

Liverpool Hope University

Digital Strategy

2025 - 2029

Introduction

This strategy, as one of five interdependent enabling strategies, focuses on supporting the new [Strategic Plan](#) and its five strategic pillars of Ethos and Community, Education, Research Scholarship and Knowledge Exchange, Partnership and Voice, Sustainable and Future Ready. The University's Strategic Plan and enabling strategies success are dependent upon the key impact and difference our use of digital technologies and data can make.

Essentially, the Digital Strategy is about ensuring we have the right digital technologies, systems and data in place, with staff and students confident and competent to harness their value, to ensure the success of the University's Strategic Plan.

Purpose

The purpose of our Digital Strategy is to underpin the university's vision and aspiration in relation to digital transformation of its core activities: student education and research, scholarship and knowledge exchange. Our Digital Strategy recognises that all staff are key in achieving the objectives of the University's Strategic plan as valued members of its community, who deserve support and encouragement to engage with and take advantage of the potential of digital technologies and data. It seeks to encourage distributed leadership throughout the University in addressing both local and corporate issues and places ownership of the priorities to those best placed to ensure they are achieved. It also seeks to ensure that the digital backbone provides resilient and secure systems across the University to increase cyber-resilience and protect data.

Our Digital Strategy has a strong focus on using digital technologies, data and digital approaches to enhance the student learning environment and experience, to ensure that we keep pace with student expectations and support their success. This focus will also ensure that our students graduate from our university with strong digital competence and confidence, to enable them to succeed in today's technology-rich workplaces and society.

This enabling strategy also describes how we will embrace use of digital technologies, data, and digital approaches to enhance our technology infrastructure, management and use of data, our campus facilities, and digital ways of working, with support and professional development opportunities for our staff, to transform the way we work, through digitisation and increased automation. These changes aim to free up time for high-value, people-centred activities, and to create efficiencies and improve reliability.

Digital strategy vision:

Our vision for digital reflects our focus on the people in our community (our students, staff, alumni, and partners) and positions digital technology, data, and digital approaches as a set of tools that will enable us to enhance student learning and experience, improve the working environment for our staff, support our wider institutional objectives and extend our position as a successful, small university.

Our people-centred approach to effective use of digital technologies, data and digital approaches will enhance our students' learning and experience, enrich our research, scholarship and knowledge-exchange activities, create connected communities, support our mission to enhance social inclusion, and improve our infrastructure and ways of working, creating a digitally-enabled university.

This means that we will:

- Embed effective use of digital technologies and approaches that enhance the quality of the student and staff experience and improve access, inclusivity, flexibility, well-being, student success and ways of working
- Improve and effectively manage our institutional technology platforms, use of data and capabilities with digital technologies, to enable us to digitise and automate our operational processes and optimise cyber-resilience
- Support our staff and students to adopt a culture of digitally enabled working, harnessing the value of digital technologies, data, and digital approaches to enhance education and learning, research and knowledge exchange, through training and professional development
- Create a connected community using digital technology and approaches to increase access, inclusion and knowledge, and to build effective partnerships and encourage innovation
- Support our net-zero sustainability plan through effective use of digital technology and approaches to reduce our use of paper, improve campus efficiency and move towards a smart campus
- Collaborate with our staff, students, alumni, and partners to use digital approaches to improve social inclusion and regional development

Themes

There are five interconnected digital themes in this enabling strategy aligned to the University's ambitions and Strategic Plan. The high-level actions supplementing the themes identified are those we believe will have the greatest impact on meeting the University's ambition. They will be underpinned by numerous other actions and work streams as detailed in our Roadmap.

Digital themes

Theme one: Living our values: Developing our culture

Our ambition:

We aim to improve our digital awareness, skills and competencies, to ensure we can use technologies and data effectively and efficiently, enabling us to focus more time on high value people-centred activities.

To achieve our ambition, we will:

- create digital leaders, champions, structures, and professional development opportunities to support delivery of our Digital Strategy
- provide staff with support to develop a digital mindset and to manage digital change effectively and proactively
- implement enhanced policies, processes and procedures to protect our data, secure our systems, ensure innovation and maintain our digital backbone
- enhance our customer services approach, to meet the needs of our staff and students

Theme two: Enhancing our technology and data ecosystem

Our ambition

We aim to enhance our technology platforms, data management, digital toolset, and campus facilities to improve education, experience, research and working practices for all staff and students.

To achieve our ambition, we will:

- implement a comprehensive infrastructure programme that will ensure resilient, scalable, and secure systems across the university, in cloud-based environments
- create a data strategy and clear data management, governance, use and sharing policies, with a strong focus on creating a single point of truth for all our business-critical data
- digitise and automate processes, significantly reduce paper use and manual processes, optimise agile working practices and free up time for staff, improving our effectiveness, data security and efficiency
- continue to modernise our physical campus to use digital technologies effectively to support education, research & knowledge exchange and on-campus working, to provide a welcoming, social, efficient, and sustainable physical environment

Theme three: Enhance our educational provision

Our ambition

We aim to enhance the access, flexibility, inclusivity, and quality of our educational provision through effective use of digital technologies, data, and digital approaches.

To achieve our ambition, we will:

- adopt appropriate existing and emerging digital technologies, and embed these in our pedagogical practice, to support students learning on campus in face-to-face, hybrid and fully online modes
- embed basic (and advanced disciplinary specific) digital and data literacy training into the curriculum for all students and ensure digital and data literacy is clearly articulated as an essential graduate outcome
- grow our online and hybrid education portfolio in appropriate discipline areas, to support geographically distributed students and professional learners

Theme four: Improve our student digital experience

Our ambition

We aim to improve the quality of the end-to-end student journey for all students, through effective use of digital technologies, data, and digital approaches.

To achieve our ambition, we will:

- increase the use of digital technologies, data, and digital approaches to provide a high-quality student experience for our prospective and registered students
- implement a customer relationship management system to unify all student interactions across departments

- enhance our communities using digital technologies and approaches, to provide an authentic and inclusive experience for all students
- improve the capabilities and content of our externally-facing website and implement secure internal portals, to improve student recruitment, and experience

Theme five: Enhance our digitally-enabled research, scholarship and knowledge exchange

Our ambition

We aim to use digital technologies, data and approaches to improve our capabilities to conduct high-quality, collaborative research, scholarship & knowledge exchange that has local, regional, and global impact.

To achieve our ambition, we will:

- provide institutional support for digital technologies, data and digital approaches used in specialised research
- increase our use of open research practice, digital scholarship practices, and digital approaches for publication, dissemination and impact activities.

Principles

Our digital strategy will only be successful if we adopt a set of guiding principles to support our future decision-making. To enable us to achieve our vision of becoming a people-centred, digitally enabled university, we will need to ensure that our use of digital technologies, data, and digital approaches:

- align with the university's mission and values
- embody the university's focus on student experience and success
- support our aspiration to improve social inclusion
- contribute to our net zero commitments
- ensure equitable access, optimised flexibility and inclusivity, resilience and data security
- focus on digitisation and automation of processes
- are delivered in an agile, iterative, and continuous improvement manner
- are seamless, integrated, mobile-friendly and user-focused
- are based on a reliable, managed, and accurate common data set
- enable us to use data openly, transparently and as a resource
- offer efficiencies and benefits to students, staff, and the university
- support us to work collaboratively and in partnership
- enable innovation managed through a risk appetite framework
- evolve with changes in technology

Liverpool Hope University: Expanded Digital Strategy Roadmap (2025–2029)

Executive Summary

This document is intended to give an overall operationalised roadmap for the implementation of the key findings of the University Digital Strategy report produced in 2024. It aims to set out the best order of projects and costs to deliver the key parts of that report mapped against the real-life pain points and transform Liverpool Hope University into a people-centred, digitally enabled university supporting:

- Student success and experience.
- Operational efficiency and resilience.
- Data-driven, sustainable decision making.
- New educational models (hybrid and online).
- Leadership in digital scholarship and research.

This road map is based on a philosophy of continuous improvement and benefits realisation throughout the programme, not just at the end. Regular milestone reviews will ensure incremental value is delivered at each stage.

The overall cost of delivery of this outlined road map is in the region of £6.16M over a 4 financial year period with the bulk of the expenditure in years 1 – 3.

Although the road map lays out a delivery schedule for activities, being a multi-year project regular reviews should be undertaken to ensure the validity, priority and benefit of upcoming investments.

Consultation was undertaken with staff and feedback was positive and supportive.

The roadmap is structured around the following strategic workstreams:

Infrastructure	O365 Migration	Cyber Security	Teams Telephony	Physical Network	Cloud Servers		
Student Lifecycle Management	SRS Evaluation	Case Management	Appointment booking	Data point collection	CRM	External Engagement	Accommodation
Data Management and Reporting	Data Repositories	Data Classification	Data quality	Reporting	Analytics		
Gateway to Systems & Services	Website	Intranet	Staff Portal	Student Portal			
Digital Learning Ecosystem	Student Requirements	Standardised Toolbox	VLE Evaluation	Standardised VLE			
Research	Collaborative Environment	Data storage	Outcomes	Publication			
Change Management	Comms planning	Skills Audit	Organisational review	Training			

2. Expanded Workstreams and Deliverables

1. Infrastructure

To support the digital backbone of LHU, a comprehensive infrastructure programme will ensure resilient, scalable, and secure systems across the university.

Key Components:

- Transition from Google Workspace to Microsoft Office 365 for communication, collaboration, and productivity.
- Adoption of Microsoft enhanced licensing to enable enterprise cybersecurity including Security Information and Event Management (SIEM), and Security Operations Centre (SOC) capabilities.
- University-wide rollout of Microsoft Teams and Teams Telephony, reducing dependence on legacy systems.
- Phased network infrastructure upgrade, including backbone switches and inter-site links.
- Establishment of cloud-ready environments for future Software as a Service (SaaS) deployments.

Outcomes:

- Increased digital resilience, data integrity, and business continuity.
- Enhanced staff and student experiences through streamlined access to enterprise tools.
- Reduction in operational costs and technical debt.

KPIs:

- Staff and student satisfaction with IT systems.
- Reduction in reported cyber incidents and data breaches.
- Increased uptime and service reliability metrics.
- Decrease in manual processes and dependency on local storage.

2. Student Lifecycle Management

This workstream focuses on the end-to-end digital journey of students, from application to alumni.

Key Components:

- Evaluation and potential overhaul of the current Student Record System (SRS).
- Implementation of a CRM to unify all student interactions across departments.
- Launch of a digital case management system for student support and triage.
- Integration of online appointment booking.
- Enhanced data collection, e.g attendance monitoring, VLE engagement and Library usage for early proactive interventions.
- Digitisation of student accommodation services.

Outcomes:

- Improved responsiveness to student needs.
- Enhanced engagement, progression, and satisfaction.
- Increased operational efficiency in professional services.

KPIs:

- Student satisfaction (NSS and internal surveys).
- Reduced attrition rates.
- CRM adoption and logged student interactions.
- Appointment scheduling efficiency and case resolution times.

3. Data Management and Reporting

A university-wide strategy to build a trusted, usable, and governable data ecosystem.

Key Components:

- Institution-wide data mapping and classification.
- Creation of foundational data lakes.
- Power BI-based reporting infrastructure with real-time dashboarding.
- Establishment of a centralised Data Team.

Outcomes:

- Transition from fragmented, reactive data practices to reliable, insight-driven analytics.
- Improved decision-making across leadership and operations.

KPIs:

- Staff confidence in data reliability and utility.
- Usage rates of business intelligent dashboards for reporting and decision making
- Reduced data-related incidents (via IG/legal reporting).
- Staff participation in data literacy training.

4. Gateway to Systems and Services

The digital interfaces for internal and external audiences will be redesigned to ensure clarity, security, and engagement.

Key Components:

- Development of a new externally facing website.
- Implementation of secure internal portals (intranet) for staff and students.
- Segmentation of content access based on user roles.

Outcomes:

- Enhanced recruitment and user satisfaction.
- Improved data protection and internal communications.

KPIs:

- User engagement metrics (time-on-page, bounce rate).
- Portal login and interaction frequency.
- Reduction in inappropriate public document access.

5. The Digital Learning Ecosystem

An overhaul of the university's digital learning environment to match contemporary pedagogical needs and student expectations.

Key Components:

- Review of Moodle and exploration of alternatives like Canvas.
- Definition of a standardised, accessible learning tools toolbox.
- Collection of student digital expectations and behaviours.
- Implementation of consistent navigation and templates across modules.

Outcomes:

- More inclusive, flexible and user-friendly learning environments.
- Better alignment of tools and pedagogy across departments.

KPIs:

- Student satisfaction with digital learning experience.
- Staff usage of standard tools.
- Compliance with accessibility standards.
- Increase in student learning engagement metrics.

6. Research and Scholarly Ecosystem

Key Components:

- Digital research data management.
- Open access publication infrastructure.
- Digital collaboration platforms for research teams.
- Support for metadata, ORCID, DOIs, and repository integration.

Outcomes:

- Greater research visibility and impact at local, national, and global levels.
- Improved researcher experience and reduced administrative burden
- Compliance with REF, UKRI, and GDPR research data expectations.
- Increased digital scholarship and interdisciplinary collaboration.

KPIs:

- Increase of REF-eligible research outputs available via open access (tracked annually to demonstrate compliance and accessibility).
- Increase of research projects with active Data Management Plans and use of institutional research data repository (reflecting responsible data governance).
- Proportion of academic staff engaging with digital research training and tools (indicating digital research capability development).
- Growth in research visibility and impact through digital channels (measured via citation indices, altmetrics, and platform engagement).

7. Change Management

Success of the above initiatives depends on a carefully managed cultural and behavioural transition.

Key Components:

- Institution-wide communication and change engagement plan.
- Skills audit and professional development programme.
- Organisational structure review.
- Comprehensive digital skills training (technical and soft).

Outcomes:

- Higher adoption of new systems.
- Improved staff confidence and capability.
- Stronger alignment between teams and transformation goals.

KPIs:

- Digital skills and confidence (Jisc digital experience survey).
- Staff participation in training and accreditation programmes.
- System adoption rates and helpdesk ticket reduction.

Summary Activities and Timelines

Workstream	Key Activities	Deliverables	Timeline
Infrastructure (Core)	Migrate email, storage, collaboration to Microsoft 365 and Azure. Decommission legacy systems (Z drive) and google services.	Complete M365 migration. Azure adoption. Cloud-first policy.	Q3 2025 - Q4 2026
Infrastructure (Security)	Implement enterprise cybersecurity (SIEM and SOC). Adopt Cyber Essentials+ principles	ISO27001 and Cyber Essentials+ certification readiness Enhanced identity management.	Q3 2025 - Q4 2026
Data Management and Reporting	Establish Data Team. Define data governance. Establish data quality. Implement Power BI, central data repositories.	Data Governance Policy. Live dashboards. Trusted datasets.	Q3 2025 - Q2 2027
Student Lifecycle Management	Implement unified CRM (Microsoft Dynamics based). Digital case	CRM live across recruitment, retention, alumni.	Q3 2025 - Q2 2027

	management and student support systems.	Automated communications.	
Gateway to Systems and Services	Redevelop public website. Build secure Intranet. Launch new Staff/Student Portals.	New website. Authenticated intranet.	Q3 2025 - Q2 2027
Digital Learning Ecosystem	Revamp Moodle; integrate digital tools (Panopto, Mentimeter, Padlet). Launch standardised digital learning toolbox.	VLE redesign. Blended learning framework. Digital education standards.	Q3 2025 - Q2 2028
Change Management	Skill audit. Communication and consultation plan. Project workshops. Organisation reviews of process and procedures	Training plans to address skills gaps. University wide contribution to process improvement.	Q3 2025 - Q2 2028
Research Digital Enablement	Invest in open research platforms, online repositories, digital research tools.	Research data management (RDM) platform. Online publication infrastructure.	Q3 2026 - Q4 2028

3. Key Parallel Tracks (Highlights)

- **2025:** Leadership setup, PMO, data governance, start M365 migration, cybersecurity foundations, CRM procurement.
- **2026:** Core systems roll-out, website and intranet go-live, CRM launch, VLE redesign, staff CPD scaling up.
- **2027:** Significant operational digitisation, data analytics dashboards mature.
- **2028:** Research infrastructure live, smart learning spaces widespread.
- **2029:** Benefits review, new strategy cycle begins.

4. Risk Management

The roadmap, if approved, will be closely managed via the University's Project Management Framework and produce regular progress reports to relevant committees as required.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Challenge	Mitigation Strategy
Resistance to Change	High	High	Some staff and students may be hesitant to adopt new digital systems and processes due to a lack of familiarity, concerns about complexity, or fear of increased workload.	Provide comprehensive training, clear communication on benefits, and digital champions to support the transition.

Lack of Digital Literacy	Medium	High	Staff and students may have varying levels of digital skills, impacting adoption and effective use of new technologies.	Implement mandatory digital literacy training for staff and students, tailored to different roles and needs.
Change Fatigue	Medium	Medium	Frequent technological changes may lead to fatigue and frustration among staff and students.	Stagger implementation timelines, provide ongoing support, and actively seek feedback to adjust approaches.
System Integration Issues	High	High	Existing legacy systems may not integrate smoothly with new cloud-based or enterprise solutions.	Conduct a thorough assessment of current systems, prioritize enterprise-wide solutions, and ensure phased integration testing.
Cybersecurity Threats	High	High	Increased reliance on digital infrastructure raises exposure to cyber threats such as data breaches, phishing, and ransomware attacks.	Enhance cybersecurity protocols, implement multi-factor authentication, conduct regular security training, and ensure compliance with data protection laws.
System Downtime & Reliability Issues	Medium	High	Interruptions to critical digital services can impact university operations, learning, and research.	Implement robust backup and disaster recovery plans, ensure high-availability infrastructure, and conduct regular system maintenance.
Poor Data Quality & Governance	Medium	High	Inaccurate, incomplete, or duplicated data can undermine decision-making and operational efficiency.	Establish a central data governance framework, appoint data stewards, and implement automated data validation processes.
Data Privacy & Compliance Risks	High	High	Handling sensitive student and staff data requires strict compliance with GDPR and other regulations.	Strengthen access controls, conduct regular compliance audits, and train staff on data privacy best practices.
Data Silos & Accessibility Issues	Medium	Medium	Decentralised data management can prevent efficient access and use of information.	Implement a single source of truth for business-critical data and ensure accessibility through enterprise reporting tools like Power BI.
Insufficient Funding for Digital Initiatives	Medium	High	Budget constraints may limit the ability to invest	Develop a phased investment plan,

			in necessary technology and staffing.	prioritize high-impact projects, and explore external funding opportunities where possible.
Staff Capacity & Skill Gaps	High	High	The need for IT specialists, data analysts, and cybersecurity experts may exceed current staffing levels.	Invest in staff development programs, consider outsourcing certain functions, and align hiring strategies with digital priorities.
Unexpected Costs & Budget Overruns	Medium	Medium	Digital transformation projects may encounter unforeseen expenses.	Implement rigorous project management practices, maintain contingency funds, and conduct cost-benefit analyses before project approval.
Poor Adoption of New Digital Tools	High	Medium	Staff and students may underutilize or avoid new systems, reducing the expected benefits of digital transformation.	Ensure user-friendly design, provide adequate training, and continuously improve based on user feedback.
Overcomplication of Processes	Medium	Medium	Excessive digitalization without streamlined workflows may lead to inefficiencies rather than improvements.	Simplify and automate processes where possible, aligning them with user needs and operational goals.
Lack of Clear Communication on Changes	Medium	High	Unclear or inconsistent messaging can lead to confusion and resistance.	Develop a structured communication plan with regular updates, FAQs, and dedicated support channels.
Failure to Keep Up with Technological Advances	Medium	High	Rapid technological advancements may render current solutions obsolete.	Maintain a flexible digital strategy, invest in scalable technologies, and continuously monitor emerging trends.
Vendor Lock-in & Dependency	Medium	High	Over-reliance on specific vendors for critical digital services can create long-term risks.	Diversify vendor relationships, negotiate favourable contract terms, and develop in-house capabilities where feasible.
Misalignment with Academic and Institutional Goals	Low	High	Digital initiatives that do not align with the university's broader mission may lack institutional support.	Ensure all digital projects are aligned with university priorities, involve key stakeholders in decision-making, and assess impact regularly.

5. Consultation and Feedback

The Senior Management Team were presented with the roadmap workstream proposal at a group meeting and given the opportunity to ask questions and challenge assumptions. Following this they were given two weeks to consult with their team and provide further feedback

This feedback has been largely positive, with staff affirming strong alignment between the strategy's priorities and their own needs across infrastructure, systems, communication, teaching, and culture. There is clear endorsement for initiatives already in motion, such as the migration to Microsoft 365, Wi-Fi upgrades, CRM implementation, workflow automation, and digital literacy training. Staff particularly welcomed the roadmap's focus on improving core platforms, digitising business processes, and enhancing both staff and student digital experience. Initiatives like the one version of the truth, intranet development, and VLE enhancements were viewed as timely and well targeted.

6. Costs and Staffing Requirements

Following a review of the current market, below are the estimated costs to deliver the road map outlined in this document excluding a replacement of the SiTS student record system. It should be noted that actual costs will be dependent on the outcomes of individual business cases and procurement exercises.

Category	4-Year Cost Estimate (£)
Staffing and consultancy	£1,000,000
Infrastructure Modernisation	£1,600,000
Data Strategy (tools, team recruitment, training)	£500,000
Student Systems (CRM, portals)	£800,000
Digital Learning Ecosystem Development	£700,000
Website and Intranet Redevelopment	£300,000
Change Management	£250,000
Hardware Refresh	£450,000
Contingency (10% buffer)	£560,000
Total	£6,160,000

Additional Staffing Requirements:

In addition to the project staff costs indicated there will be an ongoing investment in technical staff to full support the current and new ecosystem, and this will be presented in a separate business case

7. Conclusion

Running parallel streams with a focus on continuous improvement and benefits realisation, Liverpool Hope will:

- Achieve high cybersecurity compliance by early 2026
- Delivery key efficiency improvements by midpoint 2026
- Deliver major capabilities by midpoint 2027.
- Achieve full transformation readiness by end 2028.
- Position itself competitively in the HE sector for the next decade.