

# Information Services Edinburgh Bits



## The Chancellor visits the Main Library



Douglas Robertson

Sheila Cannell (Director of the University's Library Services) and students discuss different forms of study – and the investment and redevelopment taking place to support them – with the Duke of Edinburgh during his visit to the Main Library at the end of February.

## Inside

### Rise of the academic nomad

An 'IT Futures' seminar examines the increasing mobility in academic work

### Students get the message

The University has a new Web-based SMS texting service

### Fast, secure laptop backups

An Informatics research project aims to find a new and better way

### Skills development in new home

The IS Skills Development team – and others – can now use the new training and meeting suite in the Main Library

### edikt2010 Symposium

A meeting at which Scottish researchers can discuss all the ways in which computers might help

## Big step taken to improve services

Since Spring 2007, Information Services has been working to exploit the benefits of ITIL, the Government's "IT Infrastructure Library", in order to improve our service delivery to the University.

ITIL was launched over 20 years ago and has since evolved a cohesive set of best practices, drawn from public and private sectors. Its principles are now applied with advantage to the management of services well beyond the world of IT.

There are several aspects to implementing this widely-used framework for service management, as described in detail over the page. The most important involves the people who run the services, and IS has led related training and awareness in the University over the past three years. Behind the scenes, we have developed a Service Catalogue which will underpin improvements in service management, and which was used to design the Guide to IS Services on the new IS website.

With these foundations in place it is now time to adopt new procedures and systems to reap the full benefits. Over the next few months we will be installing a system called TOPdesk which will replace our present Call Management System and extend functionality to cover the full range of ITIL disciplines, such as change and release and configuration management. In order to obtain best value for the University, we are doing this in collaboration with the Universities of St. Andrews and Abertay Dundee, and we look forward confidently to steady improvements in our services and operation.

Simon Marsden (IS)



Earth Hour, 27th March, 8.30 – 9.30pm

## Continuous improvement

The IS vision is to provide continually improving services fit for a world-class University.

We have studied industry advice on managing services and have invested heavily in staff development to allow us to adopt and adapt best practice for the University.

Best practice covers People, Processes, Products and Partners. We cover all four areas in our pursuit of quality services that support the University's core activities.

### People

The cornerstone of service improvement is investing in the people who provide the services. For three years we have been providing training in the theory of service management, and establishing the key concepts in a common language.

Well over 200 staff have attended our Service Improvement sessions, which are free to all University staff: one third of attendees have come from outwith IS. Over 150 staff have gone on to achieve formal certification with the Foundation Certificate in IT Service Management.

Service improvement was a major target of the IS Help and Support Review in 2008, and led to the formation of the IS User Services Division in August 2009. A key requirement is to have a single point of contact through a 'Service Desk', and the new Division has established this.

Senior Help Services staff have taken the Practitioner course in Service Desk and Incident Management, and Colin Watt and Robert Gormley of Information Services have become ITIL Experts, one of the highest available qualifications.

### Processes

Service improvement will also mean changing the way we work, and the introduction of new processes. Our process maturity in handling user requests and implementing change has been assessed against an internationally recognised scale, which identified clear room – and strategies – for improvement.

The external consultant recommended ways to improve our processes, and we are implementing the suggestions. Over the next six months, we will enhance our processes for handling calls, particularly in User Services.

Measurement and reporting are being improved, so that we can see how enhancements improve services. We have already seen an improvement in response times, and will next check user satisfaction to ensure that the quality of service is sustained as we become more responsive.

### Products

It is essential to have service management tools to underpin our improved processes. We have outgrown the current Call Management System, particularly in terms of the information it can provide, so the University has procured a new tool, TOPdesk Enterprise, which we hope will be integrated with the new Identity Management System and EUCLID in time for the next academic session.

TOPdesk has a high market share in Higher Education in Holland and Belgium (reflecting its Dutch origins), and is well established in Germany and the UK. This is its first HE contract in Scotland. In our evaluation the software scored highly for ease of use and supporting best practice.

We have set up a TOPdesk demonstration environment to enable people to try out the software as end-user or service provider. If you would like to use this, please contact [r.gormley@ed.ac.uk](mailto:r.gormley@ed.ac.uk).

### Partners

The choice of TOPdesk was a collaboration of three Scottish universities. Abertay Dundee, St. Andrews and Edinburgh. Edinburgh will host the software and will collaborate further on the common improvements that can be made.

St. Andrews staff have attended training organised by IS: nine have achieved Foundation level status and one has recently become a Practitioner in Service Desk and Incident Management. Staff from Abertay will attend future courses.

This cross-training provides a common basis for improving services in all three institutions, and our expertise has been recognised in wider circles with service management training being provided to the Scottish Crop Research Institute, the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute and the University of Ulster. We have been working on sector-wide issues with UCISA (the Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association), and the IT Service Management Forum.

**Robert Gormley, Angi Lamb** (IS)

## IT Futures seminar: 'The Rise of the Academic Nomad'

Academics regularly work away from Edinburgh, in far-flung and exotic locations. It is also increasingly the case that academics work in a variety of locations when they are 'at home' – including their University office, a home office, the Library, on the train, even coffee shops in town or University cafes.

The IT needs of academic nomads might include the ability to forward University telephone calls to a mobile number, to use laptops rather than desktops, and to be wary of 'managed laptop' solutions.

Could the University do more to support its nomad academics? Are solutions already in place that the nomads haven't caught on to yet?

This workshop will include presentations from academics and IT professionals, with plenty of time to discuss needs and solutions. It takes place at 2–5pm on Wednesday 14th April, in Informatics Forum room 4.31/4.33. Please book your place through MyEd.

**Mariza Dima** (IT Futures Group)

## Finding Data

The Data Library website has been refurbished as part of the redevelopment of the IS website.

The new Data Library service overview has five main sections which provide support for University staff and students in finding, accessing, using, managing and sharing research data for analysis, teaching or coursework.

The streamlined Data Library catalogue is located in the Finding data section. It allows users to browse data sets held at the Data Library or freely available on the Internet – by subject category, data publisher, alphabetically, or by region.

The Data Library website is at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/data-library>

For further information please contact the Data Library (email [datalib@ed.ac.uk](mailto:datalib@ed.ac.uk)).

**Stuart Macdonald** (IS)

## Software news

### Do you get confused when ordering Adobe products?

IS Software Services has introduced a detailed step-by-step guide on how to order Adobe products. It is on the Software Services wiki at

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SoftwareServices/Ordering+Adobe+software>

The guide is aimed at Schools and departments ordering for University computers; there are additional web links for student and personal copies.

### New procedure for ordering Nvivo

Individual copies of Nvivo can no longer be ordered through Software Services; all copies should now be ordered direct from QSR (usually the cheaper option) or through re-sellers.

QSR (owner of NVIVO): <http://www.qsrinternational.com/>

Pugh: <http://www.pugh.co.uk/>

Academia: <http://www.academia.co.uk/>

Joyce Anderson (IS)

### S-Plus to be withdrawn?

There is the distinct possibility that S-Plus will be withdrawn from service at the University in the Summer, and therefore not available next academic year 2010–2011.

Our current S-Plus site licence expires at the end of August. Unfortunately central funds are no longer available to subsidise this. At the moment Software Services takes in just 25% of the annual cost, and if we cannot bring in enough money to cover the annual fee then we will have to give up the site licence and remove the software from the University.

Please email [is.software.sales@ed.ac.uk](mailto:is.software.sales@ed.ac.uk) if you would like to comment on this.

Frances Provan (IS)

## New sms-texting service for the University

Information Services has set up a new service by which University staff can send text messages to students.

The new service has a simple web interface, and messages can be sent to individuals or groups, immediately, at a scheduled time, or as triggered by an incoming txt. User data can be imported from spreadsheets or other existing sources. The service can be fully integrated with WebCT via a powerlink.

Staff can have their own named accounts, and each School or Unit will be provided with initial credits (additional messages can be purchased); each message costs 4p – so a message to a group of five people would cost 20p. Incoming messages have no cost to the University but students will be charged at the operators' standard rate.

Uses of the texting service might include notifications of future events, automated 'treasure hunts', polls and quizzes, checking that absent students are OK, and sharing urgent information. The WebCT integration is currently being enhanced to permit the creation of polls similar to those conducted using 'clicker' technology, but without the need for specialised devices or constraints on location.

There are full details at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/sms-text>

Marc Jennings (IS)

## edikt2010 Symposium: Using computing in your research

edikt2010 is a symposium for Scottish researchers to discuss all aspects of research computing – from simulations to Grids and from visualisations to analysis – in a number of scientific disciplines. It takes place at the e-Science Institute, South College Street, on Wednesday 28th April.

This event is unique in Scotland. It will bring together Scottish researchers who make heavy use of computer simulations, models or analysis to do research, allowing them to swap ideas and see how other scientists use the resources to maximum benefit. The day will be arranged into four sessions covering a wide range of computational research including cell biology, computational chemistry, brain imaging, and bioinformatics.

Speakers include Mark Ainsworth (Strathclyde), Tom Freeman (Roslin Institute), Susana Muñoz Maniega (SFC Brain Imaging Research Centre), Carole Morrison (Chemistry), Mike Tyers (Structural and Molecular Biology), Jano van Hemert (Informatics), and Tony Weir (Information Services).

Registration is free, for anyone in the UK. Lunch and snacks are provided, and there will be poster sessions during the breaks. There are full details of the symposium, and a link for registration, at

<http://www.edikt.org.uk/edikt2/edikt2010>

If you would like to display a poster about your research please contact [t.sloan@epcc.ed.ac.uk](mailto:t.sloan@epcc.ed.ac.uk)

Terry Sloan (EPCC)

## Ninth UK e-Science All Hands Meeting

AHM 2010, the ninth in the series of UK e-Science all-hands meetings, is scheduled to take place in City Hall, Cardiff, on 13–16 September. Modes of participation will include oral presentations, workshops, posters, birds-of-a-feather sessions and tutorials. Plans for the meeting are currently being developed, and participation is invited.

There are full details at

<http://www.allhands.org.uk/>

Elizabeth Vander Meer (NeSC)

## Fast and secure laptop backups

Many people now use laptop computers for a lot of their critical work, as well as their home life, so these store personal photos, music and email, as well as papers, programs and work data. But modern laptop disks are huge – 300Gb is not untypical – and this is very difficult to back up effectively. Central services have difficulty supporting such quantities – and even when they can, backups take too long. Most people therefore have some kind of ad-hoc scheme which involves copying some (rarely all) files to CD/DVD, or external disks, or online services, or ...

A lot of the data is often not unique though. Obviously people share the same system files (if they are running the same operating system). They are also likely to share copies of the same applications, research papers, and even music files with at least one other person. “De-duplication” is a technique which lets us exploit this, by only storing one copy of common files in the backup system. Clearly, this saves space, but it also makes things faster, because you don’t need to back up files which have already been stored by someone else.

However, both personal and work data really should be encrypted before being stored on some remote backup service. Doing this in a conventional way defeats the de-duplication, because people use different keys and the multiple copies of the encrypted data would no longer be the same.

We are trying to build a prototype backup program which uses a new algorithm that encrypts data without breaking the de-duplication. This could potentially provide a backup service that was both secure, and much faster than existing systems, while requiring less storage. We are currently collecting data from typical machines, to try and identify the degree of savings, and to optimise the algorithm.

We would be very grateful to anyone with a Macintosh (laptop or desktop) running OS X Leopard or Snow Leopard who would be willing to help out. This would involve running a small program that collects some information about your files. No file contents, names or other sensitive information is collected. For further information, and to get a copy of the ‘GetStats’ program, see <http://homepages.inf.ed.ac.uk/dcpspaul/iWeb/Informatics/Macbac.html>

**Paul Anderson** (Informatics)



## Edinburgh International Science Festival 2010

This year’s Science Festival runs from 3rd to 17th April, at venues across the city – including the University’s Informatics Forum and its Inspace gallery. Amongst the wide variety of themes and topics there are several meetings with a flavour of IT, including these:

- 5th: ‘The Mind is somewhere north of the neck’: brain mechanisms.
- 7th: the Sidney Michaelson Memorial Lecture (see following article).
- 9th: ‘Fever Pitch’: machine detection of human emotions.
- 13th: ‘Edinburgh Firsts’: Scotland’s latest life-changing innovations.
- 13th: ‘The Arup Lecture’: computers helping to improve concert halls.
- 13th: ‘Designer Life’: synthetic life to develop rapidly in the next decade.
- 17th: ‘The New Intelligence: Working Memory’: the brain’s post-it note.

The full programme is available at <http://www.sciencefestival.co.uk/>

**Nick Stroud** (IS)

## Creating accessible Word 2007 and PDF documents

The local JISC Regional Support Centre has produced an easy-to-use, step-by-step, free guide to help people who need to create accessible documents in Word 2007 or PDF format. You can find out more at <http://scottish-rscs.org.uk/newsfeed/?p=7597>

**Caroline Porteous, Hugh Dailly** (JISC Regional Support Centres)

## Mind, mouse and body: designing engaging technologies

Professor Kristina Höök, head of the Mobile Life centre in Stockholm, will discuss ways of making technology more responsive to our corporeal bodies, through qualities like game play, embodiment, reflection, affective loops and pliability. She will discuss the challenges in recent projects, including eMoto (mobile emotional messaging using gesture), Affective Diary (a way to remember your bodily and social experiences), and Affective Health (a mobile service empowering users to deal with stress).

The talk is presented by the Edinburgh branch of the British Computer Society in memory of University computing pioneer Sidney Michaelson, in partnership with the Science Festival, at 8pm on 7th April, in the Informatics Forum. Tickets are required.

**David Muxworthy** (BCS)

## LIBQUAL+ 2009 survey results

The results of the latest survey into the quality of the University's Library have just been published.

The LibQUAL+ survey was developed by the Association of Research Libraries to help institutions around the world assess their services, and Edinburgh has been participating since 2003. During November, 640 staff and students filled in the online questionnaire – a significant increase on 2007.

### General satisfaction

Three of the survey's questions assessed general levels of satisfaction, and in all categories – undergraduates, postgraduates and staff – these were around 75%, a slight increase since 2007.

### Services

The survey identified the services which undergraduates (UG), postgraduates (PG) and staff (S) value most:

- journal collections: UG, PG, S
- e-resources: UG, PG, S
- making e-resources available outwith the Library: UG, PG, S
- modern equipment to access e-resources: UG
- Library website to find information on own: PG, S

Students reported improvements in services as they actually perceived them, but staff satisfaction has declined slightly, possibly because many staff now use remote services more than face-to-face ones.

### Accommodation

All scores relating to the availability of suitable study space were positive. The rising score for undergraduates is particularly marked. The redevelopment of the Main Library over the past few years is undoubtedly a key factor for students, and it is interesting to see that as the quality improves, the expectation of users also increases.

Information Services is constantly looking to improve accommodation, through incremental changes in libraries, and through major changes such as the Main Library redevelopment, new developments at Easter Bush, and the continuing discussions on provision at The King's Buildings.

### Collections

This is the area where user expectation is highest, and where IS needs to focus most attention. Overall satisfaction has risen since 2007, but only because the undergraduate score increased markedly thanks to the extensive work to make it easier to find books, particularly in the Main Library HUB collection, and the greater availability of e-resources such as e-reserve. The score for both postgraduates and staff has decreased since 2007, suggesting that the University is still not spending enough on print and electronic resources to satisfy their high expectations. The IS Library and Collections Division is looking at how resource discovery can be improved.

### Invaluable feedback

Around half the respondents added comments at the end of the survey, a mixture of positive and negative, brief and detailed. We are studying these carefully and will take action where we can.

You can find the full LibQUAL+ report at <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/about/info.shtml>

We warmly thank all the staff and students who undertook this survey to help IS deliver the best possible library service.

Richard Battersby (IS)

## eProcurement Scotland: strategic service review

The eProcurement Scotl@nd (ePS) service is currently consulting public sector bodies and prospective eProcurement service providers to inform the future vision for the technology and infrastructure required to support advanced procurement and procurement reform.

The review covers all elements of eProcurement, including eOrdering, eSourcing, Catalogue and Content Management, and eInvoicing.

The review plans to build as full a picture as possible of eProcurement practices across the public sector, and will ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to and influence the future vision. The review is overseen by the Scottish Government's eProcurement Programme Board.

Craig Henderson is a member of the eProcurement Programme Board, representing both the University of Edinburgh and the wider Scottish Higher Education sector. If you have any questions or comments about the Strategic Service Review, please contact Craig (email [c.j.henderson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:c.j.henderson@ed.ac.uk), tel 502839).

Further information, updates and opportunities to comment will be published on the Procurement Office website, at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/procurement>

Craig Henderson (Procurement)

## How is your work-life balance?

The March meeting of the local BCS branch looks at 'Work Life Balance for the IT Professional', at 6.30pm on Wednesday 10th March in the Informatics Forum. Three speakers will describe the challenges they face in balancing professional pressures with personal life. There are further details at <http://www.edinburgh.bcs.org/events/2009-10/100310.htm>

This event is BCS Edinburgh's contribution to International Women's Day: all three of the case studies are by women, though the discussion will explore the issues faced by everybody, men and women. All are welcome; there will be refreshments from 6pm.

David Muxworthy (BCS)

## Brown Bag Sessions for managers

The Learning Connections 'Brown Bag Sessions' are designed to provide specific work-related knowledge and understanding to staff from different work groups across the University, as a response to an identified need from colleagues. The sessions are delivered by Learning and Development specialists from Information Services and the College of Science and Engineering, last for just one hour each, and are for anyone with an interest in the topic or with line management responsibilities. Each session begins at 1pm; participants are invited to bring their own lunch (optionally in a brown bag!). Tea and coffee will be provided.

Previous topics have included Presentation Skills, UK Border Agency, Absence Management and Understanding, and Performance Management. Over the coming year, each Brown Bag Session topic will be delivered once – starting with the three listed below; if you would like information on a topic but can't attend the relevant session, please speak to your local HR team.

26 March: Recruitment Process Overview

30 April: Induction – How to support new staff?

21 May: Competency Frameworks – Introduction to competencies

All sessions are bookable through MyEd.

**Bette Johnston** (IS)

## eLearning@Ed 2010

The eLearning Professionals and Practitioners' Forum – eLPP – is organising the annual eLearning@Ed conference on Thursday 22nd April, from 9:30am to 4pm, in the National e-Science Centre, South College Street. This year's conference will focus on the learner experience in relation to eLearning, taking account of students studying at a distance and on-campus. We will aim to cover student experiences from before they even start their programme, right through to after they graduate.

For full details of all eLPP events see <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/eLPP/eLPP+-+Welcome>

Further afield, there is a Good Practice Workshop on integrating technology into researcher training in Manchester on 27th May, for which case studies are currently being invited. You can find out more at <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/nwhub>

**Erin Jackson** (eLPP Convenor)

## New support for multimedia and online surveys

I have a new role in IS Learning Services as eLearning Advisor with a focus on Multimedia and online surveys.

A core part of the job will be to make staff better aware of how multimedia can be used to enhance teaching and learning, and to enable both staff and students to make better use of the University's existing facilities. This is partly in response to the increased interest in the Colleges for using audio and video podcasts. This has led to a need for IS to provide a more comprehensive and joined up interface to the services we offer, from planning and creating podcasts through to sharing them with others.

Another aspect of my new role will be to support the Bristol Online Survey tool. This provides an easy-to-use way to deliver questionnaires online. We have recently added options to this tool which allow you to control access to your surveys; for more details see <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/bos>

To find out more please contact the IS Helpline (email [IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk](mailto:IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk), tel 515151) or your College Consultancy team.

**David Findlay** (IS)

## New in the University Website

The University Website keeps on growing. Here are the latest additions:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-exchanges>

The 'Exchanges' web pages house all the information students and staff need about the University's exchange programmes.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/estates>

The Estates and Buildings pages now use single-source databases, to provide better information about buildings and rooms for teaching and meetings.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/transport>

The redesigned site has comprehensive and readily-accessible information about all modes of transport and handy links to help with journey planning.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/divinity>

Divinity's significant web presence has been reworked and refined; highlights are the alumni pages, complete staff pages, and a high-quality YouTube video.

**Dawn Ellis** (University Website Project)

## Information Services website expands

The second phase of the creation of the new website to cover all IS services has just been completed, and a lot of useful information has been added.

Highlights include:

- Integrated search tools for the Library Catalogue and electronic journals.
- A comprehensive catalogue of Bibliographic Databases transferred from Library Online.
- Rewritten information on borrowing books, laptops and other resources.
- New IS Skills pages, integrated with live booking information from the MyEd Events channel.
- New Learning Technology materials.
- A dozen more IT services covered.
- Resource Centre services and facilities enumerated.

The IS website is at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is>

**Martin Morrey** (IS)

## IS Skills Development: **major improvements**

The IS Skills Development team has implemented several recent changes that we hope will improve the quality of the service we offer:

- From March, most courses will run in the **new training rooms**, bright, smartly-equipped and purpose-built on the transformed first floor of the Main Library. Some courses will continue to take place at The King's Buildings.
- We are now using the **MyEd Event Booking channel** to manage course bookings, making our courses more accessible to our customers.
- Our **redeveloped web pages** have taken their place in the new IS Website. They contain clear, easy to find information on our taught courses, self-teach options and documents catalogue. The pages link to the MyEd Event Booking channel, so all our course dates and details are visible and bookable via our web pages, as well as directly through MyEd.

While the Semester 2 programme of iSkills seminars for students is now complete, we offer the face-to-face courses shown below in March, April and May.

You can find full details at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/skills>

**Jenni Reeves** (IS)



Date	Course	Location
March 4	WebCT Basic Skills: Vista Fundamentals	ML
9	Introduction to Wikis	ML
18	Making the Most of your Wiki	ML
24	Producing a Thesis using Word 2003	ML
25	Wikis: What can I do as an Administrator?	ML
29	Access Database Management Queries (T)	DHT
30	Writing for the Web	ML
30	Sharing Workbooks and Protecting Data in Excel (T)	DHT
30	Getting to Grips with Filters and PivotTables in Excel (T)	DHT
April 1	Access Database Management: Basic Skills (Part 1)	ML
7	Unix 1: Introduction	JCMB
8	Excel Basic Skills: Creating Spreadsheets and Charts (Part 1)	ML
8	Access Database Management: Basic Skills (Part 2)	ML
14	Writing for the Web	ML
14	Managing Bibliographies with EndNote	ML
14	Unix 2: Intermediate	JCMB
15	Excel Basic Skills: Creating Spreadsheets and Charts (Part 2)	ML
20	Using Tables for Organisation and Display in Word 2003 (T)	DHT
21	Word Basic Skills: Creating and Formatting Documents	ML
22	WebCT Basic Skills: Vista Fundamentals	ML
26	Introduction to Wikis	ML
27	Excel Intermediate: Manipulating and Managing Data (Part 1)	ML
28	Word Intermediate: Document Layout and Customisation (Part 1)	ML
29	Creating a Database with FileMaker Pro	ML
May 4	Excel Intermediate: Manipulating and Managing Data (Part 2)	ML
5	Word Intermediate: Document Layout and Customisation (Part 2)	ML

### Venues:

ML – Main Library Training Suite

DHT – David Hume Tower

JCMB – JCMB Room 2009a  
The King's Buildings

(T) – lunchtime taster session  
DHT Conference Room –  
bring your sandwiches!

## A glimpse of Shanghai

Shanghai is expecting over 70 million people to visit its 2010 Expo this year. To highlight the Expo, with its theme 'Better City – Better Life', and display the many facets of Shanghai, the Confucius Institute for Scotland has compiled a touring exhibition to illustrate Shanghai's evolution over the last 90 years, leading up to the 2010 Expo. The exhibition is on the First Floor of the Main Library for the first three weeks of March.



**Natascha Gentz** (Confucius Institute for Scotland)



## A new way to promote your research

**Vidiowiki** is a new research tool developed in the School of Informatics, which aims to benefit researchers in all disciplines.

Funding success depends increasingly on citation count, and researchers at all stages are finding that it is ever more important to communicate their work widely and to raise their profile.

Vidiowiki uses short 'research trailers' to drive others to your papers, articles and homepages. It will also help you to identify interesting and potentially useful cross-overs between disciplines. Junior researchers with no papers of their own can raise their profile immediately by discussing the work of others in their field.

Vidiowiki gives you all the tools you need to record directly using a webcam, or the company can send you a camera.

To find out more, log on with your 'ed.ac.uk' email address and the invite code uoe at <http://vidiowiki.com/users/account/register/>

**Nicola** (Team Vidiowiki)

## Social media rising up the strategic agenda in UK HE

Last August BITs included an invitation to contribute to a social media research study. The research is now complete, and the report published.

Noting that Social Media adoption is growing rapidly across all areas of society, including Higher Education Institutions, the report's key findings are:

- most HE institutions do not restrict the use of social media.
- most social media users are students, followed by alumni, though most HE admissions departments make little use of social media.
- the most-used social media in HE institutions are blogging and online discussion forums, while the most-used by students are Twitter, YouTube and Facebook/MySpace.
- around half of respondents plan to adopt Twitter, YouTube and Facebook/MySpace within two years.
- most respondents believe that social media improve access to information.
- most HE institutions adopt social media in response to user demand.
- the number one challenge for social media is to develop a business case.

The research highlighted the considerable benefits being gained from social media usage in a wide range of areas. However, the emerging nature of these technologies, and their impact on established ways of working, raise a number of strategic questions that have yet to be addressed. You can read the full report – *The Challenges, Usage and Benefits of Social Media within Higher Education Institutions* – at <http://www.jadu.co.uk/heisurvey>

**Christine Fiddis** (Jadu)

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](mailto:BITS@ed.ac.uk).

## Edinburgh BITs

### Editor:

Nick Stroud, Information Services

### Design and Layout by:

IS Multimedia Team  
[www.ed.ac.uk/is/design](http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/design)

### Published by:

Information Services, The University of Edinburgh

### Contributions:

Email: [BITS@ed.ac.uk](mailto:BITS@ed.ac.uk)  
Telephone: 0131 650 3345

### Distribution queries:

BITs is distributed through School offices; please notify changes in requirements to Carla Zaccardelli:  
Email: [C.Zaccardelli@ed.ac.uk](mailto:C.Zaccardelli@ed.ac.uk)  
Telephone: 0131 650 4999

### Printed by:

University of Edinburgh Printing Services  
[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/printing](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/printing)

### BITs on the Web:

[www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/bits/](http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/bits/)

### Some acronyms explained:

[www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/acronyms.html](http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/acronyms.html)

**NB:** if you fail to access a URL shown in BITs, or if you need information from it in a different format, please email [BITS@ed.ac.uk](mailto:BITS@ed.ac.uk)

Contributions to BITs are welcomed.

Copy deadline for April BITs:

**Monday 15th March**