

Kenway Review initiates major changes

Information Services has begun the process of deciding how to implement the changes recommended by the Kenway Review of IT services, which included:

- better integration of IT strategy with the needs of research, teaching and administration.
- an expanded role for the Vice Principal (Knowledge Management) as the University's Chief Information Officer – CIO – to lead and coordinate the entire range of IT support.
- MIS to be fully integrated into an expanded version of the Information Services structure to include a new Applications Division, which will incorporate MIS's development work.
- a new IT Security Officer with full authority across the whole University.
- a professional body for all IT staff in Support Groups, Colleges and Schools.

The Knowledge Management Committee considered the Kenway Report at a special meeting in October, and a priority implementation paper will be submitted to CMG on 14th November; there will be news of the implementation plan in December's *BITS*.

The final version of the Kenway Review report and comments from the consultation period are available at

http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/projects/computing_review

Jo Hamill (Information Services)

IS Web 2.0 Initiative

Information Services has set up a **Web 2.0 Initiative**, to help the University benefit from new ways of using the Web – using feedback from its recent report on 'Collaborative Tools and Web 2.0', available through http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/projects/Web_2.0_Initiative

It's clear from the feedback that a number of people are already using wikis, blogs and similar tools, so an important first phase will be to consult existing and potential users to see how Information Services can best support these activities.

The consultation will include use of Web 2.0 technologies in learning and teaching, and in research. We will establish links with College L&T and research committees, and talk to individual practitioners and potential users, to inform and help shape the development of IS services. For instance, a need for external (non-UoE) visibility and/or contribution of content to blogs or wikis will require suitable authorization, registration and authentication facilities.

IS and MIS are already working closely together on how MyEd will exploit Web 2.0 technologies.

Traditional web publishing is largely a one-way street: information producer to information consumer. Web 2.0 is bi-directional – it's about personalization and user-contributed content.

There are of course associated risks, and a Working Group will develop guidelines on managing these.

The development of the Web 2.0 Initiative depends on the outcome of the consultations. An initial input to these is available at <http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/content/1/c4/10/46/Web2.oActionPlan4Octo6.pdf>

Chris Adie (Information Services)

REMEMBER the ITfutures conference on the 24th – all about Web 2.0! See page 4.

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Pull-out-and-keep instructions for the Library's awesome new search facility!



Breathing new life into Appleton Tower

Physics Tutorial in the Teaching Studio. Picture: Peter Tuffy

After many months of construction work, the new facilities in Appleton Tower are operational. IS and academic staff have worked with the E&B design team and contractors to deliver teaching and learning facilities suitable for both traditional presentations and the use of innovative learning and teaching methods.

Integrated into the Absorb Café area on the concourse level, 35 open-access PCs create a busy social learning space. There are another 22 PCs in a quieter, enclosed area on the mezzanine level adjacent to lecture theatre four. All of these computers have been configured as dual-boot Windows/Linux systems. The concourse area is in addition serviced by wireless connectivity.

The teaching studio on the mezzanine level – designed by IS staff and academic colleagues in Science and Engineering – is a first for Edinburgh, and contributes to the debate across the HE sector on how best to design and equip group learning and teaching spaces normally referred to as teaching studios. It provides an interactive flexible space for up to 96 students to work in groups of six at desks equipped with a large display screen, dedicated PC, graphics tablet and laptop connectivity.

The tutor can bring the class together and display presentation material on a number of projection screens in addition to the student desk displays. The presentation point at the centre of the space includes a PC, graphics tablet, visualiser, PRS audience response system, VCR/DVD replay and an interactive whiteboard. Work created by a student group can be displayed to the rest of the class via the projection screens and desk displays under the control of the tutor.

All five lecture theatres have the same suite of facilities, including electric chalkboards, dual video/data projection, PRS audience response systems, graphics tablets, visualisers, VCR/DVD replay and digital audio recorders.

Summary booking information for the lecture theatres, teaching studio and seminar rooms is displayed on an 84" plasma screen on the concourse level. Individual information screens outside each location display its next five bookings, using information drawn directly from the EBIS room-booking system, and any changes are immediately updated throughout the day.

Jim Sheach (Information Services)

GMRC expanding its services

In the reorganisation of information and computing services, the Graphics & Multimedia Resource Centre (GMRC) has joined the Library User Services Division, and we can offer our facilities in new locations in the University. To start with, we will open a new multimedia area in the Darwin Library before Christmas; see <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/resbysub/biopluf.shtml>

The facilities will be usable whenever the Library is open, whereas the GMRC is open only during normal office hours. There will be regular library support, and the student helpdesk is close by, though we cannot offer the same level of technical support and training as in the GMRC (see <http://graphics.ed.ac.uk/gmrc/>).

I welcome suggestions for the kind of graphics and multimedia facilities you would like to have in the Darwin Library (tel 504965, email J.Wexler@ed.ac.uk).

John Wexler (Information Services)

Welcome to WAMS

The realignment of Information Services has combined the EUCS Information Tools team and parts of MALTS eLearning to create a new unit titled 'Web, Application and Media Services (WAMS)'. The unit is managed by Ed Dee and is in the Information Technology User Services Division.

WAMS brings together the services required to provide end-to-end solutions for the design, development and hosting of a range of web applications to support teaching and learning: in particular those combining interactive, dynamic data-driven features and 'rich content'.

WAMS retains responsibility for the management and support of WebCT, for graphic design, and for the production and encoding of audio and video content (previously provided by MALTS), and for the hosting and delivery of content via the Streaming Media Service previously provided by Information Tools.

WAMS is currently moving into the offices previously occupied by MALTS in Moray House. Further details of the complete range of WAMS services will be given in future editions of *BITs* and on the team's revised website.

John Smith (Information Services)

National Institute of Informatics, Japan

A group of information professionals from Japan's National Institute of Informatics (NII) visited the Main Library in September. NII is Japan's leading academic research institute for informatics. It was founded in 2000, and is the national centre for informatics research and for developing service operations related to academic information infrastructure; see <http://www.nii.ac.jp/index.shtml.en>

Akira Miyazawa, Tomoko Saitoh and Haruo Asoshina were greeted by Sheila Cannell and Prof Jon Usher, and went on to meet colleagues in Bibliographical Services, Information Systems, Digital Library Section and East Asian Collection, as well as HSS College Librarian Frances Abercromby and Dr Helen Parker in Japanese Studies.

NII provides the international standard for cataloguing Japanese language books with a system called NACSIS-CAT, on which the UK Japanese Union Catalogue (127,288 monographs and 4,545 serials) is maintained. With the acquisition of over 4,300 Japanese books from Stirling, the Japanese collection at EUL has joined this Catalogue and is the only resource of its kind in Scotland.

While NII colleagues came to offer us technical support on the Japanese bibliographical records, they also wanted to exchange experience on institutional repositories, and appreciated John MacColl's special presentation on the Edinburgh Research Archive.

Shenxiao Tong (Information Services)

Taster sessions for Microsoft Word

Information Services is running one-hour 'taster' sessions to focus on specific Word functions, and give you tips on getting more out of the software. Topics scheduled so far are:

- Looking good with Word's styles: 30th November
- Creating reliable numbering systems: 11th December

Sessions take place from 1pm to 2pm in the Wolfson Teaching Room in the Main Library, George Square. They are in demonstration format, so no 'hands-on' work is required. If you're interested, just turn up!

Shona Matchett (Information Services)

Website Development Project update

The Project continues to work towards the delivery of its initial phase – publishing student recruitment-related content – next Spring.

Establishing the scope

The Steering Group and Project Team are currently developing more precise forecasts of what can be delivered and when, given the resources available.

Research and consultation are vital to the success of the Project, so the Advisory Board has suggested members of the University's web publishing community to participate in consultation sessions. These sessions are planned for mid November and will contribute to the development and structure of content for prospective students and other key external audiences.

Training

The Project Team has developed an initial training and support strategy, to cater for a web publishing community which has a wide range of skills and experience. By establishing a baseline of experience for all users of Polopoly we intend to ensure the new website delivers a consistent experience to all external visitors. Through a solid foundation of training and ongoing support, the transition period for University web publishers as they move over to Polopoly will be as smooth as possible.

At this stage, we anticipate running phase one training sessions next February.

More information

For more information and latest news on the Project, see <http://www.ed.ac.uk/websiteproject/>

Contact

If you'd like to discuss any aspect of the development of the Website, or contribute views, please contact Dawn Ellis (tel 506379, email website.project@ed.ac.uk).

Neil Allison (CAM)

The 2007 University Collections Calendar



A new University Collections Calendar has been produced for 2007. This year's theme is Natural History, with images drawn mainly from the magnificent collection of hand-coloured plate books in Special Collections, Edinburgh University Library. All the high-quality photography was performed by our own Digital Imaging Unit. The images cover the broad spectrum of the natural world, from birds to bears and from frogs to flora, and several reflect the generosity of benefactors who have so enriched our collections through the centuries. Proceeds from the sale will support conservation and care of our wonderful collections.

The individually-wrapped calendars are 30cm x 30cm, have a drilled hole for hanging, and cost £8. Copies are on sale now at the IS Helpdesk and Special Collections (Main Library), other site libraries around the University, and at the University shop, Nicolson Street. For mail order see <http://www.giftshop.ed.ac.uk/>



Andy Grout (Information Services)

ITfutures conference: social technologies

From pioneer to mainstream?

Wikis, blogs, sharing references online, game-informed learning – social technologies will change our working lives. What challenges might

☆ these and other examples of Web 2.0 ☆ pose for the University?

☆ The IT Stargazing conference will explore what's going on, and discuss some of the issues. It is on Friday 24th November, from 9:30am to 4:30pm, at Pollock Halls. It is free, including lunch, but you need to book via MyEd.

☆ All the details are at ☆ <http://www.itfutures.ed.ac.uk/>

Jean Ritchie (Information Services)

Stay safe online!

Home computers tend to be the most vulnerable to exploitation by high-tech criminals. The BBC has produced some tips on how to guard against this, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/5377334.stm>

The BBC also shows how to spot danger in email messages, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/picture_gallery/o6/technology_how_to_spot_a_phish/html/1.stm

Nick Stroud (Information Services)

BCS: geospatial technology

November's British Computer Society meeting is "An Introduction to Geospatial Technology and how to exploit it", by Iain Cooke of the BCS Geospatial Specialist Group. It is at 6:30pm on 15th November, at The Royal Scots Club Hepburn Suite, 30 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh EH3 6QE. The talk is free and no reservation is required; non-members are most welcome. Refreshments will be available from 6:10 pm.

Further details and a synopsis of the talk are on the BCS website at <http://www.edinburgh.bcs.org/>

David Muxworthy (BCS)

Do you need a CAMEL?

JISC infoNet has published a booklet about Collaborative Approaches to the Management of E-Learning – CAMEL. This project explored how HE institutions might share experience of the good use of eLearning, and collaborate in regional lifelong learning partnerships. There is also a CD-ROM toolkit to help start up this kind of networking.

Copies of this free publication can be obtained from <http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/publications/>

Sue Fells (UCISA)

Computer science writing competition

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council is offering £1,000 for articles of up to 750 words about research that's part of any EPSRC-funded computer science project.

Full details are at <http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/cswriting/default.htm> (Ed.)

EDINBURGH BITS

Editor:
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Published by:
Information Services
The University of Edinburgh

Contributions:
Email: BITS@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 3345

Distribution queries:
BITS is distributed through School offices; secretaries please notify changes in requirements to Carla Zaccardelli:
Email: C.Zaccardelli@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 4999

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

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

NB: if you fail to access a URL shown in BITS, please email BITS@ed.ac.uk.

Contributions to BITS are welcomed.

Copy deadline for December BITS:

Wednesday 15th November