

## An IT strategy for the University

The University and Information Services will be publishing their strategic plans in late Spring to guide their development over the next five years, and the University is adopting a high-level framework to guide its decision-making in IT services over the same period. This IT strategy does not go into technical detail since that changes so rapidly – by the time you get to the end the beginning will be out of date – but seeks to establish guidelines and a general culture within which detailed technical decisions can be made.

The overriding aim is to shift attention from the technology to the users, to deliver what is needed rather than what the machines can do. Services should be available at any time, from anywhere; they should be easy to use and well integrated, so that one can move around the various systems without encountering any new barriers; and system and data security should be so good, yet so unobtrusive, that people can just get on with their work, confident that nothing will be lost.

I would welcome comments on the draft (email [Simon.Marsden@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Simon.Marsden@ed.ac.uk)). Following these and useful discussions at IS lunchtime seminars and with the IT Professionals' Forum, the revised strategy will be reviewed at this month's Knowledge Strategy Committee meeting, when it is expected that a new IT Committee will be set up to turn the aspirations into practical results.

The draft strategy is available through <http://www.vp.is.ed.ac.uk/plans/>  
*Simon Marsden (IS-Apps)*

## Improved access to the University network

### Recent policy changes for wireless users

The following policy changes have been made for users of the Wireless Service and are now effective:

1. You no longer need to use VPN when authenticated at the Wireless Gateway. However, you are reminded that **Wireless is an insecure medium**, and you should use encryption to protect sensitive data. If an application does not already encrypt data – or if in doubt – use the VPN.
2. Any member of staff may generate a temporary account for a guest who is visiting for academic or research purposes. The member of staff is responsible for making the guest aware of the University's Computing Regulations. To generate a guest account, visit <https://vpnreg.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ease/staffguestreg.cgi>
3. You can now self-register for Wireless / VPN / LapLAN from a computer on the Wireless Network prior to authentication. This is done by associating with SSID central, and bringing up the login page by loading your browser. There is a link on the login page describing the mechanism for self-registration and allowing you to register (separately) for EASE and for Wireless / VPN / LapLAN.

### Hardware enhancement of the VPN service

The VPN service has been enhanced and expanded with the addition of new hardware – which is in addition to the existing VPN hardware.

For details on using the VPN service provided by the new hardware please visit <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/nsd/access/vpn2-intro.html>

*Bill Byers (IS-ITI)*

## contents

An IT strategy for the University	1
Improved access to the network	1
Getting value for money in IT	2
EUCLID Project update	2
IT Professionals' Forum meetings	3
Professional Forum for librarians	3
What is life like in Europe?	3
IS teams moving to Moray House	3
ITfutures conference report	4
Mobile learning conference	4
IS Disability Advisory Group	4
Web editorial training tops 200	4
Keep IT securely	5
The Next Generation VLE Project	5
Where does the time go?	5
Internet cash for worthy causes	5
High Noon for CLOCKSS	6
Library developments	7
Alan Michael at the Talbot Rice	7
New Year, New Skills?	8
Website usability course	8
Mathematica conference	8
e-Science themes, lectures	9
ALT-C 2008 and the digital divide	9
BCS meetings	10
Kate MacGregor retires	10
Snippets from JISC NewsFeed	11
Pensions+ saving money	11
Cultural nourishment	11
The Bombay Africans	12



Where is this little fellow off to?

(Answer on page 12)

## Getting value for money in IT

Charles Hill, of the University's Corporate Services Group, delivered a seminar to the IT Professionals' Forum in January on achieving Value for Money IT, drawing on his wide experience in Finance, Accommodation Services and MIS to offer a series of useful insights into the successful delivery of IT services.

The following 'top 10' thoughts on how the University as a whole could achieve better value for money from IT projects and services emerged from the talk:

1. Partnership between IT staff and the business community is absolutely essential, to build trust and to ensure that IT staff understand the business.
2. The right projects and services must be chosen in the first place, and not by IT staff in isolation.
3. Business requirements need to be gathered carefully: many projects and services fail as this has not been done adequately.
4. Outsourcing may sometimes be the best way to deliver some requirements: increasingly attractive service options are emerging every day.
5. Put the stakeholders at the heart of all IT project and service developments, and provide appropriate training to enable them to participate fully in achieving a successful outcome.
6. Agree criteria for success and audit arrangements for all IT projects and services, and follow up delivery to ensure that sustainable benefits are being delivered.
7. Use new employees to gain insight into how you are doing in comparison with their previous employer, generally a much more reliable indicator than published data!
8. Communication is vital: there is usually a direct correlation between the success of IT services and the frequency and quality of communication between the service providers and their customers.
9. Learn from successes – both your own and others' – and don't just focus on problems.
10. Timing is often more important than the completeness of the solution (speed and predictability of delivery outweigh perfection in nearly every customer survey).

Charles highlighted a report from the UK Public Sector Audit Agencies: 'Value For Money in Public Sector Corporate Services (May 2007)'. This is a clear indicator of the attention this subject is likely to receive in coming months and years, and is available at

<http://www.public-audit-forum.gov.uk/publicat.htm>

Charles has kindly agreed to repeat this very useful seminar later in the year for IS staff and customers.

*Mark Ritchie (IS-Apps)*

## EUCLID Project update

A phased introduction of new software to support undergraduate admissions was implemented in October 2007. This provided a significant step towards paperless working, and is increasingly providing benefits as users become more familiar with it. By mid-January there were over 42,000 applications in the system, and over 19,000 applicants had logged in to the portal. Feedback from Tribal – the system supplier – is that our implementation is the most advanced web-based admissions system in the country. We are also getting positive responses from applicants to new electronic approaches to communicating with them.

However this implementation was not without difficulties. We are taking on board the feedback received from University colleagues, and valuable lessons have been learned which we are determined to apply to future phases, including the ways in which we seek input from colleagues.

In November the Project Board decided that we will focus effort this academic year on the University's highest priority area for the project, which is online postgraduate admissions from EUCLID, in support of Strategic Plan priorities. Web-enabled admissions processes will represent a significant improvement to current business practices and will have a positive impact on the applicant experience and recruitment. This decision enables the project team to focus on implementing change, thus enabling the University to develop more student-centric processes and faster, standardised ways of working in student administration.

As a result of this decision, there is a new timetable for the implementation of the remainder of the project, delaying Student Administration, Assessment and Programme and Course Creation, Approval and Maintenance until academic year 2009–2010. This in turn means that DACS and WISARD will continue in use for one further session, 2008–2009. Detailed planning is being completed for the revised implementation schedule, and this will be published as soon as possible.

The EUCLID website is at <http://www.euclid.ed.ac.uk/>  
*Sarah Allbeson (EUCLID)*

## 12th February: Internet Safety Day

Wanting to make life online less risky for children, the European Union is holding its fifth Internet Safety Day this month. The initiative is run by Insafe, the European network of e-safety awareness nodes; see <http://www.saferinternet.org/>

*Nick Stroud (IS)*

## IT Professionals' Forum: many meetings

This is a busy time for the IT Professionals' Forum.

Forthcoming meetings include:

- 6th February: Revision Control System – David Nutter
- 13th February: Call Management System (IS/ITPF only)
- 13th February: Supported Desktop installation overview
- 20th February: Mobile Computing – CISCO
- 27th February: whirlwind tour of eLearning (IS/ITPF only)
- 3rd March: Seminar with HR
- 5th March 2008: Data Centre – CISCO

The two Cisco meetings are three-hour workshops led by consultants from the company. The February one will look at the benefits of an end-to-end mobility architecture in a university, for 'omnipresent mobility' on campus. This would enable services such as wireless laptop access, wireless voice capability (VoWLAN), wireless data collaboration, video streaming, and video conferencing. Wireless options outwith the office – such as hot spots, hot zones and mesh networking – will also be discussed.

All of these meetings are available for booking through MyEd. Full details are provided on the ITPF website at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/cttees/itforum/>

*James Jarvis (IS-ITI)*

## A new Professional Forum – for librarians and archivists

A new Forum is being set up in the University, alongside the IT Professionals' Forum and the eLearning Professionals and Practitioners Forum.

The Librarians and Archivists Professional Forum – LAPF – will be self-organising and will determine its own format and objectives to serve the needs of our professional community.

The first meeting of the LAPF will be held on Tuesday 12th February in the Brenda Moon Room, Main Library at 12.15pm. Sheila Cannell, Director of Library Services, will talk about some current professional issues. There will then be an opportunity for discussion about the future organisation of the LAPF.

Lunch will be available from 12.15pm, and the meeting will start at 1pm. Please let me know if you will be attending (email [Irene.McGowan@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Irene.McGowan@ed.ac.uk)).

*Irene McGowan (IS-LUSD)*

## Help put Edinburgh on the Monopoly map!

VisitScotland would like as many people as possible to vote to have Edinburgh included on the new international Monopoly board. You can vote for your ten favourite cities until 29th February at <http://www.monopoly.com/>

*Nick Stroud (IS)*

## What is life like in Europe?

The Data Library has purchased the European Community Household Panel study (1994–2001) for the use of University of Edinburgh researchers.

The European Community Household Panel (ECHP) is a survey based on annual interviews of a representative panel of households and individuals in each country, covering a wide range of topics: income, health, education, housing, demographics, employment characteristics, *etc.* The total duration of the ECHP was eight years, running from 1994 to 2001. In the first wave, in 1994, a sample of approximately 130,000 adults aged 16 years and over were interviewed in the then 12 Member States. Austria (1995) and Finland (1996) have joined the project since then. Data for Sweden are available as of 1997, derived from the Swedish Living Conditions Survey and transformed into ECHP format.

The dataset is a unique (and expensive) resource, and may only be used under secure terms and conditions. Anyone who would like to use the panel study must apply to the European Commission with an abstract of their research project. For further information about the ECHP, see <http://epunet.essex.ac.uk/echnp.php>

For assistance and guidance please contact the Data Library (email [datalib@ed.ac.uk](mailto:datalib@ed.ac.uk), tel 511431 or 503304).

*Stuart Macdonald (IS-EDINA)*

## IS teams moving to Moray House

As part of the various Redevelopment-related moves in the Main Library, some Information Services teams based on the first floor will be relocating to Paterson's Land at Moray House. These teams are Architecture Services (moving to rooms G5 & G6), Desktop Services (moving to room G4) and Software Services (moving to room G3).

The move is scheduled to take place during the week beginning 4th February, and will take most of that week to complete. Please bear with us during this time as we will be unpacking crates, boxes and computer systems in order to re-establish services.

All existing telephone numbers will be transferred, so you will be able to contact us using our usual numbers.

### Special arrangements for Software Services

Requests for software should be placed by 5pm on 29th January, and for software codes by 5pm on 31st January. Any orders placed after these deadlines will not be processed until 6th February.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause, but this is outwith our control. We will endeavour to get the service back to normal as soon as possible.

*Graham Newton (IS-ITI)*

## IT conference on mobile computing

The University's IT Futures Group held a successful conference last November on the topic of 'Mobile Computing'. Slides from the presenters and recordings of the sessions are available on the conference website, at <http://www.itfutures.ed.ac.uk/mobile.shtml>

In the morning session, Paul Anderson (Informatics) spoke about the mobile needs of academics on the move, followed by more 'leading edge' presentations by James Stewart (Social and Political Studies) on the Edinburgh Living Lab, and Austin Tate (AIAI) on virtual offices. Anna Davidson and Thomas Graham (EUSA) highlighted some of the issues and difficulties faced by students, and a panel discussion tackled some of the points raised.

After lunch, three speakers from outwith the University expanded the view of mobile computing. Mike Sharples (Nottingham) and Stuart Smith (Manchester) concentrated on opportunities offered for teaching and learning, while Alex Taylor (Microsoft) talked about futuristic possibilities for the home. The conference finished with talks on disability (issues and opportunities), the law (of which we all have to be aware), and another panel discussion.

The ITfutures Group is producing a report from the conference, highlighting particular issues and making recommendations. The event has already triggered a useful debate on wireless provision in the University.

The Group is organising a few smaller events during 2008, starting with a meeting last month on 'Collaborative working and the paperless office: where are we, where do we want to be?'; details of this and later meetings will appear in due course on the Group's website at <http://www.itfutures.ed.ac.uk/>

*Jessie Paterson (Divinity)*

## Mobile learning conference

mLearn, the world's flagship mobile learning conference, takes place in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ironbridge in Shropshire, on 8–10 October.

The conference aims to bring together the world's leading mobile learning researchers, developers and activists in an environment that will stimulate increased deployment of mobile learning and catalyse innovation.

This year's themes include mobile learning, mobile knowledge, mobile societies, mobile technologies, and social, individual and cultural aspects of mobile learning. Full papers are invited by 14th April, and short papers by 28th April.

Full details are provided at <http://www.mlearn2008.org/> and [www.mlearn2008.mobi](http://www.mlearn2008.mobi)

*Abigail Redmond (Wolverhampton)*

## IS Disability Advisory Group

The Information Services Disability Advisory Group – ISDAG – was established in 2004 to help develop a disability action plan for Information Services, with the aim of ensuring that all services provided by IS are available to all students, staff and visitors of the University. The Group includes representatives of the Disability Office, and works very closely with the Disability Committee, to ensure that Information Services not only meets the requirements of relevant access legislation but plays its full part in supporting the University's Equality and Diversity Strategy.

Since then, members of the group have been acting as Disability Liaison Officers, providing links with all IS units on accessibility issues. The group has developed an Audit Planning Tool which allows managers to track and review progress on the accessibility of existing and developing services, and will greatly assist IS in providing an assured quality of service for all.

A new half-time Disability Information Officer is about to be appointed, and will, among other things, provide up-to-date information on accessible tools and services for Information Services, and help with staff training, strengthening the links between strategic management and front-line services. ISDAG has input into the IS Strategic planning round and developments such as the service reviews taking place early in 2008.

If you have questions about ISDAG and its work please contact the group through its website at <http://www.vp.is.ed.ac.uk/disability/resources>

*Wilma Alexander (IS-LUSD)*

## Web editorial training tops 200

'Writing for the Web' – a course developed by the Website Development Project and now delivered by IS Training – has trained over 200 University staff and postgraduate students during 2007.

The session, which covers best practice in the non-technical elements of web publishing, has been well received by those attending throughout the year.

The session also provides advice on search engine optimisation and legal requirements around issues of online records management.

First piloted in April with staff working on Phase 1 of the Project, the materials were refined before being handed over to IS Training for ongoing delivery in September 2007.

The course runs three times a month. Book a place via the courses channel in MyEd, or contact the Project.

*Neil Allison (CAM)*

## Keep IT securely

Banks, hospitals and government departments have all recently admitted to losing personal data. HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) loss of two CDs containing child benefit data for seven million UK families may be the most high profile loss of this sort, but it is not unique. The missing data include names, addresses, national insurance numbers, and bank account details, which can easily be used for fraud.

The work of this University inevitably involves the collection and use of information about people for research, teaching or administrative purposes, and there could be serious implications if there were unauthorised access to it. These could include distress or actual harm to the subjects of the information, damage to a programme of research or the University's reputation, or legal action under the Data Protection Act.

The Records Management Section has recently revised its short guidance document on the *Storage and Use of Electronic Personal Data: Data Protection Dos and Don'ts*. This highlights the issues to consider when storing and using information about people in an electronic format, such as a word-processed document, a spreadsheet, a database, a presentation or an email. If you keep personal information on your desktop, laptop, University server, PDA, mobile telephone, USB stick, CD or DVD, you must take measures to ensure that the information is always secure.

The document is available at <http://www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk/InfoStaff/DPstaff/ElectronicPersonalData.htm>

For further advice please contact the Records Management Section ([recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk](mailto:recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk)).

*Susan Graham (Records Management)*

## More from the Next Generation VLE Project

We are continuing to develop a process of consultation with both staff and students regarding the requirements for a VLE service. As with all projects, it is important that the technology should adapt to fit our learning and teaching needs as far as possible, so the importance of understanding our needs cannot be overstated. Even if all our needs cannot be satisfied at this time, an appreciation of what we are striving to achieve is essential to ensure that we move in the right direction as developments permit. A sustainable solution is one which looks beyond what is currently achievable.

It is perhaps dangerous to put in writing a definition of a VLE because not everyone will necessarily agree with it. However, the JISC MLE Steering Group has defined a VLE as "the components in which learners and tutors participate in 'online' interactions of various kinds, including online learning". Thus, matching a VLE with the learning process is critical. The revised JISC 'Framework for the Pedagogical Evaluation of eLearning Environments' (2004) found that a "simple feature comparison chart would do little to differentiate one system from another", a conclusion in more recent studies also.

One of the criticisms of the first generation of VLEs is that they were centred on learning activities at the course delivery (module) level. A more complete view of the learning process would include activities which take place at other levels, such as that of the degree programme and of individuals. A VLE needs to consider these activities as well; for example, if we want our students to form study groups then perhaps the VLE should provide facilities for self-organising activities.

We hope the consultation process will encourage everyone to re-evaluate how the VLE service might best support their learning strategies so that we can devise a direction for meeting these needs. This should be done without reference to any technological solutions which may, or may not, be available yet!

The project wiki is at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/VLEprojectwiki/>  
*Catherine Gillespie, Stephen Vickers (IS-Apps)*

## Where does the time go?

The Apple Lisa, the first commercial computer with a GUI (Graphical User Interface), was launched 25 years ago, in January 1983. "Lisa" stood for "Local Integrated Software Architecture" – and was also the name of Apple co-founder Steve Jobs' daughter. The original price was US\$10,000 – a lot of money in those days. A year later Apple introduced the "Macintosh", and personal computing took off.

*Liam McDowell (IS-Apps)*

## Internet cash to fund worthy net causes

Nominet is the not-for-profit organisation that manages domain names for the UK – currently around six million, all ending in '.uk'. This high demand has generated a surplus of cash which is going to be used to set up the Nominet Foundation, and invested in teaching people how to use the Internet productively, or in researching how it is used. The BBC's story is at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/7195618.stm>

*Nick Stroud (IS)*

## High Noon for CLOCKSS

1. *The problem with time.* Online access to the content of scholarly journals brings many benefits for researchers, students, libraries and publishers. However, there are genuine concerns about long-term access to e-journal content, given the threats from natural disaster, human folly, and technological failure.
2. *CLOCKSS as remedy.* There is urgent need to address the concerns, so that we can all be confident that what is now online and available will always be accessible. But should we take time to make sure we get this right? It may be wise to put eggs in several baskets? Indeed, the essential idea in CLOCKSS, the digital preservation scheme described here, is that “lots of copies keep stuff safe”.
3. *Edinburgh’s involvement.* Over the past two years, Information Services has been involved in the CLOCKSS pilot project to investigate and set up the organizational and technological structure for a sustainable archival scheme. The task now is to move out of project mode and build consensus – across the UK and worldwide – that CLOCKSS works.
4. *An example of how CLOCKSS works.* At the start of 2008, SAGE Publications discontinued access to its journal *Graft: Organ and Cell Transplantation*. Three volumes of *Graft* (18 issues from 2001 to 2003) have been preserved in the CLOCKSS initiative, and this is the first candidate ‘orphan’ with which to test the procedures for the CLOCKSS Archive. The EDINA national data centre – based at the University and one of the CLOCKSS Hosts – will be providing free worldwide access, without need for subscription.
5. *Sound and well-tested technology is vital for digital preservation.* CLOCKSS employs a special ‘Controlled’ version of the LOCKSS (“Lots Of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe”) system. LOCKSS won an ACM Award in 2004 for its system of peer-to-peer monitoring of replicated servers to detect and repair damage of digital content for authenticity over the very long term. The code for LOCKSS is open source and in widespread use.
6. *Shared governance and community acceptance are crucial.* The CLOCKSS Board includes both librarians and publishers, who have an equal say in deciding procedures and ‘trigger events’ to transfer orphaned content from the Archive to the delivery hosts and released to all, worldwide and without subscription.
7. *CLOCKSS participants win award.* The cross-sector cooperation in the CLOCKSS Pilot was an achievement in itself, winning the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALCTS) Outstanding Collaboration Citation in June 2007. Participants offering stewardship as CLOCKSS Nodes include five universities (Edinburgh, Indiana, Rice, Stanford and Virginia), the New York Public Library, and OCLC. Publishers include Elsevier, IOP Publishing, Nature Publishing Group, Oxford University Press, SAGE Publications, Springer, Taylor & Francis, Wiley-Blackwell, and several learned societies.
8. *The CLOCKSS Archive Network.* This gains leverage from the stewardship of established, trusted libraries and, through service level agreements with the CLOCKSS Board, with the confidence of the publisher community. With two ‘CLOCKSS boxes’ at each of seven Archive Nodes, including Edinburgh, there is already technical sufficiency in the CLOCKSS Archive Network. The pilot project has tested this with 10% of total content, and will expand this year, with new and existing publishers, and with more Nodes for greater resilience against geophysical and political fault lines.
9. *Economic sustainability.* This challenge must be faced with any digital preservation scheme. From the outset it was agreed that CLOCKSS should not depend on government support, nor rely on legal compliance in all countries. This is a transnational problem: scholarship and scholarly publishing are international and must transcend, or at least survive, the positives and negatives of territorial boundaries.
10. A key aim for CLOCKSS is to minimise operating and marketing costs, gaining leverage for the common good from the stewardship and existing infrastructure of the institutions that run the Archive Nodes and the organizations that will act as CLOCKSS hosts.
11. It is vital that this digital preservation scheme should not depend on the vagaries of recurrent (market) revenue: the strategy is to build a capital endowment fund to meet recurrent costs, supplemented by fees from publishers and contributions from the research and library communities. The challenge is to raise the target sum from gifts and grants in the next five years.
12. *Putting CLOCKSS Forward.* CLOCKSS has achieved its project aim of building and testing a trusted and secure ‘dark archive’ for scholarly journal content from the world’s leading publishers. The focus now is to join with others who judge CLOCKSS to be worth backing as a way of ensuring that ‘orphaned’ journal content will be dependably available over the long term. If you’d like to find out more, and see how you can help, do have a look at <http://www.clockss.org/>

Peter Burnhill (IS-EDINA)

## Library developments

### Rare Books Librarian

Dr Joseph Marshall took up the post of Rare Books Librarian in Special Collections on 7th January. Joe joins us from the National Library of Scotland, where he was Senior Curator for the Rare Books Collection, a role which included various aspects of rare books user services management. He has in fact worked for the University in the past, as an assistant on the ESTC Endgame project in Summer 2000.

As his new job title suggests, Joe's main task will be to develop and manage the printed rare books collections, with management responsibility for services to users in Special Collections.

Joe's particular combination of skills, knowledge and experience is ideally suited to the post of Rare Books Librarian, and we look forward to working with him in the future as he works to exploit the huge potential of our vast and prestigious collections of rare books.

### Special Collections

The Special Collections department is based temporarily on the second floor of the Main Library in George Square, and the collections are used extensively by staff, students and other researchers from the local, national and international research communities.

Our Special Collections include printed heritage material of international importance, ranging from unique incunabula (pre-1501 printed books) to books once owned by modern Scottish writers such as Norman McCaig. There is an amazing range of material, both in the printed holdings and in the extensive collections of manuscripts and archives which offer huge potential for research, learning and teaching.

For further information on the University's Special Collections see <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/resources/collections/specdivision/>

It is expected that the department will move into purpose-designed accommodation on the 5th and 6th floors of the Main Library in the Autumn, as part of the Main Library Redevelopment Programme, (MLRP). For further information about this see <http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/mlrp/>

*Arnott Wilson (IS-L&C)*




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## Alan Michael at the Talbot Rice

*Touch Void* is Alan Michael's first major exhibition of new paintings in Edinburgh, showing one of his favoured formats: text and image rendered in various styles.

Alan Michael was born in Glasgow in 1967, and gained a BA in Fine Art from Duncan of Jordanstone College, Dundee in 1996 and an MA (Fine Art) from Glasgow School of Art in 1998. He lives and works in Glasgow.

In his work Alan Michael mines various high and low cultural references to create a fluid summation of styles where the painting process and context become almost invisible. Current cultural icons such as the BMW Mini are just as valid a reference point as the work of Robert

Rauchenberg. Mass-produced consumerism with its carefully marketed sheen becomes a commodity to be employed for its own ends. The paintings often make reference to previous works and frequently use styles from the frontiers of Pop Art. In his work, details of city life are repeated like mantras, symbolism is deferred or abolished, and fragments remain as fragments.

The Talbot Rice Gallery is at the western end of Old College (furthest away from the main entrance), and admission is free. The exhibition runs until 1st March, Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm.

There are fuller details about this exhibition at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/news/071220talbot-rice-gallery.html>

*Martin Minton (IS-L&C)*

## New Year, New Skills?

If one of your New Year Resolutions was to develop your skills, then let us help you achieve this! The eLearning and IS Skills Development team runs free IT courses for most Edinburgh University staff and postgraduates. We're based in the IS Skills Centre at 19 Buccleuch Place and also run courses at The King's Buildings. See below for February's course dates, and our web pages for course synopses and bookings: <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/>

Date	Course	Venue*
Feb 4	Intermediate SPSS: Data, File and Output Manipulation	GS
4	Video Editing with Premier Pro	GS
5	Basic Image Manipulation Techniques using PhotoShop	GS
5	Creating and Editing Web Pages with Dreamweaver 8	GS
5	Creating Templates and Managing Websites with Dreamweaver 8	GS
6	Intermediate Unix	JCMB
6	Intermediate Access Database Management (Part 2)	GS
7	Excel Advanced: Manipulating and Managing Data	GS
7	Mail Merge with Word	GS
12	Creating a Database with FileMaker Pro	GS
12	Email with Thunderbird	GS
13	Editing Web Pages with Contribute	GS
19	Introduction to Wikis	GS
20	Unix Shell Programming	JCMB
20	Using SPSS Commands	GS
20	Excel Introduction: Creating Basic Spreadsheets and Charts (Pt 1)	GS
21	Managing Bibliographies with EndNote	GS
26	Introduction to Programming in Fortran 95	JCMB
26	Introduction to Access Database Management	GS
26	Preparing a Presentation with PowerPoint	GS
27	Excel Introduction: Creating Basic Spreadsheets and Charts (Pt 2)	GS
27	Creating Web Pages with HTML	GS
27	Formatting Web Pages with Cascading Style Sheets	GS

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

### Featured Course – Introduction to Wikis

One of our newly-developed courses, this half-day session looks at how wikis can be used for collaborative work, explores their advantages and issues to consider, and presents examples of how wikis are used in education. The course provides an overview before attendees practise adding their own content. The next course runs on Tuesday 19th February.

### Taster Sessions

Further dates of our popular one-hour 'taster' sessions for staff and postgraduates are now available for booking on MyEd. Sessions take place from 1pm to 2pm in the Wolfson Teaching Room in the Main Library, George Square as follows:

11th February: Using tables for organisation and display in Word.

13th February: Creating reports, presentations using SPSS tables and graphs.

21st February: Adobe Acrobat surgery – bring along questions and files.

27th February: Electronic marking of essays – looking at *Turnitin*, and an offline system developed for the School of Biology.

For more information about the taster sessions, and the content covered by each, see <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/coursesanddates.html>

Jenni Reeves, Shona Matchett (IS-LUSD)

## Website usability course

Through this new course, the Website Development Project gives web publishers the skills to test the usability of their sites. The low-tech mix of presentation, demonstration and practical work has already proved an eye opener for web publishers, in revealing how their websites really work for end users.

The three-hour sessions will run on 7th, 18th and 29th February. To attend, email [website.project@ed.ac.uk](mailto:website.project@ed.ac.uk) with the subject "User testing training - " and the date you'd like. There are full details at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/websiteproject/latestnews/0711nov/071122user-testing-course.html>

Neil Allison (CAM)

## Mathematica conference

Wolfram Research is holding a one-day Mathematica Conference at the University of Glasgow on 20th February, providing an excellent opportunity to see the most important advances in the 20-year history of Mathematica and find out about the latest breakthroughs in technical computing. Introductory Mathematica training is available before the conference at 10:30.

The keynote speaker is Senior Developer Jon McLoone of Wolfram Research. The conference offers a unique opportunity to see the new landscape that Mathematica 6 opens up, and discover the breadth of applications it can address. Both novices and experts are welcome.

There is no conference fee, but space is limited and registration is required. To reserve a place, please complete the online registration form which, with further details, is at <http://www.wolfram.com/services/seminars/glasgow2008/>

Joyce Anderson (IS-ITI)

## New themes at the e-Science Institute

The e-Science Institute will be running two new themes commencing early in 2008.

**Theme 8**, on “Trust and Security in Virtual Communities”, is being run in conjunction with the Oxford e-Research Centre (<http://www.oerc.ox.ac.uk/>) and is led by Dr Andrew Martin from the University of Oxford with Professor Anne Trefethen of the OeRC as co-leader. Dr Martin has already given an interesting and well-attended opening lecture on the topic (<http://www.nesc.ac.uk/action/esi/contribution.cfm?Title=847>) which was webcast and will shortly be available for streaming.

Further information on this theme is available at [http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/themes/theme\\_o8/](http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/themes/theme_o8/) and on the theme Wiki at [http://wiki.esi.ac.uk/Trust\\_and\\_Security\\_in\\_Virtual\\_Communities](http://wiki.esi.ac.uk/Trust_and_Security_in_Virtual_Communities)

**Theme 9**, on “Principles of Provenance” – being run with the Database Group in the School of Informatics and led by Dr James Cheney – will commence in March 2008. Professor Peter Buneman (also from Informatics) and Dr Bertram Ludascher from the Department of Computer Science at University California, Davis are the co-leaders.

Further information on this theme is available at [http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/themes/theme\\_o8/](http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/themes/theme_o8/) and on the theme Wiki at [http://wiki.esi.ac.uk/http://wiki.esi.ac.uk/Principles\\_of\\_Provenance](http://wiki.esi.ac.uk/http://wiki.esi.ac.uk/Principles_of_Provenance)

Both themes plan a range of workshops, talks and meetings as well as visiting researchers at the eSI, and these will provide opportunities for engagement in these topics by staff at the University of Edinburgh. Anyone interested in engaging with the themes should contact the leaders directly.

eSI now webcasts most of its talks and seminars, and these are available for later viewing at <http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/webcasts.html>

Details of forthcoming meetings and workshops are available at <http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/esi.html> which features an RSS feed.

The eSI Wiki is growing rapidly and is being used both for discussion and as a collaborative tool by researchers in the area of e-Science and the application of advanced computational methods to research. The work of the existing seven Themes is described here. The eSI Wiki is at <http://wiki.esi.ac.uk/>

The main e-Science Institute website is at <http://www.esi.ac.uk/>

*Anna Kenway (e-Science Institute)*



## e-Science lectures

The e-Science Institute is delighted to be hosting two public lectures this month: “Dynamising Spatial Semantics” by Dr Werner Kuhn, and “Geography in Motion” by Professor Mike Worboys. Public lectures are open to all interested parties in academia and industry. There is no need to register.

8th February: Dr Werner Kuhn, Professor of Geoinformatics (Münster Semantic Interoperability lab, University of Münster) will speak on “Dynamizing Spatial Semantics”. There are further details at <http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/events/833/>

11th February: Prof. Mike Worboys (Chair of the Department of Spatial Information, Science and Engineering, University of Maine) will speak on “Geography in Motion”. There are further details at <http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/events/855/>

Both meetings are at 4pm in the Newhaven Lecture Theatre, e-Science Institute, 15 South College Street, and both lectures will also be available via webcast. Those attending in person are invited to stay on for refreshments at 5pm.

*Gillian Law (NeSC)*

## ALT-C 2008: Rethinking the digital divide

This year’s Conference of the Association for Learning Technology takes place on 9–11 September, at Leeds University. The online submission system for conference papers is open until 28th February; the submission guidelines for Research Papers and for Abstracts are at [http://www.alt.ac.uk/guidelines\\_papers.html](http://www.alt.ac.uk/guidelines_papers.html)

The conference seeks to explore how under-served groups can make more effective use of learning technology. Keynote speakers include David Cavallo of One Laptop per Child, Itiel Dror, Senior Lecturer in Cognitive Neuroscience at Southampton, and Hans Rosling, Professor of International Health and Director of the Gapminder Foundation.

Full details are at <http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2008/>

*Sue Fells (UCISA)*

## BCS meeting: Genetic databases

The local branch of the British Computer Society will hold a public meeting on 'Genetic databases: intellectual property and individual privacy' at 6:30pm on 20th February. The speaker will be Professor Graeme Laurie, Director of the AHRC Research Centre for Studies in Intellectual Property and Technology Law, and there are details at <http://www.edinburgh.bcs.org/events/>

The meeting will be in the Royal Scots Club Hepburn Suite, 29/30 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6QE. Light refreshments will be available from 6.10pm.

*David Muxworthy (BCS)*

## BCS technical meetings

### Developer Day Scotland

This all-day meeting takes place in Glasgow on Saturday 10th May 2008 – “the date when developer events change forever in Scotland!” It is free, open to all, and is a community conference event based on the highly successful DDD (DeveloperDeveloperDeveloper!) conference day events. The full details are at

<http://www.developerdayscotland.com/>  
**Business Apps with WPF – the Full Monty with Oliver Sturm**

You may have seen all the fancy WPF presentations by Microsoft over the last few years, but been left wondering how WPF could be used in practice. Problem solved, as Oliver Sturm spends a full afternoon on this very topic in Edinburgh on 5th March. This was one of the best received and highest rated sessions at DDD6 (DeveloperDeveloperDeveloper!). We're very lucky to have secured Oliver Sturm to deliver this session to us in Scotland. There are full details at <http://www.scottishdevelopers.com/modules/extcal/event.php?event=40>  
**Computer Security: What's the point?**

This free evening meeting is presented by James Eaton-Lee and John A. Thomson on 13th February, and will cover a wide range of security topics for computer users and administrators. There is further information at <http://www.theiet.org/local/uk/scotland/southeast/computer-security.cfm>

*John A. Thomson (BCS)*

## Kate MacGregor retires from Main Library



Kate MacGregor retired at the end of December, after working for the University for 19 years. She had returned to work in 1988 after raising her family, starting as a part-time Library Assistant in the Photocopy Department of the Main Library.

Kate then increased her hours, splitting them between what was then called the Service Desk in the Main Library, and the Reid Music Library in Alison House. Her love of music and the arts made her a natural in this role. Eventually Kate went full-time in the Main Library, becoming more involved with the shelving operation there. In 2002, she joined the newly established Collections Management team, as Shelving Supervisor. By this time Kate had a deep knowledge of classification systems, and she used this experience to train many new shelving staff. Many people are indebted to Kate for the skills she passed on to them, and a number moved on to greater careers.

Kate was known by lots of people in the University community, but more importantly loved by all her colleagues in the Main Library. Never stuck for words, she always had a story to tell, an anecdote for any situation, or some words of wisdom or comfort. Kate will be remembered as one of the Main Library's great characters, and her presence will be sorely missed. We wish her all the very best for a long, healthy and happy retirement.

*Scott Summers (IS-L&C)*

## Snippets from JISC NewsFeed

### Euros for heroes

The Information and Communication Technologies theme of the European Cooperation Programme has announced its third call for proposals, in:

- Cognitive systems, interaction, robotics
- Digital libraries and content
- Intelligent content and semantics
- The science of complex systems for socially intelligent IT
- Embodied intelligence

The call also seeks to promote international cooperation. The closing date for applications to participate in this €265m initiative is 8th April, and it is expected that the first projects will be launched in the Autumn. See <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/>

### Online science resources from the Royal Institution

For over 200 years, the Royal Institution has been “diffusing science for the common purposes of life,” and now this influence has spread to the Web with an impressive series of resources for science teaching. Under the heading of *Science Inside Out* you’ll find resources on anatomy, biodiversity, energy, space, DNA and much more – at <http://insideout.rigb.org/>

### email on the way out?

Outside work, SMS and instant messaging are fast becoming the writing tools of choice. A new report from South Korea suggests that many teenagers see email as a tool ‘for old people’, with over two-thirds of high school and college students rarely or never using email. The Guardian’s report is available through <http://scottish-rscs.org.uk/newsfeed/?p=605>

### NICE Paintings

The Visual Arts Data Service has launched a database of nearly 8,000 European oil paintings. NICE Paintings (The National Inventory of Continental European Paintings) is a collection of pre-1900 oil paintings housed in Britain’s public art collections. View further information at [http://www.vads.ahds.ac.uk/news/nirp\\_news.html](http://www.vads.ahds.ac.uk/news/nirp_news.html)

### A step in the right direction: walk from A to B

Edinburgh is one of four cities included in a new service which works out walking routes. The site can print out precise directions, and add some useful tips: for example, in walking the four miles from George Square to Portobello one can burn up about 350 calories and avoid producing 1.38kg of CO<sub>2</sub> (if travelling the same distance by car), 1.77kg (by taxi) or 0.6kg (by bus). You can work out your own routes at <http://www.walkit.com/>

You might then like to browse old photos of the area: see <http://www.edinphoto.org.uk/>

### Czy tata czyta cytaty Tacyta?

Polish tongue-twisters make up one of the categories in a Wikipedia-like collection of quotations – at <http://en.wikiquote.org/>

*Hugh Daily & Caroline Porteous  
(JISC Regional Support Centres)*

## Pensions+ saving money all round

**Pensions+** – the new way to contribute to the University Staff Benefits Scheme and the Universities Superannuation Scheme – went live on 1st January, and should save money for both the University and members of staff.

Take-up has been excellent, with over 99% of eligible staff participating. Collaboration has been the key, with Finance, HR and Information Services working together to introduce the necessary system changes in time. These changes were challenging but not insurmountable, and included tackling elderly payslip printing routines and reworking monitoring reports.

To give an impression of the scale of the exercise, in terms of systems changes, **Pensions+** has resulted in *more* amendments to pay elements than pay modernisation did!

Hopefully you saw the changes reflected in your January payslip; if you have any queries please contact [Irene.Patterson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Irene.Patterson@ed.ac.uk).

*Liz Welch (Finance)*

## Cultural nourishment in February

In this month’s glimpse of the University’s cultural treasures, Dr Alistair McKenzie will speak on the University of Edinburgh’s Anaesthetics Museum – on Thursday 28th February, at 1:10pm, in Seminar Room 5, 1st floor Chancellor’s Building, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. The talk is open to everyone and will last for about half an hour; you are welcome to bring your lunch.

There is news of this nourishing series at <http://tweed.lib.ed.ac.uk/audit/Web/lunchtimelectures.html>



*Chloroform bottle owned  
by James Young Simpson*

*Emily Peppers (IS-L&C)*



*Madagascar Slaves, J. Harrison 1820*

### The Bombay Africans: an exhibition

How did Europeans manage to explore the African continent so quickly? How did a relatively small number of European explorers cover so much ground carrying vast amounts of equipment? Needless to say, they did not do this on their own.

European expeditionary activity in East and Central Africa in the late nineteenth century demanded large and diverse teams, often exceeding 100 people. This need for labour coincided with the emergence of the 'Bombay Africans', many of whom were subsequently hired for expeditions. By 1880 there were over 3,000 Bombay Africans in East Africa. Not only were they vital to the success of expeditions, but their presence challenged local slavery practices.

The Royal Geographical Society (RGS) played an important role in African exploration, supporting expeditions from 1855 onwards. Its archives reflect this history, and have been used to create an exhibition that focuses on the 'Bombay Africans', so called because they were slaves freed by the Bombay-based Royal Navy during the abolition of the slave trade between 1855 and 1870.

The RGS exhibition is in the University's Main Library until 12th February, on loan from the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers.

*Dan Hammett (Geography)*

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

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Copy deadline for March *BITS*:

**Friday 15th February**