Shawcross Refurbished

The main IT Services user area and adjacent IT Suites in Shawcross were thoroughly refurbished and redecorated during the summer vacation.

The heavily used black and white printers were replaced with brand new machines and the number of scanners in the area was increased to seven. As well as thorough cleaning, the replacement of the carpets and the redecoration of the walls, a new improved layout was introduced which makes better use of the space and allows for more computers to be made available.

Another noticeable change is the positioning of the printers, an arrangement designed to help ease congestion during busy periods close to submission deadlines when printing is in high demand.

The extra space in this area also proved invaluable during Freshers’ arrivals and at the beginning of term. The temporary addition of rows of chairs gave students waiting for assistance with connecting to the campus network somewhere comfortable and convenient to wait without blocking access.

We will continue to enforce the same “bottled water only” rule as the Library - computers and keyboards are easily damaged by sticky drinks and food fragments. In addition, spillages can damage the furniture and carpet which is expensive for both us and you.

Induction 2012

IT Services joined forces with the Library and Careers & Employability Centre to deliver our welcome talk as part of the Getting Connected session offered to all new students at the beginning of Freshers’ induction.

In total, around 3000 new students, which included over 75% of this year’s undergraduate intake, came to the sessions.

The ITS segment consisted of a twenty minute presentation including two short animated films giving an overview of the services available and stressing important points to remember. The films are now available on the IT Services YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/itssussex

The information in the films was covered in more detail in a printed booklet, IT Services at Sussex which was given to all attendees.

The booklet (copies of which are still available from the IT Service Desk in Shawcross) covers basic topics from Connecting to the Internet to Getting Help and Training. All of these topics are covered in more detail on web pages linked to via the portal, which also contains links to the induction films: sussex.ac.uk/its/students
Password forgotten?

IT Services has introduced a new facility so you can reset your own password should you forget what it is.

Previously users in this situation had to come to the IT Service Desk in Shawcross during opening hours with their ID.

Now, provided you have already registered a personal (i.e. non-Sussex) email address or mobile phone number in Sussex Direct you can have a reset password link sent to you at any hour of the day or night.

For further information about this new facility, please see our web pages at:

sussex.ac.uk/its/help/faq382

Printing from the web

This is a reminder that since the beginning of Summer Term 2012, students and staff have been able to print to the charged printers from their own laptops and computers using web printing. It is hoped that this will help students during busy periods close to submission deadlines when previously they had to queue to login to a computer simply to print a copy of their work.

The process works on any computer without the need to install additional software - all that you need is a web browser and internet access.

New users should be aware that before they can use web printing for the first time, they must print at least one page using one of the IT Services PCs or Macs on the campus.

This is because the printing account is automatically set up the first time a user prints from a campus computer. From this point forwards they will be able to use web printing and top up their printing account with a credit or debit card using Sussex Direct.

At the moment, you have to be on the campus and connected to a campus network such as eduroam (wi-fi) or ResNet to use the service.

Via the online interface at webprint.sussex.ac.uk you can upload and queue documents ready for printing - however, files won’t actually print until you decide to release them. You can do this straightaway if you’re near to the printer already.

For further information, including a list of printers available when using this service, please see:

sussex.ac.uk/its/webprinting

Purchasing computing equipment for staff

For information about computers and equipment that can be ordered via IT Services please see sussex.ac.uk/its/cfw

This describes the Centrally Funded Workstation scheme which allocates eVouchers on an annual basis to each department (i.e. school or professional services group) to ensure University funded staff have appropriate equipment to carry out their work. The head of school uses these eVouchers to obtain computers for these University funded staff at no cost to their department.

Note that the deadline for using this year’s allocation of eVouchers is 28 February 2013.

In addition, researchers who are not eligible for eVouchers can purchase workstations and benefit from the same level of support as those obtained through the scheme.

The equipment list has been updated and now includes the Dell All-in-one PCs (see Equipment page). For other equipment, like printers, scanners, webcams etc, see Additional Equipment page.

The facts of IT

IT Services have produced an infographic fact sheet which collects a number of interesting statistics about the services offered and systems in use as at Autumn 2012:

sussex.ac.uk/its/pdfs/factsheet-2012-autumn.pdf

Essentials for staff

A new Essential Guide for Staff about using information technology at Sussex has been produced. This is intended to be useful not only for new staff but also to update existing staff about the current computing services available. Copies have been sent to all School Offices and more are available from the IT Service Desk in Shawcross.

New Print Account Banking Station

IT Services have installed a new PABS in the Library, located on the first floor by the printers near the front of the building, bringing the total available to 3. Others are located on the ground floor of the Library and in Shawcross (24 hr access).
A £1.3m investment was announced in October 2011 to increase the availability and speed of wireless internet (wi-fi) on campus. This funding also enabled IT Services to provide extra computers for students, doubling the number of computers available for general use.

The work was partly undertaken in response to student feedback in the learning resources section of the 2011 National Student Survey. The results of the 2012 National Student Survey show that the money was well spent - student satisfaction with learning resources increased to its second highest level (79.8%) since the survey began.

**Computers**

During the course of the programme, IT Services have installed 440 new computers, making 900 PCs and Macs now available for general student use around campus.

This includes a significant number of extra computers in the Library and a number of additional clusters including one in the brand new Jubilee building (see photo above) which contains 24 dual-screen PCs.

**Wi-fi**

Over 200 new wi-fi access points were installed in lecture rooms, teaching labs and social spaces, substantially improving capacity in the central part of the campus.

All of the existing wi-fi points were replaced with different models able to handle 40% more connections than before.

In the Library, substantial upgrades to the network were made to improve provision across all of the open-plan areas.

In addition a wi-fi service was installed in the campus residences for the first time, to provide a service to complement the existing wired connection in all study bedrooms.

The use of wi-fi on the campus has grown dramatically in the last two years. The proliferation of mobile devices with internet access has left universities across the UK racing to keep up with demand. With the prospect of a shift from traditional computers to “post-PC” devices and increasing reliance on connections to cloud-based services, this may only be the beginning.
High performance computing
During the summer, IT Services upgraded the Bright cluster management software and Lustre parallel file system on the High Performance Computing Facility. The Experimental Particle Physics (EPP) group, which participates in the CERN ATLAS experiment, has had their STFC rolling grant renewed, and will be adding more Lustre storage and compute nodes to the cluster at the beginning of next year.
For further information or to apply for a user account on the apollo HPC facility, please email:
researchsupport@its.sussex.ac.uk

Annual Software Review
Before the end of term we will be consulting with your Head of School or Department to identify future software requirements for the PC, Mac and Linux computers managed by IT Services. This includes software in general teaching space computer rooms as well as workstations used by staff and researchers.
Please consider your own requirements for teaching, research and work and ensure that your Head of School or Department is aware of your software needs.
If you would like to offer your own suggestions then please email s.radford@sussex.ac.uk.

Corporate Information Systems
Major changes have recently been made to support the new academic year structure. In addition, a lot of hard work was put into the change of terminology to Courses and Modules in all systems in time for the switch date at the beginning of September.
Sussex Research Online (SRO), a repository containing details of research outputs from staff at the University of Sussex, went fully live on 24 April 2012. SRO contains details of over 20,000 articles, papers, books and other forms of research output, including the full text where permitted. It is the source of publication lists in staff Web Profiles and is freely searchable via the Web to raise the University’s research profile and support the “Open Access” vision. It will also facilitate the University’s “Research Excellence Framework” submission to HEFCE.

Staff news
Since the last newsletter IT Services have said farewell to Rebecca Hattersley and Jane Monaghan from Corporate Information Systems; Patricia O’Brien and Zac Bruce-Merrie from Client Services plus Chris Jenkins from Infrastructure Services.

We also welcome Jeff Reif, Adam Ford, Jack McCulloch and Dawn Stewart to Corporate Information Systems.

CrashPlan Pro
IT Services offer an automated backup service for University owned laptops (or desktop computers with no networked home directory) using CrashPlan Pro. CrashPlan Pro can be installed on a laptop or other computer that is only intermittently connected to the campus network. It will automatically copy data files to the main university back-up file store whenever the laptop is connected to the campus network. CrashPlan Pro can also be used to restore files that have been deleted by mistake or due to a problem with the laptop.
Please note that both backup and restore are currently only functional whilst connected to the campus network.
The service is available for Linux, Mac and Windows computers. For information and download, see: sussex.ac.uk/its/crashplan

General enquiries and help
The IT Service Desk in Shawcross is open from 9am - 7pm (term time) and 9am - 5.30pm (vacation), Monday to Friday, ext: 8090.
The ITS Help Point in the Library is open from 11am - 5pm, Monday to Friday during term time.
Help is available online at sussex.ac.uk/its/help or via email support@its.sussex.ac.uk.

Support for staff desktops
Please request support in the normal way by using the web form at sussex.ac.uk/its/help/staff.

Help with Audio-Visual equipment in General Teaching Space
Wall-mounted instructions are available in every room, along with details of the AV helpline (8022).
To report faults on audio-visual equipment please email gts-faults@its.sussex.ac.uk.

Videoconferencing
Our suite - available to staff for University business - is located in Arundel 1E. Enquiries to videoconf@its.sussex.ac.uk.

Please send any contributions for the next issue of ITS News to Chris Limb at C.Limb@sussex.ac.uk by the beginning of Spring Term 2013.
New services, changes to existing services and announcements of any changes that cannot be publicised in advance in ITS News will be published in Latest News at: sussex.ac.uk/its/news (RSS: sussex.ac.uk/its/news/rss.xml), Twitter at: twitter.com/ITSservices and Facebook at facebook.com/ITSSussex.