**Changes to the College Box service** ICT Contacts: Richard Favell/Will Bennett

Box was introduced to College c 4 years ago primarily as a tool to support Research Data Management.  The initial cost to College was £40K per annum.

The landscape for storage and collaboration tools has changed significantly during this period.  Box as an organisation now positions itself as a content management, workflow and collaboration tool, not a storage or file sync and share tool.

There is currently 1.5PB of data held in Box.  The annual subscription cost for Box based on current growth will be £1.4M.

Box is not being discontinued as an entire service.  However, the use case for using Box as a repository for holding raw research data is no longer commercially viable.

The primary research data storage service is now the [Research Data Store](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/research-support/rcs/rds/).  ICT will work with groups to identify whether RDS will meet the needs of the Research groups and where gaps in service offerings exist, seek to identify more appropriate storage options throughout the data lifecycle.

Action is required both short term and medium term to reduce College exposure to expensive renewal costs.

**Background statistics**

* We currently have c1.5PB of data held in Box.
* Based on current growth patterns, storage is projected to increase to c2.3PB by the time of our Box subscription renewal in July.
* The top 100 users of Box consume over 1PB of data
* Over 80% of the data currently stored in Box is in file formats that cannot be previewed in Box and hence cannot be worked on collaboratively in Box
* Usage patterns include a number of academics and PhD students who are using Box as a ‘free’ back up / archive location for data where the primary copy is held outside of Box.
* As a price comparison storage costs for Box compares unfavourably to the Research Data Store:
	+ Box:                                   £630 / TB/ Yr
	+ RDS (dual copy):               £60 / TB / Yr
	+ RDS (Archive):                  £100 / TB / Decade.

Box is an expensive storage tier if the collaboration and digital workflow features of Box are not leveraged.

**Box usage within Faculty of Natural Sciences**

NB.These totals only include the top 100 Box users across the College

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| Chemistry16.5TB | Life Sciences75.9TB | Mathematics25TB | Physics93.8TB |

Please get in contact with Will Bennett if you would like more detail about who in your department we will be contacting.