

Communicating IT well – Service alerts: Information for service owners and administrators

IT Support Centre

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DRAFT

The initial announcement

When we experience unexpected service issues, we need to ensure information is communicated as soon as possible, to keep colleagues and users informed and avoid unnecessary traffic to the IT Support Centre. In cases where we're unable to contact the service owner immediately, we will issue a high-level announcement which acknowledges the symptoms we're currently aware of. However, we will contact the service owners at the earliest opportunity to find out as much as possible.

Keep support colleagues updated

The more information we have (and the quicker we have it), the better. Often, the first time we're aware of an issue is when users report it via the IT Support Centre. If it is a major issue, the support centre is often inundated with calls and messages.

If we have information about a service outage quickly, we can announce this on the telephone greeting message, IT Service Availability widget, social media channels and other methods if relevant.

Information checklist

If a service you own is having an issue, please inform the Support Centre Escalation leads **in person or via telephone**, and give as much of the following information as possible. You don't need to worry about grammar, tone of voice or University house style; as long as it makes sense to IT Support staff, we can deal with the wording of the service announcement.

- Service affected
- People affected (*eg is it affecting staff, students, researchers, small groups of the above, a particular department or building*)
- Symptoms (*eg complete outage, intermittent access, performance issues*)
- Time problem occurred
- Whether there is an estimated time to fix or not (*mention this either way*)
- Expected time of next communication/update
- Temporary workaround, if available
- LANDESK incident reference number

The Support Centre will then issue an announcement targeted at the relevant audiences.

If the incident happens outside of working hours (8am-5pm, Monday-Friday), call the emergency phone.

Telling the support centre about the problem is just as important as fixing it

We understand that writing this information might take up a few minutes of your time – and that's time you'd rather spend fixing the issue. However, supplying this information is a **huge** help to colleagues. Even if you don't have the full details, acknowledging that something unexpected is happening is better than saying nothing at all.

If we have information to put on the Support Centre phone greeting message, Service Availability widget and social media channels, this reassures our users that we're doing something to fix this, reducing the number of enquiries to the support centre and/or Library walk-up IT support desks.

Also, the fewer enquiries we get to the Support Centre means fewer tickets in your LANDESK queue for you to deal with, and reduces the risk of being you interrupted with multiple enquiries from various sources asking you for more information.