

This is the second issue of the redesigned *BITs* – I hope you recognised it! I forgot to give due credit to its designers last month: Aileen Robertson and Sonia Viridi of MALTS, to whom all thanks. *Nick Stroud*

### IT support for research

Work has begun on the next edition of the University's Knowledge Management Strategic Plan, and in particular on the Research Computing Support section.

The current version is at [http://www.kmstrategy.ed.ac.uk/KM\\_index.htm](http://www.kmstrategy.ed.ac.uk/KM_index.htm)

Comments and suggestions would be welcome, and should be addressed to Brian Gilmore, Director of Computing Services (email [b.a.gilmore@ed.ac.uk](mailto:b.a.gilmore@ed.ac.uk)), or Professor Peter Clarke, Chair of e-Science (email [clarke@nesc.ac.uk](mailto:clarke@nesc.ac.uk)).

### Eliminating duplication of IT effort

I would appreciate comments by 31st October (to [Helen.Hayes@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Helen.Hayes@ed.ac.uk)) on the University's proposals for harmonising IT systems by developing common systems and services, as discussed at September's IT Committee meeting; see <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/cttees/itc/2005-09-27/paperB.html>

*Helen Hayes (Information Services)*

### Huge demand for MyEd

The Edinburgh Student Portal moved on to MyEd at the beginning of Summer, and the demand for it has exceeded all expectations.

Around half the new students who had a confirmed place at Edinburgh logged in before they arrived at the University, so this is a potent new opportunity to welcome them.

The system coped well in Freshers' Week, but there were teething problems in week one. In the same period last year there were around 3,500 daily logins. It seemed sensible to expect this number to double, but in the event we saw up to 37,000 daily logins and more than triple the number of unique users visiting the site – with around 300,000 logins altogether during September.

MyEd handled 100,000 service visits in the last week of September: most students use it every day. This is not surprising, as MyEd is tightly integrated with a range of popular student services.

MyEd is clearly now a significant and strategic way for the University to reach its core customers.

*Mark Wetton, Anne-Marie Scott (MIS)*

### Changes in the LRC

The Learning and Resource Centre – LRC – was born out of a collaboration of the Library and EUCS over five years ago.

That collaboration broadened within Information Services with the launch in August of the new IS Helpdesk on the ground floor of the Main Library. Two members of LRC staff moved to the Helpdesk, so there are changes in the LRC.

The LRC Reception desk has closed. Enquiries about library and information databases should now be directed to the Helpdesk on the ground floor. Multimedia support continues in the LRC as before.

The Student Support Team will continue to offer a service in the LRC, giving advice on computing issues. The popular eSkills seminars will carry on, and the 'Learning Centre' aspects of the LRC will be further developed. Support for assistive technologies will remain.

Allyson thanks all the staff who have worked to support and encourage the LRC, and contributed so much to its success.

*Allyson Hayes (EUL)*

*Noel Millar (EUCS)*

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**INFORMATICS FORUM**

(see page 8)

## University Web Site

The University is engaged in a major exercise to redevelop its Web Site. The intention is to unify the University's existing web publishing into a single cohesive entity, designed from the outset with the needs of all users in mind.

A scoping report has been completed and a project team is now being assembled. The report concludes that the University's current Content Management System, Polopoly, will provide a suitable platform for the new site. It also advises a staged delivery over a two-year period: the University's main out-facing content would be established in the first year, with other key parts of the site following in the second year.

A series of town-hall-style open meetings will be held in November to discuss the project and receive feedback. There will be six meetings, in the Central Area, The King's Buildings, Little France, Holyrood, The Bush and The Western General. All staff are encouraged to attend.

Further information regarding the meetings, and a summary of progress to date, can be found at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/webpub/redevelopment/>

*Ian Conn (CPA)*

## Web accessibility course

The Edinburgh Branch of the British Computer Society is running a Web Accessibility course over four evenings, starting on 18th October. The course is aimed at Web designers, anyone charged with commissioning or managing Web developments, and individuals wanting a better understanding of Web accessibility issues. For details see <http://www.edinburgh.bcs.org/courses/webaccess.htm>

*Graham Rule (EUCS)*

## First Polopoly website live

The first website to use the Polopoly web content management system went live in September, marking the end of the implementation phase of this EUCS project. The School of Divinity's website (at <http://www.div.ed.ac.uk/>) is now served from the Polopoly system, instead of from the morse webserver.

The site looks no different to its visitors, but the Divinity computing officers now have a much easier way to maintain the pages. The appearance of the site is controlled using templates, and navigation menus are automatically updated. Academic staff can quickly update their own pages, for example to add new publications and photographs. The migration of the site was simple (if tedious!), and feedback about the ease of use of the system is positive.

Several other websites are in the pipeline, and will be made available through Polopoly in the next month.

The latest report on the new University Web Site recommends Polopoly version 9 for content management. The existing Polopoly installation is version 8, and there are significant differences between versions 8 and 9, specifically in the user interface and the method for creating input and output templates. EUCS needs to get to grips with version 9 in preparation for the University website project, so it has been decided not to migrate any more websites into version 8 beyond those already in the pipeline.

The work done in version 8 is a good basis for moving forward with Polopoly, confirming it as a suitable choice for the University. It has also shown that a content management system brings benefits for anyone creating or updating web pages, as well as for website administrators.

*Chris Adie (EUCS)*

## Email relay news

All mail passing through the main University mail relays has long been scanned for viral content using Sophos anti-virus. We are now also scanning all traffic with the free open-source ClamAV package (<http://www.clamav.net/>).

Using two different virus scanners improves protection in several ways: the average time to deal with new threats is reduced; the two scanners pick up slightly different sets of threats; the failure of one scanner does not now block mail; and ClamAV has signatures for common 'phishing' scam messages and other types of undesirable email.

EUCS is upgrading the hardware for the mail relay service. One of the four relay components has been replaced, and the others will follow shortly. As well as simply being much faster, the new hardware will cope better with the unpredictable nature of Internet email traffic.

The old hardware will be used to support the relay service, and further improve our spam defences.

*Scott Larnach (EUCS)*

## Wireless developments

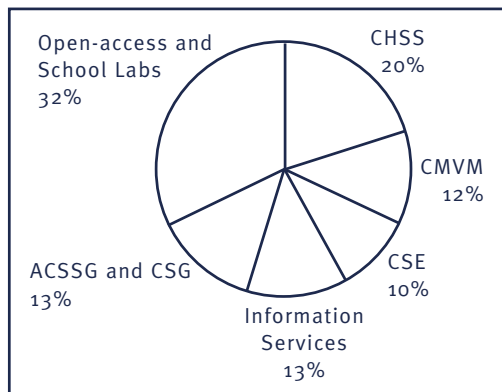
The registration process for Wireless and VPN has been changed: users no longer receive a confirmation email, but are directed to a 'what next' web page which explains how to use the services. The link is also available on the registration page at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/nsd/access/wselfreg.html>

Local network capacity has been expanded to cope with the growing popularity of the Wireless Service. The address obtained by DHCP will now be on the 129.215.135.0 or 129.215.48.0 subnets. If you get wireless problems, click the **repair** (or **renew DHCP lease**) button.

*Bill Byers (EUCS)*

## Supported Windows XP Desktop reaches milestone of 8,000!

The number of PCs in the University using the Supported Windows XP Desktop has now passed the significant figure of 8,000. This is about 72% of the estimated number of PCs which can run Windows XP. The chart below indicates distribution of the Supported Desktop in the University of Edinburgh.



Some of the basic benefits offered by the Supported Windows XP Desktop include:

- **Quick Build and Rebuild:** on a standard network, Windows XP can be installed within 15 minutes.
- **Windows Update Service:** Windows XP is automatically configured to download and install all critical updates from an internal Software Update Service (SUS).
- **Firewall configured:** the default installation of Windows XP now includes Service Pack 2 and a configured personal firewall.
- **AntiVirus updates:** if installed, the McAfee AntiVirus software is configured to update itself automatically from an update server.
- **Application deployment:** an increasing number of applications are available for automatic installation (subject to licence conditions) at build or reboot time. These include Office 2003, Endnote, SPSS, Minitab, Photoshop and Firefox.

The Supported Windows XP Desktop provides a complete installation service from initial installation of Windows XP through to application configuration and security features. Service Pack 2 is now installed as standard (subject to local School or College policy) offering enhanced network security using a personal firewall.

*Graham Newton (EUCS)*

### Service Pack 2

Service Pack 2 added several key security features to Windows XP, including a built-in firewall, security enhancements in Internet Explorer and Outlook Express to stop viruses, spyware and popups (collectively known as Malware), and the whole operating system has been “toughened up”. Its features add to the overall reliability and maintainability of users’ computers.

This Service Pack has now been rolled out to the vast majority of computers using the Supported XP Desktop, with virtually zero interruption to service. If your PC has not yet been updated, it is likely that it will be very soon. Most people will not even notice the upgrade, as most installations have taken place silently overnight.

*Mark Sammons (EUCS)*

### MIS and the Supported Windows XP Desktop

All staff users in Administration, Communications & Student Services Group and the majority of users in Corporate Services Group – over 850 in total – have now been upgraded to the University Supported Windows XP desktop by the MIS Customer Support team. These users can now take full advantage of all the supported applications available, whilst enjoying reduced sign-on to the integrated email and eDiary service, the MIS-hosted web publishing service, and a series of Active Directory dependent local and third-party systems.

Only the Estates and Buildings Planning Unit remains on the Windows 2000 platform, as its core business EBIS service must be upgraded to be compatible with the Windows XP Service Pack 2 platform. This version is currently in test within Works Division, and the rollout on the new desktop is scheduled for early November.

*Bryan MacGregor (MIS)*

### The Supported Desktop in Science and Engineering

The College of Science and Engineering has made great progress with its deployment of the Supported Windows XP Desktop. Over the last eight months we have successfully installed over 280 staff and teaching lab PCs in the School of Biological Sciences. Other Schools have already reaped the benefits of the Supported Windows XP Desktop, including GeoSciences (450 PCs), Engineering & Electronics (143 PCs) and Informatics (50 PCs).

The School of Chemistry is currently in the process of moving its staff PCs into this environment, and the School of Mathematics, currently using the Supported Desktop on 50 teaching PCs, will be starting a project later this year to deploy the Supported Windows XP Desktop to their staff PCs.

For further information or help on this or any other computing issue, please contact the Science & Engineering Support helpdesk (JCMB Room 3251, tel 505013, email [Science.Support@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Science.Support@ed.ac.uk)) or visit our website at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/scisup/>

*Keith Nicol (EUCS)*

## Linux pilot in the labs

Students from two Schools in the College of Science & Engineering will be enjoying a Pilot Linux Desktop in the open-access labs this session. For the first time, students from the School of Engineering and Electronics will be able to access specialist teaching applications in the EUCS-provided 24 hour computer labs at George Square Hugh Robson Basement and Kings Buildings Centre Level 3. Similarly, students from the School of Informatics will be able to access School resources using secure shell connections and the X11 windowing system.

To get Linux, students have to restart the computer and select the Linux option at boot time. If no selection is made the PC will default into Windows XP Professional. PCs left unattended in Linux for a set period of time will shut down and restart in Windows XP Professional.

For further details, please see <https://adelie.ucs.ed.ac.uk/dstwikireadonly/index.php/LinuxLabPilotProject>

*James Jarvis (EUCS)*



## Open-access labs – Session 2005–2006

EUCS has now completed the planned hardware and software upgrades in the open-access computing labs for the session 2005–2006.

### Hardware upgrades

Over 300 four- and five-year-old PCs were replaced with the current configuration of the SelectPC, including 17" flat panel TFT monitors which consume less power and generate less heat than the traditional CRT monitors. The new PCs have 1GB RAM, providing some 'future proofing' against the next generation of Microsoft Desktop Operating System, as well as offering greater flexibility for some of the larger School-based applications.

All of the open-access Apple Macintosh iMac G3 computers – on Level 4 of the Main Library, in the Hugh Robson Basement and in Holland House – were replaced with new Mac minis and 17" TFT Monitors.

### Software upgrades

All of the Windows XP PCs were updated to include Service Pack 2, and some core applications such as SPSS, Maple and eXceed were upgraded to their latest versions. This year also saw the removal of Novell Client32 from the open-access labs. Novell Client32 provided authentication access to the now defunct GPAS printing system hosted on Novell Netware servers.

Printing is now being provided by four Windows 2003 file servers using the new **Pcounter** print accounting system (see article on next page).

This year saw the introduction to the open-access labs of Microsoft's Systems Management Server (SMS). SMS allows us to overcome a "feature" in Windows XP that limits the amount of time a PC can spend processing

policies (such as application installations) to 60 minutes. This feature has caused considerable disruption to PCs when installing large Science and Engineering applications, some of which are over 3 Gigabytes in size.

The intelligent part is that SMS is using Microsoft's BITS (Background Intelligent Transfer Service) in a similar manner to Windows Update, delivering large quantities of information to a large number of systems in a sophisticated way. BITS asynchronously transfers files in the background, using only idle network bandwidth to preserve the responsiveness of other network applications, and automatically resumes file transfers after network disconnects and machine restarts.

Using SMS, we have transferred almost 4 Terabytes of information across the network during the course of the Summer upgrades.

### Network Upgrades

A planned series of network upgrades took place over the Summer, resulting in a significant increase in bandwidth to each desktop (100Mbit/s). Access from each lab to core services was increased to 1Gbit/s. These changes, combined with the removal of Novell Netware Client32, have drastically reduced the time it takes to log in to a lab computer. The upgrades have also allowed the Desktop Services Team to use the extra bandwidth to deploy both the Windows XP image and the applications in the labs remotely. All the PCs in the open-access labs were built this year without operator intervention, using a series of scheduled tasks at each PC, allowing up to fifty PCs to be upgraded concurrently within one hour.

*Dave Ross, Vlad Zirojevic (EUCS)*

## Lab PC availability – at a glance

Area	Available	In Use	Total
HRE Basement A	64	1	65
HRE Basement B	136	2	138
Main Library Level 0	4	1	5
Main Library Level 1	12	0	12
Main Library Level 2	132	6	138
Main Library Level 3	116	3	119
Main Library Level 4	74	2	76

Last updated Tuesday 9 September 2008 at 09:02

A new service to students has been launched by Information Services to indicate where open-access PCs are available. The system relies on data collected for each user session at every PC, which in turn updates a central database. This information is displayed on the three plasma screens in the Main Library, and on stand-alone kiosks at key locations throughout the University. It is hoped that these kiosks, which are fitted with touch-screen technology, will come to provide students and staff with a range of general information, and web access to Information Services.

*Vlad Zirojevic (EUCS)*

## Printing with Pcounter

As part of the migration to Windows and Active Directory, it has been necessary to replace the GPAS Printing Prepayment system. Pcounter, purchased from Altman Technologies, has been chosen as the new system.

There are background information and tools for Computing Officers managing Pcounter printers, and information for students printing through Pcounter, at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/isd/archpub/pcounter.html>

### Adding credit to print

You must have credit in your account before you can print. This is achieved using one of the new prepayment kiosks. Alternatively credit can be topped up at the IS Helpdesk in the Main Library. Locations of the kiosks and details of other locations for adding credit can be found at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/printprepayment.html>

In the open-access labs the amount of credit in an account is displayed via a pop-up, or it can be checked from a web browser by logging in with an EASE username and password at <https://www.printbalance.ucs.ed.ac.uk/>

(On a Windows workstation you must enter the Windows domain before the username – for example `ed\un`.)

### Charging and refunds policy

At the start of the Academic Year all students have £2.40 in their accounts; unused credit can be claimed back at graduation. Details of this and the policy on refunds for spoiled or lost print jobs are provided at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/ctees/citc/policies/studprinting.html>

*Garry Scobie (EUCS)*

## Software News

We have been asked if the University might be interested in a couple of new software deals:

### Autodesk

Imass Design Solutions (<http://www.imass-ids.co.uk/>) has contacted us about a new campus-type agreement for Autodesk. This is used for design work: more details at <http://www.autodesk.co.uk/>

### Powerpressed

This Windows-only software reduces the size of Powerpoint presentations without the need for zip/unzip facilities. A new Chest deal for Powerpressed is available; details at <http://www.eduserv.org.uk/chest/software/powerpressed/>

If you might be interested in either of these deals, please contact [eucs.software.services@ed.ac.uk](mailto:eucs.software.services@ed.ac.uk).

### S-Plus 2000

The Appleton Tower licence server is no longer available for S-Plus 2000. We are not aware of anyone still running this version of S-Plus, but please contact your EUCS Support Team or Software Services if your copy of S-Plus 2000 stops working.

*Frances Provan (EUCS)*

## From the local JISC support centre

### BBC Computer Tutor

Computer Tutor is a BBC resource for people who have never used a keyboard, mouse or computer screen. If you know people who are nervous about starting to use a computer, they might appreciate this step-by-step introduction. To sugar the pill, the action takes place in a virtual TV theme park. This learning aid is at [http://www.bbc.co.uk/computertutor/more\\_info.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/computertutor/more_info.shtml)

### Yotophoto

Yotophoto is a search engine for finding free-to-use stock photographs and images from a collection currently numbering over 100,000 items. Get the picture at <http://yotophoto.com/>

### Fol conference

Holyrood Conference's *Freedom of Information One Year On* takes place on 12th December at the Edinburgh Conference Centre at Heriot-Watt University. A short leaflet is available which provides information for staff about the Scottish Information Commissioner's role, investigation procedures and legal powers of enforcement.

If you would like a copy or a stock of leaflets for training purposes, please call 01334 4646410 or email [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

*Caroline Porteous (JISC Regional Support Centre)*

## 100 chemical, petrochemical and process engineering reference books online

The Library has purchased *Referex Engineering*, providing perpetual access to 100 chemical engineering reference titles from Elsevier.

### What?

The collection combines key sources of reference material, including:

- Handbooks of engineering fundamentals
- Situational reference
- How-to guides
- Titles focused on technique and practice
- Scholarly monographs
- Highly specialized professional information

### Key titles

The collection comprises leading titles in energy, chemical engineering, chemical hazards, process engineering, oil and gas engineering, and environmental engineering. Titles include *Bretherick's Handbook of Reactive Chemical Hazards*, and the unique handbooks from Gulf Professional Publishing, such as *Standard Handbook of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering*, and *Rules of Thumb for Chemical Engineers*.

A full list of titles is available in PDF format (<http://www.ei.org/eicorp/refxtitles.pdf>) or Excel format (<http://www.ei.org/eicorp/refxtitles.xls>).

### Key features

- Site licence provides unlimited access to the subscribed collection.
- 100 full-text electronic reference titles in PDF format.
- Search all of the collection simultaneously.
- Search the full-text or restrict to searches on title, author name, or ISBN.
- View titles based on subject category.
- Result lists show section title, book name and bibliographic information.
- Cover images and relevance ratings are displayed with each record.
- Link to detailed book descriptions, the full-text book, the relevant full-text section and sub-section in PDF format.

### Other collections

Referex Engineering comprises three collections. The Library chose initially to purchase the Chemical collection, in consultation with the School. If you are interested in the Mechanical & Materials and/or the Electronics & Electrical collections, please inform your School Library Representative (<http://www.scieng.ed.ac.uk/Admin/Committees/libcom/libcom.htm>).

### Useful links:

- The Referex story: <http://www.ei.org/referexstory.html>
- Referex factsheet: <http://www.ei.org/referex.pdf>

Referex Engineering is available via the Engineering Village 2 platform (also used to access the Compendex and Inspec databases):

- On campus: <http://www.engineeringvillage2.org/> – no username or password required.
- Off campus: <http://www.engineeringvillage2.org/> – Athens/EASE username and password required (see <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/resources/databases/athensdaease.html>).

Sarah Kelly (EUL)

## PhD students! Searching the Literature?

Conducting a comprehensive and accurate search of the literature in your field is a key task as you start your PhD.

Staff from the Science & Engineering Libraries run courses to help you make the best use of library and information resources within the University and beyond, and help you manage your literature review and bibliography. Time spent now learning to make good use of these facilities will be time well spent.

The following courses are available:

- Biological Sciences, 11th October
- Physical Sciences, 18th October
- GeoSciences, 25th October

For a place email [transkills@ed.ac.uk](mailto:transkills@ed.ac.uk).

For further information contact:

- Informatics and Engineering:  
[Sarah.Kelly@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Sarah.Kelly@ed.ac.uk)
- Biological Sciences and  
GeoSciences: [D.Carroll@ed.ac.uk](mailto:D.Carroll@ed.ac.uk)
- Physical Sciences:  
[Rowena.Stewart@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Rowena.Stewart@ed.ac.uk)

The Transkills website is at <http://www.scieng.ed.ac.uk/transkil.htm>

Sarah Kelly (EUL)

## Data Library news

The following datasets, obtained from the UK Data Archive, are now available to University staff and students:

- Transition Out of the Parental Home in Britain, Spain & Norway, 2001–2002.
- Improving Survey Measurement of Income and Employment (ISMIE), 2001–2003.
- Dynamics of Attitudes Towards Democracy and Participation in Contemporary Britain, 2000–2002.
- Survey of How Parents Balance Work, Family and Home, 2000.
- Scottish Schools Adolescent Life-style and Substance Use Survey, 2002.
- General Household Survey, 2003–2004.

For further information contact the Data Library (email [datalib@ed.ac.uk](mailto:datalib@ed.ac.uk), tel 511431 or 503304).

Stuart MacDonald (EDINA)

## An e-Learning cornucopia

### ALT online newsletter

ALT – the Association for Learning Technology – now has an online newsletter, with an RSS feed, at <http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk/>

Please send comments by emailing the Editor, Susi Peacock ([speacock@qmuc.ac.uk](mailto:speacock@qmuc.ac.uk)) or Rhonda Riachi ([rriachi@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:rriachi@brookes.ac.uk)).

### Edublogs? a workshop

Weblogs – ‘blogs’ – widely used for online journals, have opened a new era in personal publishing. Can they also enhance learning and teaching? What are the advantages of combining them with technologies such as Really Simple Syndication (RSS) news feeds?

‘Edublogs’ are weblogs, web-logging tools and RSS in education.

A workshop on the theory and practice of using edublogs in a variety of educational settings takes place on 17th November in London. Full details are at [http://www.alt.ac.uk/workshop\\_detail.php?e=191](http://www.alt.ac.uk/workshop_detail.php?e=191)

### Handheld computers

The *Third National Workshop and Tutorial on Handheld Computers in Universities and Colleges* takes place on 4th November at Wolverhampton Science Park. Each delegate will receive a complimentary handheld computer. Further information is at <http://www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/pdaws/>

### Learning and Skills Agency to be restructured

From April 2006 the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) will become the nucleus of a new agency, the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) for Lifelong Learning. A second new organisation, the Learning and Skills Network, will take over the hands-on delivery work with the learning and skills sector currently carried out by the LSDA, as described at <http://www.qia.org.uk/>

### New JISC publication on e-Learning

*Innovative Practice with e-Learning* was published by JISC at the Association for Learning Technology Conference (ALT-C) held recently in Manchester. It builds on the case study approach adopted in ‘Effective Practice with e-Learning,’ and is a good practice guide to embedding mobile and wireless technologies into everyday practice. It includes the presentation of ten case studies written by the Open University, five of which include illustrative videos made by MALTS. Copies of the publication can be ordered, and downloads obtained, from [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/eli\\_practice.html](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/eli_practice.html)

### ALT-C 2006

ALT-C 2006, on the theme of ‘the next generation’, will be held at Heriot-Watt University, on 5–7 September. The conference website is at <http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2006/>

### British Library e-newsletter

The British Library has recently launched an ‘e-newsletter’ specifically for researchers in Higher Education. It will be issued three times a year, and includes information on:

- How to use the Library for your research;
- New products and services;
- Special offers;
- Exciting new collections items;
- News;
- First-class exhibitions and events;
- How we collaborate with HE;
- Ways in which to get involved.

To sign up, send your name and email address to [highereducation@bl.uk](mailto:highereducation@bl.uk).

To find out more about the range of services offered by the British Library, visit <http://www.bl.uk/>

### JISC e-Learning workshops

A series of regional workshops from the JISC e-Learning and Pedagogy strand, in partnership with the Higher Education Academy, will look at ‘Planning and Evaluating Effective Practice with e-Learning’.

The workshops are for advanced practitioners, e-learning champions, staff developers and those who support effective e-learning practice in UK higher education. They are not an introduction to e-learning for general academic staff, and will not involve any skills training.

The success of JISC’s recent *Effective Practice with e-Learning* guide ([http://www.jisc.ac.uk/elp\\_practice.html](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/elp_practice.html)) shows the widespread demand for expertise in exploiting e-learning. The workshops will:

- establish principles of effective ‘design for learning’;
- introduce participants to planning and evaluation tools;
- discuss the usability of these materials in different contexts;
- share ideas for using materials in participants’ own activities;
- create an informal network to test, share and cascade the tools.

The one-day workshops – for a maximum of 50 delegates – will be delivered throughout the UK by a core team who have worked closely with the e-Learning and Pedagogy Strand. They will be at Edinburgh University on 18th January.

There is no charge for the events. To register your interest, visit [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/elp\\_workshops.html](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/elp_workshops.html)

For information about the e-Learning and Pedagogy strand visit [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/elearning\\_pedagogy.html](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/elearning_pedagogy.html)

For any queries about the workshops, contact Sarah Knight (email [sarah.knight@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.knight@bristol.ac.uk)).

*Wilma Alexander (MALTS)*

## Informatics Forum: builders start work on University's world-class facility

The Crichton Street car park is about to disappear. The City of Edinburgh Council granted planning permission for the University's development plans for the area at the end of September. A water main was diverted around the site over the Summer, and the contractor has fenced off the area ready to

begin building. The Informatics Forum which is phase one of the development is due to open in 2007.

Also in September the University won further backing for the £42m project with £14m from the Scottish Executive, adding to the support already received from the University, SHEFC, the Wolfson Foundation and private contributors.

The result will be one of the world's leading centres for artificial intelligence, cognitive science, computer science and information-related research.

The project website – with webcams behind the 'construction' link to follow progress – is at <http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/building/>

*Gordon Duckett (Informatics)*



## Realising Lifelong Learning UCISA courses

JISC infoNet and ALT – the Association for Learning Technology – have launched 'Making Lifelong Learning a reality'. The publication looks at the organisational and cultural aspects of trying to provide a seamless transition for students between institutions and across the FE/HE sectors.

The publication is available, free of charge, from JISC infoNet. Details of how to obtain copies of this and other publications can be found at <http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/publications/>

*Janette Hillicks (JISC infoNet)*

## Alice in Web-Wonderland

The original *Alice in Wonderland* manuscript is now online, complete with Lewis Carroll's drawings, in the British Library's *Turning the Pages* website at <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/ttpbooks.html>

*(Editor)*

### IT Training Skills Workshop

Date: 6–8 December 2005

Venue: University of Edinburgh  
This Workshop is for HE staff from any background who need to deliver practical-based IT training, and is suitable for non-teaching staff. It is particularly suitable where the tutor and participants make substantial use of desktop computers.

### Professional Advisory Skills

Date: 3–6 January 2006

Venue: Stirling Management Centre  
*Professional Skills for Advisory Staff* is aimed at computer professionals who have been working in an HE IT service for at least a year, and focuses on administrative, communication, problem-solving and business skills, with particular reference to Helpdesks.

### Details and booking

For information go to <http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/groups/sdg/courses/>

*Sue Fells (UCISA)*

## EDINBURGH BITS

### Editor:

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### Published by:

Information Services  
The University of Edinburgh

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### Distribution queries:

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### Printed by:

University of Edinburgh Printing Services  
<http://www.pps.ed.ac.uk/about/printing/>

### *BITS* on the Web:

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

### *BITS* RSS feed:

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Copy deadline for November *BITS*:

**Wednesday 19th October**