

Information Services Edinburgh Bits



Here is the news



This issue of the Information Services newsletter BITS completes its 20th year of publication – two decades which have seen staggering changes in the way the world communicates. It is high time for IS to adopt new communication options, and perhaps relinquish some old ones.

Paper is a comfortable, reassuring and 24x7 medium. Even people who live their entire working and social lives online have told us that they prefer the option of having a paper newsletter to read. Others lament the destruction of forests to make paper for a newsletter that is read once (at most) then thrown away – but if those trees didn't have this commercial value they might be replaced with suburbs and car parks, and they pull vast amounts of Carbon Dioxide out of the atmosphere as they grow. If we were really serious about not killing trees to feed our minds, then we could be equally serious about feeding our bodies, growing all our food in vats of algae and letting cabbages and cows live to a ripe old age.

On the other hand, a paper newsletter (or newspaper or even academic journal) doesn't do the best possible job of delivering information. BITS is published once a month, so its 'news' might be several weeks old, and it can miss events that are announced less than a month in advance. While it aims to include 'something for everyone', it cannot deliver 'everything for someone', and much of its content is likely to be of only passing (or less) interest to any particular reader.

Communication in the 21st century is all about personalisation. Digital methods allow us to select from a greater mass of information than ever before available just those items which are of interest to us, and at the time and in the form in which they are of interest.

We therefore think it might be time to lay BITS to rest, at least as a monthly newsletter. Over the page we list some of many ways in which you can receive news from Information Services, and we will keep these under constant review to meet readers' needs as well as we can. We do intend to produce paper publications from time to time, but these will be descriptive and reflective rather than urgent and time-dependent.

We'd be very pleased to receive comments on our plans. Please let us know if you'd miss BITS, what news you'd like to receive from IS and how you'd like to receive it – by email to BITS@ed.ac.uk: the name at least will live on!

Nick Stroud (IS)

Inside

News from Information Services

A paper newsletter was OK for the 20th century, but this is the 21st...

IS website complete

The third development phase has transferred a lot more material from the old Library and EUCS websites

Helpline celebrates its first birthday

The new amalgamated service handles up to a thousand calls a week, and deals with over 60% within 24 hours

Students assess themselves

A trial with WebPA finds advantages in allowing students to participate in assessing group work

We say Goodbye

Several long-serving members of Information Services are moving on this Summer



Sources of news

There are scores of ways to find and share information over the Internet, and it would be impossible to use all of them. This page highlights a small number of electronic channels that are currently being used to deliver news in the University; full and updated details are provided in the IS website at

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/news>

Websites

Information Services 'Latest News':

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

The main University news page:

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

RSS:

An RSS reader lets you know whenever there's an update in any of the RSS feeds to which you subscribe, so the news comes to you instead of you having to go and look for it. Both the IS and the University news pages have RSS feeds. There is advice on subscribing to these in the IS news site.

IS latest news:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/news>

IS service alerts:

<http://www.managed-services-index.ed.ac.uk/alerts/> (at foot of page)

Main Library Redevelopment Project:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/rssServlet?contentID=2.6643>

Data Library:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/about/organisation/edl/news/>

EPCC news-feed:

<feed://www.epcc.ed.ac.uk/feed>

Mailing lists

There are hundreds of mailing lists in the University on a host of different subjects, run on the Majordomo system. You can subscribe to ones that interest you by sending the message "subscribe <listname>" to "majordomo@lists.ed.ac.uk". There is further guidance on this in the IS news site.

Some lists of general interest:

'itforum' (the IT Professionals' Forum)

'elpp' (the eLearning Professionals' and Practitioners' Forum)

Twitter:

Twitter is a service run somewhere on the Internet – "in the cloud" – which lets anyone send a short message to anyone who wants to listen. Messages can be up to 140 characters long and are therefore very succinct. You can look for particular people and 'follow' them to receive their messages. If you choose to follow a lot of people you might receive large numbers of twitter messages – or 'tweets' – every day, but you are no more supposed to read every one than you are supposed to hear every conversation as you walk through a crowded room: it's just a way to catch a flavour of what's going on. It's easy to capture tweets you really want to see and keep them until you've read them. Twitter has become a significant way for people to keep in touch with developments that matter to them, in work as well as socially. A mechanism of 'hashtags' has been devised to collect all the tweets on particular subjects, which for example gave politicians much quicker feedback than opinion polls in the general election. Networks of 'tweeters' and followers spread like webs through organisations, or through subject areas across organisations, and urgent news can spread far and wide very quickly. For example this is how many people heard that Bath University closed in last Winter's snow-storms. One thing to remember if you do use Twitter: messages – tweets – can never be withdrawn or deleted, and the Library of Congress is archiving every single one of them.

UoEIS (news from IS)

ISforMVM (from IS to MVM)

HCA librarian (from IS to HCA)

UniofEdinburgh (the main University broadcast, from C&M)

edinburghmsc (an Edinburgh pioneer)

uoebusiness, uoembacareers (the Business School is very active)

edbeltane (promoting science)

eusa (the Students' Association)

IDEAatEd (Informatics ideas)

EdInfAlumni, EdinburghAlumni

TweetDeck is a user-friendly front-end to Twitter, and is recommended by experienced users as the best way to use Twitter; see the 'news' section of the IS website for details.

Blogging

Blogging is an easy way for people to put their thoughts online, and like Twitter it can be useful to find and follow blogs on topics of particular interest. Many people in the University already publish their own blogs, for work or pleasure. It's easy to get started as there are many free blogging services 'in the cloud'. IS is currently assessing the need for local advice and support for blogging (please email Mark.Wetton@ed.ac.uk if you'd like to know more). Information about blogging and local blogs will be added to the 'news' section of the IS website.

Some blogs of possible interest:

Dave Berry, Head of Development Services in IS-Apps: <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/linkeddev/Home>

The Centre for Research Collections (CRC): <http://is-crc.blogspot.com/>

The Digital Curation Centre: <http://www.dcc.ac.uk/news/blogs>

UK Web Focus, advice for HE on Web innovations and best practice: <http://ukwebfocus.wordpress.com/>

Second Life

Experts confidently predict that future generations will increasingly interact with each other through avatars in virtual worlds. You can explore this future in the Virtual University of Edinburgh, and watch a video about it, at <http://vue.ed.ac.uk/>

IS offers some services through its 'IS Cream Van' in the Virtual University of Edinburgh.

More signs of the times

EDINA exploits a variety of social media for its various services – including blogs, Twitter, Facebook and MySpace – as you can see at http://edina.ac.uk/news/news_socialmedia.html

The JISCmail service that operates UK-wide academic mailing lists has embraced Facebook, Twitter and RSS: <https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/>

Facebook? We've been viewing this as a place for students to socialise, but should IS add this to the communication armoury?

Nick Stroud (IS)

Latest additions to the University Website

Several new sections have been added to the University Website in the past two months:

- The Careers Service: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/careers>
- Counselling and Psychotherapy in the School of Health and Social Science: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/health-social-science/counselling>
- History of Art in the School of Arts Culture and the Environment: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/ace/history-art>
- The University's Governance and Strategic Planning (GaSP): <http://www.ed.ac.uk/governance-strategic-planning>
- The Chaplaincy: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/chaplaincy>
- The Labyrinth: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/labyrinth>
- The Student Counselling Service: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-counselling>

We have also added a button on the home page to link to Edinburgh Global, the area of the website which showcases just some of our international activity.

Dawn Ellis (University Website Project)

Extended opening of the Main Library in August

Following discussions between Information Services and EUSA, the Main Library will be open for extended hours in the calendar month of August 2010.

From 1st August the library building will be open until midnight each evening Monday to Thursday; until 5pm on Friday and Saturday; and from 12 noon to 12 midnight on Sunday. Normal Summer IS Helpdesk and IS Helpline staffed service hours will continue unchanged; self-services will operate when the Helpdesk is closed.

For more information about Main Library opening hours and services, please visit the IS website at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/main-library-opening>

Barry Croucher (IS)

Procurement update and inviting your ideas

Several projects are under way to improve procurement in the University. We adapt our services and training in response to ideas from staff: do please keep them coming in!

Travel Policy: based on ideas from School Administrators, you can now book online for low-value trips; see <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/procurement/news/travelpolicychange>

Training courses: based on ideas from staff, we now offer more courses to help you learn about systems for buying: eProcurement (PECOS, SciQuest) and Printing Services (PSO); and awareness sessions for procuring goods or services. Case law and government policy keep changing, so it's important to keep up to date. <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/procurement/training/current-courses>

Lean projects: based on ideas from staff, we are exploring ways of improving the route for adding new suppliers, the data on contracts or approved suppliers, and eInvoices (with Finance) to speed up the last step in a purchase-to-pay process of eProcurement.

Sustainable procurement: based on ideas from staff and students, we are updating commodity-based strategies to consider value for money, legal compliance and a risk matrix for a number of social responsibility and sustainability criteria, such as 'Green IT' and Fair Trade policy.

If you have some positive and helpful procurement ideas, please email them to karen.bowman@ed.ac.uk with 'procurement ideas' as the subject.

Karen Bowman (Procurement)

Final stage of IS website migration

The transfer of IS web pages to the University website is almost complete. This includes information, help material and tools relating to all IS services. By early September, the remaining 'legacy' websites – including Library Online (www.lib.ed.ac.uk) and the old Computing Services site (www.ucs.ed.ac.uk) – will no longer be visible on the web. Old links will be re-directed for a period, but staff and students are encouraged to update their bookmarks and published links to point to the new material as soon as possible.

Trial of GetSatisfaction.com

IS is trialling a web-based solution for open feedback on its services, GetSatisfaction.com. This will be available on the web-pages of selected IS services – including e-Journals and WebCT – from August until December. All users of these services are invited to participate in the online forums, by adding new topics, and voting for, or responding to, existing topics.

Martin Morrey (IS)

'Ask a Librarian' service to end on 31st August

After ten years of excellent service, the 'Ask a Librarian' service is being integrated with the IS Helpline which resolves library, IT and e-Learning enquiries. This is part of the IS objective of achieving a single point of contact and greater clarity and service availability for the user community.

'Ask a Librarian' will close on 31st August 2010. After that please contact the IS Helpline, preferably by email to IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk or by telephone on 515151 (or from outwith the University, 0131 651 5151). Enquiries are answered by the IS Helpline team supported by colleagues from across Information Services.

Our thanks to Lorna Cheyne, Graeme Eddie and all other contributors, for their dedicated and expert work for 'Ask a Librarian' over the years.

Barry Croucher (IS)

IS Helpline celebrates first birthday with big contribution to IS website

The new User Services Division of Information Services was created in August 2009, with an IS Helpline team providing a single point of entry for help with all IS services. We in the IS Helpline are celebrating our first birthday, and we thank all our users, and everyone in Information Services, for their support in the past year.

So far we have dealt with 28,249 calls, averaging 2,500 per month, and 500–1,000 per week. We close over 60% of these within 24 hours, and over 83% within seven days.

Calls come in via email, telephone, the Call Management System (CMS), walk-ins at service desks, and web-forms. We plan to offer support through new channels such as GetSatisfaction.com, and are looking into new communication channels such as Facebook and Twitter.

The IS Helpline resolves over 50% of calls itself, aided by our continually evolving Knowledgebase, and acts as a conduit between users and other teams for the rest. We routinely liaise with over 30 different teams within and outwith IS. We are able to identify for each caller which support model their School or Unit subscribes to, and liaise with local computing officers and computing reps as necessary. The forthcoming replacement for the Call Management System, 'UniDesk', will give us better functionality and equip us to manage calls even more efficiently.

The IS Helpline team continues to take on new areas of first-line support, ranging from the Moray House School of Education to the Poloply web publishing system. We provide ongoing support for legacy and existing services which are part of the daily activities of the University, such as Student and Applicant queries; University Card queries; WebCT and e-learning. Additionally we cover background areas such as running laptop clinics for students; writing user-friendly IT guidance and FAQs; and maintaining an improved and expanded help services presence in the IS website.

The updated web pages, produced as part of the final phase of the IS website redevelopment, offer a more flexible structure which makes it easier to find articles of interest. Discrete sections for staff members, students, Alumni and applicants provide IT, e-learning and library help. Alongside the most commonly asked questions you can find information for new starters, help with faults, IT user guides, and of course links to resources in other sections of the IS website. The online help for students now incorporates all the material from the 'Web Helpdesk', which received over 22,000 unique page-views in 2009–2010.

Over the Summer the IS Helpline is open 9am–7:50pm Monday to Thursday, 9am–4:50pm Friday, and 10am–3:50pm Saturday (email IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk, tel 51 5151, or 0131 651 5151 from outwith the University). Semester hours resume on 13th September. A range of help services is available online via the 'Help and advice' link at the bottom right of the IS home page, or visit <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/help>

Johannes Schaten (IS)

If you build it will they come?

A study by the Manchester e-Research Centre and Edinburgh's Institute for the Study of Science, Technology and Innovation indicates that a majority of researchers are making at least occasional use of one or more Web 2.0 tools or services for purposes related to their research – for communicating their work; for developing and sustaining networks and collaborations; or for finding out about what others are doing. But frequent or intensive use is rare, and some researchers regard blogs, wikis and other novel forms of communication as a waste of time or even dangerous.

The report is at <http://www.rin.ac.uk/our-work/communicating-and-disseminating-research/use-and-relevance-web-20-researchers>

Graham Pryor (IS)

HECToR solves age-old problem

Using the EPCC-hosted supercomputer HECToR, scientists at the Universities of Sheffield and Warwick have discovered that the chicken came before the egg:

<http://www.fwi.co.uk/articles/2010/07/15/122260/Researchers-conclude-chicken-comes-before-an-egg.htm>

Nick Stroud (IS)

Research Data MANTRA: Research Data Management Training

The Data Library has won JISC funding to develop online learning materials in research data management for postgraduate students, under JISC's 'Managing Research Data' programme.

Research Data MANTRA aims to develop online learning materials which reflect best practice in research data management in the academic disciplines involved. These will include video interviews with leading academics about data management challenges, and practical exercises in handling data in selected analysis software. The resulting materials will be embedded in the three participating postgraduate programmes and made available through the Transkills programme for use by all postgraduate and early career researchers. They will also be deposited with an open licence in Jorum Open, a national repository for academic learning objects.

The Research Data MANTRA project, to run for a year from 1st August 2010, will be undertaken by a partnership involving IS, the Institute of Academic Development (IAD), the Graduate Schools of Social and Political Science and Geosciences, and the Clinical and Health Psychology Professional Directorate. Data Librarian Robin Rice is the project manager, with EDINA Director Peter Burnhill and Jon Turner, Director of the IAD, providing overall project leadership.

Anne Donnelly (IS)

Software News

New site licence for NAG on Linux

A three-year site licence comes into effect at the beginning of August for NAG products on the Linux operating system only. There are three parts: Fortran compiler, serial libraries and HPC libraries. Please contact Software Services (details below) if you are interested in a single licence or a School licence; prices will depend on the level of interest.

If you have any NAG software for other operating systems under our old site licence, please remove the software from your computer and destroy any copies or return them to IS Software Services immediately.

S-Plus withdrawal

There was insufficient interest to renew our current S-Plus agreement, which will therefore run out at the end of August. Consequently S-Plus will no longer be available in the open-access labs from 1st September 2010. Any installed copies should be removed from your computer, and disk copies destroyed or returned to IS Software Services.

'R' is a suitable replacement for S-Plus; there are notes on migrating to R at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/ISstatsComp/Transition+to+R+from+S-Plus>

SPSS code renewal

Just a reminder, that the SPSS renewal date has changed from December to September to coordinate better with the new academic semester. Current codes will start to give warnings on 1st September and cannot be used for new installations after that. Current installations will stop working on 1st October 2010. We are signing a new three-year SPSS agreement to start on 1st September. Billing for current subscribers and distribution of codes will start later this month.

There are notes on the SPSS annual renewals at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/ISstatsComp/SPSS+codes+Annual+renewal>

Graphpad

Graphpad is a collection of powerful statistical and graphing utilities, and we are canvassing again for interest in a site licence for it. It is quite expensive, so if we don't have enough interest for an annual site licence, a one-off bulk purchase may be possible. Please register interest by 16th August. Details of the software can be found at <http://www.graphpad.com/>

Contact IS Software Services

For further information on any of the above, or with any software question, please email is.software.wishes@ed.ac.uk.

You can register interest on our wiki at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SoftwareServices/Software+interest>

The Software Services website is at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/software>

Frances Provan (IS)



Monumental Ideas in Miniature Books

A display of intriguing little books in the Centre for Research Collections last month generated an unusual amount of interest from the local media. The tiny books were created by artists from all over the world, and curated as a travelling exhibition by the University of Akron, Ohio. They were brought to Edinburgh by Professor Del Rey Loven, who was attending two history of the book conferences at the University.

For full background information on the project please see <http://www.mimb.org/>

All the miniature books have a home on the Web, in the MIMB image gallery at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mimborg/>

Andy Grout (IS)

Prof. Del Rey Loven of the Myers School of Art, University of Akron, Ohio, shows one of the miniature books in the MIMB collection.

JISC advises Data Openness

JISC has published a report which strongly urges researchers to be open with their data: <http://www.dcc.ac.uk/news/jisc-advises-openness-light-climate-change-report>

Angus Whyte (IS)

DISE 10: Digital Interactive Symposium: Edinburgh

The Digital Interactive Symposium: Edinburgh (DISE) is an annual event organized by the Virtual Policy Network in conjunction with the University of Edinburgh. This year's Symposium is on 27th August at Pollock Halls, and focuses on the legal issues of computer games, virtual worlds and the issues that arise from the convergence of new and traditional media. Speakers will include both academics and practising lawyers.

Full details are at <http://www.virtualpolicy.net/DISE10>

Nick Stroud (IS)

WebPA for online group peer assessment

WebPA is a free, open source, online peer assessment tool developed by Loughborough University. It allows a tutor to grade group tasks by group, with the final individual student result calculated by the WebPA algorithm on a peer result 'weighting' (set by the tutor). This leads to a unique result for each student based on peer feedback on their activity within the group.

We have tried WebPA with the MSc/Dip/Cert in Equine Science (an online, distance-learning programme) for two group activities in May and June. Previous methods, for example using wiki-based tasks where activity could be monitored via the wiki history, proved difficult to grade, and are not easily scalable with the increasing numbers of students in our online programme. Using a system in which the tutor graded only the group, and feedback combined tutor and peer responses, we hoped to shorten our response time.

With WebPA some of the grading responsibility lies with the students themselves – anonymously, against criteria set in advance by the course team (e.g. team work skills, research skills). Loughborough students report that this made them feel involved in the assessment process, encouraged positive team dynamics, and provided a 'fairer' grade with more rapid feedback.

We informed our students in advance that we had chosen to trial WebPA, explaining what we felt it would add to their learning experience, with feedback from the Loughborough students. Our students responded positively and the pilot went ahead. Stephen Vickers (IS) set up instances of WebPA for us to pilot with our first and second year groups, and solved some initial problems with its use. We integrated it with WebCT (the system our students use), but it is also available as a standalone option.

Students took part in a group assignment, using tools such as Skype, Second Life, GoogleDocs and Dropbox to coordinate their activities across timezones. They were allowed to choose their groups via sign-in sheets on WebCT and to select their assignment topic from a list provided. At the closing date, WebPA combined the student grades with the tutor grades and calculated the final individual result based on the 'weighting' percentage set by the tutor.

It all worked incredibly well, with a few minor issues at the outset. WebPA is straightforward to use from a tutor's perspective, and the wide range of reports produced after the closing date are very effective, clearly showing the grading process. Feedback from students has been positive – that WebPA is intuitive to use, the majority would use it again, they appreciated how the group assignment brought the group together, and they liked having their assignment partially graded by their peers, feeling that this method of grading would be helpful for their learning development.

We see ourselves using this again with other courses, with some adaptations to cover issues raised in feedback. This is a simple yet effective tool in promoting student autonomy and engagement with the assessment and feedback process, and has certainly assisted us with group activities for a diverse student group. If you'd like more information (including a chance to play with a WebPA demo and join the WebPA mailing list and Special Interest Group), see the Loughborough University resource pack at <http://webpaproject.lboro.ac.uk/?q=node/520>

If you'd like to pilot the tool or find out more about our use of it on the Equine Science programme, please get in touch with Stephen Vickers (email stephen.vickers@ed.ac.uk) or Sharon Boyd (email sharon.boyd@ed.ac.uk).

Sharon Boyd (Veterinary Studies)

Repository Fringe 2010: Registration now open

EDINA and Library staff are helping to plan and organise the Repository Fringe event, back for the third time on 2–3 September, this year moved to the end of the Edinburgh Festival, and to the National eScience Centre. The 2010 event will be looking at the OPEN: Open Data; Open Access; Open Learning; Open Knowledge; Open Content; etc. Full details are at <http://www.repositoryfringe.org/>

Philip Hunter (IS)

BCS meeting: machine learning for compiler design

Christophe Dubach of the University's School of Informatics, and winner of the BCS Distinguished Dissertation competition in 2009, will talk on 'Using Machine-Learning for Compiler and Architecture Design' at 6.30pm on Wednesday 11th August in the Informatics Forum, 10 Crichton Street. There are further details at <http://www.edinburgh.bcs.org/events/2009-10/100811.htm>

David Muxworthy (BCS)

SelectPC update

The SelectPC Advisory Group, which includes representatives from all Colleges and Support Groups, has agreed to change the SelectPC policy to allow two suppliers to be recommended for supplying SelectPC computers to the University. This change was brought about because incumbent suppliers have changed twice over the last 18 months due to substantial price increases and supply shortages, leading to instability for the University.

The SelectPC configuration remains unchanged (Core 2 Duo E8400 processor, 160Gb hard disk, 4Gb RAM, Stable Image system board).

The SelectPC Advisory Group has just completed a mini-tender exercise to choose one of the suppliers for the SelectPC configuration. After evaluating four suppliers from the National Desktop and Notebook Agreement (NDNA), Dell was selected as representing best value for money with its Optiplex 780 model. The second supplier to the University is Hewlett Packard (HP), which recently won the contract for supplying PCs to the public sector in Scotland.

Schools and Support Groups are free to choose from either Dell or HP, but should, as always, consult with their usual IT support channels.

Graham Newton (IS)
George Reid (Procurement)

Introducing the IS College Consultancy teams



Leading the teams which are aligning IS services with College needs:

Abdul Majothi (for Humanities and Social Science); Irene McGowan (for Medicine and Veterinary Medicine); and Richard Battersby (for Science and Engineering).

A warm appreciation of the Printing Department

One of the great satisfactions of producing a paper publication is the opportunities this brings for working with the staff in the University's Printing department, who have done a superb job – usually against the clock – of producing BITs and other IS publications to a high standard, reliably and economically, over many years. If you need something printed, you are commended to <http://www.ed.ac.uk/printing>

Nick Stroud (IS)

We are what we do

Pin your history to the world at <http://www.historypin.com/>

Nick Stroud (IS)

IS Skills Development: August events

IS Skills Development runs courses and short sessions for staff and students to help them use IT effectively in their work and studies.

Dates of forthcoming taught courses are listed below. Please see our web pages for further details and to book, at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/skills>

New dates for courses and iSkills seminars running from September to December will be published on our web pages and in the MyEd Event Booking channel later this month. To focus on the IS courses in MyEd, choose 'IS Skills' from the drop-down menu under 'View Events' in the Event Booking channel, then click on the 'Go' button. If you do this you will see that many of our courses are already showing the red flag, indicating that they are full; don't leave it to the last minute to book your place! MyEd is at <https://www.myed.ed.ac.uk/>

Jenni Reeves (IS)

Date	Course	Location
Aug 2	Photoshop	ML
3	Excel Basic Skills: Creating Spreadsheets and Charts (Part 1)	ML
3	Wikis: What can I do as an Administrator?	ML
4	Access Database Management: Intermediate (Part 2)	ML
4	PowerPoint Intermediate: Adding Tables, Charts and Diagrams	ML
10	Creating Web Pages with HTML	ML
10	Excel Basic Skills: Creating Spreadsheets and Charts (Part 2)	ML
10	Formatting Web Pages with Cascading Style Sheets	ML
11	Photoshop	ML
11	PowerPoint Intermediate: Adding Media and Graphics	ML
12	Excel Intermediate: Manipulating and Managing Data (Part 1)	ML
17	Access Database Management: Basic Skills	ML
17	Producing a Thesis using Word 2003	ML
19	Excel Intermediate: Manipulating and Managing Data (Part 2)	ML
20	Writing for the Web	DHT
25	Managing Bibliographies with EndNote	ML
26	Creating and Editing Web Pages with Dreamweaver 8	ML
26	Creating Templates and Managing Websites with Dreamweaver 8	ML

Venues:

ML – Main Library Training Suite
DHT – David Hume Tower

Moving on: life after Information Services

Information Services thanks all those who are retiring this year for their contributions to the success of the University, and hopes they thoroughly enjoy their well-earned rest!

Jeff Haywood (VP-IS)



Lorna Cheyne

Lorna was a student at the University when the Main Library was being built, and apart from a few brief breaks has worked for the Library ever since. She started as a Library Assistant in 1969, and later had spells in the cataloguing team, Inter Library Loans, the Reference Collection, in charge of the Undergraduate Reading Room, then in the Medical Library. Most recently Lorna has been one of the experts for the 'Ask a Librarian' service, where she has been much appreciated by the user community, and her invaluable expertise has helped people throughout the world.



Denny Colledge

Denny joined the University from Moray House, where she was Head Librarian. Her work has since covered such a wide range of areas – like the Voyager implementation project, widening access and the IS Cream Van in Second Life – that it's hard to summarise in a short space: Denny is a multi-professional team embodied in one person. She is remarkable for her readiness to embrace new ideas, new ways of working and new colleagues – sometimes literally! Many colleagues across the University will miss Denny's warmth, enthusiasm, humour and wisdom.



Rose Dewar

Rose joined the University in 2003 as a Web Projects Coordinator/Designer in MIS, undertaking several roles in project management and website support and development. In 2007 she was seconded to work with Corporate Services, then Student and Academic Services, to lead the development of their presence in the new University Website. She leaves with some regret and fond memories to take up a new challenge as Web Manager for Midlothian Council in Dalkeith.



Margaret Dowling

Margaret worked for the University for a great many years, most recently as Collections Manager, ensuring the best possible management of the printed collection of books, particularly in the Main Library. She established the HUB collection, and managed major moves needed for the Main Library redevelopment. Before that she was a Librarian for the Social Sciences Faculty, working for many years in the Reference Section, and she also spent a couple of happy years working in Bloomington, Indiana, on exchange and secondment.



Jack McAulay

Jack was with the University for over 36 years, starting in the Data Processing Office and becoming a MIS Project Team Leader in 1980. In 1992 he was appointed to be the University's Audit and Security Officer, leading the initial work on Data Protection before the Records Management section was established. He was a respected authority on the legal aspects of the University's IT service, and worked tirelessly in monitoring and protecting the University from the variety of threats that confront us every day of the year.

Tricia Garside

Tricia joined the University's Data Processing Unit in 1973 as a trainee programmer. Over the years she has been through a number of reorganisations of the unit to DP, to MIS and then IS Applications. Throughout her long career she has been a major driving force in project implementation and application support in a number of corporate business areas, including HR, Payroll and Research. She has been a Senior Applications Support Analyst in the Production Management team for the past three years.

Sandy Shaw

Sandy joined Edinburgh Regional Computing Centre (ERCC) from the Statistics department in the early 1970s, and used his considerable programming skill to make many significant contributions to EMAS, the innovative Edinburgh Multiaccess System. He did pioneering work of UK-wide significance in implementing the EMAS mail system (on top of John Henshall's file transfer service), bringing order out of chaos and giving EMAS users a first-class service. He helped to develop the ISO standard for email and published a book with John on this work. Sandy later moved to EDINA, where he led the TIES (Technologies for Information Environment Security) project and successor SDSS project to design the 'shibboleth' system which greatly simplifies our access to national academic resources.

Jean Ritchie

Jean worked for the Scottish Agricultural College before joining the University's computing advisory service, moving on from there to the documentation team. She was seconded to the Scottish Funding Council for several years to work on the Use of MANs initiative when Metropolitan Area Networks were being established, and returned to lead the IS documentation and training team before becoming service director of the Edinburgh Compute and Data Facility (ECDF). She also contributed to the University's IT Futures group.



Liam McDowell

Liam joined the Data Processing Unit in 1970 as a trainee programmer, doubling the existing team complement to enable all the financial and payroll programs to be converted for decimalisation in February 1971. Over his 40 years in IT, Liam has seen many technology and business changes and has overseen the implementation of several major corporate business application packages such as e-Financials and EBIS. For the last three years he was the IS Liaison Director for CSG and SASG Support Groups, as well as being Assistant Director for Planning in IS Applications.



Pete Kirkby

Pete is a software engineer, and has served both in the Networks team and subsequently for more than ten years in the Commercial Projects team. There he made major contributions to a number of software development projects under contract to external customers, particularly Rockliffe Inc. of Silicon Valley, and JANET. His attention to detail and the quality of his work were of great value to IS and its customers.



Steve Scott

Steve came to Edinburgh from the British Library, to establish and manage the Learning Resource Centre at Moray House, then becoming Deputy Librarian until the merger with the University. Steve then played an absolutely critical role in developing *Library Online*, the Library's website and by far the most popular website in the University, and over the last couple of years in transferring much of it to the new IS Website. He also contributed significantly to several generations of the IS intranet.



Nick Stroud

Nick has had a variety of roles in the University in the 30 years since he joined Edinburgh Regional Computing Centre, including spells in the computing advisory team, Physics, EPCC, and the EUCS documentation and training team. He edited BITs for 17 of its 20 years, producing around 200 issues, and also helped with the redevelopment of the IS website and intranet.



Margaret Thomson

Margaret Thomson retired in April, and a large number of colleagues gathered in the Darwin Library at the end of May to celebrate her 30 years at Edinburgh University Library. She noted in her speech that most of the libraries she worked in have now closed – but despite that record we wish her a long and happy retirement!

Mistral Finlayson

Mistral started work in 1983 in the Western General Hospital Library, and has since held a myriad of posts – part-time and full-time – at a range of library sites. Since 1992 she has worked at the three King's Buildings libraries, first as senior library assistant in charge, and latterly with responsibility for co-ordinating all bibliographic services across the three libraries. Her dedication and attention to detail were real assets in the complexities of journal acquisition, and countless users over the years have benefited from her considerable knowledge.

Gordon Wright

Gordon was a Messenger in the Main Library until he retired at the end of May. He gave many years of service to staff, students and visitors who came to the Library in the evening, and was held in high regard by them. He had worked for many years previously for British Gas, where it was vital to observe rules to promote health and safety, so he was a stickler for the rules in the Library to ensure the comfort and convenience of its users, and he quoted that mantra often in his Library work. By day he is a School Lollipop Man, so won't be able to enjoy full retirement until later this year.

Ann Henderson

Ann has worked for the University Library since 1997. For most of that time she has been in the Special Collections department – now the magnificently redeveloped Centre for Research Collections – which is responsible for the University's large collection of rare books and manuscripts. Her main role has been reception duties, handling enquiries and issuing and supervising Special Collections material. She is now looking forward to being able to spend more time with her family, who are all based in and around London.

Tom Blackwood

Tom joined the Cataloguing team in the Main Library in 1989, and has been here ever since apart from a four-year secondment to Royal College of Physicians (2004-8) where he helped to catalogue their rare books collection.

Stephen Vickers wins two more Blackboard Awards

Blackboard Inc acquired WebCT in 2006 and has been steadily replacing its brand name ever since, at the same time vigorously pursuing open standards. Stephen Vickers, of Information Services, has played a valuable role in supporting the open initiative, through the IMS Learning Tools Interoperability specification. Stephen's work was singled out for praise by Blackboard president Ray Henderson in his keynote address at the BbWorld 2010 conference in Orlando, Florida last month.

At the conference Stephen was presented for the third year running with a Blackboard Catalyst Award for Innovative Development. He also received a Catalyst Award for his support to the Blackboard developer community.

The awards are described at <http://www.blackboard.com/Communities/Catalyst-Awards.aspx>

Jeff Haywood (VP-IS)



At this rate Stephen will soon have to extend his mantlepiece.

Training for Wimba Classroom

The last two issues of BITs announced details of a renewed pilot of the Wimba Collaboration Suite. If you would be interested in the pilot project but haven't yet said so, please contact Stephen Vickers (email stephen.vickers@ed.ac.uk) as soon as possible. We plan to run training sessions for Wimba Classroom in early September.

Stephen Vickers (IS)

Thieves target personal documents

In 2008 one in seven burglaries was committed solely to steal personal documents. Personal identity documents such as bank statements, driving licences and passports are valuable items on the black market. A quarter of all burglary victims now fall victim to identity fraud as a direct result of a break-in, and the numbers are set to rise as identity fraud increases. Personal information is valuable, and individuals and organisations must take security seriously.

Tips:

- Whenever you can, avoid using personal data.
- If possible, anonymise personal data.
- Use the University's secure shared drives to store and access data,

permitting access only to those who need it.

- Avoid transporting personal data on portable media; use the Virtual Private Network or similar services whenever possible.
- If you have to use portable media, buy encrypted memory sticks or use freeware encryption software.
- Implement the University's retention and disposal policies so that the University does not keep personal data it does not need.
- Consider the physical security of personal data; for example, use locked filing cabinets for storage, and shredders for disposal.

Anne Grzybowski (Records Management)

The DCC – the same, but different



Having had a month or three to find my way around, it's time for me to say a little as the incoming Director about what the Digital Curation Centre (DCC) will be up to in the next few years. Many of its activities will continue. Its role as a national (and international) advisory centre for digital curation and digital preservation is well-established; it curates (by selection, commentary and practical example) resources about digital curation, just as its clients wish to curate their own digital resources.

Mainly, the DCC will be concentrating on the management of research data in institutions – in response to a strong message from our funders and partners. This will entail changes in our outreach. For instance, while we will continue our well-received training events (DC 101), we'll be putting more content online for self-paced education as well. I'm glad we can draw on significant expertise in Edinburgh for this.

I also want the DCC to do more work for our host institutions, including Edinburgh. Our mission is to help researchers, funders and institutions deal with data management and curation more effectively, which surely must include the institutions in which we are embedded. I'm glad we have already contributed to developments in research data management in Edinburgh, and I hope to do a great deal more; DCC will increasingly be providing services as well as content and research.

We're still actively interested in research where we can attract funding, and we've had fruitful relations with Informatics which I expect to rekindle; we're also seeking wider collaborations, in Edinburgh and elsewhere. We can help researchers meet funder expectations through online data management planning, and we have been named as the central focus for the nascent UK Research Data Service (UKRDS).

I am very grateful to Chris Rusbridge and others at Edinburgh who had the vision to establish the DCC. Our first face-to-face meeting of all DCC staff assures me that the vision continues to thrive.

Kevin Ashley (IS)

New College Library: Funk Donation projects

In 2005 New College Library received a donation of \$1,000,000 (spread over ten years) from American alumnus Robert Funk, to safeguard the School of Divinity's unique Special Collections. A range of 'Funk-funded' projects are now well under way, with support from the University and the Church of Scotland.

Pamphlets project

New College Library's pamphlet collection contains over 30,000 items, and is a unique and invaluable source of primary research material for Scottish theologians and historians alike. The Funk Donation Pamphlets Cataloguing Project is now half way through its two year span and has added over 6,000 items to the online catalogue. There have been more pre-1850 items than originally estimated, of which over 500 have been notified to the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), which lists over 460,000 items published between 1473 and 1800 in the British Isles and North America. Of these, 32 items are, to the best of our knowledge, unique in the world, and we have undertaken digital photography of these.

Interesting items from the Pamphlets Collection are on display in the Library in August.

Building and security projects

The Funk Donation has enabled us to install another security gate and a second safe for Special Collections. Together with the CCTV recently funded by the Church of Scotland and additional security improvements funded by the University and the School of Divinity, we believe we now meet the security standards appropriate for Special Collections in the 21st century.

Our headline building project has been the Funk Donation Reading Room, a dedicated reading area for Special Collections which is separated from the rest of the Library Hall by glass and oak panelling. The Funk Donation allowed us to purchase oak panelled lockers and new or refurbished furniture for the use of Special Collections readers, carefully crafted to match the new oak and leather panelled Helpdesk. The original 1930s chairs have been refurbished to a high standard, and we now have a grant to refurbish the other chairs in the Library.

The Funk Donation supported the costs of relocating the Reserve Area, and a new self-issue machine and security gate will allow library staff to devote more time to Special Collections.

There will be an official opening, attended by Robert Funk, at 3:30pm on Monday 9th August; if you would like to attend please email new.college.library@ed.ac.uk by 6th August.

Christine Love-Rodgers (IS)

The Cheyne Bequest Archives Projects

The Cheyne Bequest funded work by Project Archivist Lesley Doig in 2009–2010 to sort and list the papers of Prof. James Whyte, Tom Allan and Prof. Alec Cheyne. The work entails organising the papers and using preservation materials to house the collection. Work on the James Whyte and Tom Allan papers is complete, and they will be available in New College Library this Summer. The Cheyne papers are scheduled for completion in the Autumn.

The James Whyte papers include a wide variety of materials, with the bulk covering his sermons and lectures. There are also scrapbooks of newspapers cuttings, which are not normally retained in archival collections as they rapidly degrade. However Lesley has produced an index to the cuttings which provides sufficient metadata to locate the articles elsewhere if the originals degrade. These cuttings refer to significant events, such as Margaret Thatcher's 1988 address to the General Assembly and James Whyte's Moderatorial response. James Whyte spent four years as minister of Mayfield North Church, Edinburgh, and kept issues of the Mayfield Church News from 1954 to 1993 for a detailed record of the social history of this congregation. The papers also include items of James Whyte's family history.

The Tom Allan Papers contain materials relating to the 'Tell Scotland' Project, including audio recordings and film footage of a BBC programme filmed in 1961 focusing on St-George's Tron Parish Church and Tom Allan's work there. These collections, already in use by postgraduates, will clearly have an important tale to tell in the religious history of 20th century Scotland.

Christine Love-Rodgers (IS)

Paul Anderson selected for innovative research with HP

Paul Anderson, of Informatics, is one of a handful of people around the world who have been selected to participate in this year's HP Labs Innovation Research Program, which is designed to provide colleges, universities and research institutes with opportunities to conduct breakthrough collaborative research with HP.

Paul will be working with colleagues, postgraduates and HP researchers to investigate the application of automated planning techniques to the management of configuration changes in 'Cloud Computing' infrastructures.

Paul, and the University, have significant experience of large-scale computing infrastructures, with the increasingly critical cloud computing presenting new challenges in which the environment is highly distributed and federated, the scale is large, the loading is unpredictable, and the configuration is complex.

Further details of Paul's achievement are provided at http://www.ed.ac.uk/popolopoly_fs/1.39852!fileManager/HP_IRP_Award_Template%20PA%20version.pdf

Nick Stroud (IS)

LISA '10: the 24th Large Installation System Administration Conference

The annual LISA conference is the meeting place of choice for system and network administrators and engineers, serving as a venue for a lively, diverse and rich mix of technologists of all specialties and levels of expertise. LISA is the place to exchange ideas, sharpen old and new skills, learn new techniques, debate current and controversial issues, and meet industry gurus, colleagues and friends.

LISA '10 is in San Jose, California, on 7–12 November, to give the most in-depth, practical system administration training available. Full details are at <http://www.usenix.org/event/lisa10/>

Paul Anderson (Informatics)

Talbot Rice Gallery: Festival exhibitions

Figurative painting has had a difficult relationship to modern and contemporary art, with artist Donald Judd going so far as to announce, in the 1960s, that painting was dead.

However, dramatic claims like this – resurfacing with the nomination of two painters for this year’s Turner Prize – have not been borne out by historical changes, and have instead given way to a continuing reassessment of painting, rather than its end.

Three exhibitions of figurative painting, from very different historical periods, form the basis for the Talbot Rice Gallery’s programme during this year’s Edinburgh Arts Festival. They feature new work by internationally-renowned artist Julie Roberts (b. 1963), modernist portraits and still lifes by Craigie Aitchison (1926–2009) and a selection from the University’s Torrie Collection, including 17th Century Dutch genre and landscape paintings. It is hoped that they will provide a timely opportunity to consider figurative painting at three separate stages in its history.

Shawn Coulman (IS)



Julie Roberts, 'Staying Together' 2010.
(photo © Roger Lee)

Virtual Summer Graduations

Students on the innovative distance programme at the University of Edinburgh graduated in the virtual world Second Life on 2nd July, with the 'real' graduation ceremony for the School of Education streamed live on to virtual screens. Graduating students who could not be present in person in Edinburgh gathered with current student and tutor avatars to celebrate and receive their scrolls.

This was only the second time we have run a virtual graduation ceremony, but it has proved so popular that we plan to introduce it as a matter of course for students who can't get to Edinburgh for their graduation. Students are able to download robes and University of Edinburgh hoods for their avatars to wear, and everyone has free access to a virtual bar.

You can find out more about the Second Life graduation events at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/VueWiki/Virtual+Graduation>

The MSc in E-learning programme website is at <http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/e-learning/>

Fiona Littleton (IS)

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

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Nick Stroud has been an outstanding editor of BITS for most of its 20 years of existence, and retires as we publish the last issue in this format.

The pages of BITS have recounted countless changes under Nick's editorial control: he has been the mouthpiece for many exciting developments in how we deliver our services in IT, the Library and e-learning. For many of us, Nick's messages seeking news for BITS have been a key moment – even a highlight – every month for almost two decades. He always knows everything that is going on – a great source of information, which is the hallmark of a good communicator. The 200+ issues of BITS will stand as a fine historical record of our achievements.

Recently, Nick has been leading us as we develop new methods of communicating and delivering our news to the University community, and we hope this work will bear fruit over the coming months. We are all grateful to Nick for his work over the years, and wish him all the best in his retirement.

Jeff Haywood (VP-IS)