

Information Services

Edinburgh Bits



24x7 (x2) opening of Main Library



The Main Library will be open 24 hours a day for two weeks during the Semester 1 examination period.

The library building will open at 8.30am on Thursday 3rd December, then remain open until midnight on Thursday 17th December 2009.

Normal Semester IS Helpdesk staffed service hours continue unchanged; self-services operate when the Helpdesk is closed. For full information about all Library opening hours and services, please see www.ed.ac.uk/is/main-library-opening

Barry Croucher (IS)

The new IS User Services Division

Information Services was recommended by a wide-ranging expert review to combine its Library and IT support services into a single group, and after more than a year of hard work the new User Services Division is established and ready to help the University make the most of its superb Libraries and sophisticated IT infrastructure.

This issue of BITs summarises the operation and contribution of the new Division.

The new User Services Director

Bryan MacGregor has been appointed director of the User Services Division. After graduating in computer science from Heriot Watt University, Bryan worked as a software engineer with Burroughs Machines on their first family of personal computers, then moved back to Edinburgh with the WM company as part of their online investment accounting team.

Bryan joined the University in 1986, and was based in Old College to lead the newly-established support team for microcomputers in administrative and faculty offices. In March 2007 he became acting director of the IT User Services Division in IS, until the User Services Division was created in August.

For the past three years Bryan has led the IS service management improvement programme, which grew out of our adoption of ITIL; the University is in the process of procuring a service management system to support further development of this initiative and increase the benefits we derive from it. Bryan has also led the creation of the IS Services Catalogue which underpins the structure of the new IS website and which has been used as a model by several other universities.

Jeff Haywood (VP-IS)

Inside

New User Services Division

This expanded issue of BITs focuses on a major realignment of IS support services

IS Resource Centres

The Learning & Resource Centre and the Graphics & Multimedia Resource Centre will be reborn

eLearning resources

The support for online teaching and assessment is steadily increasing

IS Cream Van

A novel way to find IS services and support

Masterpieces

17 University treasures exhibited in an 18th



Bryan MacGregor (IS)

Why change User Services??

When Information Services was restructured in 2006–2007, the creation of two user support divisions resulted in uncertainty for users and support staff about the effectiveness of help processes, and concerns over unnecessary duplication. The Help and Support Review in 2008 made several recommendations to address these issues, which included a further reorganisation of the User Services divisions and greater recognition of the role played by local support staff.

These were the recommendations:

Improve Awareness of IS Help Services

- 1: Improve awareness of services available amongst Users
- 2: Improve awareness of services and help processes amongst IS and School/Unit staff

Embracing the ITIL framework

- 3: Adopt ITIL framework for service management improvement
- 4: Publish and maintain an active Business Service Catalogue

The New IS Help Service

- 5: Redefine the IS Help Service
- 6: Provide relevant, up-to-date and clear Self-Help pages
- 7: Develop a network of IS Helpdesks and establish an IS Helpline
- 8: Confirm the front-line and second-line support network and management
- 9: Ensure effective communication of Service Alerts and Updates

Help in Schools and Other Units

- 10: Schools/Units to declare and confirm contact point if running their own front-line help service

The Next Steps

- 11: Procure a Service Management Software package
- 12: Establish IS User Services Organisational Structure
- 13: Address IS staff training and development needs
- 14: Re-evaluate help available for laptops

A significant amount of work has already been carried out on these recommendations, and this will continue into 2010.

The User Services Division has settled into place, and the new IS Helpline is now receiving, logging and addressing all user calls where the local unit has elected not to run a front-line service. For a list of the latter use the Help and Advice link on the IS home page at www.ed.ac.uk/is

The Helpline team is also responsible for outgoing messages about service availability, also easily accessed from the same home page as the Service Status and Alerts link.

The redesigned IS website has provided the ideal platform to deliver on many of the recommendations. We hope it is easier to find the information you need about IS services, how to gain access, and what to do if something unexpected happens. If you have comments on any page please use the feedback link in the left-hand menu. We are trying very hard to keep these pages accurate and up-to-date, and we value user input.

The User Services Division doesn't just react to routine issues affecting day-to-day business. The other sections in the Division are striving to be more proactive in the areas of training and awareness, enhancing existing services, improving the development of new services, and making better provision for innovations.

The project to procure a new service management software package is at an advanced stage, and we expect to announce the selected package and supplier, and timescales for implementation, in January. This will replace our existing Call Management Service (CMS) and provide extended functionality in support and delivery of all our services.

Bryan MacGregor (IS)

College consultancy services

The College Consultancy teams provide high-level professional advice in the domains of IT, Library and eLearning. This summary of the three teams is supplemented by specific responsibilities and contact information for team members on the IS website.

HSS

Head: **Abdul Majothi**
 Web: www.ed.ac.uk/is/hss-consultancy
 Email: HSS-Consultancy@ed.ac.uk

MVM

Head: **Irene McGowan**
 Web: www.ed.ac.uk/is/mvm-consultancy
 Email: MVM-Consultancy@ed.ac.uk

SCE

Head: **Richard Battersby**
 Web: www.ed.ac.uk/is/sce-consultancy
 Email: SCE-Consultancy@ed.ac.uk

The Teams' roles include:

- Consulting with and advising staff and students on IT, Library and eLearning issues
- Ensuring robust delivery of existing services and enabling innovation in service delivery in the areas of IT, Library and eLearning
- Developing a clear understanding of the needs of the Colleges and Schools, and focused on delivering quality services for all users
- Discovering, assessing and promoting services, resources, collections and facilities
- Liaising with Information Services colleagues on testing and piloting new and emerging educational technologies
- Facilitating the flow of information to and from the Colleges and Schools, and from external users, to Information Services

Bryan MacGregor (IS)

About Help Services

IS Help Services is a section of the new User Services Division, and it provides a first point of contact for enquiries about Library services, IT and eLearning.

Help Services includes the IS Helpline, the IS Helpdesk in the Main Library, IS Helpdesks and service desks at site libraries, and the 'Ask a Librarian' service.

The Help Services team aims to:

- provide first-class, user-focused first-line help covering library, eLearning and IT to all the diverse user communities in the University.
- provide clear and reduced channels of communication for users to seek information and report problems, in person, or by email, telephone, online form, fax or other means.
- offer robust services, acceptable response times and extensive hours of service availability.

Contacting the IS Helpline

The IS Helpline is the primary route for all enquiries about our Library, IT and eLearning services, or if you don't know who else to contact. There is a separate Helpline for Moray House School of Education.

IS Helpline

Email: IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk
Tel: **+44 (0)131 651 5151**
Int: **51 51 51**

The IS Helpline is open in Semester:

Monday – Thursday 9:00am – 9:50pm;
Friday 9:00am – 6:50pm;
Saturday 9:00am – 4:50pm;
Sunday 12 noon – 6.50pm.

IS Helpline – Moray House

IS help with IT for staff and students at the Moray House School of Education:

Email: Helpline@education.ed.ac.uk
Tel: **+44 (0)131 651 6689**
Int: **51 66 89**

Some Schools and Units operate a local IT Helpline: please check 'School and unit locally operated helplines' under 'Help and advice' at www.ed.ac.uk/is

IS Helpdesk

Enquiries can also be brought to an IS Helpdesk:

In the *Main Library – IS Helpdesk*

Tel: **+44 (0)131 650 3409**
Fax: **+44 (0)131 651 5041**
Email: IS.Helpdesk@ed.ac.uk

Opening hours:

www.ed.ac.uk/is/main-library-opening

In the *Darwin Library – IS Helpdesk*

Tel: **+44 (0)131 650 5784**
Fax: **+44 (0)131 651 6702**
Email: Darwin.Library@ed.ac.uk

Site libraries can provide help with Library enquiries in relevant subjects: information about their contact details and opening hours is at www.ed.ac.uk/is/

Another source of help is the 'Ask a Librarian' service for in-depth library research enquiries: see following article.

Barry Croucher (IS)



Edinburgh University Library is about to enter its tenth year of using the reference management service QuestionPoint (QP), subscribed from OCLC, and known locally as Ask-a-Librarian.

The QP service allows Library users to interact with Electronic Reference Librarians by email or – at certain advertised times – web-based chat, with seamless integration of chat, follow-up and referral.

Since its launch, the QP/Ask-a-Librarian service has expanded from a total of 490 enquiries in 2001–2002 to 2,500 in 2008–2009, with 97.3% of the latter answered within three working days.

Around 86% of the people who use Ask-a-Librarian are from Edinburgh University, 7% from the UK, 4% from North America, 2% from the European mainland, and 1% from the rest of the world.

Edinburgh University users can Ask-a-Librarian through the web-based enquiry form at www.ed.ac.uk/is/library-help

The Chat service is available at advertised and varied times; look for the Ask-a-Librarian logos!

Lorna Cheyne, Graeme D. Eddie (IS)

IS Resource Centres: relocating and rebranding

The IS Resource Centres in the Main Library and at The King's Buildings – formerly known as the LRC and the GMRC – will be on the move over the coming months, and will be collectively rebranded as 'uCreate' early in the new year.

The Resource Centre in the Main Library will open at the East end of the First Floor in February. The new facility will be entirely bookable online, and will offer the same IT resources as are currently available. Payment for services, including poster printing, will still be made at the IS Helpdesk on the Ground Floor.

The KB Resource Centre, which was in Room 3901 JCMB, has temporarily relocated to the Darwin Library, beside the Helpdesk. Later in 2010 it will move to a permanent new location, as yet to be decided, to make way for the new KB Learning & Teaching Centre in JCMB.

The two new Centres will offer IT facilities for large-format poster printing, scanning, multimedia capture, editing and distribution, and there will be bookable podcast recording booths nearby. We plan to hold regular events, and specialist advice on the use of the facilities will be available by appointment.

Further information will be added to www.lrc.ed.ac.uk

Enquiries should be directed to isrc@ed.ac.uk.

David Findlay (IS)

Bletchley Park Codebreakers

Dr Mark Baldwin will give a talk entitled 'The Codebreakers – Enigma, Bletchley Park and the Battle of the Atlantic' on Wednesday 9th December, at 6.30pm in the University Informatics Forum, 10 Crichton Street.

There are further details at www.edinburgh.bcs.org/events/2009-10/091209.htm

All welcome.

David Muxworthy (BCS)

Library opening hours in Winter Vacation

Main Library

December 2009

Saturday 19th:	Closed
Sunday 20th:	Closed
Monday 21st:	8.30am – 5.00pm (Helpdesk 9am – 4.50pm)
Tuesday 22nd:	8.30am – 5.00pm (Helpdesk 9am – 4.50pm)
Wednesday 23rd:	8.30am – 5.00pm (Helpdesk 9am – 4.50pm)
Thursday 24th:	Closed
Friday 25th:	Closed
Saturday 26th:	Closed
Sunday 27th:	Closed
Monday 28th:	Closed
Tuesday 29th:	10.30am – 5.30pm (Helpdesk closed: self-services only)
Wednesday 30th:	10.30am – 5.30pm (Helpdesk closed: self-services only)
Thursday 31st:	Closed

January 2010

Friday 1st:	Closed
Saturday 2nd:	Closed
Sunday 3rd:	Closed
Monday 4th:	Closed
Tuesday 5th:	8.30am – 5.00pm (Helpdesk 9am – 4.50pm)
Wednesday 6th:	8.30am – 5.00pm (Helpdesk 9am – 4.50pm)
Thursday 7th:	8.30am – 5.00pm (Helpdesk 9am – 4.50pm)
Friday 8th:	8.30am – 5.00pm (Helpdesk 9am – 4.50pm)
Saturday 9th:	Closed
Sunday 10th:	Closed

Self-services operate when the Main Library is open outwith the IS Helpdesk service hours. Only people with valid entry cards will be admitted during the self-service hours. The last admission to the Library is ten minutes before the building closes. A warning bell will sound 30 minutes and then 15 minutes before the Library closes. Self-issue, self-return and photocopying facilities will then close.

Site Libraries

Saturday 19th to Wednesday 23rd December 2009:
and Tuesday 5th to Sunday 10th January 2010

Monday to Friday: 9.00am – 5.00pm
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

Thursday 24th December 2009 to Monday 4th January 2010: **Closed**

Exceptions:

Roslin Institute Library,
open Monday to Friday 8.45am – 12.30pm.

Scottish Studies Library,
also closed from 1.00pm to 2.00pm.

Western General Hospital Library,
open until 7.00pm Monday to Thursday.

Staffed services end ten minutes before closing.
Some sites may close earlier than 5pm on 23rd December: please check locally.

All Libraries

Please cooperate with Library and security staff in clearing Library buildings promptly at closing times.

Normal Semester hours resume on Monday 11th January.

Barry Croucher, Pam Clouston (IS)

The Operational Services Section

Operational Services responsibilities revolve solely around the IT domain (unlike the other five USD sections which also cover Library and eLearning).

The main emphasis is on second-line support and development for desktop and personal computing services across all platforms, and systems administration of College and Support Group file and print server infrastructure. The section also advises all three Support Groups on the specification and procurement of office IT equipment and software.

Primary Activities include:

- support of services for MS Windows, Apple Mac, Linux desktops and laptops.
- technical backup and advice to Help Services frontline teams; some staff are located at selected sites across campus for second-line activity or rollout duties.
- coordination of the second-line support network of Computing Officers across IS, Schools and Support Group units.
- provision of good staff development programmes for the second-line network of staff.
- advice on IT.
- encouragement of standardised working in all three Support Groups to enable improved sharing of systems and data.
- management of file servers for access to file space, profiles, print queues etc.
- definition and management of a supported service for laptops for University members.
- project-related work, mainly in the testing and acceptance role, ensuring smooth and proper change and release management.
- assistance with the rollout and migration of office systems and updates – such as EXSEED, the supported desktop at Roslin, and migration from First Class at the School of Education.
- promotion of Service Management initiatives around awareness, training and business process improvements.
- introduction of a software suite to provide the required level of integration across all service support and delivery disciplines.

Bryan MacGregor (IS)

Do you need **security certificates for your website?**

Update to the JANET Server Certificate Service

We have received notice from JANET(UK) that the existing agreement to provide free Globalsign X.509 certificates for not-for-profit web and other services using SSL encryption is coming to an end.

JANET is instead signing up to a new TERENA (Trans-European Research and Education Networking Association) contract for server certificates provided by Comodo. This new contract will start before the end of 2009, and the existing Globalsign agreement will expire in January 2010.

All certificates issued by Globalsign will remain valid until their expiry date, so no immediate action needs to be taken by people using them. This is a change to earlier advice we had received, which suggested that all certificates were going to be revoked.

The process of applying for a Comodo certificate is simpler than before. Information Services will be able to issue them directly for any University-owned domain name without having to request them from JANET(UK)/UKERNA. When we have worked through the details of the application process we will publish the details on our certificate web pages at www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/fmd/unix/certificates/admin.html

The official notice from JANET(UK) about this is at www.ja.net/services/scs/index.html

Graeme Wood (IS)

New Firewalls for critical UNIX servers

The project to install new firewalls on the UNIX servers which run the University's critical Corporate IT applications has been completed successfully.

The new firewalls significantly increase the capacity, stability and resilience of the infrastructure that these applications rely on, and played a large part in the continuous availability of services during matriculation and start of term.

The following deliverables were successfully completed through the project:

1. a new firewall pair with greater-capacity hardware, more stable software and reliable resilience with automated failover capability.
2. a secure infrastructure which does not adversely impact the experience of users accessing the University's corporate services.
3. a firewall infrastructure which performs adequately during the high usage periods of matriculation and start of term.
4. a clear plan to monitor and assess, at a pre-determined frequency, the overall health status and key performance metrics of the firewall cluster.
5. the functionality and capacity to retain relevant performance data over a twelve-month period.

Further information can be obtained by emailing Mark.D'Amara@ed.ac.uk.

Mark D'Amara (IS)

New in the **University Website**

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies has recently joined the new Website:

www.ed.ac.uk/vet

There is a brand new site focusing on researcher development, providing updated and expanded information on training courses, resources and career development support, and guidance and advice on working at the University, with sections for both new and existing researchers.

www.ed.ac.uk/researcher-development

The Communications and Marketing team is now sharing its expertise on its newly-launched site, with a range of services to support the University's work and business.

www.ed.ac.uk/communications-marketing

I look forward to sharing news of further arrivals in Polopoly in the coming weeks.

Dawn Ellis (University Website Project)

Main Library Redevelopment: the next big step

The First Floor is still on schedule to be completed by the contractors in January. There will then be a short 'fitting out' period when Information Services will move in equipment to make the floor fully operational.

The major redevelopment work will then move up to the Second Floor, where clearance will begin in earnest after exams finish on 18th December. Some 40 staff will move to the former bindery space on the Lower Ground Floor. Collections will also be moving:

- Music goes to the Third Floor, in the space currently housing the current journals.
- Current Journals go to the Lower Ground Floor.
- Most of the remaining Second Floor collections will go out to the Library Research Annexe.

Detailed information will be published via the usual channels and websites as soon as it is available.

Fiona Boyd (IS)

eLearning resources from Learning Services

The Learning Services section of the User Services Division provides specialist tools and a range of training opportunities to empower you to take advantage of new technology for learning and teaching.

Some of the services we provide are highlighted on these two pages. As well as supporting and developing WebCT and related services for the University, we encourage experimentation and innovation using technologies such as lecture capture, virtual classroom and mobile applications, and we help evaluate the effectiveness of educational innovations. We operate two Resource Centres for the University, about to be rebranded as uCreate, to support multimedia and accessibility work.

Full details are provided at
www.ed.ac.uk/is/elearning
www.ed.ac.uk/is/skills

Nora Mogey (IS)

Txt messaging @ ed

Have you ever considered using SMS text messaging as a method of communication? If so you may be interested to hear that the University now subscribes to the edutxt service from txttools.

This web-based application allows you to send and receive SMS text messages securely from your desktop to a large group or single mobile phone instantly, in a way that is proved to save time and money. Currently over 45% of UK Colleges and Universities send critical messages with this service.

The service offers the following benefits:

- instantly send a message to a group or individual from your computer
- schedule a message to go later in the day, week, month or year
- track the delivery of the message to the handset
- enable users to opt in to a service by sending a text message
- quick, discreet, to the point, to the person and inexpensive

A WebCT PowerLink has been installed which allows instructors to send messages to students enrolled in their sections using the mobile numbers they have entered into their profile.

If you would like further information regarding this service please check our web page at www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/CMC/sms.phtml

BoB: National off-air recording and archive service

IS Learning Services has subscribed to Box of Broadcasts, an off-air recording and broadcast media archive service for Higher Education Institutions which have BUFVC (British Universities Film & Video Council) membership and an ERA+ licence (Educational Recording Agency).

BoB allows individual users to record programmes scheduled to be broadcast over the next seven days and to retrieve programmes buffered from the previous seven days of recorded channels. Users have their own online space in which they can store links to recorded, archived and scheduled broadcasts. Playlists can be created in this space and shared with other users. National digital terrestrial Freeview channels are available for recording, and all recorded programmes become available as a searchable archive to every BoB National member.

For further information, please see www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/services/bob/

Grademark: electronic marking/ feedback system

Are you interested in paperless marking? Do you want to give students a more comprehensive feedback experience, while saving you time over the traditional pen and paper method?

You might like to try Grademark!

This electronic marking and feedback system is intuitive and easy to use, and if you already use TurnItIn's plagiarism-detection features, it's a small step to mark and give feedback electronically as well.

Features include:

- 100% paperless system
- faster than traditional grading
- standardised editing marks
- ability to assess students over time
- fully customizable rubrics
- works with all subjects

There is fuller information at: www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/services/plagiarism/grademark.phtml

Please get in touch via the IS Helpline (IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk) if you would like to find out more.

New self-registration option for WebCT

Most of the enrolments in WebCT courses are automatically managed every night using data from Registry. These data can also be used to generate 'shared courses' which contain enrolments from more than one Registry course – for example to allow a course to be set up for all honours students.

Now a further option has been added: the ability for students to enrol themselves in a course. This option has to be enabled for a course; it is not available by default. A unique URL is generated which can be placed as a link on any website for those who wish to enrol themselves on the course. EASE is used to identify the user making the request and an option is provided for a contact person to be notified by email when an enrolment is added.

For further details see www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/webct/basic.phtml

Are you fed up struggling to read students' handwriting?

In December some courses will again offer students the choice of writing their essay examinations either using pen and paper, or using their own laptop computers.

The ground floor of Adam House has been equipped with power – which means students don't need to worry about battery life – and a wireless network set up specially for exams. This creates a venue where up to 70 students can type their essay-exams.

Research funded by the Principal's Teaching Award compared marks for handwritten and typed scripts, and demonstrated that there is no reason why students should not be offered this choice; the software deals with security and data encryption, and everything else remains the same: the examination question is still provided on paper in the exam hall, and scripts are circulated on paper for marking – the difference being that the typed scripts are all legible!

If you'd like to know more please contact Nora Mogey (email Nora.Mogey@ed.ac.uk) in IS Learning Services.

Questionmark Perception

Questionmark Perception is a comprehensive and versatile assessment system which allows for delivery of a range of tests/exams, including high-stakes summative assessment in a secure environment, and is one of the centrally-supported assessment systems in the University.

The system allows for 22 question types, from the standard multiple-choice question, to more complex question types including 'drag and drop' and 'flash'. Questions are authored using Authoring Manager, a fully featured Windows-based application, and allows for all of the question types; there is also a browser-based authoring tool which supports a limited number of question types, but offers an easier interface and requires less training.

Assessments can be accessed in a number of ways. Tests can be accessed direct from a VLE without the need to log in, or can be delivered in a fully secure locked-down environment for high-stakes exams, as well as other methods for integrating or accessing exams.

There is a wide range of Reporting tools in Perception, some designed to provide feedback for students, others designed to help academic staff analyse how effective the questions are at testing students. Each report can be set up to individual requirements by the use of templates, so almost any data you may require can be displayed in the format you wish.

Questionmark Perception usage has grown exponentially over the last few years, from around 6,000 student assessments three years ago to over 50,000 now, with formative assessment making up most of the usage.

More information on Perception:

- on the IS website: www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/perception/
- on the Questionmark website: www.questionmark.co.uk/uk/index.aspx

Embedding web forms in WebCT

The Form Submission tool in WebCT has been available for some time and allows instructors to embed web forms into their sections. A web form provides a convenient mechanism for gathering structured data in a manner which may, for example, resemble a printed form. The data entered by students are forwarded by WebCT mail.

The latest release provides new features, including:

- students can save data before final submission
- previously submitted data can be edited and resubmitted
- forms can be shared with colleagues
- values can be retrieved from and saved to the Grade Book

One of the benefits of the Grade Book integration is that it allows the Form Submission tool to be used in conjunction with WebCT selective release. So, for example, content may not be released to students until they have responded to a form. If you would like to know more, or require assistance with creating forms for use with the tool, please consult our web page at www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/webct/formsub_pl.phtml

Stephen Vickers (IS)

ePortfolios are gathering speed

During the last academic year the ePortfolio system 'PebblePAD' was used by 14 undergraduate and postgraduate courses across the University as a tool to support a variety of activities.

PebblePAD is a web-based system which allows people to make and store records about their learning, achievements and goals. Users can create a variety of new records using scaffolding and other forms and tools which are provided, or they can upload existing files including rich multimedia, then arrange, annotate and present these as they desire. Some students see the system as the educational equivalent of Facebook.

The MSc in Advancing Nursing Practice is one example of how the ePortfolio system can be used. As an integral part of the programme it helped to support the professional and personal development of the students by enabling them to share their work experiences, to define their own needs (using the built-in ePortfolio tools), and to work at their own pace. Students particularly liked the interface, the blogging tool (also used for communication) and the built-in word processor. Programme Director Anne Robertson could not imagine the course running without the ePortfolio system, and sees its potential as being yet bigger.

Robert Chmielewski (IS)



IT Futures Conference 2009

Drowning in data or just waving? – Supporting new research and collaborations at Edinburgh

Tuesday 15th Dec at the Informatics Forum

*****MyEd bookings are now open. Please book your place through MyEd.*****

How can Information Technology help YOU with YOUR research?

Collaborating, finding, sharing, interpreting, ...? Humanists and technologists alike have stories to tell and lessons to share. This year's IT Futures conference will include presentations from a diversity of researchers at Edinburgh, and from invited guest speakers.

- Collaboration tools – Google Wave? A.nnotate?
- What might the Grid, the Cloud, the Semantic Web mean for you?
- Mobile phones and maps
- Sharing research data
- The Wode Psalter – a case study of collaborative manuscript analysis
- Where is eResearch going at Edinburgh?

We welcome posters that are related to any of this year's topics. For more information please contact Mariza Dima (email Mariza.Dima@ed.ac.uk).

Programme:

- 9.00 Registration: coffee/tea available
- 9.30 Welcome: Jeff Haywood, Vice Principal Knowledge Management
- Collaboration and research at Edinburgh:**
- 9.40 Instrumental meetings – Jean Carletta
- Service confusion and user ambivalence: the slow progress of software and services for collaboration – James Stewart
- Putting the Place into Locative Media – Chris Speed
- Using the Semantic Web – Ewan Klein
- 11.00 Coffee/Tea
- Supporting collaboration and research at Edinburgh:**
- 11.30 What next for research data at the University of Edinburgh? – Sheila Cannell
- Collaboration to Curation: The High Rise Project meets Edinburgh DataShare – Eduardo Serafin, Robin Rice & Stuart McDonald
- Research publications service – Simon Bains
- Panel Session – Collaborating and sharing at Edinburgh – Sheila Cannell, David Dewhurst, Malcolm Atkinson, Mike Fourman, James Stewart
- 13.00 Lunch
- What next for e-research at Edinburgh?**
- 14.00 Data intensive research – Malcolm Atkinson
- Development of e-research at Edinburgh – Mike Fourman
- 15.00 Coffee/Tea
- Some new technologies:**
- 15.30 Cloud computing – Mark Parsons
- Introducing Google Wave – to be confirmed...
- Introducing A.nnotate – Iain Woodhouse
- 16.30 Finish

Mariza Dima (ITFutures group)

Service Management Training

Information Services has a programme of continuous service improvement, as part of which it has been running courses for over two years on the best practice advice on service management. So far, 157 University staff have been through this formal, certified training, 80% of them being IS staff. A free, in-house course has also been running successfully with 224 University staff attending, 66% from IS.

Five IS staff have built on the certified training by completing a masters-level course in Service Management.

All this training has provided a theoretical foundation for the improvements taking place within IS, including our recent re-organisation of User Services. All Help Services staff will be attending at least the first in-house session, to cover the concept of the Service Desk and the role envisaged for Help Services.

Early in the New Year, managers in Help Services are to take this one step further and be formally trained as Practitioners in the Service Desk and Incident Management disciplines.

All of the training will be put to extensive use as new processes are developed around the Service Desk and used throughout Help Services and beyond. For further information on the courses available please see www.is.ed.ac.uk/itil/

Robert Gormley (IS)

LAMP meeting on 'Social Media'

The next meeting of the Librarians, Archivists and Museum Professionals' Forum will take place on Friday 4th December, with a presentation by Nicola Osborne, EDINA's Social Media Officer. The meeting is at 12.30 in Faculty Room South of the David Hume Tower; a (modest) sandwich lunch will be available from midday. Please book through MyEd.

There are details of Nicola's presentation on the LAMP wiki at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/FQIUAw>

Anne Donnelly (IS)

IS Cream Van Draws a Crowd

Or: “Would you like a flake with that?”

The IS User Services Division is keen to support distance learners, and to deliver help to where our users are studying. We have developed a novel tool for the online MSc in e-Learning, to reach distance learners in Second Life: the IS Cream Van.

The van will be the focal point for research to discover the views of visitors to the Virtual University of Edinburgh; is there a role for Information Services in virtual worlds, and if so, what should it look like?

The IS Cream Van fits in with the seaside environment and informal learning spaces in virtual Holyrood Park, in the space visited by MSc students' avatars. The van has all the essential attributes, including a large ice cream cone on its roof, it can be driven, and it can play musical jingles to let student/avatars know it's there. More importantly, student/avatars can 'touch' the van's menu selections to obtain not only an ice cream but also useful information, links to web resources such as e-journals, and contacts for further help.

Help Services staff avatars were present with the IS Cream Van in October to 'serve' a group of student/avatars undergoing orientation and induction; group conversations took place between them and the tutors using live chat. More 'staffed van times' are planned for the New Year.

The MSc in E-Learning: www.education.ed.ac.uk/e-learning

The Virtual University of Edinburgh: www.vue.ed.ac.uk

To visit the van in Second Life: <http://slurl.com/secondlife/Vue%20South/113/158/21>

Barry Croucher (IS)



University experiments with Twitter

The University has a Postgraduate Open Day on 4th December, and for the first time there will be an experiment to see if Twitter can add value to it. This will be done by including the 'hashtag' #uoepgopen in Twitter messages ("tweets"), and by searching for tweets containing this marker using sites such as twitterfall.com

We hope that potential distance learners, and others who can't get to Edinburgh, will include #uoepgopen in tweets to pose questions, follow the event and be involved via Twitter; and that people who do attend the Open Day might use the hashtag to tweet about the event. A report on the experiment will be published in due course. The University is in Twitter: see <http://twitter.com/UniofEdinburgh>

Fiona Littleton (IS)

Life in another world

The Journal of Virtual Worlds Research has just published its latest issue, with a range of articles around the themes of Technology, Economy and Standards, at jvwresearch.org

The team which runs the MSc in e-Learning course held a graduation event in Second Life in November, in parallel with the conventional School of Education graduation, for its graduates in absentia. Graduating eLearning students were able to mingle with current students and colleagues in Vue, the Virtual University of Edinburgh in Second Life. The organisers would be happy to advise others who might wish to do something similar (email fiona.littleton@ed.ac.uk).

Fiona Littleton (IS)

eLPP workshop to explore eLearning at the University

Does your job involve eLearning? Have you ever thought about the contribution that your eLearning role makes to the University?

If so, please join us at an interactive workshop organised by the eLPP forum – from 10am to 12 noon on Wednesday 9th December, in Teaching Studio 1206c, James Clerk Maxwell Building (JCMB), at The King's Buildings.

The workshop will aim to discover some of the wide-ranging roles and activities of eLearning professionals and practitioners at Edinburgh. How do these relate to the University's Leadership and Management (Competencies) Framework, now being used as a tool for recruitment, review and day-to-day management?

In the workshop, we will map participants' examples of eLearning activity against the Framework, using the interactive facilities in one of the University's cutting-edge teaching studios (an interesting experience in itself). This will form a starting point for discussion about how best to highlight and increase the value of eLearning in the University.

In a previous run of this workshop, participants agreed that this self-reflection and sharing was of huge benefit in understanding and appreciating their own skills and knowledge of eLearning use in the workplace.

You can book your place via **MyEd**.

Erin Jackson (Law)

Exchange diary and mail service now live

The good teamwork of Information Services staff with colleagues from around the University has enabled the EXSEED project to achieve a major milestone, with the successful launch of the new Exchange Diary and Email service to hundreds of pilot users.

In a fairly typical reaction, a prominent user representative reported his pleasure with the transition, suggesting that apart from minor issues it could hardly have gone more smoothly.

Careful preparation and extensive testing with pilot users paid off well. Some early problems with email routing were quickly diagnosed and sorted out. For many users the migration took only 15–20 minutes, and with the IS Helpline prepared for any incoming calls, only a dozen isolated incidents were logged during migration. The new service is now live and working.

This pilot stage was the most complex step in the migration process, encompassing both email and calendar data. Although the next phase will involve larger numbers, the process is simpler, and proven to be fit for purpose.

You can find out about the pilot launch and the migration schedule on the project Wiki at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/ITS016/EXSEED+Launch+Information>

Everyone in the project thanks all staff involved for their hard work, and the community in general for the support so far. The project team has been contributing to the discussion on the ITPF mailing list and is well aware that more work is required for Linux users; we will not lose sight of these. Furthermore, the team will plan a series of user clinics over the coming weeks to help anyone who requires more personal help and guidance.

Mark Wetton (IS)

Digital music on trial until end of semester

Provided by Alexander St Press, Music Online aims to be a comprehensive database of streaming music audio, scores and reference on the web.

The digital music library includes classical music, contemporary world music and jazz. It is accompanied by a reference package including a classical scores library and the Garland Encyclopedia of World Music online.

This resource is available on trial until 18th December, at www.lib.ed.ac.uk/news/trialsnew.shtml

Christine Love-Rodgers (IS)

Masterpieces

“... the beautiful and the gorgeous, the controversial and the jaw-dropping ...”

This is the inaugural exhibition in the new Exhibition Room in the Main Library.

The exhibition will showcase 17 particular masterpieces which demonstrate the richness and diversity of the University Collections.

The exhibition opens on 11th December and runs until 14th March 2010; opening hours are 10am to 5pm Monday to Saturday, and 12 noon to 5pm on Sundays, except when the Library itself is closed.

Jacky MacBeath (IS)



Corporate IT planning for 2010–2011

The Corporate IT systems planning exercise for 2010–2011 is under way.

The timetable and processes to identify, cost and prioritise projects is broadly similar to previous years, with the additional requirement that, as well as helping deliver the University's strategic plan, projects need to have a strong focus on delivering operational efficiencies, improving business processes, or delivering income or other realisable benefits.

As a first step, the various business areas are currently putting together a list of the projects they would like to do in 2010–2011. The provisional list of projects was published in November, and feedback is sought by mid-December.

Further details are available on the projects website at www.projects.ed.ac.uk/planning/Corporate_IT/index.shtml

Liam McDowell (IS)

IS Skills Development

The IS Skills Development team provides a range of learning opportunities to help develop your IT skills, both for personal development and to enable you to work and study more effectively.

Taught courses

We offer over 40 different taught courses on a scheduled basis, usually lasting half a day or less. These cover a variety of IT topics and aim to help you carry out specific tasks such as using wikis for collaborative work or writing a thesis using Word. They also extend to more technical disciplines.

Most courses combine tutor demonstration with practical exercises, and you can keep your workbook afterwards for reference.

Our tutors are experienced IS staff with specialist knowledge of the subjects they teach. By sharing their knowledge, they help transfer learning from the training room to your place of work or study.

Courses usually take place in the central area, and are free to University staff and students. For upcoming course dates and bookings, see www.ed.ac.uk/is/skills

If you prefer to learn on your own, or at a different time to the scheduled courses, you can download course workbooks and exercise files from our documents catalogue at the above web address.

Time for a taster...

Our popular lunchtime 'taster' sessions give you an opportunity to get to grips with a function or feature of the software you use, while you eat your sandwiches. You can learn how to create a table of contents in Word in just a few keystrokes, control movie clips with action buttons in PowerPoint, analyse Excel data with PivotTables, and many more. For the current programme see www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/tasters.html

Arrange a private tasting...

If you have at least five people in your team who all want to learn the same sorts of things, you can choose from our list of taster topics and we'll run a session specially for you.

Coming soon...

Do you have to produce a research poster and don't know where to start? We are developing an online resource to provide guidance on design, the use of graphics and colour, and how to prepare your poster for printing. The course will also provide instructions on how to create a poster using PowerPoint.

Skills development opportunities for students

We run a programme of free computer skills training for all undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Our iSkills Seminars are short introductions to a wide range of software, including EndNote, Excel, LaTeX and databases. The seminars consist of a 45-minute presentation and demonstration, followed by up to one hour of self-paced practical work at a computer with the tutor on hand to help. They run in both semesters, in the Main Library and the King's Buildings Centre.

There is more information, including the timetable, at www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/seminars.html

Please book via the MyEd Event Booking channel.

Other computer skills training opportunities for students, including the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), are detailed on our web pages at www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/students.html

Shona Matchett (IS)

IS skills development courses December

Dates of half- and full-day taught courses and one-hour taster sessions, primarily for staff and postgraduates, are listed below. Please see our web pages for further details and bookings: www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses

Jenni Reeves (IS)

Date	Course	Location
Dec 1	WebCT Communication Tools	BP
2	Managing Bibliographies with Reference Manager	BP
2	WebCT Assessment and Assignments	BP
3	Intermediate Unix	BP
3	Excel Introduction: Creating Basic Spreadsheets and Charts	BP
7	Managing Bibliographies with EndNote	BP
8	Introduction to Access Database Management	BP
8	Producing a Thesis using Word	BP
8	Editing Web Pages with Contribute	BP
9	Excel advanced: Manipulating and managing data	BP
10	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	BP
10	Writing for the Web	BP
10	Testing the Usability of your Website	BP
11	Creating a table of contents in Word (T)	DHT
17	Tracking changes to Word documents (T)	DHT

Venues:

BP – 19 Buccleuch Place

DHT – David Hume Tower

(T) denotes lunchtime taster session – bring your sandwiches!

Musical wardrobe wins **Scottish BAFTA**



Cybraphon consists of several self-playing vintage instruments, including a reed organ and an Indian accordion, housed in a Victorian wardrobe, and driven by software designed by Simon Kirby, Professor of Language Evolution in the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences. Its creators describe it as “an autonomous emotional robot band” – and it has just won the award in BAFTA’s Interactive category.

Behind its antique appearance a computer gives Cybraphon a personality which can range through a wide variety of ‘emotions’ depending on how much notice is being taken of it – not unlike the temperament of a conventional rock band. The system gauges the attention it is getting by checking its Facebook and Twitter accounts, and Googling itself to monitor reviews and comments.

If Cybraphon feels popular, it will play an upbeat tune and post happy Twitter messages to its fans. When publicity dies down, it sinks into depression and grumbles.

Cybraphon has spent the last few months in InSpace, the new gallery in the Informatics Forum, and has now moved to a secret location where it will be back online shortly to keep an eye on the world keeping an eye on it, watching and waiting until its next large-scale public appearance in the Glasgow International Festival next Spring. Meanwhile you can find out more about it at www.cybraphon.com

And with Christmas coming up, you might be pleased to know you can buy its music at <http://cybraphon.bandcamp.com>

Nick Stroud (IS)

(Another of Professor Kirby’s research interests, the evolution of language, was recently featured on BBC’s *Horizon* and is linked at www.ling.ed.ac.uk/~simon)

If you require this document in an alternative format (e.g. large print, Braille) please contact Nick Stroud, Information Services, University of Edinburgh, Main Library, George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9LJ, or by email to BITS@ed.ac.uk.

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Contributions to BITS are welcomed.

Copy deadline for January BITS:

Wednesday 9th December