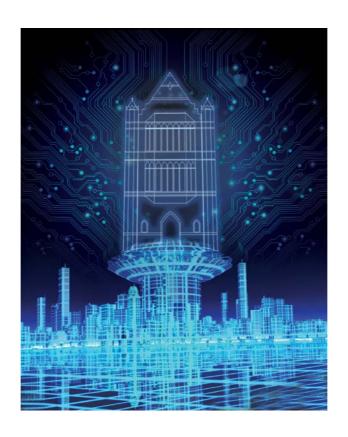# Vision and Strategy for
Digital Learning and Teaching at Victoria
2012-2017

Executive Summary

In 2011 SMT accepted the report of the Working Party on Teaching and Learning at Victoria using Digital Technologies and CAD was asked to lead a strategic initiative developing a strategy and vision for learning and teaching. This document outlines a vision and strategy for the contribution technology makes to learning and teaching at Victoria and describes a set of actions intended to build our collective capability.

The Victoria Digital Vision for Learning and Teaching is anchored on the presumption that the experience of study at Victoria will be built on high quality and effective face to face engagement with staff and other students. Enhancing face to face experiences with technology requires an awareness of the different places and contexts students will encounter staff and other students. A range of technologies need to be provided that are designed to both improve the quality and efficiency of learning that occurs face to face as well as extending the impact of that time through online activities which prepare students and extend their engagement afterwards. This approach, a form of hybrid distance and face to face learning is commonly referred to as "blended learning" where a blend of approaches and tools are used to support student learning.

Vision

Technology is a fundamental contributor to modern life and key to a challenging and stimulating educational experiences for students in the 21st Century. Victoria students will experience a professional, supportive and enabling digital learning technology environment aimed at ensuring our students succeed in the modern world. This environment will enhance and extend student learning experiences through participation in a lively, innovative and scholarly community, both physically and online.

Technology will be used to facilitate the engagement of students through their experience of:
1. Programmes of study designed to maximise the positive impact of technology on students' critical engagement, motivation and creativity. Innovative digital technologies extending the impact of formally scheduled face to face contact by preparing, informing and framing the student's learning and enquiry, enabled and enhanced in partnership with staff and other students; and
2. An efficient, seamless and professional service, administration and learning environment designed to support individual student's engagement with their studies and ensure that students are able to focus their energy and attention on learning.

Strategy Actions

A strategic plan encompassing ten key actions is proposed in support of this vision. These actions address weaknesses identified in the various analyses conducted at Victoria and respond to the concerns of staff and students identified throughout the consultation.
1. Articulation by faculties, schools and CSUs of plans for technology use in learning and teaching, reflecting their distinctive identities, pedagogies, students and services
2. Staff training and support in ICT use provided and ongoing development encouraged for all staff engaged in learning and teaching
3. Faculty support staff employed to help staff engage with technology
4. Provision of student training and support for ICT use in courses
5. Encouragement of a change in the way face to face time is used in courses
6. Development of a technology platform, lifecycle, and roadmap for investment in new and improved learning and teaching technologies
7. Development of a policy on minimum course presence online
8. Support of innovation through the innovation incubator
9. Course information management and publication
10. Technological support for assessment activities

Introduction and Background

This Vision and Strategy for Digital Learning and Teaching is a response to the Working Party on Teaching and Learning at Victoria using Digital Technologies report presented to SMT in 2011. It reflects the analysis and recommendations of that report, as well as being aligned to the goals and actions (see Appendix A) of the Victoria Strategic Plan 2009-2014, the Victoria Learning and Teaching Strategy 2010-2014, the Equity and Diversity Strategy 2010-2014, the Victoria Student Experience Strategy 2010-2014, and the New Victoria Learning Partnership/Te Kirituako document accepted by Academic Board in July, 2012. This latter document describes in summary the intention of the Digital Vision and Strategy:

> "The Victoria graduate attributes will be the starting point for establishing clear and coherent learning pathways through programmes which offer intellectual challenge and an induction into a culture of rigorous enquiry, with learning opportunities informed by **effective pedagogy and enriched by the widespread application and use of digital technologies**." (emphasis added)

The Working Party on Teaching and Learning at Victoria using Digital Technologies report identified pockets of excellence in technology use at Victoria but also a systemic lack of engagement with technology in learning and teaching as experienced by the majority of Victoria's staff and students. The Working Party report is available from the CAD website[1] and includes a detailed examination of the national and international experience of technology for learning and teaching, the experience of Victoria staff and students, and the challenges identified in sustaining and growing the use of technology in the future.

As noted in the Working Party report, investment in technology systems by universities internationally is being driven by the expectation that increased use of technology will improve the quality and flexibility of learning (Bates 2001; Bush 1945; Cuban 2001; DfES 2003; Oppenheimer 2003; Ryan, Scott, Freeman and Patel 2000). This investment has been supported by the widespread adoption of Learning Management Systems and the computerisation of key administrative functions (Hawkins and Rudy 2006, 52; Zemsky and Massy 2004). The maintenance of an effective technology infrastructure remains a key strategic focus for university leaders internationally (Allen and Seaman 2010; McCarthy and Samors 2009).

However, while IT systems have become mainstream and essentially seamless in terms of administrative and research activities (Carr 2003; Chester 2008), changes in the experience of learning and teaching enabled by technology are less apparent. Benchmarking of New Zealand and international universities (Marshall 2010) suggests that technology decisions have been made primarily with the intention of engaging in forms of change that merely support or extend existing pedagogical approaches, and that universities generally show little capability to transform their existing educational models. In particular, the New Zealand universities are trailing the majority of Australian universities in the mainstream adoption and use of technologies throughout learning and teaching (Marshall 2009). It is important to emphasise that this difference is qualitative, reflecting the ways in which technology is being actively used to advance the objectives of the institution, rather than differences in the level of technology infrastructure investment.

Victoria has invested significantly in the creation and maintenance of a modern information technology infrastructure. Despite this investment, the use of digital technologies in support of learning and teaching at Victoria has primarily been an ad-hoc bottom-up process, and the level of adoption varies considerably across schools and programmes. Subject-specific technologies and media are already used in creative and innovative ways across many programmes, including architecture and design, engineering, science, psychology, languages and linguistics, music, film

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[1] http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Technology#Digital_Vision

and media studies, marketing, and information management. In broad terms, however, the impact of digital technologies upon 'mainstream' teaching pedagogy and practice at Victoria remains modest.

As a result of the analysis undertaken by the Working Party, the report made as its first recommendation "That Victoria University make a high-level strategic commitment to embrace and embed digital technologies across a broad range of academic programmes in all faculties, recognising that this is a critical determinant of fully realising the goals and objectives laid down in the Learning and Teaching Strategy."

In response and under the direction of the DVC Academic, CAD have led a strategic initiative resulting in the creation of this strategy and vision. The strategic initiative also includes work to expand the support directly available to staff through the provision of faculty support (action 3 discussed below) and to support innovation (action 8). The strategy is based on the initial findings of the Working Party, further developed through consultation with an expert group and also the wider university through the Ako Victoria event. The draft of the document was discussed by the DVCs Learning and Teaching Strategy group and also made available formally for consultation by units, faculties, staff and students in the normal manner.

The intention of this document is to identify a vision and strategy for the contribution technology makes to learning and teaching at Victoria, as distinct from the research, service, marketing and administrative activities of the University. Learning and teaching is, however, closely inter-related to those other activities and this strategy thus provides important context and guidance relevant to all University functions. In particular, while this strategy does not explicitly address research, many of the actions supporting learning and teaching activities will also enhance support for research and development is already underway of a closely aligned research strategy for digital technology.

One of the factors that appear to facilitate the adoption of digital and communication technologies is distance delivery. Programmes offered by distance have actively adopted both proprietary and free software and online technologies. Interesting examples of such use at Victoria can be found in graduate and postgraduate programmes offered by the Faculty of Education, undergraduate courses in Marketing and International Business, Master's programmes in TESOL and Applied Linguistics, and in Information Studies, as well as postgraduate programmes in Nursing and Midwifery. While these innovations are encouraging, distance delivery represents only a tiny proportion of all courses and programmes offered at Victoria, and hence their flow-on impact upon 'mainstream' learning and teaching approaches has been minimal. This strategy presumes that Victoria will continue to use distance delivery models primarily for high quality postgraduate applied programmes.

The Victoria Digital Vision for Learning and Teaching is anchored on the presumption that the experience of study at Victoria for the majority of programmes will be built on high quality and effective face to face engagement with staff and other students. Enhancing face to face experiences with technology requires an awareness of the different places and contexts students will encounter staff and other students. A range of technologies need to be provided that are designed to both improve the quality and efficiency of learning that occurs face to face as well as extending the impact of that time through online activities which prepare students and extend their engagement afterwards. This approach, a form of hybrid distance and face to face learning is commonly referred to as "blended learning" where a blend of approaches and tools are used to support student learning.

The creation of this strategy and vision was guided by a futures scenario planning exercise with Victoria staff led by Associate Professor Ian Yeoman, culminating in the 2012 AkoVictoria event. Staff attending AkoVictoria identified four major concerns they felt were limiting the impact of technology on learning and teaching at Victoria:

1. The teaching and learning purpose for using digital technology is unclear;
2. Staff need support and assistance in developing their digital technology skills and knowledge;
3. Staff need access to a comprehensive set of technology tools to support the range of activities in learning and teaching;
4. The systems infrastructure supporting learning and teaching needs to be reliable and perform well under the load of learning and teaching activities.

The first concern is consistent with previous staff surveys conducted by CAD which have identified that academic staff would like information on how technologies might serve to enhance the learning experience of their students. This document responds to this concern through its identification of a unifying vision for technology use at Victoria and a strategy intended to support attainment of that vision through collegial and coherent engagement with the recommended actions outlined below. Within that unifying vision, the strategy makes clear the need for all faculties and schools to engage with their own plans for the role technology can play in student learning. The diversity of disciplines and subjects taught at Victoria mean that no one pedagogical and technological solution will meet the needs of all courses, students and staff, however there are many ways in which expertise, tools and experience can be shared and developed collegially.

The other three concerns can be summarised as reflecting the lack of organisational and staff capability to use and depend upon technology for learning and teaching. Victoria has made substantial investments in the information technology infrastructure but this needs to be sustained and complemented with investment in our people. Feedback was gathered from students and through VUWSA during the consultation on this vision and strategy that not all students have necessary skills to use technology well for learning. Similarly, students expect their teachers to be capable users of technology when working with students. Specific actions in the strategy address staff, student and infrastructure capability building and maintenance.

As with the recommendations of the Emerging Technology Working Party, this strategy reflects an appreciation of these and other challenges and constraints facing the University. The most significant constraint being the time that will be needed to address some of the proposed actions. The recent burst of engagement internationally with MOOCs (Massively Online Open Courses) including the announcement of several national and international consortia[2] illustrates both the scale and pace of change being enabled by technology as well as the need to have clear and coherent strategic plans capable of responding to a dynamic and changing set of operating conditions, societal expectations and competitive forces.

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[2] Examples of these consortia include Coursera, led by Harvard and MIT; OERu funded by UNESCO; and the recent announcement of a UK MOOC collaboration led by the Open University UK.

Digital Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan 2012-2017

Vision Goal 1: Programmes of study designed to maximise the positive impact of technology on students' critical engagement, motivation and creativity. Innovative digital technologies extending the impact of formally scheduled face to face contact by preparing, informing and framing the student's learning and enquiry, enabled and enhanced in partnership with staff and other students.

As noted in the Working Party report, some parts of Victoria are much further advanced than others in their thinking about and use of technology for their specific context. In particular, several applied programmes have very successfully used technology to offer courses to students online and at a distance. The Working Party report clearly identified the positive contribution these programmes have made to the University's understanding of online education and the quality of the learning and teaching apparent. It was also noted however that "distance delivery represents only a tiny proportion of all courses and programmes offered at Victoria, and hence their flow-on impact upon 'mainstream' learning and teaching approaches has been minimal"[3].

This Vision and Strategy is directed at the majority of Victoria programmes that are provided for undergraduates and those postgraduate programmes, which are not delivered at a distance. High quality postgraduate distance education, particularly in the applied disciplines, is clearly important to Victoria and will remain so. Key elements of the action plan outlined below will benefit programmes in either model of education (in particular the enhancement of the technology platform, Action 6) and programmes operating in a fully distance mode are expected to continue providing examples of innovation and leadership that can be shared through the Innovation Incubator (Action 8).
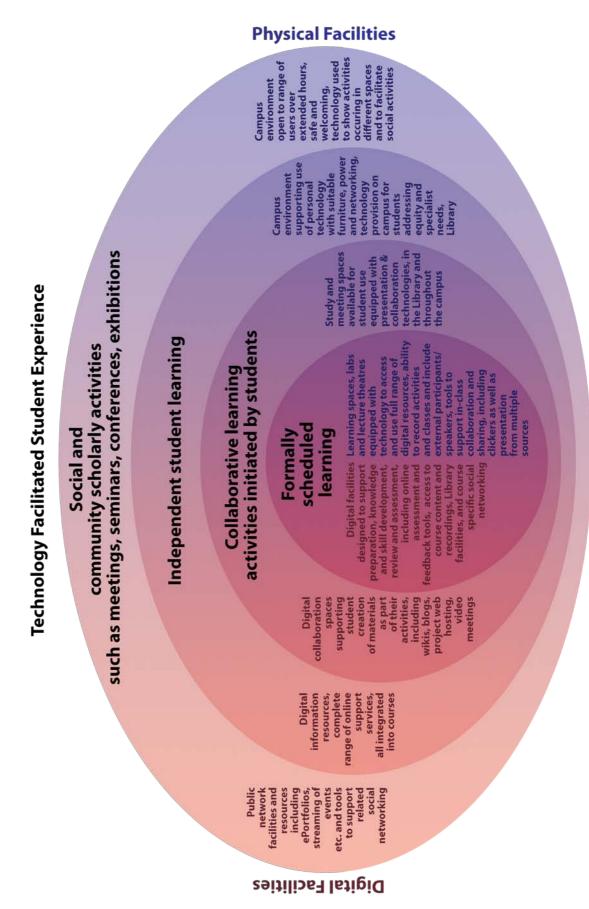
This Vision and Strategy is constrained by the realities of the current educational landscape in New Zealand that see our student numbers and the composition of the student body substantially constrained by the Government. In particular Government policies are hostile to the growth of distance courses. The focus on student retention in courses and qualification completion is a challenge for distance and online provision (outside of applied and vocational courses) as many more students fail to complete either courses or qualifications online or at a distance. In addition, Victoria is being required to focus on the education of students leaving school, and of Maori and Pasifika ethnicity. A key objective of this Vision and Strategy is to ensure that technology is used to maximise the success of these groups.

Educationally, technology offers the potential for enhancing the effectiveness of face to face teaching by extending formal class time into learning activities conducted on campus or online outside of the class (Figure 1 below). These would include activities designed to prepare students for classes by providing content and skills online as well as facilities to support student communication and discussion (both online and physically in the learning spaces typified by the Campus Hub). A key element of this Vision and Strategy is integrating the physical and virtual technology infrastructure with an engagement model for student learning as reflected in Figure 1.

Victoria has made substantial investments in the physical campus infrastructure to support learning and teaching. As well as the investment in the Campus Hub project this has included a significant programme of teaching space (re)development and the deployment of a standard set of digital communication and presentation technologies throughout the campus. A significant challenge remains using this space efficiently and effectively, with timetabling formal teaching a continuous balancing act compromised by the lack of sufficient space during normal business hours.

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[3] Working party report, page 5.

Figure 1: Technology Facilitated Student Experiences

Physical Facilities

Technology Facilitated Student Experience

Social and community scholarly activities such as meetings, seminars, conferences, exhibitions

Independent student learning

Collaborative learning activities initiated by students

Formally scheduled learning

Learning spaces, labs and lecture theatres equipped with technology to access and use full range of digital resources, ability to record activities and classes and include external participants/ speakers, tools to support in-class collaboration and sharing, including clickers as well as presentation from multiple sources

Digital facilities designed to support preparation, knowledge and skill development, review and assessment, including online assessment and feedback tools, access to course content and recordings, Library facilities, and course specific social networking

Digital collaboration spaces supporting student creation of materials as part of their activities, including wikis, blogs, project web hosting, video meetings

Digital information resources, complete range of online support services, all integrated into courses

Public network facilities and resources including ePortfolios, streaming of events etc. and tools to support related social networking

Study and meeting spaces available for student use equipped with presentation & collaboration technologies, in the Library and throughout the campus

Campus environment supporting use of personal technology with suitable furniture, power and networking, technology provision on campus for students addressing equity and specialist needs, Library

Campus environment open to range of users over extended hours, safe and welcoming, technology used to show activities occuring in different spaces and to facilitate social activities

Digital Facilities

Digital technology offers at least a partial solution to this pressure through the transfer of some face to face activities (those associated with gaining access to knowledge particularly) online, with academics thus able to use face to face time to engage with students collectively, motivate and stimulate their engagement with the online resources, and to provide a structure to students' learning. Potentially this can drive efficiency gains through the reduction in scheduled face to face sessions in some classes, with content delivery sessions moved online for example through the use of pre-recorded video resources. The Campus Hub also provides an excellent set of spaces designed for students to interact informally with other students working on common projects and learning activities, further increasing the quality of the student's learning experience on campus.

Vision Goal 2: An efficient, seamless and professional service, administration and learning environment designed to support individual student's engagement with their studies and ensure that students are able to focus their energy and attention on learning.

The Victoria Student Experience Strategy 2010-2014 states the need for Victoria to "Provide services to students that are: integrated, empowering, responsive, and focused on supporting academic success." Technology is used heavily in all modern organisations to provide efficient access to important information and services. Victoria has already invested heavily in technologies to support student records management and for tasks such as enrolment and access to course information and resources, this Vision and Strategy proposes that this needs to continue and extend into the service and administrative aspects of individual courses, particularly the ways in which the University communicates key course information and manages course-related activities such as assessment.

A tension exists between the intention to provide a seamless and efficient set of services supporting student engagement with their course, and the need to promote and support academic freedom, disciplinary differences and innovation. An important distinction needs to be made between the functions of the university as an organisation that enable students to enter the university community and engage with a programme of study, and the experience of the student once they are learning. The university needs a coherent and well-maintained set of systems that consistently provide students with the information, services and support that position them to learn. Academic staff need to be able to select from a similarly well-maintained and supported set of rich and effective technology tools those which enhance student achievement of course learning objectives.

Alignment of Digital Vision and Strategy Actions with the Vision Goals

	Vision Goal 1	Vision Goal 2
1. Articulation by faculties, schools and CSUs of plans for technology use in learning and teaching, reflecting their distinctive identities, pedagogies and students	X	
2. Staff training and support in ICT use provided and ongoing development encouraged for all staff engaged in learning and teaching	X	
3. Faculty support staff employed to help staff engage with technology	X	
4. Provision of student training and support for ICT use in courses	X	
5. Encouragement of a change in the way face to face time is used in courses	X	
6. Development of a technology platform and roadmap for investment in new and improved learning and teaching technologies	X	X
7. Development of a policy on minimum course presence online	X	X
8. Support of innovation through the innovation incubator	X	
9. Course information management and publication		X
10. Technological support for assessment activities	X	X

Digital Learning and Teaching Action Plan 2012-2017

These actions are outlined in the expectation that each will involve additional elaboration, in many cases development of projects (for those not already in train) and formal funding.

1. Articulation by faculties, schools and CSUs of plans for technology use in learning and teaching, reflecting their distinctive identities, pedagogies, students and services

This overall vision and strategy for Victoria needs to be contextualised by faculties, schools and CSUs to reflect their distinctive identities, pedagogies, students and services. The goal of this vision and strategy is not to homogenise the experience of higher education at Victoria but rather to use technology to support and sustain the rich diversity of programmes offered by the University. There are already pockets of innovation throughout the University and the Innovation Incubator (Action 8) is expected to further encourage exploration of the ways technology can improve education. This experience can be built upon to see the benefits shared more generally throughout the University. Understanding the purpose for technology use was identified as the most significant item of concern at the 2012 AkoVictoria event and full appreciation of this purpose requires engagement by the faculties, schools and CSUs, aligning technologies with their other strategic and operational priorities.

2. Staff training and support in ICT use provided and ongoing development encouraged for all staff engaged in learning and teaching

Effective use of technology for learning and teaching (as well as research) builds on a foundation of IT skills and knowledge. This includes familiarity with standard productivity tools such as word processors and spreadsheets, as well as more general knowledge and skill in the use of a variety of online tools. Support staff currently encounter a range of competence in general IT skills when working with academic and other staff and this introduces a significant support burden as well as inhibiting staff engagement with new and existing technologies. Skill and knowledge in technology use was the second most significant item identified by participants at the 2012 AkoVictoria event. Practicable support for development of ICT skills and knowledge needs to be easily available and responsive to specific needs, suggesting the use of online resources and one-on-one support rather than traditional workshops. A priority for the Teaching Technology Support Specialists (Action 3) is a systematic needs analysis for staff development and any response is expected to be part of the overall Staff Capability Project action plan.

3. Faculty support staff employed to help staff engage with technology

Many of the benefits of technology use are highly contextualised and the complex range of options open to staff can be confusing and discouraging. Many staff are unaware of the range of tools and systems available already to support their work. Contacts for Academic Technologies (CATS as they are currently known) are being appointed throughout the University to provide an easy and convenient means for staff to learn about possible options for technology use in their teaching work. These Specialists are being nominated by faculties and schools as being people aware of the needs of specific disciplines and able to introduce staff to ways existing technologies might enhance their teaching. A small time allocation for each faculty has already been funded until 2014. Further expansion of this initiative is expected to happen in response to evidence of its success and impact, funded at least in part by the faculties and schools benefiting from the support.

4. Provision of student training and support for ICT use in courses

Victoria provides minimal support for students using technology in their courses. ITS provides a basic set of services supported online and via student help desks but this does not address the range and complexity of technology use in courses. It is important to emphasise that many students are not 'digital natives' and start their studies with very limited ICT skills and experience. Currently individual teaching staff are responsible for supporting much of the technology use by students in their courses, including for core tools such as Blackboard and Turnitin. As more systems are introduced as part of the standard technology platform for teaching (Action 6) the ability of the

University to support students needs also to be addressed. A plan for student support needs to be developed and resourced, complementing and building on the approach taken to support staff ICT skills and knowledge development.

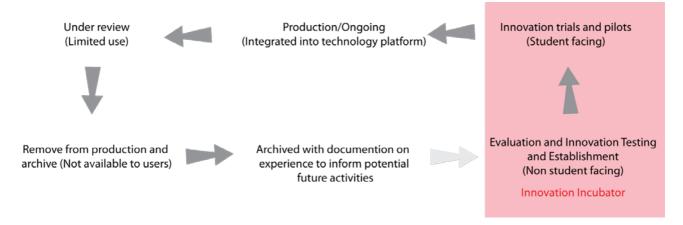## 5. Encouragement of a change in the way face to face time is used in courses

The Victoria Digital Vision for Learning and Teaching is anchored on the presumption that the experience of study at Victoria will be built on high quality and effective face to face engagement with staff and other students. Enhancing face to face experiences with technology requires an awareness of the different places and contexts students will encounter staff and other students. A range of technologies need to be provided that are designed to both improve the quality and efficiency of learning that occurs face to face as well as extending the impact of that time through online activities which prepare students and extend their engagement afterwards (see Figure 1 above). Realising this requires both provision of the technologies and a revision of the pedagogical designs for face to face sessions being used by staff. A shift to using online tools to enhance and extend face to face time and a focus on engagement, interaction and motivation during face to face time potentially could see a reduction in scheduled contact hours and a shift to learner-centred informal learning on campus facilities. It is suggested that a proportion of any realised operational savings associated with the reduction in timetabled hours be used to directly encourage and support the use of online resources by the schools and faculties that engage in this process. This could involve the transfer of a proportion of those savings into an expanded learning and teaching fund, potentially integrated into the Innovation Incubator process (Action 8).

6. Development of a technology platform and roadmap for investment in new and improved learning and teaching technologies

Victoria provides a comprehensive set of modern learning and teaching facilities for face to face teaching. These need to similarly complemented by a standard and comprehensive set of digital tools if we are to encourage staff to use technology in ways commonly seen in international institutions. The range of tasks that can be supported effectively with technology is well understood and apparent when reviewing the systems in place in institutions that Victoria benchmarks with. Victoria provides a core set of the tools other institutions routinely provide and needs to identify suitable systems to address the gaps currently evident while also sustaining the investments made to date. A draft platform is provided as Appendix B to this Vision and Strategy. Further development of this platform should be undertaken by ITS and CAD as a priority and a plan for a programme of future investment and development of the platform of technologies developed for use in the budget planning process. It is also anticipated that this will drive a re-engagement with academic governance of IT at Victoria and be clearly aligned with the needs of researchers as outlined in the forthcoming Research Strategy for Digital Technologies.

As well as implementing a platform of technologies Victoria needs to define the supporting processes and policies for managing the support and evolution of that platform in ways that enhance learning and teaching. Typically this is done through the creation of a technology lifecycle that describes the process by which the University identifies new technologies, pilots these to understand the benefits and costs of using the technologies, move them into normal use by staff and students, and then retires them when they are no longer needed. A summary of a potential lifecycle for Victoria is provided in Figure 2. It should be noted that while the Incubator would support the lifecycle as indicated there would also be other processes introducing new technologies (as guided by the Roadmap). Development of a full lifecycle with supporting procedures and standards should be undertaken by ITS and CAD as a priority, as it supports the work for Actions 7 and 8.

Figure 2: Overview of a Potential Technology Lifecycle for Victoria

7. Development of a policy on minimum course presence online

The technology platform proposed in Action 6 describes the online equivalent of the normal physical resources of a University campus. Just as all facilities are not used by all courses in face to face teaching, not all of the online tools are appropriate for all courses. However, a subset of the tools represent an important part of achieving a seamless service experience for students and will be significant contributors to University and faculty goals for student engagement and success. Once the platform is defined, the University should work to ensure that a key subset of that platform be defined as essential for all students and courses and that a policy on a minimum course presence online be established. This would impose the requirement that normally students can expect this subset of tools will be used in their courses and that key services will be always available irrespective of their programme of study. Development of this minimum course presence would be facilitated by CAD and developed collaboratively with the faculties.

8. Support of innovation through the innovation incubator

An innovation incubator is a managed environment that is used to support innovation projects in a way that encourages exploration by staff, but within a management framework that:

- Reduces the threshold needed to engage with technology;
- Encourages and supports collaboration and a scholarly assessment of innovations;
- Controls costs;
- Reduces unnecessary duplication of effort;
- Ensures security of data and access;
- Provides a mechanism for formal review and decisions about ongoing operational use;
- Collects information on the experience of staff with particular innovations to inform future ideas.

Most importantly the incubator can create and sustain a community of practice at Victoria focused on learning and teaching innovation and excellence. The incubator can support better communication of existing services and ultimately support the creation of new intellectual property by the University.

A central technology infrastructure is being established in collaboration with ITS to host new and experimental technologies in a managed space with much greater flexibility than existing core IT systems. This will use existing services but simplify the processes used by staff to engage with the services. No additional IT expenditure is proposed to establish and operate the incubator itself, which would be seen as a key component of the technology lifecycle (Action 6). The associated community site will act as an idea-generator also able to be used by operational groups such as ITS and the Library to share their ideas and plans for technology. Potentially, the Innovation Incubator community and processes could be used to access funds for learning teaching projects available to further promote innovation and excellence at Victoria, such as the current learning and teaching

fund operated by the Academic Office. Finally, the incubator can inform mechanisms to formally celebrate and reward staff who engage in innovative projects, further emphasising the value Victoria places on innovative learning and teaching.

9. Course information management and publication

Currently students receive important information on their courses in multiple, often inconsistent, ways including the online course catalogue, programme documents, course outlines, and Blackboard pages. These multiple channels represent significant inefficiencies and opportunities for error. Much of the key information needed by students can be stored and populated into other channels if it was accurately entered into the Student Records system and if a standard set of publications was defined, incorporating much of the information included in current course outlines. The Course Information project initiated in the Academic Office offers the potential to address this issue and also to greatly improve the accuracy and value of information on courses stored in the Student Records database. This improvement in information quality will greatly assist the University as more systems would be able to use this information with confidence rather than the current practice which sees unnecessary duplication and administrative workload for many staff.

10. Technological support for assessment activities

Assessment activities inevitably require work on the part of staff to manage the workflow associated with the receipt, processing and return of student work. Increasingly this involves the handling of digital assets with the inevitable issues of dealing with submission, multiple formats and the challenge of effective feedback and marking of digital materials. Often, assessment submission of digital work currently involves either staff or the students printing work out for marking and return to students. This is both costly and inefficient with many staff reporting students' failure to collect work after it has been graded. Currently the University provides a basic set of technologies for assignment collection, plagiarism review, and reporting on grades. These systems provide little support for academic assessment workflow, and often introduce more work. The University is currently reviewing the Assessment Handbook and needs to address technological support for assessment and feedback in the context of the changed expectations arising from the review.

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Appendix A: Relationship to Key Victoria Strategies and Plans

Victoria has stated through all of its key learning and teaching strategies the need for engagement with technology as a key element in ensuring students experience an effective learning environment.

Victoria Strategic Plan 2009-2014

2. LEARNING AND TEACHING

Strengthen Victoria's high quality research-led learning and teaching environment, and reward and celebrate learning and teaching excellence in all its forms.

3. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Engage students as active and lifelong members of an inclusive and supportive community of higher learning through an outstanding academic, social and cultural experience that equips them to make a significant contribution to local, national and international communities.

(Action) Ensure that Victoria offers a first-rate student experience through high quality and challenging academic programmes, excellent facilities, responsive student services, and opportunities for stimulating social and cultural experiences.

5. CAPABILITY

Retain, develop and recruit high quality people who contribute to Victoria's success through outstanding leadership, scholarship and administration, through positive external engagements, and through quality governance and management.

(Action) Build academic and general staff capability in areas linked to strategic priorities.

Victoria Learning and Teaching Strategy 2010-2014

Goal

Strengthen Victoria's high quality research-led learning and teaching environment, and reward and celebrate learning and teaching excellence in all its forms.

Objective 1

Establish a distinctive vision for education and the student experience at Victoria.

1.5   Give greater emphasis to active, flexible self-directed learning as a model better suited to supporting Victoria's identified graduate attributes.

Objective 2

Foster, support and reward good practice in learning and teaching.

2.12 Further develop the availability of flexible delivery, web-based learning resources and learning support for students who need extra assistance. (From the Equity Strategy)

Objective 3

Ensure that academic programmes and teaching delivery are of high quality, and specifically, that they:

are informed by current research and scholarship; meet the needs of accrediting and professional bodies; are relevant and accessible for students; and are sustainable and efficient.

3.6   Develop and adopt a policy framework in relation to distance and flexible learning, teaching and assessment with a view to encouraging more effective use of these modes of learning and teaching.

3.7   Review the current technology platform for online learning and teaching to ensure that it meets institutional requirements.

Victoria Equity and Diversity Strategy 2010-2014

Student equity and diversity

Objective 1

Improve the recruitment, retention and success rates of students in the identified equity groups.

1.5   Further develop the availability of flexible delivery, web-based learning resources and learning support for students who need extra assistance.

Victoria Student Experience Strategy 2010-2014

1.   Create a student experience that is transformative, and helps to develop values, knowledge and relationships that equip students to be responsible global citizens and instil a sense of personal accomplishment and pride in their association with Victoria.

1.4   Foster active collaboration across the University to enable student-centred formal and informal learning environments.

2.   Provide services to students that are: integrated, empowering, responsive, and focused on supporting academic success.

2.5   Develop integrated information channels which provide clear, up to date information about the full range of Victoria's programme offerings, activities and opportunities for both future and current students.

2.9   Provide efficient, effective, reliable and accessible IT services which support student learning and other activities.

3.   Provide a safe vibrant and welcoming environment that offers opportunities for meaningful engagement among the diverse university community.

3.1   Accommodate changing pedagogy and student expectations by providing flexible, responsive services with our existing facilities while developing new facilities with a sustainable environmental focus, including the Campus Hub.

3.2   Focus on remote library services and resources to students beyond the campuses and in doing so work to enhance the online learning environment (embedding resources, and providing online support).

New Victoria Learning Partnership/Te Kirituako

1. Institutional commitment

Institutional commitment will be demonstrated by:

d.   Support for effective e-learning across all Faculties through senior leadership, a shared development and design team, and a University-wide governance group.

2. Shared programme structures and curriculum principles

An integrated and coherent approach will be demonstrated by:

f.   Effective use of digital technologies across a broad range of academic programmes in all faculties.

4. Partnership

A partnership model of learning and teaching will be demonstrated by:

d.   Effective use of contemporary learning technologies to foster student engagement and build digital literacy.

7. Personal development

A commitment to the personal development of students will be demonstrated by:

e.   E-portfolios and other mechanisms enabling students to record and track their own progress through academic programmes and to assemble evidence of their abilities, skills and achievements.

Appendix B: Draft Technology Platform

Function - Online	Deployed	In progress	Future options	Issues/Challenges
Mail - Staff	Microsoft Exchange			Sometimes causes issues with non MS products
Mail - Students	Microsoft Live@Edu		Office 365	Is student email still relevant?
Calendar/Timetabling	Microsoft Exchange			Calendars also feature in MyVictoria and Blackboard and do not sync.
Content creation	Microsoft Office/Wimba	add VStream (Echo360)		
Content publishing	Blackboard/Web			
Content storage/distribution	Blackboard & 'M' drives	add VStream (Echo360)		
Course management system	Blackboard			''mobile' pilot testing in progress, courses need to be 'designed' for mobile use.
Virtual classroom (synchronous)	Blackboard Virtual Classroom		Blackboard Collaborate	Limited functionality and issues with student access in many settings
Content collaboration	Blackboard Campus LX wikis and blogs	Blackboard Blog and Wiki		
Audio collaboration/communication	Wimba			
Synchronous discussion	Blackboard Text chat, Campus LX wikis and blogs	Blackboard Blog and Wiki		
Asynchronous discussion and communication	Blackboard Discussion forum			
Originality/Plagiarism detection	Turnitin			
Lecture capture		VStream (Echo360)		
Desktop video content creation		VStream (Echo360)		
Pod/vod casting management system	Wimba/Bb Campus Pack LX	VStream (Echo360)		
Surveys/polls/questionnaires	Qualtrics			
ePortfolios	CareerHub portfolio		Mahara	Limited flexibility for portfolio development, desire for integration with external systems
Online assessments	Blackboard			
Assessment submission and management	Blackboard/Turnitin		Turnitin Grademark	No support for assessment workflows beyond submission, plagiarism detection and grade reporting
Virtual Worlds			OpenWorld?	
Tutorial Signup	S-Cubed		Syllabus Plus	Ownership, ability to modify and support

Function - Face to Face	Deployed	In progress	Future options	Issues/Challenges
Teaching room AV equipment	ITS Room Specification			
Student response system	Clickers			
Video conferencing	Scopia			
Access Grid	Access Grid rooms			
Student collaboration/groupwork				