ITServices

IT Services Newsletter | March 2022

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

ITServices

IT Services Newsletter | March 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the March 2022 edition of the IT Services newsletter. In this edition we have an update on one of our large projects, the upgrade of our **Datacentre.** In our **IT Security** story, we feature details of the Log4j global cyber vulnerability and the tremendous response by the team in IT Services. The primary focus of this edition is the work we are doing to support **Blended Working,** how can we take the useful things about how we worked during the pandemic and keep these features as life thankfully returns to normal. If you want to find out more about what technology you need for blended working, then you can find everything you need to know in this edition.

I am also happy to share details of our new **Wi-Fi printing** service, advice on how best to manage **hybrid meetings** using our infrastructure and results of our recent **IT Training survey.** We are also excited to announce a **promotional offer** for staff allowing them to trade in their desktop, for a new docking station. Also, in this edition we will continue to spotlight our staff, we feature **Rosemarie Scanlon** who is leading our work with Google products, including work **on our laptop loan scheme** for students, which is also detailed in the newsletter. I hope you enjoy this edition and if you have suggestions or information that you'd like to see we'd love to hear from you, you can contact our newsletter editor, Deirdre Keane at **deirdre.keane@ucc.ie**

Dr. Gerard Culley
Director of IT Services, UCC
gerard.culley@ucc.ie

IT Advice for Returning to work on Campus, Blended Working and Hybrid Meetings

Since March 2020 UCC staff have coped with significant changes in how we work. We want to advise you on the IT considerations when returning to campus. We will share with you advice on blended working, by staying mobile and working flexibly. We are encouraging staff to remain using their laptop to work and not return to using their desktop/PC. Please read our advice **here** on returning to work on campus and watch our video below.

CLICK HERE TO PLAY VIDEO ▲

Blended Working

As we are now working both on campus and remotely, IT Services have created a training module on Canvas, **Blended Working@UCC**, which shares how to work effectively and seamlessly between campus and home. You can complete this training on Canvas **here.**

Hybrid Meetings in UCC

Hybrid meetings is where some participants are remote, and others will be physically located in the same meeting space. It is like an online meeting using your PC or laptop but with multiple people in one location. AVMS have created an **information page** with advice on running a successful hybrid meeting in UCC. Watch **our video** to see a hybrid meeting inaction in the Western Gateway Building, Room WGB21.

Drop-in Q&A Sessions on Hybrid Meetings for Blended Working

We will be running on campus Q&A sessions on 31st March, 7th April and 28th of April @ 11am. We will email joining instructions to all staff on these sessions.

CLICK HERE TO PLAY VIDEO ▲

Top Tips for Running a Successful Hybrid Meeting

Before the Meeting

- Consider visiting the room beforehand and conduct a test.
- Consider Wi-Fi & power, check connections and camera position.
- Switch your Teams status to 'do not disturb', switch notification preview to 'off' in the settings to avoid notifications from non-meeting users.

During the Meeting

- Microphones are muted when not speaking.
- While sharing, ensure there is no sensitive data shared on your desktop.
- Advise use of the 'raise hands' features in Teams.

After the Meeting

- Ensure you log off from the PC to protect your account.
- Retrieve any of your portable equipment.
- If the meeting was recorded, validate it was shared to participants.

Read all our tips for successful hybrid meetings **here.**

Desk to Dock! Get a FREE* Laptop Dock for your Office and Recycle your Desktop!

Desk to dock!

As you will be coming back to the office more, now is the time to think of mobile working. Have a laptop and a desktop in your office? Then you can recycle/repurpose the desktop pc in your office and we will provide you with a **Free Laptop Dock** and **peripherals** instead to use with your existing laptop. If your desktop is good enough, we will wipe and re purpose it for UCC's student labs or if not, we will enter it into the sustainable circular economy. You can read more about our commitment to sustainability **here.**

Requirements, Benefits, and Next Steps

1. You will need to have an existing UCC Laptop that is in warranty.

2. The desktop should be one of the following models: Dell OptiPlex5050, 5060, 5070, 5080 or 5090.

3. There will be a free docking station, including the required peripherals, available to the first 100 eligible staff. Once they are gone, we would still recommend getting a dock in place of your desktop.

4. You will only have one cable to connect to your laptop for charging, network (if no Wi-Fi available) monitor, keyboard & mouse.

5. Supports blended working allowing you to easily move between home and office.

6. Visit our **service desk page** and click option 7 for details on how to apply.

Laptop and Dock set-up
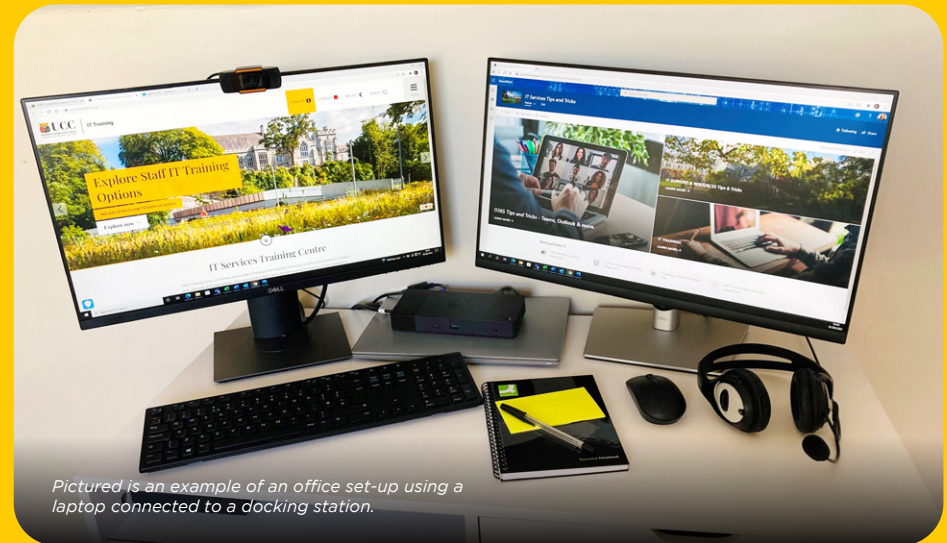
Pictured is an example of an office set-up using a laptop connected to a docking station.

Read more about our advice on blended working **here.**

This offer is available to the first 100 eligible staff members.

Wi-Fi Printing Available in UCC

The Managed Print Service in UCC provides printing, copying, and scanning in a user-friendly, secure, and efficient manner that aims to minimise both cost and environmental impact. Up to now, the service was only available to users connected to the UCC wired network.

IT Services, in collaboration with Cantec, have now further enhanced the Managed Print Service to enable UCC staff to print **wirelessly** from their UCC laptop.

Want to use Wi-Fi printing and have Cantec's Managed Print Service in your department already?

Laptops that are joined the CENTRAL domain can print the same way on the UCC Eduroam wireless network as on the wired network. Check **here** for step-by-step instructions.

Please note that any Laptop that was purchased through IT Services, would automatically be joined the CENTRAL domain.

For other devices, including those purchased outside of IT Services, phones, tablets or Apple Macs, you can still upload documents for printing at the **uprint.ucc.ie** website while connected to the wireless network or anywhere on the Internet.
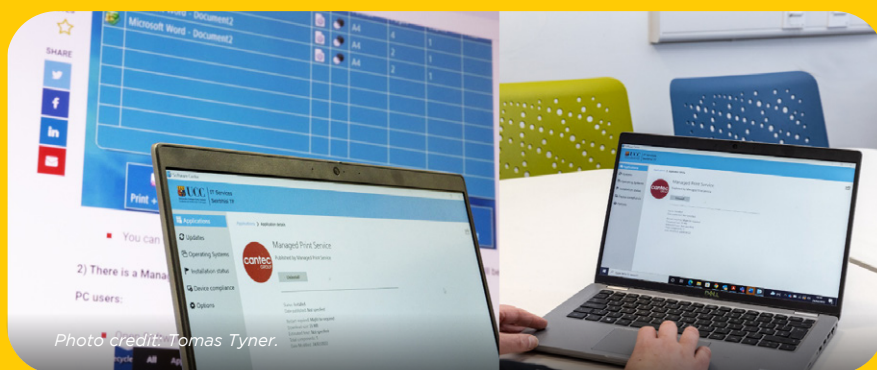
Photo credit: Tomas Tyner.

How do I obtain Managed Print Services for my department?

The Managed Print Service is provided by Cantec **(www.cantecireland.ie)** who are the University's sole supplier for printing and copying.
If your department is interested in this service, contact Cantec at 051 337012 or **info@cantecireland.ie**. Cantec will then visit your site to discuss your printing requirements and how best to fulfil them as well as conducting a site survey to identify suitable locations for devices.

The lead time, following this visit, to delivery and configuration of the device will be 2 – 4 weeks.

Benefits of Wi-Fi Printing through Cantec's Managed Print Service

- **Easy to access** - It is already pre-configured on all managed Windows machines.

- **Secure** - use your ID card to release print jobs and scan.

- **Mobile** - You can print to the UCC service from the Wi-Fi or at home.

- **Wi-Fi First** - You no longer need to be on the wired network to access core UCC services if you have Wi-Fi available.

- **Flexible** - Release your print jobs from any Cantec managed device on campus.

- **Sustainable** - Meets UCC's Sustainable Print Policy.

Further Info & FAQs

If you require any further information on the UCC Managed Print Service and Wireless printing options, please check **here.**

Student Laptop Loan Service Launches in The HUB

Photo credit: Tomas Tyner.

Key Features

- 14" **Laptops available.**

- **7" Touchscreen** Display.

- **Flexibility on loan** schedules and access to laptops.

- Automated and controlled access **using Traka system.**

- **Enables secure and ease of access** to Student services

Watch **our video** to find out where and how to access the laptops.

CLICK HERE TO PLAY VIDEO ▲

Following on from the success of the **Lapsafe** laptop loan service available in **The Boole Library and the Brookfield Library,** IT Services, in collaboration with The Student Experience Office, launched the **Traka** laptop loan scheme in The Hub in March 2022. There is a total of **72** laptops available to students in The Hub, 36 laptops in one unit for **Access UCC** students and another 36 laptops in the second unit available to all students and located in the Global Lounge of The Hub.

Each locker has a built-in charging unit and a separate mains charger, enabling the laptop to be loaned for up to **4 hours.** This loan period is recorded via the **Traka** system, allowing reminders to be sent to students in the event of a device not being returned by the allotted time. In addition to this, Traka's FIFO (first in first out) feature ensures that laptops are loaned in a timely order, to prevent students from withdrawing a laptop which has only just been returned and could be out of battery.

The UCC enrolled laptops allow students who need a laptop to log in with their student email address and password and grant them access to web applications, Canvas, O365, Umail etc.

Feedback from students has been positive since we first rolled out the service in the Library in 2016 and has enabled students who may not have access to a device to allow them to complete their study. To find out more about this service **here.**

Well done to Rosemarie Scanlon and Eoin O'Sullivan in IT Services for leading out of this project and to our colleagues in The Student Experience Office, particularly Access UCC, Procurement Office, The Student's Union, General Services and The Hub for their support in rolling this service out.

IT Training Survey Results

2021 saw the IT Training team continue to deliver online IT training offerings to UCC staff and students. As we approached 2022, it became clear that we are inching slowly closer to the return of on campus IT training. Before developing our training program for the upcoming year, we wanted to assess how this period of online IT training was viewed by UCC staff and postgraduate students, and what they would like to see from IT Training in 2022.

The survey received 133 responses from 90 administrative staff members, 18 research staff members, 24 academic staff members, and 1 postgraduate student.

Staff Enjoyed...

- **Online Training:** 49% of respondents want to see hybrid (on-campus and online) IT training in 2022, 48% want to see online IT training only, and just 3% wanted to see on-campus IT training only. Many mentioned the increased accessibility of online training - whether staff are working from home or working remotely, IT training is available to them live online or through our **online recordings.**

- **IT MicroSessions:** The MicroSessions have been hugely successful with over 39 sessions delivered in 2021 with a total of over 600 attendees. IT MicroSessions were the most popular IT Training service amongst respondents, with 72 respondents availing of live IT MicroSessions, and 54 using our IT MicroSession recordings.

- **Short Training:** with many UCC staff being very busy throughout 2021 our short 1-hour trainings were popular. Going forward, most respondents want online training to be one hour or less, and on-campus training to be two hours or less.

In 2022...

- **Microsoft 365 Productivity Apps (To-Do, Lists, Planner, etc.):** are the most in-demand training area for 2022.

- **Excel:** the second most in-demand training option for this year. With over 8 different Excel IT MicroSession recordings to-date, demand is still high, and staff are eager to learn more about the application.

BITE-SIZED
ONLINE LEARNING

- **And more...** Respondents made helpful suggestions for areas for growth in IT Training. Suggestions included hardware training on how to set up docking stations and home office equipment, best practice with Microsoft 365, and file storage.
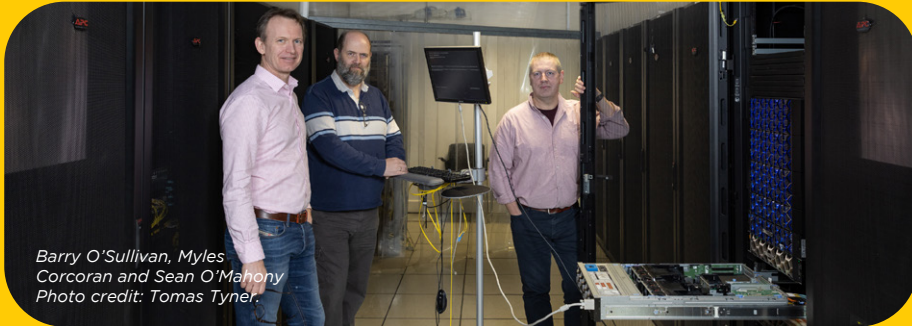
A huge thanks to UCC staff for taking the time to fill out our IT Training survey. The feedback has been invaluable in assessing where to go with IT Training for the year ahead.

Training Demand by Application

No. of Participants

● Yes   ● Maybe   ● No
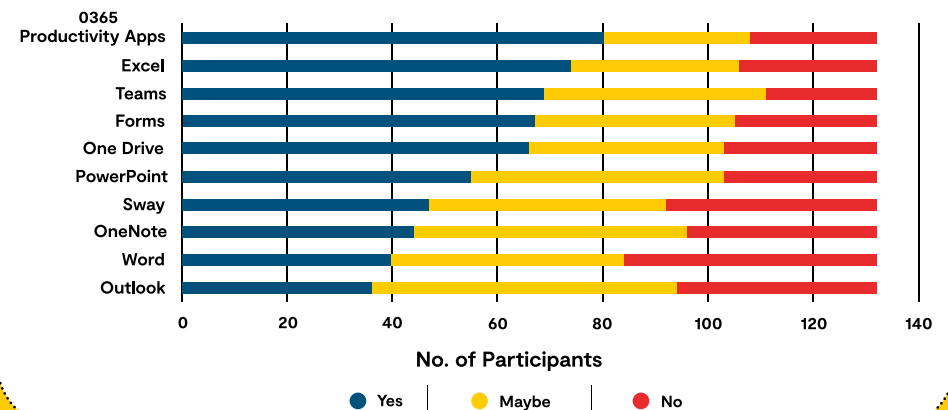
IT Services Complete Major Infrastructure Upgrade

Barry O'Sullivan, Myles Corcoran and Sean O'Mahony Photo credit: Tomas Tyner.

How the Datacentre Keeps the University Digital Estate Running

The UCC Datacentre is the heart of the UCC Digital Estate, and every time staff and students use any campus IT system or service it is likely they will interact with the UCC datacentre.

Some of the ways Staff and Students Interact with the UCC Datacentre

- When a staff member or student arrives on campus and connects to our wireless service the authentication process talks to servers hosted in the **UCC Datacentre.**

- Each time a student uses an **open access PC** or **lab PC** the datacentre infrastructure supports the login process and connectivity as well as hosting many of the applications.

- Our Datacentre supports and host key websites including **www.ucc.ie.**

- Our **Professional Services** staff connect into the Datacentre everyday to run the university line of business applications, including our **HR, Student** and **Finance** systems.

- The ability to **work remotely** over the last 2 years has been enabled largely by the technology and services that we run in the datacentre, including **VirtualApp.**

Delivering a More Sustainable and Efficient Datacentre

In 2021 IT Services embarked on a major upgrade of the datacentre. In April 2021 we ran a public tender and awarded the tender to **PFH/DELL.** Between April and December 2021 IT Services installed, configured, and migrated over 350 servers and 100+ applications to the new infrastructure. This considerable undertaking was completed with no business outages or impact on services. We are now running modern best of breed technology from DELL in our datacentre that ensures we can continue to run critical services on-premise but also allows us to leverage public cloud technology where it makes sense. Well done to the **Platform Delivery Group** in IT Services for bringing this critical and complex project to this stage.

Sean O'Mahony Photo credit: Tomas Tyner.

The Benefits of the Datacentre Upgrade for UCC

- We can continue to support the **critical IT applications** and services required by the University knowing we have a modern supported infrastructure. The storage and compute that we have represents the most modern and reliable in the market.

- Our Datacentre uses free air cooling, and all equipment has a **Triple E rating from SEAI (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland)** making it the most efficient on the market.

- We have further developed our strong relationship with both **DELL** and **PFH** who have supported the university over many years.

- Our new infrastructure provides modern technology to help mitigate the risk of **ransomware** and **cyber-attacks.**

IT Security Update. Log4j IT Security Incident – December 2021

On **Thursday December 9th 2021** a critical vulnerability impacting logging software "Log4j" was publicly disclosed. The following day, **Friday 10th December,** this flaw was given a maximum severity score of 10 - a low complexity attack could exploit this flaw remotely with no user interaction or privileges required. To make matters worse this software component is used everywhere from Minecraft, SPSS, Apple, Microsoft, FSecure to computer systems on UCC campus.
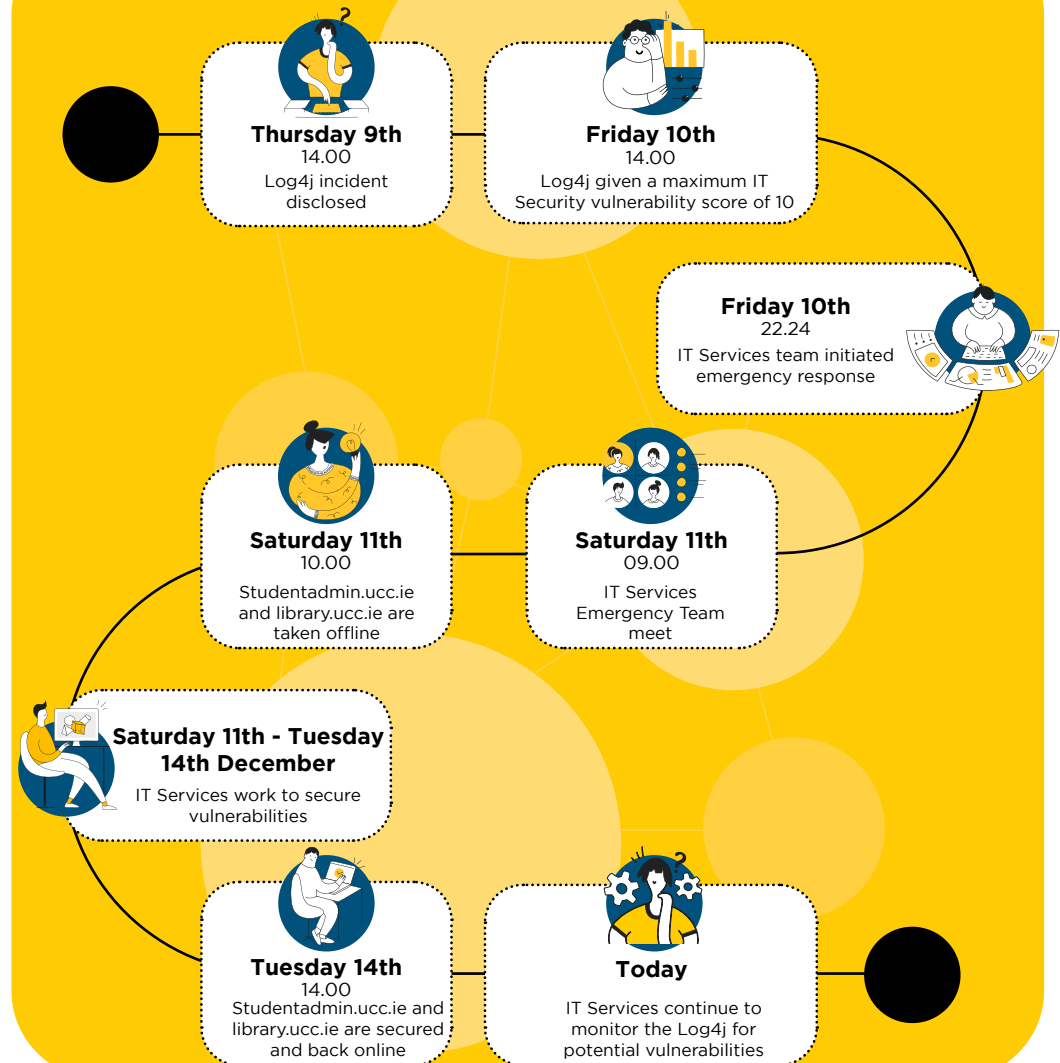
That day the severity of the flaw became increasingly evident and alarm within the cyber security community grew with many calling it "the most serious vulnerability" they had ever seen due to its use in so many different pieces of software and the relative ease to exploit. UCC IT Services initiated an emergency response at **22:24** on **Friday December 10th** to assess UCC's exposure to the vulnerability.

Initial meetings and an assessment of all software and servers began that night and a local emergency team met on **Saturday 11th December** to discuss the mitigation work. Our scanning tools began identifying multiple scanning events for this vulnerability from all areas of the globe and a risk decision to shutdown certain servers until a full assessment was made. The decision was made to take library.ucc.ie and mystudentadmin.ucc.ie offline and to work to secure vulnerabilities. By **Monday 13th December,** IT Services and our colleagues across the University had made an assessment of hundreds of servers, patched and mitigated the vulnerability where possible and additional detection rules employed.

The speed and dedication of IT staff across the University during this cyber event is to be commended with affected systems back online by **Tuesday 14th December**. Log4j continues to be a near ubiquitous logging tool and malicious actors continue to scan environments for this vulnerability. It is likely that this vulnerability will remain an issue for IT teams and will likely crop up for years to come.

**Cyber threats are very real: THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK!
Email itsecurity@ucc.ie if you notice any suspicious activity or believe your UCC account has been compromised.**

December 2021 - Timeline of Log4j Events

Thursday 9th
14.00
Log4j incident disclosed

Friday 10th
14.00
Log4j given a maximum IT Security vulnerability score of 10

Friday 10th
22.24
IT Services team initiated emergency response

Saturday 11th
10.00
Studentadmin.ucc.ie and library.ucc.ie are taken offline

Saturday 11th
09.00
IT Services Emergency Team meet

Saturday 11th - Tuesday 14th December
IT Services work to secure vulnerabilities

Tuesday 14th
14.00
Studentadmin.ucc.ie and library.ucc.ie are secured and back online

Today
IT Services continue to monitor the Log4j for potential vulnerabilities

From CD's to Google! Staff Spotlight: Rosemarie Scanlon, GSuite Administrator

Rosemarie Scanlon
Photo credit: Tomas Tyner.

Rosemarie joined UCC in 1997 as a Project Assistant to the student data project in the Student Records and Exams Office and later that year moved to the Computer Centre, as it was known then. In 1999 Rosemarie joined the team in the Library, a time when databases were accessed by CDs! Rosemarie worked on the introduction of new IT equipment including additional library pcs, booksorter, selfissues, the upgrade of the Library Management System along with many more digital improvements across the Library infrastructure. In 2014, when Information Services was formed, Rosemarie joined IT Services working on more of the core services for the University and has recently taken up the role as UCC's System Administrator for Student email and Google services.

Rosemarie, what is a standard day for you as GSuite Administrator?

Every day can be different which makes my working day interesting! Depending on the day, I could be preparing for the planning of new laptop loan units, adding new policies for Chromebook lockers and also provisioning new Google support accounts for departments. As the Google storage model will change over the next year, I also join Google meetings regarding the roadmap for this change which will affect the University. Services provided by Google evolve at a fast pace so it's good to keep up to date with future developments.

What do you like most about working in IT in UCC?

There's great variety in my work, as new technologies are always emerging, there are always new challenges on the horizon. Over the years there's always been great networking between the departmental System Administrators on campus, especially now as centralised services have become streamlined in local departments. Also, due to the pandemic, the experience for both students and staff has become more standardised across the University.

The pandemic has been a challenging time, can you share your experience?

The shift to working from home certainly brought its challenges. I missed the office on the days where I could pop down the corridor to a colleague or discuss an idea over the partition. The banter of IT Services coffee room used to be great too, there was nowhere to bring the leftover chocolates after Christmas! I started the Aurora Programme in November 2021 online. Although the sessions are really interesting, we are missing out on the face-to-face networking. The breakout rooms just don't have the same atmosphere as an in-person event, so I am glad to see the end of the restrictions and a gradual return to seeing and meeting people again.

How do you switch off?

Usually while walking our dog, Alfie with my husband and 2 daughters. Alfie is a Bichon Frise and Yorkie crossbreed. Our neighbour thinks he looks like Sprocket from Fraggle Rock! I find a yoga class great for winding down and will always have a good book to get lost in.

Alfie the dog

Podcasts, Passwords and More!

Did you know….

Visio is now available to all UCC staff and students

Good news, Visio is now part of our O365 license. It is available to all UCC staff and students.

Follow these steps to access the Visio application and get creating!

OFFICE VISIO
NOW AVAILABLE WITH O365 LICENSE

Organise complex ideas visually with Visio

Create flowcharts, floor plans and more

HOW TO ACCESS

Go to www.office.com and click on app launcher

Click on all apps

Click on Visio to launch the app and get started

Ger Culley talks Sustainability in the Green Campus Podcast

Director of IT Services, Ger Culley, talks to the UCC Green Campus Podcast about sustainability in IT at UCC. You can listen to Ger's conversation on **Apple Podcasts** or **Spotify.** Thanks to hosts of the podcast, Niamh Guiry and Oliver Cunningham, for inviting Ger onto the podcast.

You can also read more about our commitment to sustainability **here**.

THE GREEN CAMPUS PODCAST

STUDENT LED-RESEARCH INFORMED-PRACTICE FOCUSED
THE WORLD'S FIRST GREEN FLAG CAMPUS

Listen on Apple Podcasts   UCC GREEN CAMPUS   Spotify

Did you know about our Microsoft Learning Pathways?

A range of on demand courses on the Microsoft O365 suite of applications. These courses are customised for UCC and available to students and staff. Courses include Teams, OneDrive, Word, Forms and more.

Follow **this link** to sign-in to learn and explore.

MICROSOFT LEARNING PATHWAYS

Did you know about our **Microsoft Learning Pathways**

Available to both **students** and **staff** of UCC.

Click on the link above to sign in and learn more about **O365 Applications**, including OneDrive, PowerPoint and more.

Self Service Password Reset Tool

We understand that sometimes you can forget the password to your student or staff UCC account. But did you know that you can reset it yourself through our **self-service password reset?** This self-service tool will help you reset your password quickly.

Click **this link** and follow these steps.

Self Service Password Reset

Forgot the **password** to your student or staff account?

Use our **Self Service Password Reset** to change it yourself!

Just enter your
- student/staff **email**
- **captcha code**
- **phone number** in the boxes provided

ITServices

IT Services Newsletter | March 2022

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh