

IT Decision Framework and Terms of Reference for Committees

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1. Objective

This document defines the University of Guelph Information Technology (IT) Decision Framework and Terms of Reference for the key groups involved.

2. Background

At its most fundamental level, the **IT Decision Framework** defines **who makes decisions** and **how those decisions are made**.

The IT Decision Framework defines the process by which the University of Guelph will align IT actions with its goals and objectives. This involves establishing decision rights (who decides what) and an accountability framework (who is responsible for what) for encouraging desirable behaviors and actions in the deployment and use of IT.

The major objectives of IT decision-making are to:

- enable the strategic and tactical alignment of IT with University priorities and goals
- understand the value and impact of IT investments (dollars, human resources, and capital)
- identify opportunities for improved IT utilization
- support visible and transparent decision making
- establish and sustain effective IT policies
- establish performance measurements
- identify and mitigate risks
- satisfy regulatory and formal compliance requirements

The IT decisions managed through the decision-making process are those that have **enterprise utilization or enterprise implications**.

3. IT Decision Framework

The IT decision framework at the University of Guelph is comprised of 6 key areas of accountability (see graphic representation below):

1. President and the Board of Governors: the senior executive leadership and institutional governance body responsible for fiduciary and regulatory oversight.

2. University IT Steering Committee: the senior administrative group charged with decision making regarding IT principles, strategic directions and IT investments.

3. Chief Information Officer (CIO): senior administrator responsible for University strategy and policy development regarding IT, and for overseeing the IT decision making framework. Reporting to the CIO, the IT Portfolio Management Office (IT PMO) manages the IT decision framework by enabling oversight of the IT environment and the decision-making processes.

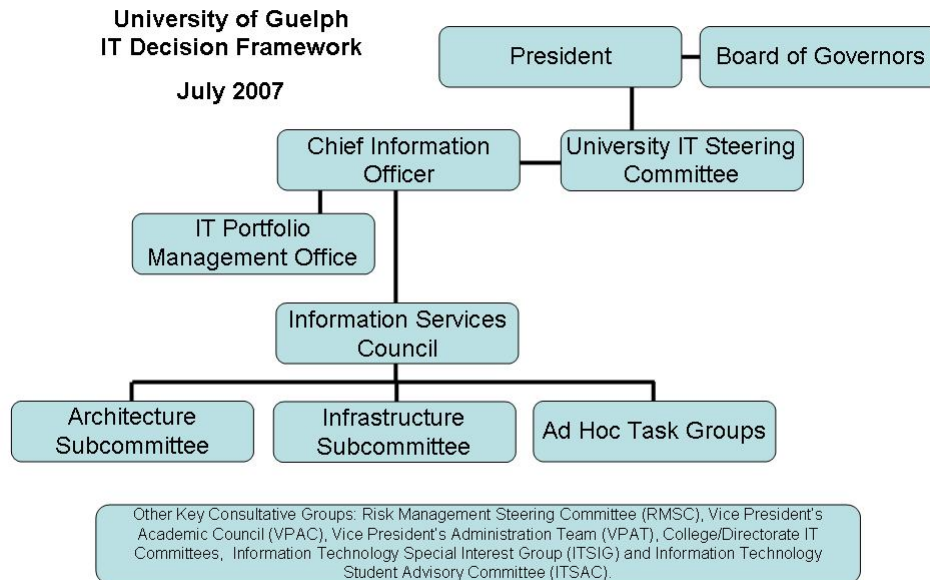
4. Information Services Council (ISC): the main University group for considerations of enterprise IT services and infrastructure. ISC represents the diverse needs of the University and recommends, informs and advocates with respect to enterprise IT. ISC will have two main standing committees (Architecture Subcommittee, Infrastructure Subcommittee) as well as special purpose task groups as required. ISC is comprised of representatives who have IT accountability from academic and administrative areas.

5. Colleges, Departments, Directorates, Business Units: decision making for local IT issues that is consistent with University IT policy.

6. Other Committees and Groups: these groups impact IT decisions or are important consultative groups. This would include such committees as the Risk Management Steering Committee (RMSC), Vice President Academic Council (VPAC), Vice President Administration Team (VPAT), College/Directorate IT Committees, the Information Technology Special Interest Group (ITSIG) and the Information Technology Student Advisory Committee (ITSAC). Liaison with these groups will be enabled through the CIO and others participating in the IT Decision Framework.

This “federal” model of decision making is best suited to a university environment and culture which is characterized by diversity and distributed autonomy. In a federal model, some groups or individuals have formal input into decisions while

other groups or individuals have decision making responsibilities and accountability for outcomes.



University IT Steering Committee Terms of Reference

Mandate:

Chaired by the Chief Information Officer (CIO), the University IT Steering Committee articulates strategic directions for enterprise information technology systems and services. This includes setting the expectations of IT regarding its role in supporting the University's mission and objectives, and the overall principles for how IT will be managed and utilized. The committee will guide IT funding and evaluation, and make decisions regarding large scale investments within the context of the enterprise IT applications and infrastructure services portfolio.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

The University IT Steering Committee will establish and maintain guiding principles regarding how IT will support and enable the University's mission and its objectives. This will include articulating how IT is managed and funded, how enterprise applications and/or services are developed or acquired and what oversight and compliance is required.

In addition, the Committee will:

- Sponsor, review and approve a multi-year IT strategic plan and framework as part of the University's Integrated Plan.
- Review and recommend funding for large scale IT initiatives or implementations.
- Review and/or develop and approve enterprise-level policies related to IT.
- Liaise with the Risk Management Steering Committee
- Liaise on matters relating to privacy and access policies and legislation through the University Secretariat.
- Oversee the enterprise applications, infrastructure services, major projects and resources portfolios.

Periodically, the University IT Steering Committee will review the IT Decision Framework, including its own terms of reference, to assess its effectiveness and to make recommendations to the President.

Meetings:

The University IT Steering Committee will meet at least once per semester and more frequently if deemed necessary.

Membership:

AVP Academic	AVP Human Resources
AVP Student Affairs	University Secretary
AVP Research	Director, Communications & Public Affairs
AVP Alumni Affairs & Development	Chief Information Officer (Chair)
AVP IRP and Registrar	Director, IT Portfolio Management Office
AVP Finance and Services	

Information Services Council Terms of Reference

Mandate:

Reporting through the Chief Information Officer, the Information Services Council (ISC) is the main University forum responsible for considerations of enterprise IT. ISC represents the diverse needs of the University and recommends, informs and advocates with respect to enterprise IT.

Information services are defined broadly and encompass the management and provision of information, the use of information technology, and the application of these technologies, services and resources by academic units, academic support functions and administrative services.

The committee utilizes the guiding principles and strategic direction outlined by the University IT Steering Committee and applies an institutional perspective in the evaluation of enterprise information services and infrastructure. The committee's scope specifically includes enterprise computing, networking and communications, major hardware/software development projects and acquisitions, IT standards, learning technologies, and information management.

ISC works closely with both central and distributed IT service providers, other units, groups and committees where there are related objectives and acts as a planning and facilitating agent seeking to achieve the desired University direction while facilitating local innovation and practice.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Within the domain of enterprise IT, ISC:

- articulates the IT needs of the University community and advocates for those requirements
- advances the strategic management of existing IT services, technologies and resources through planning, assessment and evaluation, and policy development
- solicits, reviews and comments on major IT/IS initiatives from both central and distributed IT service providers
- recommends actions-and priorities regarding enterprise IT
- informs and influences major IT decisions to be taken by both senior administrators and local units
- assists the Portfolio Management Office (PMO) with the utilization and accuracy of the enterprise applications, infrastructure services, major projects and resources repositories to enhance planning and communication with the University

ISC maintains two standing subcommittees: Architecture and Infrastructure. It will also create time limited Task Groups as required.

Membership:

ISC is comprised of representatives who have IT accountability from academic and administrative areas, and resource members appointed by the CIO.

Meetings:

ISC will meet monthly during the academic year and more frequently if deemed necessary. Non-committee members may be invited to attend meetings.

ISC Architecture Subcommittee Terms of Reference

Mandate:

Reporting to ISC, the ISC Architecture Subcommittee is responsible for defining and recommending the technical and process standards upon which the information technology environment at the University of Guelph operates. The Subcommittee clarifies how enterprise IT supports the guiding principles outlined by the University IT Steering Committee.

The Subcommittee will explore, define and promulgate standards that promote and maintain interoperability, security, cost effectiveness and regulatory compliancy. With a twin focus on integration and sustainability, the Subcommittee is responsible for recommending stable, up-to-date IT standards that guide new application development/acquisition and supports the teaching, learning, research and administrative requirements of the University.

The Architecture Subcommittee will consider applications for exceptions or exemptions to the standards that may be required from time to time in order to achieve institutional objectives.

The Subcommittee will seek and receive guidance from ISC where necessary and provide recommendations to ISC where appropriate.

Examples of the technical standards include, but are not limited to, those related to:

- network and communications protocols
- data interchange standards
- security protocols
- account authentication management
- network bandwidth and spectrums

The agenda of the subcommittee will be managed by the Chair based on issues brought forward by subcommittee members, IT service providers, ISC or the CIO. The subcommittee will maintain visible and transparent communication with the University community to engage awareness of their activities and involvement from stakeholders.

Membership:

To be determined.

ISC Infrastructure Subcommittee Terms of Reference

Mandate:

Reporting to ISC, the ISC Infrastructure Subcommittee is responsible for defining and recommending the coordinated shared services and resources of the information technology environment at the University of Guelph. The Infrastructure Subcommittee will explore, define and promulgate resources and services that form the core IT capacity (i.e. centrally supported and maintained).

This infrastructure is the foundation of planned IT capability and will directly support the primary organizational needs (academic and administrative) in a manner that responds to key operational requirements and promotes interoperability, reliability, security, cost effectiveness and regulatory compliancy. With a twin focus on integration and sustainability, the Subcommittee is responsible for defining and recommending the provisioning of University-wide IT tools and shared services that support the teaching, learning, research and administrative requirements of the University.

The Subcommittee will seek and receive guidance from ISC where necessary and provide recommendations to ISC where appropriate.

Examples of coordinated shared services and resources include, but are not limited to, those related to:

- standard infrastructure applications
- security services (firewalls & encryption)
- productivity tools
- database software services and central storage
- facilities management (desktops & servers)
- learning management systems
- web development and delivery
- email and calendaring
- communications services (telephony & network services)

The agenda of the subcommittee will be managed by the Chair based on issues brought forward by subcommittee members, IT service providers, ISC or the CIO. The subcommittee will maintain visible and transparent communication with the University community to engage awareness of their activities and involvement from stakeholders.

Membership:

To be determined.

Information Technology Portfolio Management Office (IT PMO)

Mandate:

Reporting to the CIO, the Information Technology Portfolio Management Office (IT PMO) provides oversight information and assistance to those involved in the IT Decision Framework and to the University community. The Office will be a support vehicle to raise awareness and enhance communications.

Portfolio management provides a snapshot of the IT environment (systems, services, resources, information flows) to facilitate assessment of complex inter-relationships, and help manage those as the University (and technology) evolves.

The ITPMO will provide centralized on-line repositories of enterprise applications and infrastructure services, major projects and resources. This clearinghouse function will also assist the University community in connecting with groups with similar objectives and interests.

The IT Portfolio Management Office will coordinate the Decision-Making Framework, provide consultation to those who need guidance and/or support and provide a forum to seek common solutions. Portfolio management is not a University project management office but rather a means to make visible the issues and decisions arising through the IT decision-making process.

Specific Objectives:

1. Support IT Decision Framework effectiveness by a) documenting the impact and value of IT decisions, and b) communicating IT decisions, tracking progress, assessing impact.
2. Provide oversight information to those involved in IT governance and across the enterprise, enabling and balancing both local and central autonomy.
3. Manage and make visible to the University community, on-line repositories which reflect the existing IT environment (applications and infrastructure services).
4. Manage and make visible to the University community, on-line repositories of proposed and current projects that extend or augment enterprise IT capacity.

Staffing:

The ITPMO will initially be comprised solely of its Director, Doug Badger. Additional resources may be allocated from the Office of the CIO as required.