

## Information Services Divisions

Following its major restructuring last year, and its recent merger with MIS, Information Services is now settling down into its seven divisions. Along with the VP's office which supports Jeff Haywood, the divisions are:

- IS-ITUS: IT User Services: Acting Director Bryan MacGregor
- IS-LUSD: Library User Services: Acting Director Richard Battersby
- IS-L&C: Library and Collections: Director Sheila Cannell
- IS-Apps: Applications: Director Simon Marsden
- IS-ITI: IT Infrastructure: Director Brian Gilmore
- IS-EDINA: EDINA and the Data Library: Director Peter Burnhill
- IS-DCC: the Digital Curation Centre: Director Chris Rusbridge

*Nick Stroud*

## Computing Review Phase II Equipment Exchange website relaunched

The Report from Phase II of the University's Computing Review, on the use of IT in Schools and Colleges, is now available online at <http://www.committee.kmstrategy.ed.ac.uk/docs/open/Reportv2.0-GOLDENCOPY.pdf>

The report is open for comment before it goes to the Knowledge Strategy Committee. Comments have been invited directly from Heads of Colleges, Heads of Support Groups, the IT Professionals' Forum and the eLearning Professionals & Practitioners' Forum, but are welcome from anyone. Please send comments to Charlotte Kemp (email [Charlotte.Kemp@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Charlotte.Kemp@ed.ac.uk)) by 12 noon on Tuesday 25th September.

*Jo Hamill (IS-VPoffice)*

Procurement has relaunched its 'Equipment Exchange' website, to encourage staff to offer and request items, and help the University minimise waste and maximise return on investment by getting the most out of equipment, stationery, etc.

The website is at <http://www.pps.ed.ac.uk/for/equipmentexchange/>

This site is *only* for University-owned equipment. Furniture exchange should continue to be done via the Furniture Office (email [furniture@ed.ac.uk](mailto:furniture@ed.ac.uk)).

Information is also available on the "What to do with it" pages of the Waste website at <http://www.eso.ed.ac.uk/Waste/WhatToDoWithIt/>

*Fleur Rothwell (Estates & Buildings)*

## Midnight opening in the Main Library

Information Services has taken a major initiative in extending the opening hours of the Main Library to meet the needs of users more fully: it will be open until midnight every day during Semester and the Easter vacation.

Access during the extra hours will be by University Card only, and the entrance will be staffed by security services. Ground, first and second floors will be available on a self-service basis from the end of staffed service hours until midnight. This will include access to PCs, printers and study space, and self-service issue machines and photocopiers.

Semester hours for the Main Library from Monday 17th September will be:

- Monday – Thursday 8.30am to midnight (staffed services finish at 8pm)
- Friday 8.30am to midnight (staffed services finish at 7pm)
- Saturday 8.30am to midnight (staffed services finish at 5pm)
- Sunday midday to midnight (staffed services finish at 7pm)

Further details are published at <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/about/opening/>

*Jeff Haywood (IS-VP)*

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The University's cultural collections: page 7

**Main Library transformation:  
invitation to view on  
6th September; see page 5**

## Joining up services: new integrated IS Helpdesk at KB

IS opens a new help and support service this month, in the Darwin Library at The King's Buildings. This is part of the move to develop fully integrated services, and will cover both library and IT areas.

Information Services staff will be able to assist users with a wide range of enquiries, such as:

- answering queries about library services and collections, including electronic journals and retrieving information from electronic sources;
- providing practical help with using the hardware and software in the open-access computing labs;
- giving advice on IT problems related to a course of study;
- advising on the use of self-service multimedia equipment in the Darwin Library;
- helping with laptop problems.

These services will be available whenever the Library is open (see below). Detailed advice on some computing problems may only be available during limited periods of time. Complex enquiries may be referred to more appropriate library or IT staff for a more detailed response.

For staff and postgraduates, the Science & Engineering Computing Support Team (<http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/itus/sce/>), based in JCMB, continues to be the first point of contact for all computing support issues during Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. At other times, staff and postgraduates may seek help in the Darwin Library.

There will be a programme of IT seminars in the Darwin Library from October; details will be provided at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/student/courses/>

During semester, the Darwin Library's hours are:

Monday to Thursday	9am – 10pm
Friday	9am – 6pm
Saturday	9am – 5pm
Sunday	12noon – 5pm

This pilot service will be developed further during the session. We are keen to receive feedback: comments can be sent to [Darwin.Library@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Darwin.Library@ed.ac.uk).

Staff in the other KB libraries – Robertson and JCM – can also help with library-related queries. For their opening hours see <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/about/opening/mainopeningbylib.html>

*Richard Battersby (IS-LUSD)*

## Graphics & Multimedia Resource Centre

The GMRC welcomes users back for the new semester. If you don't know what that's about, we invite you to visit us in room 3901 of the James Clerk Maxwell Building at The King's Buildings to find out. We offer a wide variety of multimedia technologies for do-it-yourself use with support, advice and training on request. We are open from 9.30am to 5.30pm on weekdays. You can contact us on 0131 650 4965, or by email to [graphics\\_support@ed.ac.uk](mailto:graphics_support@ed.ac.uk).

We also support three well-configured multimedia systems in the Darwin Library, accessible at all library opening times.

We have updated several of our systems over the Summer, introducing the latest CS3 versions of Adobe's 'Creative Suite' software packages – Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere, After Effects, and so on.

Since users now bring very little analogue video material for editing, we are concentrating on digital video (DV). We have ample capacity to support projects, with two 500Gbyte external drives that can each carry well over 20 hours of raw video.

A0 poster printing and large-format scanning have been very popular for some years, and we continue to support them. You may like to know that more options are becoming available:

- a similar printer and scanner in the Learning and Resource Centre in the Main Library;
- a sophisticated large-format printer in the KB Copy Centre;
- a new photo-quality printer in the GMRC for sizes up to A2.

Some of our equipment is available for loan:

- microphones, stands, audio mixer and firewire interface;
- colour calibrator for monitors, printers and scanners;
- miniDV camcorder and tripod;
- laptop equipped for audio recording and multimedia work.

Please contact us in advance if you would like to borrow these (we will ask for a letter accepting responsibility for loss or damage). We offer training for classes or groups who need to use specific software or hardware. For more information, see <http://graphics.ed.ac.uk/gmrc/>

*John Wexler (IS-LUSD)*

## Poster printing at KB

Large posters, up to A0+ size, can now be printed at The King's Buildings Copy Centre, in room 2300 of the JCMB. The service is available to all staff, students and the public. There is a special introductory rate for August and September. For full details please contact the Copy Centre (tel 505301, email [martin.byrne@ed.ac.uk](mailto:martin.byrne@ed.ac.uk) or [mark.tweedy@ed.ac.uk](mailto:mark.tweedy@ed.ac.uk)).

The printer itself is a Canon imagePROGRAF 8000, designed primarily for photography, fine art, poster and sign making, which uses a 12-colour pigment system with lightfast qualities; see [http://www.canon.co.uk/for\\_work/products/professional\\_print/large\\_format/ipf8000/](http://www.canon.co.uk/for_work/products/professional_print/large_format/ipf8000/)

*Martin Byrne (Printing & Procurement)*

## MyEd: latest enhancements

Students can now apply for an **NUS Extra Card** through MyEd. The card offers local and national discounts, and incorporates the International Student Identity Card for discounts world-wide and savings on international flights.

The **“TAS Deadline Approaching”** channel is back, to remind academic staff to complete the survey on time. The channel provides a direct link to the online survey.

**Online Catering Bookings** are now available through MyEd. This facility is for booking food and drink from a range of menus to be delivered to meeting rooms and offices within designated buildings.

The University will shortly be launching a **centrally-provided wiki service** to support collaborative teaching and learning as well as research activities. The wiki service will be available on request through a channel in MyEd; keep an eye on MyEd for further information.

EUCLID is the latest in a long list of providers to make use of MyEd's **Events Booking channel**. If you would like to use this for your own event, please get in touch with the Service team via the Feedback form link in MyEd.

*Liza Zamboglou (IS-Apps)*

## EASE and MyEd take the strain

EASE and MyEd have been tested with a load four times greater than that anticipated for the start of the new session, and they coped well. We subjected the system to the equivalent of a new login every second, and achieved an average login time of under six seconds; less than 2% of login times exceeded ten seconds.

This successful test is the culmination of a programme of work which began at the start of last session, when the service struggled to cope with its popularity.

*Simon Marsden (IS-Apps)*

## Wikis: a seminar

September's IS Applications Lunchtime Seminar is 'Wiki While u Work – using wikis to assist your day-to-day work'.

The aim is to raise awareness of what Wikis are, and how they could be used to help collaborative working in all aspects of University business. There will be an overview of the new centrally-supported Wiki service, and presentations from staff involved in the pilot for Learning & Teaching, Research, and Administration. The presentations will focus on the practical and awareness aspects of Wikis, and will not be technical. The seminar will be at KB on the 19th and Old College on the 21st. Details and booking are at <http://www.mis.ed.ac.uk/services/seminars/ISAD-LTS-Sept2007-agenda.shtml>

Presentations from previous seminars are at <http://www.mis.ed.ac.uk/services/seminars/#presentations>

*Liam McDowell (IS-Apps)*

## Identity Management Scoping Study

The Identity Management Service Board has approved a proposal to engage Salford Software – a commercial consultancy company with a strong record of delivery to the UK HE sector – to carry out a short Identity Management (IdM) Scoping Study for the University. The aim is to capture our strategic institutional requirements and the operational needs of services that use our current in-house Identity Management System (IDMS).

The scope of the study is wide-ranging, and will involve senior business representatives from HR, EUCLID, Development & Alumni and Internal Audit. IS and Colleges will be represented, with the CIO, several IS Directors and key technical support staff from IS, Colleges and Schools actively participating in the study.

The ensuing report, to be presented in October, will compare the capability of our current IDMS with market-leading solutions from Microsoft, Novell and Sun, in the context of our strategic business objectives.

*Anne-Marie Scott (IS-Apps)*

## Corporate IT projects for 2007–2008

Following the annual Corporate IT planning exercise, a prioritised list of projects for 2007–2008 was agreed at a meeting in July with the Heads of the three Support Groups. The list focuses primarily on projects for the business areas formerly supported by MIS. In line with its wider remit, IS Applications Division will be undertaking a range of other projects, particularly for e-learning and areas previously covered by WAMS.

All the project proposals, the prioritised list, interim lists and copies of the main communications throughout the process are available from the University projects website, at [http://www.projects.ed.ac.uk/planning/Corporate\\_IT/2007-08Planning/Annual%20Plan/](http://www.projects.ed.ac.uk/planning/Corporate_IT/2007-08Planning/Annual%20Plan/)

*Liam McDowell (IS-Apps)*

## 2006–2007 availability across the board

Throughout the year, IS Applications Division monitors service availability across a selection of key systems – including the RAE data repository, external-facing sites such as the Jobs website, internal facilities such as File and Print servers, and enterprise systems such as MyEd.

Over the course of 2006–2007 all monitored systems have achieved at least 99% availability (excluding planned service downtime). For the coming year we will add some of the services new to Applications Division, and simplify the report format to make it an easier read.

For the full details of 2006–2007 services measured, and the first report from the new session, see <http://www.mis.ed.ac.uk/docs/reports/>

*Anne-Marie Scott (IS-Apps)*

## Numeric and Spatial Data Mashups

A number of Web 2.0 mashups (or 'bricolage') are venturing into the numeric and spatial data arenas:

**Data360** – <http://www.data360.org/>

Data360 is a site for people to find, present and share data. Using it, any organisation can collaboratively analyse and report on key metrics, privately or publicly.

Data360 embraces Web 2.0 concepts of participation and collaboration "to provide clear context on important cultural, environmental, social and economic issues." By using "collaborative trend tracking" Data360 allows organisations and users to create their own Data360 space, and to collaborate with others. Data360 spaces can be built for free, as long as users are willing to share all their data openly and – potentially, though not in the current version – have small advertisements on their pages. The software and related public data are available for a fee to those who want to keep their own data private.

**Many Eyes** – <http://services.alphaworks.ibm.com/manyeyes/home>

This IBM utility allows registered users (note stringent terms and conditions) to upload their own data on the understanding that the data is made available to all. Many Eyes has the facility to visualise numeric data in a spatial manner (using the proprietary mapping utility World Map).

**Swivel** – <http://www.swivel.com/>

Swivel aims "to liberate the world's data and make it useful so new insights can be discovered and shared". Swivel charges for any restrictions a user may impose on the data. Swivel Geography or Swivel G allows users to zoom in and out, and move seamlessly from one part

of the globe to another. Swivel G includes interactive features that enable users to drill down into specific data points in more detail.

In addition to Non-Government Organisations directly uploading their data into Swivel, Swivel is ingesting data directly from NGO websites, thus exposing the data (and ultimately their commercial products) to a wide audience.

Current limitations with Many Eyes and Swivel mean that only simple linear tables can be accommodated – thus editing may be required prior to uploading, as is the decision about the type of visualisation required (scatter plot/bar chart/histogram *etc*).

**GeoCommons** – <http://geocommons.com/>

There are lots of map (or spatial) mash-ups (see <http://www.programmableweb.com/tag/mapping>). GeoCommons in a sense formalises a spatial approach to data visualisation. Registered users can:

- upload, download and search for spatial data;
- easily create mash-ups by combining datasets;
- create heat maps, a type of thematic map

Data are available under 'Creative Commons with Attribution' licensing.

*Stuart Macdonald (IS-EDINA)*

## DataShare gathers momentum

The 'DataShare' project mentioned in July's *BITS* – for which the University's Data Library is leading a consortium of UK universities to help academics share data over the Internet – now has a Web presence, at <http://www.disc-uk.org/>

*Stuart Macdonald (IS-EDINA)*

### EDINA requests the pleasure ...

EDINA moved into new premises earlier this year as part of the preparations for the major redevelopment of the Main Library Building. Having now had a while to settle in, we are ready to hold an Open House. We therefore invite colleagues across the University, and beyond, to join us in an informal gathering and learn something of 'what EDINA does' in its role as a UK National Data Centre.

The date is Thursday 27th September, from 4pm. Please let us know you are coming, for catering purposes (email [isobel.johnstone@ed.ac.uk](mailto:isobel.johnstone@ed.ac.uk), tel 511282). We are at Causewayside House (2nd Floor), 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh EH9 1PR, mid-way between the George Square and King's Buildings campuses (opposite the National Library of Scotland's glassy map and science library).

You may care to check us out in advance: you can find out about the services we deliver and projects we carry out – funded by JISC, ESRC and the EU – 'to enhance the productivity of research, learning and teaching in UK higher and further education', at <http://edina.ac.uk/>

*Peter Burnhill (IS-EDINA)*



## Main Library Redevelopment

The University's Main Library is now entirely encased in scaffolding – some 25 linear kilometers of it – to allow the external stonework to be repaired. In the longer term, there will only be scaffolding on the west side of the building; that at the front will be the first go, but it will be there for a couple of months. We have made the main entrance to the Library as accessible as possible, and apologise for the restriction that inevitably remains.

Inside, the preparation of floors 5 and 6 is almost complete. New building services such as heating, ventilation, electrics and water will now be installed, as the transformation begins. The EUSA-run cafe in the basement closes at the beginning of this month and reopens a day or so later on the first floor, to allow for work on the services in the basement.

We hope you will be able to drop in to the Main Library between 3 and 4pm on **Thursday 6th September** to get a sense of what this transforming project is all about. More information is available at <http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/MLRP/>

*Sheila Cannell (IS-L&C)*

## Scottish Digital Library Consortium grows

The University of Highlands and Islands is the latest institution to join the Scottish Digital Library Consortium – SDLC. This Summer, UHI implemented the SDLC's free-to-use open access repository for theses and research publications, following in the footsteps of the Edinburgh Research Archive and the Digital Research Repository at St Andrews University.

The Edinburgh Research Archive has rapidly become a key showcase of Edinburgh's research. The University's digital repository regularly serves over 10,000 downloads per month, with significant use coming from such countries as China, India, Germany, Australia and Iran.

All three universities' repositories are hosted by Information Services, which also provides expertise in repository management and advocacy under the auspices of SDLC.

Another Consortium service has developed from Scotland-wide interest in **Searcher**, the University of Edinburgh's federated search service. WebFeat Express – an entry-level version of Edinburgh's Searcher service – is being taken up by other SDLC member institutions. SDLC has negotiated a reduction in the price, and Information Services staff are providing project coordination, and sharing their expertise in federated search and e-resource management with the National Library of Scotland, and the universities of Abertay, Heriot Watt and St Andrews.

SDLC: <http://www.nls.uk/sdlc/>

Edinburgh Research Archive: <http://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/>

*Clare Whittaker (IS-L&C)*

## ECDF adopts waverley users

The Edinburgh Compute and Data Facility includes a significant compute resource ('Eddie'), and it is sensible to consolidate the **waverley** intermediate compute service on to this new service.

So – after over ten years of service – the Sun-based Unix intermediate compute service on waverley will be closing. Eddie has a vast compute capacity compared to waverley, and is an actively developing service. You can read about it at <http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/ecdf/>

If you use waverley, or are interested in high-performance computing, please contact John Blair-Fish (email [J.Blair-Fish@ed.ac.uk](mailto:J.Blair-Fish@ed.ac.uk)) to discuss using the ECDF.

*Keith Farvis (IS-ITI)*

## Website Development Project update

The Project continues to work with Phase 1 partners (primarily the CAM web team, Student Recruitment and Admissions and the International Office at this point) to populate a new site ready for the initial launch.

### University URL policy proposed

The Project has asked the Knowledge Strategy Committee to ratify a formal URL policy for the University. The policy proposal is available on the Project website.

The aim of the proposal is to bring greater consistency and usability to the addresses of University websites. The wide range of conventions currently used makes it difficult for our users to anticipate what to type.

The next step will be to consult with the University's web publishing community to establish a comprehensive transition plan, to ensure that the changeover is as convenient as possible for web publishers and a seamless experience for users.

Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/37ghha>

### Writing for the web training: more dates available

You can book to attend a session on 'Writing for the web' through the MyEd training channel. Dates are available for September to December. The 90 minute session covers best practice in generating and structuring online content, improving your search engine rankings, and our legal obligations as University web publishers.

It's non-technical, and aimed at everyone who contributes to the University site – whether publishing directly or producing material for others to publish.

### Information and Contact

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

If you'd like to receive regular new updates via email, or discuss any aspect of the Website Project, please email [website.project@ed.ac.uk](mailto:website.project@ed.ac.uk).

*Neil Allison (CAM)*

## IT training courses in September and October

The following IT courses are free to most staff and postgraduates at Edinburgh University. Most are held at the Computing Skills Centre at 19 Buccleuch Place; some run at The King's Buildings. Course synopses and later dates are available on our website, where you can also book online: <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/>

Date	Course	Venue*
<b>Sept</b> Thu 6	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	GS
Wed 12	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	GS
Wed 19	Basic Image Manipulation Techniques using PhotoShop	GS
Wed 19	Managing Bibliographies with EndNote	GS
Mon 24	Introduction to S-Plus	GS
Tue 25	Preparing a Presentation with PowerPoint	GS
Wed 26	Introduction to Unix	KB
Wed 26	Excel Introduction: Creating Basic Spreadsheets and Charts	GS
Fri 28	Producing a Thesis using Word	GS
<b>Oct</b> Tue 2	Introduction to Minitab	GS
Tue 2	Introduction to SPSS	GS
Wed 3	Introduction to Computing	GS
Thu 4	Excel Advanced: Manipulating and Managing Data (Pt 1)	GS
Thu 4	Creating Web Pages with HTML	GS
Thu 4	Formatting Web Pages with Cascading Style Sheets	GS
Mon 8	Managing Bibliographies with Reference Manager	GS
Tue 9	Introduction to Windows XP Operating System	GS
Wed 10	Creating a Database with Filemaker Pro	GS
Thu 11	Excel Advanced: Manipulating and Managing Data (Pt 2)	GS
Mon 15	Programming in Perl	GS
Mon 15	Managing Bibliographies with EndNote	GS
Mon 15	Creating and Editing Web Pages with Dreamweaver 8	GS
Mon 15	Creating Templates and Managing Websites with Dreamweaver 8	GS
Tue 16	Basic Image Manipulation Techniques using PhotoShop	GS
Tue 16	Introduction to Access Database Management (Part 1)	GS
Wed 17	Word Introduction: Creating and Formatting Documents	GS
Wed 17	Editing Web Pages with Contribute	GS
Tue 23	Introduction to Access Database Management (Part 2)	GS
Tue 23	Creating Accessible Websites	GS
Tue 23	Creating Leaflets and Posters with InDesign	GS
Wed 24	Introduction to Programming in Fortran 95	KB
Wed 24	Using EDINA Digimap	GS
Wed 24	Introduction to Visualising Data in ArcGIS 9	GS
Wed 24	Video Editing with Premier Pro	GS
Thu 25	Excel Introduction: Creating Basic Spreadsheets and Charts (Part 1)	GS
Tue 20	Scanning and Image Capture	KB
Wed 31	Introduction to Mac Operating Systems: Mac OS X	GS

\* Venues: GS – George Square area, KB – The King's Buildings

Jenni Reeves (IS-LUSD)

## Changes in the eLearning support team

Two teams were merged earlier this year in the restructuring of Information Services. The old EUCS 'Communication and Training Services' team (CTS) and half of the MALTS eLearning team have joined forces to create the eLearning and IS Skills Development Team.

CTS activities continue as before, for example with the provision of the IT courses listed at left. Users may wish to note some recent changes to staff supporting eLearning.

**Wesley Kerr** has joined the team as eAssessment Manager. Many of you will know Wesley from his work supporting eLearning and eAssessment in Chemistry. He and **Mark Findlay** provide support for the Questionmark Perception service and other eAssessment tools.

After many years of providing central support, Ava Blass has left the IS eLearning team to take on a new role with the Graduate School of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine at Little France.

**Jo Kinsley** has joined the team from an eLearning support role at Lauder College and will be providing support and advice on all aspects of eLearning at the University.

Support for the Plagiarism Detection Service *Turnitin* is provided by **Gill Chetty** and **Robert Chmielewski**.

In September we will be welcoming another new member of staff to the team: **Susan Beasley** comes to the University from Queen Margaret University, where she has had extensive experience of supporting WebCT.

Support for WebCT Vista will continue to be provided by several members of the team; please send enquiries to [ellearnhelp@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ellearnhelp@ed.ac.uk).

Nora Moge (IS-LUSD)

## GIS tools for measuring accessibility in real and virtual spaces

4pm, 6th September 2007

e-Science Institute, South College Street

Prof Harvey J Miller, Professor and Chair, Dept of Geography, University of Utah

Accessibility is a concept that focuses on an individual's ability to participate in activities in space and time. This is core to many theories about human phenomena as well as policies and plans to create efficient, equitable and sustainable cities and societies. Traditional methods focus on spatial separation between geographic locations, but these are becoming archaic in a highly mobile and connected world where activities are increasingly fluid and fragmented. Geographic information science and related geospatial technologies are facilitating a sophisticated approach to accessibility that focuses on individual activities in space and time. In this lecture, Prof Miller will discuss analytical theories and GIS tools for analysing individual accessibility in real and virtual spaces.









The lecture will be available via webcast. For further details on the event see <http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/events/817/>

*Alison McCall (NeSC)*

**Welcome to ISIS**

**Information Skills and IT Skills**

ISIS is a resource intended to help you find stuff that you need to know, but which is not discipline specific. If you have ideas about other topics which should be included here, or suggestions of specific resources, then please post feedback at the bottom of this page

 <b>Literature skills topic</b> Finding reading materials for your university studies	 <b>Writing</b> Grammar, Punctuation and Academic Writing	 <b>Understanding Plagiarism</b> University-wide course developed across several institutions	 <b>Citing</b> How to reference different types of sources in different situations.
 <b>Keeping Your Work Safe</b> Developing Good Housekeeping Practices. Dealing with Security Issues and Virus Prevention.	 <b>Dealing with Data</b> Evaluating data, Turning data into information, some introductory statistics, and something about graphs and charts.	 <b>Powerpoints, Posters and Presentations</b> Resources and tips on making Powerpoint slide-shows. Making web-pages to present your own findings.	 <b>Communicating Online</b> Picking the right medium, differences between different media, which to use when.

## ISIS arrives to help students

ISIS means Information Skills and Information Technology Skills for All.

An information skills e-learning resource for all new undergraduates goes live this month. It is called **ISIS**, and it brings together a range of learning materials which students use on their own. The skills covered are relevant across many subject areas, so we hope that lecturing staff will think ISIS useful and direct their students to topics within this general WebCT course.

ISIS is in WebCT so that access is easy from MyEd for all students. The intention is that, initially, ISIS will be available to all first-year students. Staff will not normally have access by default, but if you are a member of staff and would like access (or if you are keen to make ISIS available to other student groups) please email your UUN (*not* your password!) to [isis@ed.ac.uk](mailto:isis@ed.ac.uk).

You are welcome to adopt and adapt most ISIS materials within your own courses; please contact one of the ISIS team below if you are interested in doing this.

*Charlie Mansfield, Caroline Stirling, Nora Moge (IS-LUSD)*

## Lynda Arden tears herself away



*Lynda (left) with Brenda Moon, the University Librarian who appointed her.*

The staff common room in the Main Library was packed in August to bid farewell to a long-serving and well-kent member of Information Services.

Lynda Arden started working for the University in 1992, as a typist in the General Office and the Erskine Medical Library. She soon showed that she could do much more, and started using her terrific organising skills to serve as PA to four deputy librarians: Peter Freshwater, Sheila Cannell, Richard Oviden and John Scally – all of whom have much reason to be grateful to her.

Lynda was responsible for many other areas besides. She effectively ran the Library's Wolfson Suite, and the letters we have received over the years praising the Suite testify to the quality of Lynda's service. In another vital area, Lynda has been conscientiously responsible for all sorts of Library publications over the years; her skill as a proof reader is legendary.

Many people have reason to be grateful for Lynda's care and professional skill, and we know she will add new friends in retirement to the many, many friends she has in the Library and Information Services, because she is that sort of person. We all wish her the very best for that retirement.

*Sheila Cannell (IS-L&C)*

## Scott Currie disconnects

Scott Currie retired in August, having helped to build up the University's communications network over the last 30 years, and overseeing the implementation of a structure that will last us well into the future.

Since joining the University in 1976, Scott has managed a range of challenging tasks and projects, and always delivered with great professionalism. He was in the first cohort of students to obtain a (first class) Computer Science degree from this University, and after a few years working in business he returned to begin his illustrious career developing the University's network, starting with the ground-breaking Edinburgh Remote Terminal Emulator and then writing the University's first network management system.

He was then the driving force behind the creation of EdLAN, the University's immensely successful and capable local area network; he had two books published to give others the benefit of his experience in this challenging field. He then took over as Director of the Computing Services Network Division, and in 2002 of the Facilities Management Division, which he steered successfully through to the major restructuring of Information Services last year.

Scott played an active and willing part on various national groups – various JNT and UKERNA technical groups, the strategic sub-committee of the ACN (JISC), chair of the UCISA Networking Group, the Scottish MAN Interconnect Working Party and the UK MAN Managers Group.

We thank Scott for all he has done for the University, and wish him a long and happy retirement in Islay.

*Brian Gilmore (IS-ITI)*

## Autumn Holiday

The University observes the annual Autumn Holiday on Monday 17th September, and most IS services will be running unattended on that day. Support teams will be closed. The Main Library will be open from 8:30am to midnight, but all other libraries closed. The open-access labs in the Main Library will be supervised; the 24hour labs in the Hugh Robson Building, High School Yards, Holland House and KB Centre will be available to students via their University Card and PIN.

This year's Induction Week is the preceding week, 10–14 September, and teaching starts on the 18th. Full session dates are provided at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/news/semesters/>

*Pam Clouston (IS-LUSD)*

## Cultural nourishment

This month's talk in the IS lunchtime "cultural nourishment" series is 'A Hidden History: exploring the University of Edinburgh's Cultural Collections Audit', at 1.10pm on Thursday 27th September, in the Brenda Moon Room, Main Library. All are welcome to this, and welcome to bring their lunch!

*Emily Peppers (IS-L&C)*

## The defensive possibilities of the vacation message

The BBC reports that people are starting to protect themselves from the barrage of email by setting up vacation messages when they aren't on vacation. Apparently at least a third of us are stressed by excessive email. The report is at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/6943223.stm>

*Nick Stroud (IS)*



*Scott's final activity in paid employment was to play in the annual AUT (UCU) golf competition – for which he had the brainwave of putting "on a course" in his online diary!*

### EDINBURGH BITS

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Copy deadline for October *BITS*:

**Friday 14th September**