a world where our customers want us to partner with them, ucisa enables us to build understanding of their environment, the tech and challenges they face and gives us the headlines of where we should focus."

Nicola Moss
Head of Real Tech Education
Real Staffing



"The feedback from my team is that ucisa has really upped its game. The work you are doing is both valuable and valued"



Vipin Ahlawat,
Director of IT Services
Loughborough University

Reflections from the ucisa CEO



Thanks to the heroic efforts of University and College IT staff at every level, the almost Herculean task of enabling remote working for just under 3 million students, lecturers, researchers, academic leaders and support staff was achieved at pace in 2020.

Deborah Green
CEO

@ucisa2021

In my foreword to the joint report ucisa published with Microsoft at the end of last year, I reflected on the key role that CIOs and the teams they lead had played in enabling the Higher Education sector's response to the Covid 19 Pandemic and the sheer scale of the task you had achieved as you moved the delivery of higher education and research fully online. I went on to quote one Vice Chancellor who had commented, *"Our IT team delivered four years' worth of digital strategy in six weeks, enabling our whole operation to continue"*.

Given the challenges that our members have faced over the period covered by this Review, it is hardly surprising that ucisa, as your professional body, has had one of the busiest years ever, as we worked with and for you to support, inspire and represent you during these unprecedented times. In reality, the pages of this Review provide just a snapshot of the many and varied activities that we have undertaken in the past months with huge engagement from a wide cross section of our community all of whom found time, despite the challenges of their substantive roles, to ensure that the voice of our sector was heard and that we continued to connect, share and transform. We have never been prouder to

say that ucisa is run by our members, for our members and we hope that you are as proud as we are of what you have collectively achieved, both within your institutions and on behalf of your professional body.

I would also like to thank our corporate members for the incredible support they have shown. Our sponsors and exhibitors for the postponed Leadership Conference, now scheduled to take place in March next year, deserve very particular mention, as almost two thirds of them agreed to repurpose their sponsorship monies in 2020, ensuring we were able to deliver a wide-ranging event programme reaching over 7,500 attendees to date and many more via the recordings. I am pleased to say that the dialogue commenced with our corporate members at that time has continued, enabling us to work far more collaboratively with them to ensure they make the very most of their ucisa membership. We were also delighted to launch our first programme of events specifically for Corporate Members this year.

Over the last year, interaction through working groups has allowed a more dynamic style of discourse with both parts of

the ucisa membership, enabling us to highlight areas of concern and provide platforms for collaboration, developing mutual understanding and co-creation of constructive solutions. At a time when our institutional members are looking to build partnerships with suppliers rather than transactional relationships, this focus on collaboration is key to our mutual ongoing success.

On behalf of our ucisa staff, or 'Team ucisa' as we prefer to be known, I would like to thank the Board of Trustees for their unfailing support throughout the past twelve months. Our chair, Drew Cook, steps down at the AGM later this month after serving two years in this role. It has been an absolute privilege to work with him and we would like to record our thanks for his sound guidance, clarity of purpose and good humour throughout.

I will save the final word for team ucisa. It is a real pleasure to work alongside such a hard-working, creative, dedicated, and resilient team and I thank them for all they have achieved and for all the things I know that they will go on to achieve on your behalf in the year ahead.

ucisa

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