ICT Services

*"To influence and shape the nature, scope and direction of ICT in the University of the Free State through leadership,

Departmental Principles

ICT Management Committee

2019-05-03

1 LIVING THE ICT SERVICES MANDATE

Dedication is one of our core values and we always find a way to achieve what we need to. We prove our loyalty by working in collaboration with UFS employees, students, partners and suppliers to achieve institutional, departmental and individual goals. Through resilience, we strive to be robust under conditions of enormous stress and change.

However, we execute the mandate responsibly by acknowledging and respecting boundaries. Business divisions are responsible for performing a specific *function*, while we are responsible for enabling them through technology (*form*). Sometimes saying no is the most responsible decision to make. However, we give factual reasons to motivate our decisions and provide alternatives where possible. Our mandate spans the following domains:

- Application configuration
- Business process architecture management
- Digital security
- Database management
- Digital infrastructure management
- Digital operational business continuity planning (BCP)
- Digital operational disaster recovery planning (DRP)
- Embedded technology support
- Institutional data integration and provisioning
- Institutional licence management
- Institutional scanning
- Enterprise resource planning (ERP) development
- High-performance computing

- ICT change management
- ICT communications
- ICT governance
- ICT data management governance
- ICT procurement
- ICT project management
- ICT risk management
- ICT strategy
- Internal quality assurance
- Networks and telecommunications management
- Platform and application management
- Services management
- Software development
- Student lab management and support
- Technology innovation

2 COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION AND PPSGS

ICT Services compliance management has two distinct areas of governance: firstly, from an external perspective, as defined and imposed by mandatory national and international legislative and regulatory requirements; and secondly, from an internal perspective, as defined by institutional enterprise and departmental policies, procedures, standards and associated guidelines (PPSGs). An important legal principle states that ignorance of the law is no excuse. Therefore, we do not defend our decisions or actions by arguing that we did not know that they were illegal.

3 ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is one of our core values. We honour the commitments we make and take personal responsibility for all actions and results. We create an operating discipline of continuous improvement, which is an integral part of our culture. Accountability encapsulates the following domains and we are measured according to performance in each domain:

- **Plan**: The ability to consolidate, define and maintain a long-term plan (18–24 months) involving the six domain aspects.

- **Execute**: The ability to effectively manage the six domain aspects on a daily basis as part of an effective, competent management style.

- **Lead**: The ability to lead a function, people, change, transformation and 'self'.

- **Control**: This involves the ability to effectively exercise control over people, process efficiency, technology deployment, governance (compliance) and the management of data.

- **Communicate**: The ability to effectively communicate at all levels.

- **Transform**: The ability to manage change and transformation and set tilt-and-stretch objectives.

- **Mitigate risk**: The ability to identify and mitigate risk (strategic, reputational, financial, operational, technological and environmental risks).

- **Realise value**: The ability to distil value from the activities we perform to enable the business of the UFS, get a decent bang for our buck, sweat the assets, and do the right things the right way.

4 CUSTOMER FOCUS

Our primary function is to enable business divisions; they are our customers and therefore we treat them with respect and manage our relationship with them with care. Customer relationship management focuses on our ability to inspire, influence and build strong relationships with those we engage with. We foster good customer relationships by: (i) actively seeking out different views (consultation); (ii) bringing out the best in those we engage with (collaboration); (iii) exchanging viewpoints (communication); and (iv) resolving differences in a constructive way (conflict resolution).

5 VISIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Visibility and transparency ensure all our stakeholders that we are operating as agreed and that we subject ourselves to independent verification. Documentation is essential to create consensus on promises and objectives. For example, the work of a development or application configuration team is **always** done in accordance with a written request signed by the relevant system owner and the relevant data steward (if applicable).

Apart from complying with the agreed expectations of our stakeholders, we practice evidence-based decision making. In other words, our decisions are grounded in the best available research and informed by experiential evidence from relevant fields, as well as relevant contextual evidence. Again, we are always willing to subject the process to independent verification.

6 COMPREHENSIVENESS OF VIEW AND PERSPECTIVE

Information systems are the heart of our department. The core components of any information system are people, data, processes and technology. Technology captures processes and outputs *data*, while enforcing *processes* that *people* have to follow. *People* enable and leverage *technology*. Apart from the design elements of an information system, the risk and impact of any change, as well as the governance of the different components, have to be considered. Maximum long-term benefit to the university should always be the determining factor in any decision or action.

7 PLANNING AND LIVING THE PLAN

We believe in the saying "Measure twice, cut once"; therefore we plan **before** we do. The result of planning is always specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) objectives. Planning keeps the goal in mind, since we plan beyond the immediate fix. Once the plan has been approved, we commit and stick to it, monitoring progress using the pre-defined objectives. However, we constantly adapt and respond to change to ensure agility.

8 OPERATIONAL INTEGRITY

Operational integrity flows from our duty to always act to protect the university first. When operational integrity is achieved, we are considered a trusted partner to the UFS and its preferred supplier. Operational integrity means that we perform as expected, in an atmosphere of limited surprises, due to certain initiatives we have taken.

For example:

- Risk management

- Quality management

- Knowledge management

- Project management

9 SINGLE VERSION OF THE TRUTH

The single version of the truth is **one** view concerning a topic that we agree is the trusted view. It is important since it lends credibility to who we are and what we do. For example, there should be approved authoritative systems and approved data stewards. This single, shared view should consistently be delivered to our stakeholders through one voice. In other words, we communicate through a single, moderated voice. Maintaining and supporting a single version of the truth supports the values of trust and integrity we ascribe to.

10 RATIONALISE, STANDARDISE, SIMPLIFY

We aim to rationalise, standardise and simplify (RSS) processes, governance and technology, which enables efficiency.

Rationalisation is the review, alignment, reduction and/or redistribution of our processes, functions, services or applications to eliminate unnecessary redundancy. The goal of rationalisation is to ensure maximum operational capability and flexibility at the lowest cost. Rationalised solutions are co-defined in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders.

The foundations for **standardisation** are (i) re-use before buying, and (ii) buy before building. Therefore, we do not re-invent the wheel with every solution, since standardised solutions ensure ongoing usability, re-usability and supportability. When selecting these standards, we consider current and future integration and are mindful of best practice and industry standards.

Simplification is the elimination of complexity. The "Rolls-Royce" solution is not necessarily always the best solution; sometimes the "Beetle" will do just fine. In other words, think carefully about what the user requires, not just about what is the most cutting edge. Keep the bells and whistles to a minimum; it usually just adds to the number of things that can go wrong.