

ucisa CEO Corporate Member Update



March 2021



Dear Colleagues,

Time seems to be elastic in lockdown; the days seem long yet the weeks and months fly by. I can hardly believe the Easter break is almost upon us and we are at the end of the first quarter already! Nevertheless, as we begin to contemplate the tantalising prospect of life after lockdown, this seems an ideal opportunity to reflect on the busy start to the ucisa year and update you on things to come.

Events to stimulate and inspire

Our programme of free to attend on-line webinars continues to go from strength to strength with five events per month in January and February rising to ten events as the season got into full swing in March. To date we have welcomed 1,734 delegates across the twenty events. Many more are taking advantage of our growing library of webinar recordings, appreciating the ability to access personal development at a time and pace that suits their individual needs. The library now contains over 50 [recordings](#) and can be accessed via the website.

We were also proud to launch our new Corporate Member Events Programme in February with our CIO Panel event where Senior leaders considered the implications of the events of last year for the future of the sector. The session was well received with strong engagement and so many questions and comments that we now plan to allow more time in future sessions of this nature.

We are therefore pleased to announce the Corporate Member Events Programme for the next quarter. All these events are in response to the direct requests made by corporate members in the original consultation meetings, and so you may wish to save the following dates in your diaries:

- **April 20th** - Chair of our Software and Procurement Group, Tina Pask will deliver a 1-hour 'Frameworks 101' session to explore frameworks, how they are used, how to get on them and when & where opportunities are publicised. Perhaps even more helpfully, this session will cover how to successfully respond to a tender.
- **May 12th & 13th: Spotlight Conference** - Corporate members are invited to attend our virtual Annual Spotlight Conference which will focus on the future of blended learning. The [programme and booking form](#) is available on our website.
- **June 17th at 3.30 p.m.** - The first of this year's **CEO briefings** will take place where I will share details of key issues and challenges facing the sector ahead of the busy Clearing period.

Please look out for further details of these events shortly after the Easter break.

We launched our Leadership Series in February with a timely focus on Cyber Security in a session led by CISO and thriller writer, Mick Jenkins, supported by a Directors' Cut briefing paper. The second in the series took place last week, kindly sponsored by InterSystems and chaired by Greenwich CIO and ucisa elected Trustee, Paul Butler. The session was led by Adrian Byrne, CIO of University Hospital Southampton, who shared his institution's [Journey to Interoperability](#).

The next event in the Leadership programme series will take place at our AGM on Thursday 10th June, where inspirational speaker, Nicky Moffat, will address the audience of CIO's and IT Leaders. Nicky's first career spanned 27 years in the Armed Forces and saw her leading some 4,500 soldiers within the Army's personnel and finance function. We would invite any corporate member interested in sponsoring the AGM meeting to contact events@ucisa.ac.uk.

Meeting members' needs

Our representation work continues to grow in volume and coverage with working parties and representative groups currently co-ordinating 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 bodies, such as HeLF, DDF, CUBO, CASE, BUFDG, Home Office and Jisc, ensuring suppliers receive a clear and co-ordinated 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.

If you are making any key changes to products, services, delivery models, or indeed pricing, which you would welcome our support in communicating to members, then please contact membership@ucisa.ac.uk.

Research and Resources:

As last year closed, we were pleased to publish a [joint report](#) with Microsoft reflecting on the incredible work by IT departments across the sector in 2020. The [report](#) generated a great deal of interest and has resulted in invitations to speak at a number of events this year.

In January, we were pleased to announce the publication of our [latest toolkit](#): Establishing a Business Analysis Practice in the HE Sector, developed by the ucisa Project and Change Management Group (PCMG). With helpful advice, tips and case studies, the toolkit guides the journey to creating a business analysis centre of excellence in academic institutions.

In February, the transforming IT Procurement Working Party, chaired by Dr. Robert Moore of Leeds Beckett University, kindly took on the challenge of co-ordinating the [ucisa response](#) to the Green Paper on Transforming Public Sector Procurement, published in December. The response was collated from discussions with university and college procurement and IT professionals, and from key stakeholders in the IT supply chain. [The response](#) brings our distinct perspective to bear on what is likely to be a tremendously important change to the public sector procurement regulations. Our thanks are due to Rob Moore, Tina Pask (London University) and Mel Gomes (Royal Holloway University) who led this work, to all members of the working party and to all corporate members who contributed.

February also saw our first 'pulse survey' launched, kindly sponsored by Lenovo, and we hope to be sharing the report with you very shortly. We hope that these regular, short surveys will become a regular feature enabling us to take a frequent 'temperature check' that will allow us to comment on the health of the sector.

Our stakeholder engagement work continues to grow, and our extremely popular members' briefing event with The Home Office in mid-March evidences this. Home Office representatives gave full details of the changes to The Graduate Route and the data that institutions will need to provide to assist eligible graduates to remain in the UK to study. This change will have implications for suppliers and so we were pleased to see many corporate members represented at the meeting and to facilitate direct discussions with Home Office representatives outside the meeting.

The [recording and slides](#) can be accessed via the website and will be helpful to IT teams supporting the reporting requirements, as well as to corporate members who provide student information systems. More importantly, we identified that some of the suggestions put forward by the Home Office may not be feasible for some institutions. We have therefore formed a working party to work with Home Office representatives to facilitate institutions' and corporate members' ability to comply in a manner that is manageable for them.

Looking Forward:

We launched the latest CIS survey, our annual survey of the Corporate Information Systems in February, which is widely used across the sector. The deadline for completion has now passed and I would like to thank all our institutional members who have participated. Their responses help us to provide relevant information that paints a clear picture of where the sector is and the challenges it faces. We aim to publish the results in the summer.

In the next quarter, we also plan to meet your requests to enhance corporate members' visibility within the ucisa website with a new categorisation schema. We welcome further suggestions for development of the website to membership@ucisa.ac.uk.

Our thanks to all who have sponsored events, surveys, and resources in the first quarter. Without your support, we would not be able to offer the wide range of services to our members and we are therefore deeply grateful. Our thanks also to all of you we are currently working with for the upcoming programme. We would encourage you to contact events@ucisa.ac.uk if you have any suggestions for future events, resources or thought-leadership pieces.

I hope you have found this update useful. As always, your comments and feedback on any aspect of ucisa's work on your behalf would be warmly welcomed.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your teams an enjoyable Easter Break.

Best Wishes

Deborah



Deborah L. Green
CEO ucisa

ucisa

Registered office:

30 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LE.

admin@ucisa.ac.uk

www.ucisa.ac.uk

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