



Congratulations to the new University of Edinburgh!

The Information Services Group sends very best wishes to all colleagues in the new University of Edinburgh, with the new arrangement of Colleges and Schools launched on 1st August.

The Information Services Group (ISG) arises from the Academic Services Group, itself formerly known as Support Group One, with the departure of MIS to Corporate Services. The remaining departments in ISG—Computing Services, the Library, the Office of Lifelong Learning and MALTS—are all reviewing their structure and organisation, with a view to giving the best possible service to the new Colleges. This will be an evolutionary process, and we will develop strong links with the Colleges and Schools to find out exactly what services are required and to deliver them as effectively as possible.

Meanwhile we offer our congratulations to all our colleagues for the way they have accommodated this major step forward in the story of the University of Edinburgh.

Richard Field (Vice Principal)

Restructuring EUCS

Computing Services is reorganising its internal structure over the coming months, with the current seven divisions being rearranged into five. The new College Support Teams will be fully in place by 1st September.

- **Support Services** sees the merger of the five old support teams into three new ones—one for each College—alongside the existing Undergraduate Support Team.
- **Infrastructure Services** will operate core IT facilities such as the communications network, Unix systems, mail and Novell servers, Active Directory and calendaring.
- **Specialist Services** will support desktop computers, computing labs, software services, databases and Web services, and provide training and documentation.
- **Data Library Services** provides for the University's data needs, and hosts the national EDINA services.
- **Administrative Support** underpins the other EUCS divisions, and hosts the University's telephone and security services.

Our intention is to tailor the best possible C&IT support to the University in its new form, to be more responsive to users and to make the most effective use of finite resources. The new EUCS structure will be kept under constant review, and refined as necessary—working closely with the Colleges—to deliver a high-quality service to the University.

EUCS services are established and explained in a series of Service Level Definitions. These will be refined over the coming months as the University's requirements evolve; you can see them at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/EUCS/sld/>

Brian Gilmore (EUCS)

[CONTENTS]

Congratulations to the new University of Edinburgh!	1
Restructuring EUCS	1
Library Strategy: input from users welcome	2
New Horizons	2
eProcurement strategy	2
C&IT support for courses	2
WebCT Users Forum	3
WorldCom difficulties	3
Unable to see a URL?	3
Reorganization of the Web proxy cache service	3
HPC-X: keeping Edinburgh at the forefront	3
Search Engine update	3
Learning and Resource Centre Web site	4
Computer-based learning	
Digital Resources in the Humanities University of Edinburgh 8–11 September	4
Digital Preservation Project	4
On-line Printing	4
Edinburgh Tattoo	4

Library Strategy: input from users welcome

Library staff have begun the process of creating a Strategy for the next five years, replacing the existing Strategy (see <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/lib/about/policy/strategy.shtml>) which runs until the end of 2002.

In our discussions thus far we have been identifying the key issues to be covered by the Strategy. The overriding challenge remains how to deliver many current services while continuing to embrace the electronic developments that enable us to extend services beyond existing boundaries. For this reason the primary focus of the next Strategy will be on developing the *Electronic Library*.

The electronic challenge has implications for many aspects of the Strategy, including: engaging our users; developing the infrastructure for electronic access; reskilling Library staff and Library users; delivering change which anticipates need; identifying resources and making best use of them; delivering services which can be adjusted to suit varying needs; supporting new methods of delivery in the teaching/learning process; supporting research; and enhancing electronic processes, such as Web request forms.

We will be looking for input from our users in other, more structured ways as the Strategy begins to take shape, but we welcome comment at this stage (and indeed, throughout the process) on what directions you think Library services should take over the next five years. Please email comments to

A.Roberts@ed.ac.uk.

Alason Roberts (EUL)

New Horizons

On 8th July the Principal-elect, Professor Tim O'Shea, officially launched a series of new information services using resources from the University Library. He spoke to an audience of 150 invited guests who could then visit the Web sites and experience the great new resources available to the community. The projects are all collaborative, and enhance access to other relevant primary sources, particularly in Scottish institutions, showing how Edinburgh University Library, supported by Computing Services, is taking a lead in developing technological solutions to providing access to research collections.

Three of the Web sites were funded by the Research Support Libraries Programme. They are:

- Navigational Aids for the History of Science Technology and Environment (NAHSTE)
- Finding the Right Clinical Notes
- Charting the Nation: Early Maps of Scotland, 1580-1740

A fourth project is an initiative of the University Library itself: The Walter Scott Digital Archive aims to create the world's leading Web site on Sir Walter Scott.

Details of these initiatives will be highlighted in future issues of *BITS*.

Ian Mowat (EUL)

eProcurement strategy

The University's draft eProcurement strategy calls for a significant shift to on-line transactions, and your comments would be much appreciated. The draft strategy is at <http://www.procure.ed.ac.uk/procure/guidance/eprocurement/Summary%20eProcurement%20Strategy.htm>

Karen Bowman (Procurement)

C&IT support for courses

Now would be a good time to consider on-line support for your courses next session. Among the freely-available tools are:

Virtual Learning Environments

- **The Integrated Learning Environment (IVLE)** (a good first step into on-line environments)
- **WebCourse tools—WebCT** (a powerful and flexible tool)

Computer Assisted Assessment

- **Optical Mark Reading (OMR)**
- **Question Mark Perception** (a robust and flexible system which can support on-line assessments, tests and quizzes)
- **I-Assess** (developed by a team with a strong academic pedigree, this is particularly appropriate for courses with a substantial mathematical content)
- **Triads** (a complex system for building challenging and sophisticated assessments)
- **Hot Potatoes** (this software tool, free for non-charged courses, can build simple interactive exercises for existing Web sites or on-line courses; download it from <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked/>)

Other Tools

MALTS staff have written a number of other small tools in response to requests from staff, and these are freely available via the Resources Index on the MALTS Web site, at <http://www.malts.ed.ac.uk/>

Tools include a simple feedback form, a tool to allow students to sign up to a given set of essays, and PowerPoint templates. Ideas for more tools are always welcome!

More information on these tools, or other aspects of on-line support for courses, is available from Nora Moge (tel 516163, email Nora.Moge@ed.ac.uk).

Nora Moge (MALTS)

WebCT Users Forum

Anyone using WebCT, or interested in using it, is invited to a meeting at 2pm on **12th September** in Faculty Room South, David Hume Tower. Staff who have used WebCT will demonstrate their courses, present feedback from their students, and comment on the effectiveness of their innovation.

This could be the first of a series of informal meetings, establishing a WebCT users' community within the University.

Nora Moge (MALTS)

WorldCom difficulties

WorldCom in the US filed for reorganisation under Chapter 11 of the US Bankruptcy Code on 21st July. WorldCom in the UK (and the other non-US subsidiaries) are not part of this filing. The significance is that WorldCom provides the UK's JANET backbone (SuperJANET). This is clearly a serious development given that the company is already under investigation for overstating its profits by \$3.8 billion.

UKERNA, which runs JANET, is in close contact with WorldCom UK, and is developing contingency plans to put an alternative infrastructure in place should WorldCom cease trading. Currently the network is fully operational and there is no reason to believe that this will change in the short term.

*Robin Arak
(Chief Executive, UKERNA)*

Unable to see a URL?

BITs has many readers outwith Edinburgh, but often announces information which is only available to people in the University. If you are denied access to something of interest, please email **BITs@ed.ac.uk** to find out if a copy can be made available to you.

Nick Stroud (EUCS)

Reorganization of the Web proxy cache service

As you may recall from the March issue of *BITs*, the mechanism for charging for the use of the JANET network has changed. There is now no economic imperative to use the JANET national Web cache—which was previously a means for us to download Web documents without incurring a network charge—so we will now merge our own two proxy cache services, charged and free, into a single cluster and abandon the national cache.

There should be no impact on users who use the caches, and performance of the entire cache cluster should improve.

Users in open-access labs and on ResNet will still be required to use the new Web proxy cache service in order to ensure efficient delivery of course material and provide access to the wider Internet. Users using ISPs to connect to the University will also continue to benefit by using the authenticated service, allowing them access to sites restricted to the University. Other categories of users may still get benefits from using the proxy cache service through reduced latency to slow Web servers, but many may choose to bypass the cache altogether; any routing restrictions currently in place will be removed (except for those mentioned above) so that people have the choice.

One change does impact users: the address of the automatic proxy configuration script is changing to **<http://wwwcache.ed.ac.uk/config/proxy-config.pac>**. This will help to provide a more resilient service. The old config files will continue to work, but only for a while. See instructions at **<http://webhelp.ucs.ed.ac.uk/docs/proxycache.html>**

Graeme Wood (EUCS)

HPC-X: keeping Edinburgh at the forefront

A consortium of the University of Edinburgh, CLRC (Daresbury Lab) and IBM has been selected to provide a new flagship High Performance Computing service for the Research Councils. The computer itself will be housed at Daresbury, since Edinburgh doesn't have any suitable accommodation readily available, but the value of the contract to Edinburgh and CLRC is fairly even and many aspects of the new service will be directed from here. The phase 1 system, to be in service this year, will be amongst the top ten systems of its kind in the world today.

The winning of this contract, worth around £53m overall, represents a very significant achievement by the University, and means that once again Edinburgh is at the leading edge of high-end computing as one of the biggest players in the world in capability computing for the academic and research sector.

Mike Brown (EUCS)

Search Engine update

The University's search service [**www.catalogue.ed.ac.uk**] has changed to match the new college structure of the University. The search forms now have checkboxes to allow selection of which college's Web sites to include. The search software itself has been updated: it now provides 'wildcard' searches, and highlights your search terms in the results.

Documentation has been updated: select the 'Help' link next to the 'Search' button. Publishers who have created customised search pages are asked to see the revised information about which collections to search.

Graham Rule (EUCS)

Learning and Resource Centre Web site

Find out what computing facilities and resources we can offer, by visiting our updated Web site at <http://www.isg.ed.ac.uk/lrc/>

The summer would be an ideal time to visit the Learning and Resource Centre (LRC), on the 2nd Floor of the Main Library, George Square. If you do not already have a username and password to access the computers you can find them from the LRC homepage: click on 'How to use the Centre', then on 'Getting registered as a user.'

Computer-based learning

If you have attended computing courses—such as Word, Access, Excel and Powerpoint—in Appleton Tower, there are related computer-based learning packages in the LRC. If you would like to build on your coursework, LRC staff look forward to assisting you: please contact the LRC (tel 506684) to find out when relevant expertise is available. If you already know how to use the resource you want, come along at any time.

Please visit us! We look forward to seeing you soon.

Allyson Hayes (LRC)

Digital Resources in the Humanities

University of Edinburgh 8–11 September 2002

The programme for DRH 2002 is now available. Speakers from Canada, Spain, Austria, Norway, Germany, the US and the UK will cover topics such as 'Value Added Video', 'Mapping the Cultural Heritage of Tibet', and 'The best musick in the world'. The closing date for registration is **16th August**.

For further information and the online booking form, visit <http://www.drh2002.lib.ed.ac.uk/>

Elaine Mowat (SCRAN)

Digital Preservation Project

After its first year, the Digital Preservation Project has produced a comprehensive report, issuing guidelines and recommendations for the benefit of the Library and the University. The practical outcome was a significant factor in ensuring that corporate records can be kept in perpetuity whilst still retaining their legal admissibility: a pilot project carried out to archive the on-line University Calendar emphasised this.

The report is open for public consultation until 1st September, at <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/sites/digpres/>

All comments are welcome, to najla.semple@ed.ac.uk, please.

Najla Semple (EUL)

On-line Printing

Printing Services—in line with the University's draft eProcurement Strategy and the Finance Department support for on-line ordering internally—is looking at developing a streamlined desktop Web-based service for ordering printing and photocopying, suitable for work managed in-house or by University authorised suppliers.

It is envisaged that this system would allow authorised department staff to manage printing work from the desktop, with on-line proofing, ordering and a desktop-to-desktop delivery service.

To help us gauge the interest and need for such a service, please retrieve the questionnaire from <http://www.printing.ed.ac.uk/ordering/online.htm> and email it back as an attachment to stuart.mclean@ed.ac.uk, or post it to Stuart McLean, Procurement Office, 13 Infirmary Street. Additional comments and queries would be welcome.

Stuart McLean (Printing)



Murray Clayton, manager of the University's Telephone Service, will be portraying The Lord Lyon in this year's Edinburgh Military Tattoo, making the 1952 proclamation from the Mercat Cross of The Princess Elizabeth's accession to the throne. Murray, a prominent member of the Scottish Community Drama Association, has appeared in the Tattoo on several previous occasions—as one of Wellington's generals in this photograph. Find out about the Tattoo at <http://www.edinburgh-tattoo.co.uk/>

Edinburgh BITs

Editor:

Nick Stroud, EUCS.

Published by:

Computing Services
The University of Edinburgh
for the Edinburgh IT community.

Contributions:

Email: BITs@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 3345

Distribution queries:

BITs is distributed through departmental offices; departmental secretaries please notify changes in requirements to:

David Muxworthy
Email: D.Muxworthy@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 3305

Printed on chlorine-free paper from sustainable forests by:
University of Edinburgh Printing Services,
<http://www.printing.ed.ac.uk/>

BITs on the Web:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/bits/>

Some acronyms explained:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/acronyms.html>

Contributions to *BITs* are welcomed from all readers.

Copy deadline for September BITs:

Monday 19th August