THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY WEBSITE PROGRAMME

Annual Report

2012 / 2013

An introduction from University Website Programme Director, Dawn Ellis

The 2012-13 academic year culminated in a huge achievement for the Programme team; that of delivering a new design to the University Website which now has well over 60,000 pages.

It will be no surprise to read how delighted we were to win the 2013 Standard of Excellence Award from the Web Marketing Association for the new design. My heartfelt thanks go to the team and to all our collaborators across the University who made the transition happen so smoothly and the end result such a success.

Looking forward to 2013-15, we intend to build on this success, to make the most of the strong collaboration and trust we have across our University-wide website publishing community, and to deliver a new, improved content management system, one fit for all of our needs.

This Annual Report gives an insight into the wide range of editorial and technical development activities the team are involved in and aims to reflect our enduring commitment to putting the user experience at the core of everything we do in order to deliver web publishing excellence.

I hope you enjoy reading it.

Dawn Ellis
Director, University Website Programme

Contents

1. Overview

This paper provides an overview of University Website Programme (UWP) activity in academic year 2012-13. The paper is brief, providing further information in the annexes.

Highlights and key achievements of the year

- Rollout of a new look and feel across the University website
- Improved user experience across key strategic themes - Student Experience and Global Academies
- Successful pilots of new and updated training courses to support colleagues
- 94% increase in new visits and 23% increase in returning visits to the website
- Cookies audit and education programme to support compliance with EU regulations
- PURE widget delivered to integrate research more seamlessly into the website
- Drupal CMS Agile development underway
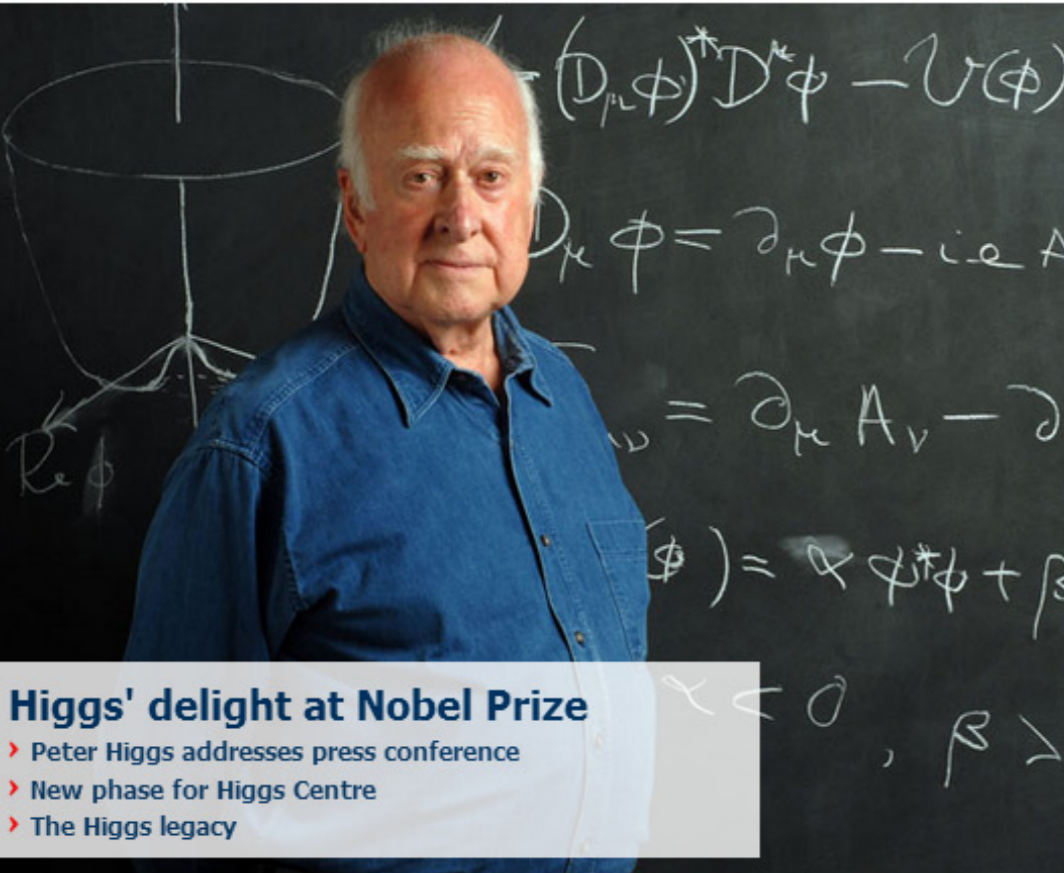- 2013 Standard of Excellence Award winners, Web Marketing Association

Award winners

We have received a **Standard of Excellence Award** from the Web Marketing Association for the University website for our new website design and associated usability improvements.

Award winners were selected on the quality of the design, interactivity, technology, content, innovation, copywriting and ease of use of the website.

The new design was developed and implemented in close collaboration with colleagues in Communications and Marketing and Information Services. This Award is a tribute to the hard work of everyone who has worked together to deliver the best possible user experience on our website.

The Award also provides the University Website Programme with an endorsement to continue to build on its expertise in online user research, innovation, and knowledge sharing to ensure the delivery of continuous improvement for the University's online presence.

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2. A new look and feel

The successful rollout of a refreshed graphic design in summer 2013 laid groundwork for the second phase new CMS planned for 2013-14.

Following a design tender project in summer 2012, design agency Tayburn were selected to work with the University Website Programme (UWP) and Communications and Marketing (CAM) to develop and implement a new look for the University website.

The new look and feel was designed to continue to represent University brand values, improve the website and CMS user experiences and deliver a design refresh with minimal CMS development, editorial investment or impact on web publishers.

Tayburn evolved their concept proposals into a deliverable design in collaboration with UWP and CAM with focus group research and prototype user testing helping to inform development. The design was implemented in July 2013 and initial perception testing has been positive among key target audiences. This has also been endorsed by the Standard of Excellence Award from the Web Marketing Association, received in September 2013.

Looking ahead

Research through autumn 2013 will include further perception testing of the new design, homepage click analysis of user behaviour and comparative user testing of structure, navigation and layouts.

3. Improving the online user experience

Enhancing the online student experience, improving the user journey through certain aspects of the design refresh and around the Global Academies websites, and launching 14 new websites demonstrates that we continue to put the user at the heart of our online developments.

3.1 Enhancing the student experience

We are working in close collaboration with colleagues in the Student Experience Programme to optimise the student experience online across the University website.

Initial progress has focused on enhancing the provision of key information and support:

- Publishing a new '*Preparing to study*' section to provide academic pre-arrival support.
- Creating a corporate website for staff to explain more about the programme, the range of activities taking place and how to get involved.
- Developing a new website to promote the Student Information Points service.
- Redeveloping and consolidating content and resources for Student Surveys.
- Restructuring the New students website to enhance the user experience.

Building on these achievements, we will continue to work together to establish a shared vision for 2013-14 which pulls together the different strands of the Student Experience Programme to create a unified approach to help best meet the needs of students online.

This work is supported by the contribution of funding for 1 FTE from Vice Principal Rigby and the Student Experience Project fund.

3.2 Edinburgh Global - Global Academies

In October 2012 we carried out a large-scale review of the Global Academies website and came up with a number of recommendations to improve the user journey to and around their sites. Since February 2013 we have been working closely with staff in the Global Academies to improve their current and ongoing web content, from basic tidying to full-scale site redevelopment, as well as a brand new site profiling the Academies generally and bringing together strands that run through all Academies.

This project has included the use of systems outside the corporate CMS, with advice being given on blog setup, social media and mailing list management. This work will continue into 2013/14, with 0.5 FTE funded by Vice Principal Hillier to support this collaboration.

3.3 New sites: launch highlights

Although most Schools and all three Colleges have now been in Polopoly for some time, we continue to receive regular requests for new sites coming into Polopoly as our reputation spreads and more people become convinced of the value of a centrally supported website service.

**See Annexe 2 - Polopoly implementation across the University**

In 2012/13 we helped to launch 14 new sites, listed in full in Annexe 3. The following are particularly worthy of note:

Alumni – graduation

This site works towards Alumni Services' objectives to capture and engage with alumni at an early stage. The site was launched in time for the June graduations and will be refreshed for the November graduations. This new site highlights the opportunities for ongoing engagement after graduation.

University at the Festivals

In March 2013 we launched a site to mark the University's involvement in the *Edinburgh International Science Festival*. This was later expanded into a wide-reaching but concise website showcasing our involvement in all of Edinburgh's festivals. A festivals strategy group has been established by Vice Principal Bownes and more work will follow to add further festival-related content and enhance links to and from the University site.
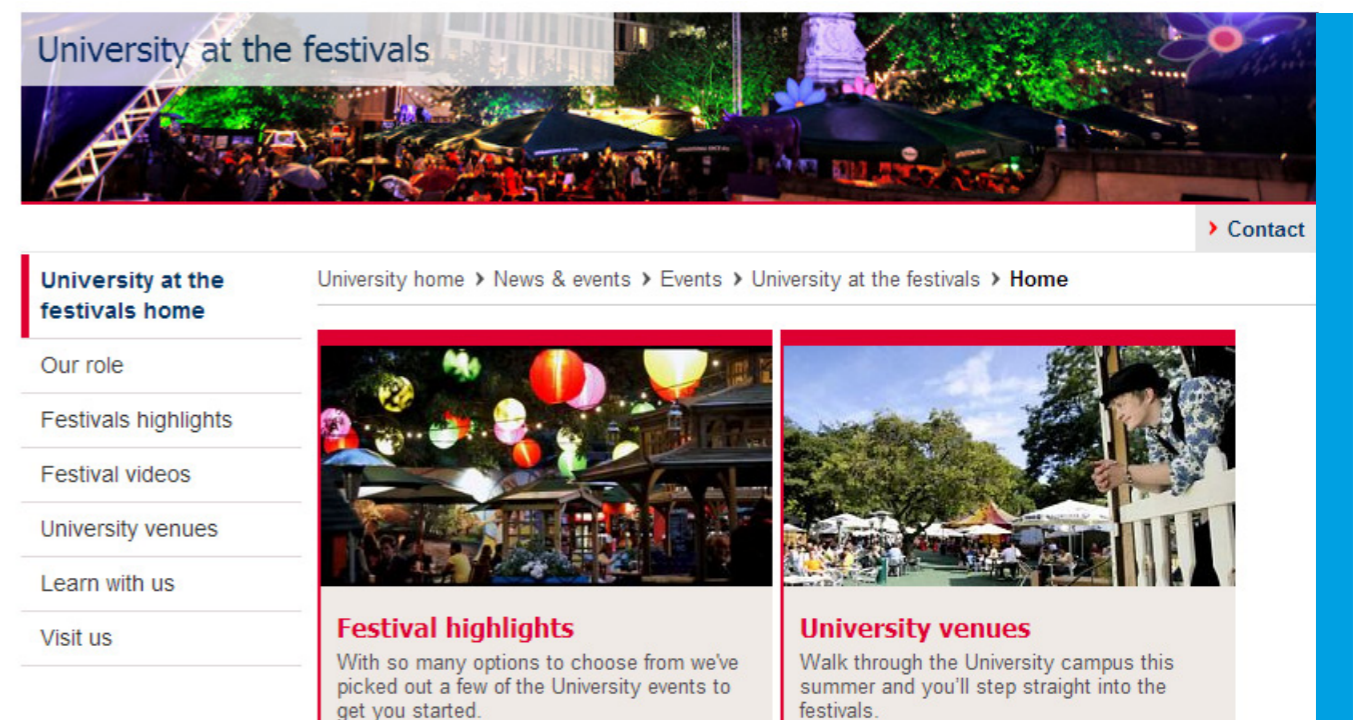
> **I'll be singing the praises of the University Website Programme and all the great work you have done for us!**
>
> **Sarah Anderson, Biological Sciences, who brought six new sites into Polopoly this year**

4. Educating and empowering our colleagues

Providing robust, research-based training and support services to the University web publishing community and maintaining web standards are a core part of what we do and key to ensuring the quality of the web content produced on behalf of the University.

4.1 Training, support and knowledge sharing

In 2013 we enhanced our training and support provision with new *Google Analytics* training, continued the rollout of our *Website Appraisal and Review Service,* and revamped our *Writing for the Web* training.

4.1.1 New *Google Analytics* training and dashboards

UWP supports site managers in measuring the effectiveness of their websites to help continually improve the University's online presence.

> **Brilliant, perfect mix of practical and theory. Really enjoyed it.**
>
> *Google Analytics* **training attendee**

Analytics training

The training consists of a mix of presentation, self-led training and follow-up support offered at our weekly drop-in sessions. In February 2013, we ran three pilots of our new training session which were booked out within days and we have now trained around 100 staff members in basic *Google Analytics*, with 92% rating it useful or very useful. These sessions now run monthly and continue to prove very popular.

Metrics dashboards provided to Schools

UWP provides high level dashboard analytics to all three Colleges and 14 individual Schools and bespoke dashboards to Schools when required. These have been well received with positive feedback. Infographics on our dashboards are engaging and an easy way to communicate key statistics and help to raise interest in web metrics. We have also started using analytics and metrics to help reach specific business goals; support has been given to Estates and Buildings for example, to promote and advertise their building access guides.

Future developments

We have started on a major update of the analytics code on the University website which will allow us to track visitors in a more sophisticated way by tracking document downloads, clicks on email links, clicks to external website links and how far users scroll down a page. This will enable us to promote *Google Analytics* again and encourage site managers and administrators to use web metrics in new ways.

4.1.2 Website Appraisal and Review Service rollout

Following a pilot in July 2012, our *Website Appraisal and Review Service* has grown further. Using these reports, which use a mix of automated and manual checker tools, we identified a number of quick fixes which we carried out on units' behalf, and we then followed up separately with many units on a one-to-one basis.

In November 2012, we carried out lighter touch mid-year appraisals for the academic units who received full reports last July, as well as running full reports for support units. In total, we distributed 73 reports in 2012/13. We will continue to run this service on an ongoing basis and expand to include support groups.

See Annexe 4 - Site appraisal service report

4.1.3 Updated Writing for the Web training

Our *Writing for the Web* training is a mandatory course for all staff who need access to the corporate CMS. This year we identified the need for the current training to be updated and so this was overhauled, bringing in the latest research in user behaviour and a number of examples of content and research from within the University to encourage the creation of readable and usable content.

4.1.4 Further training

User experience (UX) testing training

UX testing training continues to be an in-demand course, with an additional session run this year at the request of Student Experience Project colleagues. We've looked to build on this demand by establishing a community of interest in UX. This has taken the form of in-person sessions mixing seminars with opportunities to conduct user testing and an email forum which currently has 126 members.

Polopoly training

Demand for initial training and support continues with around 150 further members of staff trained to use Polopoly this year. 94% of all participants rated the quality of the training as being good or very good.

Demand for our advanced training course (run through a one-to-one drop in service) also continues to grow and tripled in 2012/13 compared with 2011/12.

> **This is extremely useful so thanks very much to all who worked on the report.**
>
> **School of Education**

> **Very useful session and lots of practical things in there to use - thanks.**
>
> **ECA staff member attending new WftW training**

> **This was an excellent introduction to Polopoly and I feel confident that I can go and edit live pages.**
>
> **Polopoly training attendaee**

Polopoly drop-in

Our weekly drop-in session, which runs every Tuesday, is busier than ever. We ran over 80 sessions, with staff from 28 different Schools, Colleges and support units. Attendees were given advice on specific Polopoly functionality, *Google Analytics*, site restructuring, site appraisal findings and more.

Web Publishing Community – sharing best practice

UWP and IS run a well-attended monthly Web Publishers Community meeting. Presentations cover a range of topics from content strategy to metrics such as 'Five things you didn't know about your website' and 'How *Google Analytics* was integrated into *MyEd*' to share best practice around the University.

See Annexe 5 - Web Publishing Community

4.2 Ensuring legal compliance: Cookies

The UK amended the existing Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations in May 2011, following an EU directive, to cover the use of cookies for storing information on a user's equipment. The regulations are in place to inform and protect all internet users from privacy-invasive technologies by forcing websites to provide information to users and to get consent for storing any private information.

UWP has already made great strides in ensuring compliance by removing where possible all dependencies on privacy-invasive cookies and will continue to work towards complying fully with the legislation.

Cookie audit

UWP has put in place a programme of education and training to update the University on the legislation and continue to keep people informed of any legal or technical developments. We have also run an annual comprehensive cookie audit with a lighter audit run every quarter. Any new cookies found are assessed for their impact and in certain situations they are added to the privacy and cookie policy. At other times site managers are communicated with directly to explore ways to remove any risk. A new section has also been added to the website appraisal reports highlighting any privacy invasive cookies picked up by the cookie audit, and encouraging their removal/avoidance.

Some privacy invasive cookies are set by sites using third parties that provide certain useful functionality such as *Twitter* feeds or social media 'like' buttons. UWP continue to develop and provide alternative functionality so that editors can replace these widgets with ones that set no cookies.

An additional benefit of the UWP site audit software has meant that it can be used for other purposes, for example by completing a *PayPal* audit for the Finance Department.

5. Integrating world-leading research online

The UWP development of a PURE 'widget' is helping to highlight our world-leading research activity by integrating it more seamlessly into our web presence and fulfil aspects of the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

PURE is a research information management system, designed for researchers, administrators, and managers across the University. Research outputs are uploaded to a database and are publicly available using the *Edinburgh Research Explorer*; a web portal integrated into the University website.

A staff consultation was carried out in May 2012 with representatives from Colleges and Schools to discuss opportunities to build on the successful integration of PURE into the University website to allow reuse of this important research output in websites beyond the *Research Explorer*. The data is complex and varied and different Schools have taken different approaches to how the data has been entered. This means that a generic approach for everybody has been difficult but not impossible to achieve.

Development has taken the form of a software 'widget' - a small web application with functionality focused on the most important aspects of research output. Standalone code built outside of the central CMS can be easily embedded by Schools who can use the widget as is, or take the code and adapt it to suit their individual purposes.

The PURE profile widget will give staff the opportunity to display a short list of their publications in a web page eg. a staff profile. Options will allow between 1 - 10 publications to be displayed in chronological order or the ability to only show their highlighted publications. They will also be able to add their staff photo, school and location.

Future development and enhancements can be planned to allow the data to live on beyond the life of the REF.

See also Annexe 6 – Technical development

6. Exploiting new technology

A new University Content Management System (CMS) using the Drupal open source platform is now in development using an Agile methodology. This follows a series of planning and consultation activities which took place during the first half of 2013 and is part of an evolution in future-proofing our website management.

Drupal CMS development

Agile development process

The development is using an Agile methodology (rather than waterfall as has been previously used), which provides the opportunity to appraise and revise priorities at frequent intervals based on development progress and the uncovering of unforeseen obstacles or opportunities. Working in short development cycles ('iterations'), the co-located development team deliver small, themed areas of functionality which are reviewed and tested on an ongoing basis feeding into a series of incremental development phases.

On such a long-term and large-scale project, it was felt that Agile was the most appropriate approach and leads well into a new culture of ongoing and collaborative technical development and website improvement.

Future-proof website management

Building on our previous success and award-winning development, the challenge now is for the UWP to become more responsive to future trends and challenges. We need to be explicit in our goals for the University website with Key Performance Indicators continually measuring how well we're performing. Small incremental changes, carefully monitored and reported upon, can deliver steady improvements month-on-month, year-on-year, in a more cost effective and efficient manner than a 'big bang' approach.

In the process of developing the new CMS, we have put content and the CMS user at the core.

Content above all

We're putting structures and processes in place to ensure that our content lives beyond our website. Through trends in social media and content aggregation, we're already seeing a decline in the impact and importance of the institutional web presence. Prospective students frequently trust content on third-party websites ahead of ours and value what is talked about in the social media sphere.

By ensuring that content in the new CMS is well 'chunked' and semantically rich we will facilitate better re-use of our content, provide more useful search experiences and enable our web designers to produce more engaging and robust experiences across the full range of devices.

We can't predict the future, but what we can say is that well-structured content is essential for genuinely useful and usable experiences across various sized devices and will enable us to respond to future innovations and trends.

Prioritising the CMS user experience

The vast majority of University web publishers are non-specialists who have little time to give to website management, but the voice of the non-specialist is rarely heard in development processes. The UWP is prioritising usability within the new CMS development, and investing time and effort in engagement with ordinary users.

Facilitating multidisciplinary collaboration

We've formalised roles within the development process that will help maintain our focus on ease of use and quality content – Information Architect, Content Strategist, UX Lead – who will engage with ordinary users and bring the established roles – technical developers, project managers, graphic designers – closer to the target audiences through a range of user-centred design techniques.

See Annexe 8 - The Drupal development team chart & activity log

> **"** Fall forward, fast: make many small bets, iterate wildly, back successes, kill failures, fast.
>
> **One of the BBC's 15 web principles; Tom Loosemore, the Head of the BBC's Web 2.0 project (2007)**

> **"** A revolution doesn't happen when society adopts new tools. It happens when society adopts new behaviors.
>
> **Clay Shirky, American writer on the social and economic effects of the internet**

7. Conclusion

The strides we have made in training and support consolidation as well as in the development of user-friendly technologies, demonstrate our commitment to our website CMS user community.

We will continue to put the user at the core of what we do. As we move towards the delivery of a new open source content management system, we aim to bring yet more people on board who will share in the benefits of building **BRIDGES**.

For more on this, look out for the University Website Programme through the academic years 2013-2015.

B / BUSINESS - Facilitate online business for all areas of the University.

R / ROBUST - Robust, resilient and scalable.

I / INNOVATION - Support flexible and innovative web development.

D / DEVICES - Deliver a quality website user experience across multiple devices.

G / GOVERNANCE - Governed and managed by a central service with inclusive, transparent processes.

E / EASY - Quick and easy for all levels of CMS user.

S / STANDARDS - Support the generation of standards and legislation compliant website content.

Annexes

Vision & goals

The quality and scale of the University's online engagement reflects our international standing as one of the world's leading comprehensive research-intensive higher education institutions; we will deliver a vibrant and seamless online user experience to external and internal audiences to support the delivery of the University's strategic goals.

Goals

To achieve the vision, everyone will need to play their part.

The University Website Programme team will support the delivery of the vision by setting and focusing on specific goals with agreed measures and by providing the necessary support to colleagues across the University to help them follow the agreed guiding standards.

More specifically in 2012-13, we will;

Goal 1 Continuously evaluate our target end users' online activities and requirements with a key focus on our applicant and student experience.

Goal 2 Educate and empower colleagues to become more engaging and efficient in their use of online tools.

Goal 3 Protect and strengthen our brand and reputation.

Goal 4 Highlight our world-leading research activity by integrating it more seamlessly into our web presence.
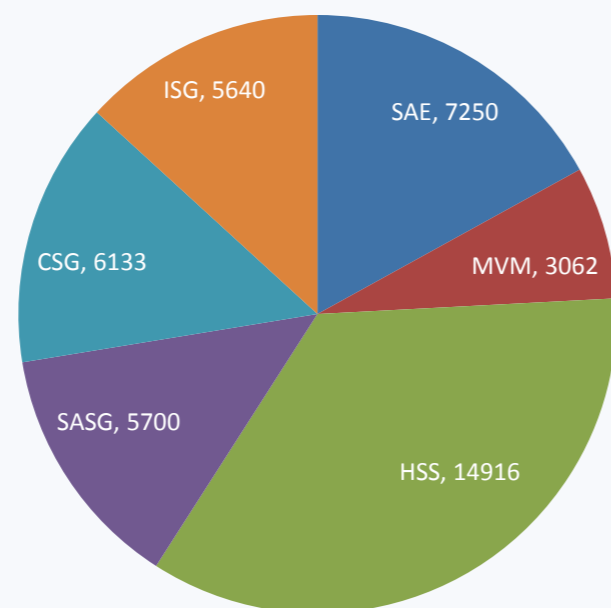
Goal 5 Exploit new technology wherever and however it helps colleagues deliver their business goals.

University chart showing Polopoly implementation

Polopoly implementation across the University

Website rollout and content development focus
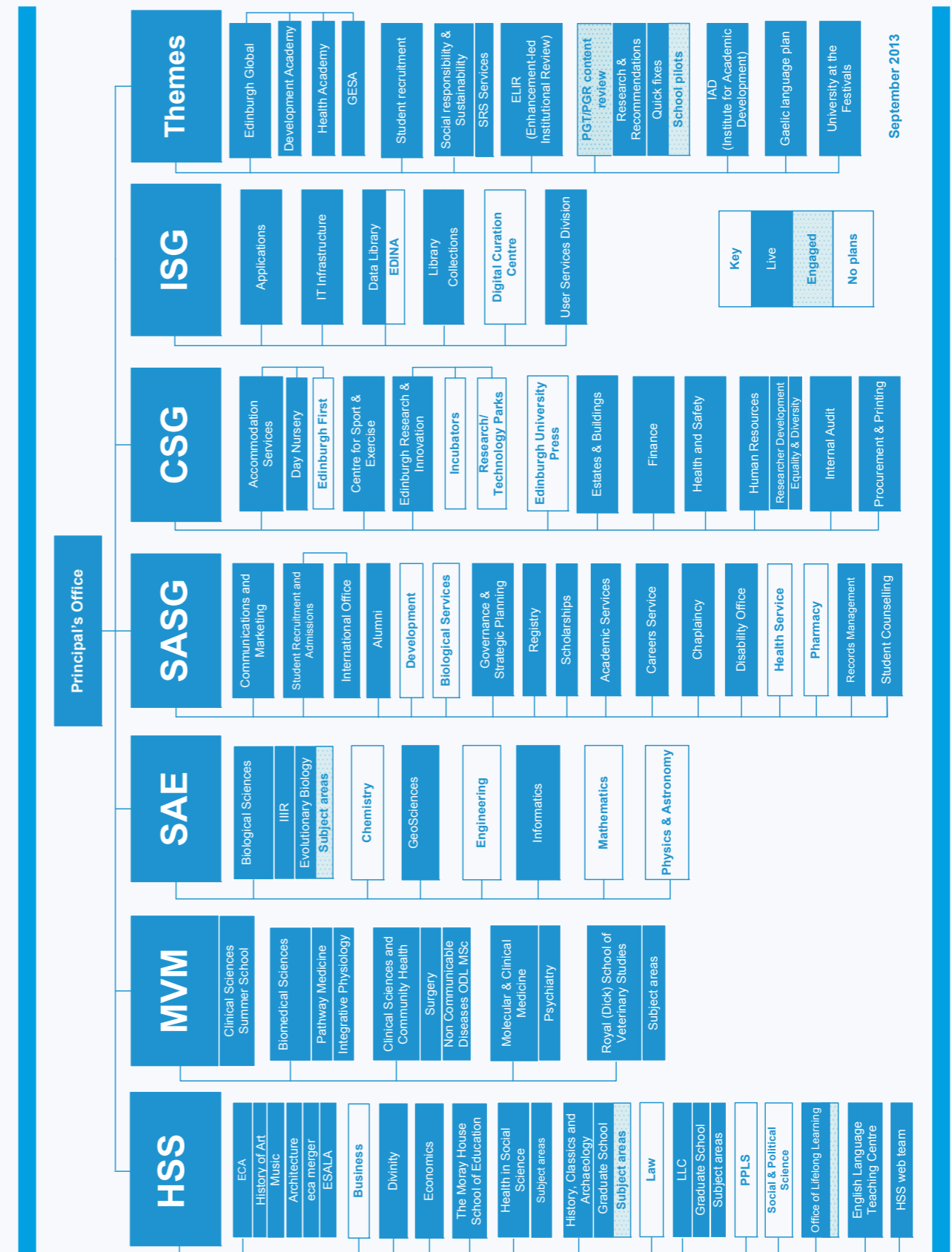
Pie chart showing pages by organisational unit

Pie chart: ISG, 5640; SAE, 7250; MVM, 3062; HSS, 14916; SASG, 5700; CSG, 6133

The University Website Programme team provided customer liaison, project management and editorial management to deliver websites outlined below in the academic year 2012/2013.

Editors by organisational unit	**Academic units**	**Editors**
	Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS)	137
	Medicine & Veterinary Medicine (MVM)	76
	Science & Engineering (SAE)	57
	Support groups	
	Information Services Group (ISG)	163
	Student and Academic Services Group (SASG)	139
	Corporate Services Group (CSG)	105

Total editors: 677

Total pages in Polopoly framework*: 42,701

*Estimate based on Google search result statistics

College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine	School of Veterinary Studies • MSc in Animal Behaviour School of Biomedical Sciences • MSc in Biomedical Sciences School of Clinical Sciences • Sleep Research Unit
College of Science & Engineering	School of Biology • MSc in Biotechnology • MSc in Systems & Synthetic Biology • MSc in Drug Discovery & Translational Biology • Online MSc in Drug Discovery & Translational Biology • MSc in Bioinformatics School of GeoSciences • Research support wiki School of Molecular, Genetic & Population Health Sciences • MSc in Clinical Trials
Student and Academic Services Group	Alumni • Graduation website
Strategic themes	• Edinburgh Global – Global Academies • Student Experience Project • Edinburgh at the Festivals

Site appraisal report

Introduction

Since July 2012, UWP have carried out 73 full site appraisals, covering 18,000 Polopoly web pages. We have spent time advising on and fixing errors and bad practice in sites' accessibility, usability and information architecture.

All the feedback we've received about the reports has been positive. From support calls, speaking to users at drop-ins and events, and from carrying out the mid-year appraisals, it's apparent that changes are being carried out by many units.

The full appraisal comprises:

- a manual web checker report detailing issues with accessibility and navigation
- an automated report from external service Site-Beam
- information of top pages in Google Analytics, so editors know where their efforts are best focussed.

The mid-year appraisal comprises:

- a manual check of the site against IA guidelines, with tailored advice
- an automated report from external service Site-Beam
- information of top pages in Google Analytics, so editors know where their efforts are best focussed.

All site appraisal reports are available from the Polopoly support wiki: **www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/pl71CQ**

Why?

We understand how little time the average web editor has to devote to web activity. The appraisal reports:

- identify quick fixes where users can make content more accessible and/or user-friendly with minimum effort
- identify larger issues – mostly structural – that ought to be addressed, and provide an avenue of support to do so
- help editors better understand web editing guidelines to help them with future content creation.

> " I found the report both useful and comprehensible. I would not have had time to carry out a detailed review/check myself.
> **School of Biological Sciences**

> I can promise you we shall look at this with a view to improving/changing things.
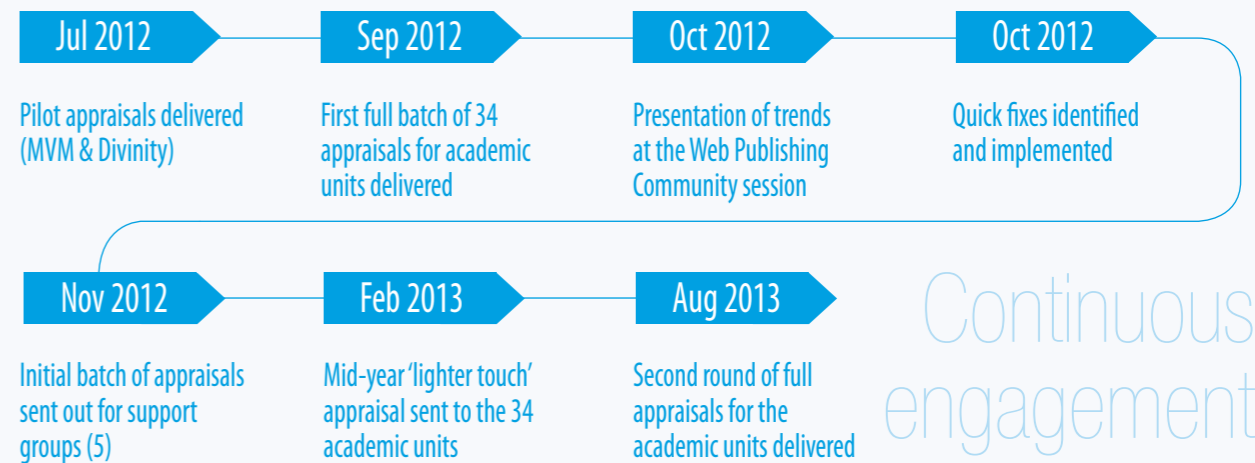> **Accommodation Services**

> The SiteBeam & Google Analytics is very useful for the folks at the coalface working on the site.
> **School of Divinity**

> A useful reminder to make us look at and refresh our site regularly.
> **MVM**

Timeline

Jul 2012	Sep 2012	Oct 2012	Oct 2012
Pilot appraisals delivered (MVM & Divinity)	First full batch of 34 appraisals for academic units delivered	Presentation of trends at the Web Publishing Community session	Quick fixes identified and implemented

Nov 2012	Feb 2013	Aug 2013	Continuous engagement
Initial batch of appraisals sent out for support groups (5)	Mid-year 'lighter touch' appraisal sent to the 34 academic units	Second round of full appraisals for the academic units delivered	

> " We make sure to reinforce message in the appraisals at every opportunity. This is not a stand-alone project but an integrated part of our processes.
> **Lizzie Cass-Maran, UWP**

Trends

Trends were identified across the appraisals. We are monitoring these trends and making sure content editors are educated in common issues, via presentations, training and one-to-one engagement.

Issue	Solution
Basic spelling errors (including typing errors)	Fixed as part of 'quick fixes'.
Broken links	
Alt text incorrectly applied	Fixes made on all sites.
Link titles missing or incorrect	
Tagging missing or incorrect	
Incorrectly used metadata	
Inappropriate use of title case	Engagement with editor so quick fixes can be carried out by editors without affecting other content.
Right hand navigation incorrect	
Unfriendly URLs	
Incorrect contact link	
Homepage IA incorrect	These issues are more deeply ingrained and will be solved through ongoing education and engagement on a one-to-one basis.
Missing or incorrect intro text	
Crowded overview pages	
Insufficient or incorrect subheadings	
Basic content at a very high reading age	

Full presentation on trends found: **www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/3L7MCQ**

Web Publishing Community

The Web Publishers Community sessions aim to inform and educate web publishers; sharing new ideas, experiences and developments via presentations, demonstrations and group exercises.

Date	Summary of agenda items
Jun 2013	• Graphic design refresh update • The future of the IS Applications web hosting service • Populating content in Drupal from a web service data feed
May 2013	• EU cookie legislation update • Google Analytics in MyEd update • The Future of MyEd and Mobile
Apr 2013	• Feedback on edin.ac, a new University URL shortening service • Vimeo now added to the cookies-free University video publisher • An update on the UX mailling list • Key concepts from writing for the web practice - how to better engage your audiences, as well as making your content findable and easier to evaluate • Different options for taking online payment
Mar 2013	• Forthcoming Polopoly development - CMS search enhancements • Cookies and privacy update - plans for the coming months • Embedding postgraduate fee information • Using edin.ac, a new University URL shortening service • Video presentation by web strategist and consultant Paul Boag on 'Fighting the System' • Handling web enquiries through suggested relevant content
Feb 2013	• New features in the Polopoly text editor • Using tables in Polopoly • Prototyping: the hows and whys of prototyping for websites and applications, including University case studies • Jquery for web developers: what it is and how you can use it
Jan 2013	• Update from the University Website Programme • Polopoly standout elements • Easter Bush Campus Winter Alerts system • Configuring Drupal 7 to run multiple websites from the one codebase
Dec 2012	• University Website Programme update • Information Architecture, Content Strategy and Search • Web Hosting service overview & new Reseller hosting solution • An overview of the IS Applications division Web Development service
Nov 2012	• Quarterly UX (User Experience) Interest Group session
Sep 2012	• Site appraisal trends • User Experience (UX) management • The benefits of prototyping when developing web content
Aug 2012	• Results of the July survey of the Web Publishers Community • Creating web forms using Polopoly • Creating easy-to-use forms - tips for better usability

Technical development

The initial IS programme budget for University Website Programme for this year was 1030 days. Following the mid-year review in Feb 2013, it was collectively agreed that this should be reduced to 730 days as IS Apps would not be able to deliver the full 1030 days within the time available. 718 days of work by IS Apps had been undertaken to the end of July 2013.

Date	Project	Benefits
Jul 2013	Drupal – further investigation and training	Building on the knowledge and experience gained from proof of concept project, further investigations have been completed and no show stoppers discovered. In addition work started on the infrastructure for the Drupal implementation and delivered DEV and TEST environments; Training for developers and CMS Managers in Drupal has been completed as has training for the whole team in Agile project management/delivery.
Jul 2013	Drupal – business requirements and business case	Developed complex set of user stories covering the business requirements for a new CMS, meeting the core needs of non-technical, technical users and support staff. Developed a business case for the new CMS outlining reasons for taking the project forward, core deliverables and a range of options to be considered.
Jul 2013	Polopoly - graphic design refresh	Successfully delivered a refreshed graphic design for the existing website, whilst addressing usability issues and with minimum development of Polopoly CMS.
May 2013	Alternative search engine investigation	Investigated a wide range of potential search engine options. Identified no clear winner, so decision to delay procurement until after replacing the University CMS was agreed. Improvements to the existing Google search were taken forward by the UWP team and implemented by the CMS Support Officer.
Feb 2013	Polopoly - text editor styles	Added citation, quote and footnote styles to existing rich text editor and addressed some bugs.
Jan 2013	Google search infrastructure	Set up a robust/resilient virtual server on standard UoE architecture to host the LIVE Google search functionality. Completed comprehensive testing on integration between the new search and Polopoly, plus a fall back solution should the new search fail.
Dec 2012	Drupal - proof of concept (POC)	Developed an initial POC environment using the Drupal CMS and produced a report evaluating the suitability of this technology for the University Website framework. Delivered a thorough and detailed report with recommendations on further research and evaluation and a high level costed plan for implementing the University Website framework based on the Drupal CMS.
Dec 2012	Ajax Enhancements	Building on enhancements started in spring 2011 Ajax was introduced to speed up the Polopoly interface. These enhancements significantly reduced the time on tasks for the majority of users (at the time 600+) working in Polopoly.
Nov 2012	POLO Database Upgrade	Project to upgrade the existing Oracle database owned by the University Web Site Team, POLO, from Oracle 9.2 to 10.2. The current version of the Oracle POLO DEV, TEST and LIVE databases is 9.2. Oracle 9.2 is past its Extended Support date. The three POLO databases were upgraded to lower the cost to the University, to mitigate security issues and to enable UWP to take advantage of new features.
Oct 2012	Polopoly Updates for Cookie Legislation	Upgraded the Google Maps version so that the Campus Maps implementation complies with the 'cookie law' (Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations). This is a privacy law that requires websites to obtain consent from visitors to store or retrieve any information on a computer.

In addition the IS Apps team have supported the University Website team in developing, estimating and planning a significant programme of work for 13/14. This will mainly focus on the development on the new CMS in Drupal, but will also include Polopoly projects that will prepare the way for content migration, plus compliance projects that will allow the Polopoly service and infrastructure to remain robust and resilient until it is ready to be decommissioned.
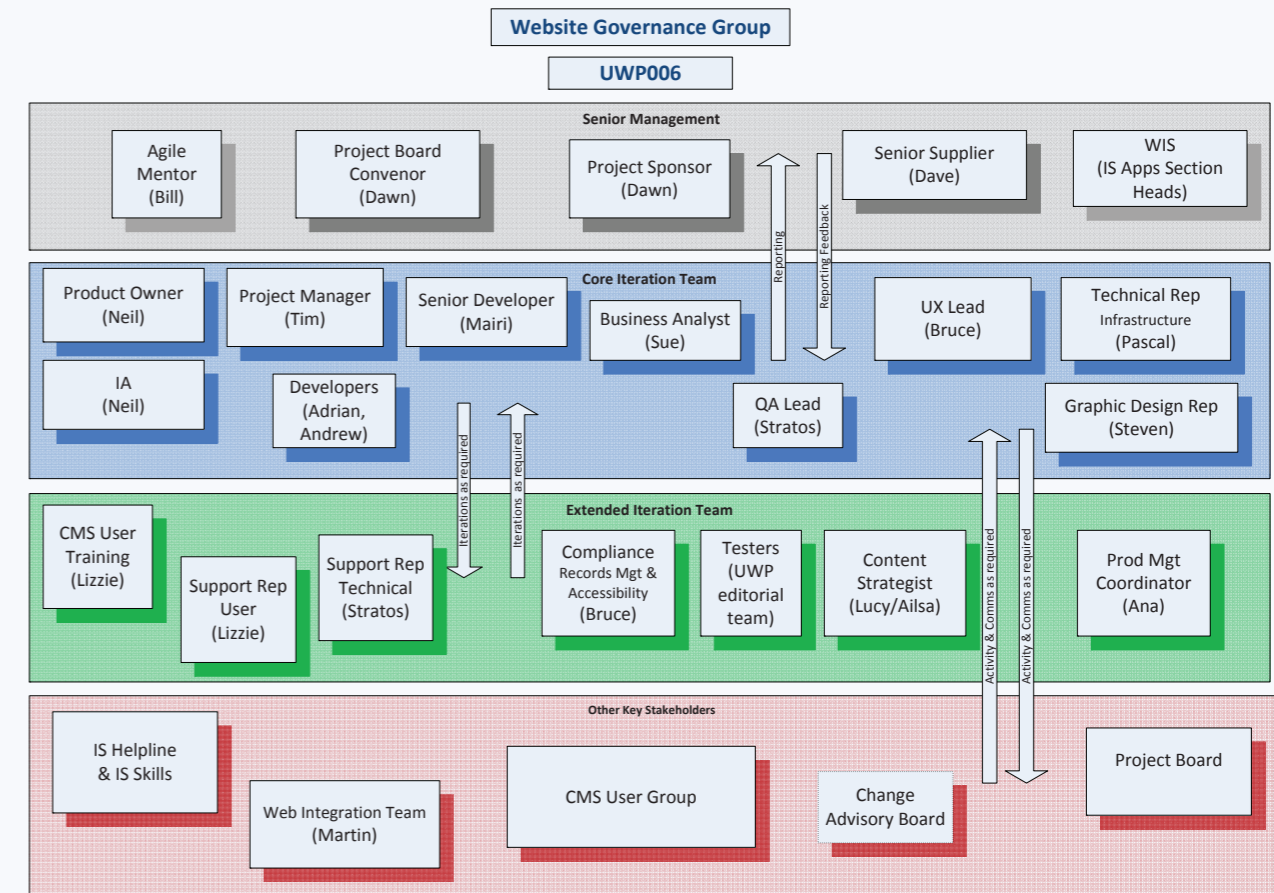
Technical Peer Group

The Technical Peer Group has continued to meet and collaborate. With representation from technical colleagues from across the organisation (Polopoly and non-Polopoly users), the following areas were covered.

Date	Summary of agenda items
Jan 2013	• Website search • Drupal Proof of Concept project update
Oct 2012	• Overall update from the University Website Project • The Drupal Proof of Concept project update • Embedding video content from the University streaming service • Further progress regarding cookies • New site search • Polopoly FCK editor changes

Drupal CMS development activity

Drupal development team

The agile development approach encourages ongoing collaboration between members of the iteration team and cooperation across the roles involved.

Activity log

Pre-2013

- June 2011 - Technical review proposal
- August to November 2011 - Requirements gathering exercises with CMS user groups (surveys and focus groups)
- January to March 2012 - Use case scenarios developed from user group requirements and dis seminated back
- March to May 2012 - Technical feasibility study
- August to December 2012 - Proof of Concept development and report

2013
- February to May - Generation of business requirements (in the form of agile user stories) from use case scenarios and user group sessions
- February to June - Outstanding development investigations arising from Proof of Concept
- June to August - Rationalisation, organisation and estimation of user stories
- June - Business Case finalised
- July to August - Technical infrastructure and pre-iteration development tasks
- August - Iteration process and planning finalised
- September - Development iterations begin

Development phases and iterations 2013-14
Each iteration takes place over a 3 week period, with a number of iterations making up a development phase. Each development phase has an overarching theme, with optimisation of the CMS user experience an ongoing consideration.

Development phase 1
- Theme: Core editorial and publishing functionality and user management
- 4 iterations
- Ends December 2013

Development phase 2
- Theme: Content re-use, CMS search and dashboard, content deletion and archiving, content migration
- 3 iterations
- Ends March 2014

Development phase 3
- Theme: User management consolidation, website theming (look and feel), advanced resource management, basic external data integration
- 3 iterations
- Ends May 2014

Development phase 4
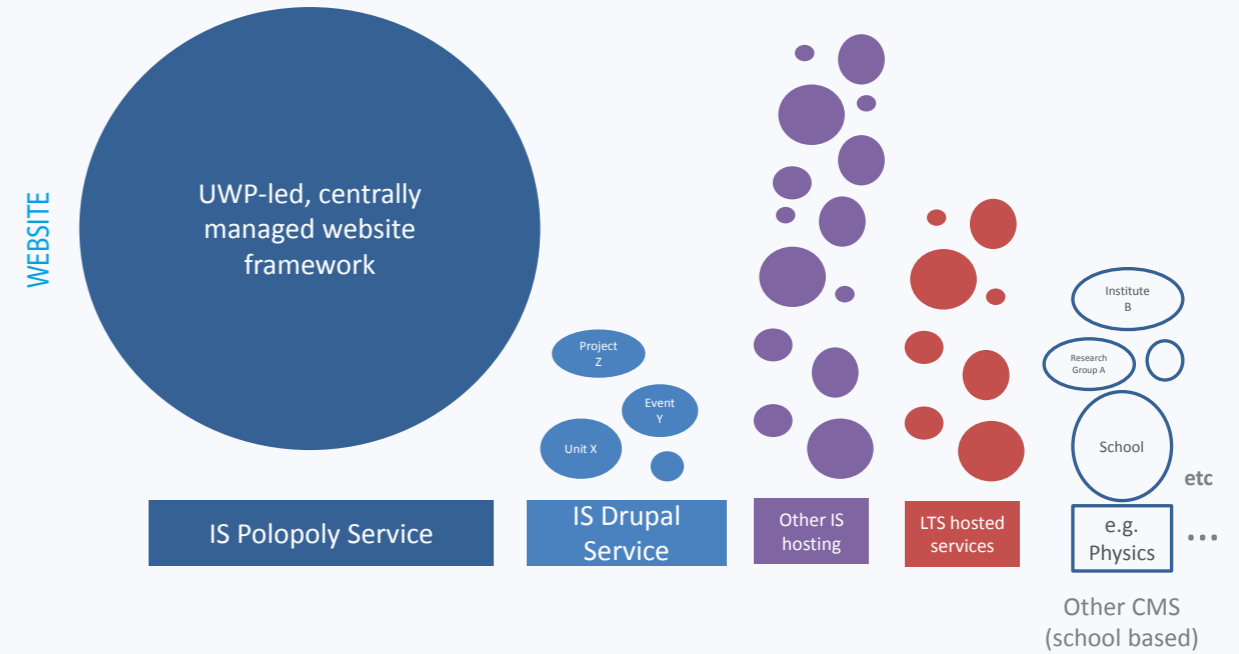- Theme: Devolved user management, advanced search and dashboard, full external data integration options
- 3 iterations
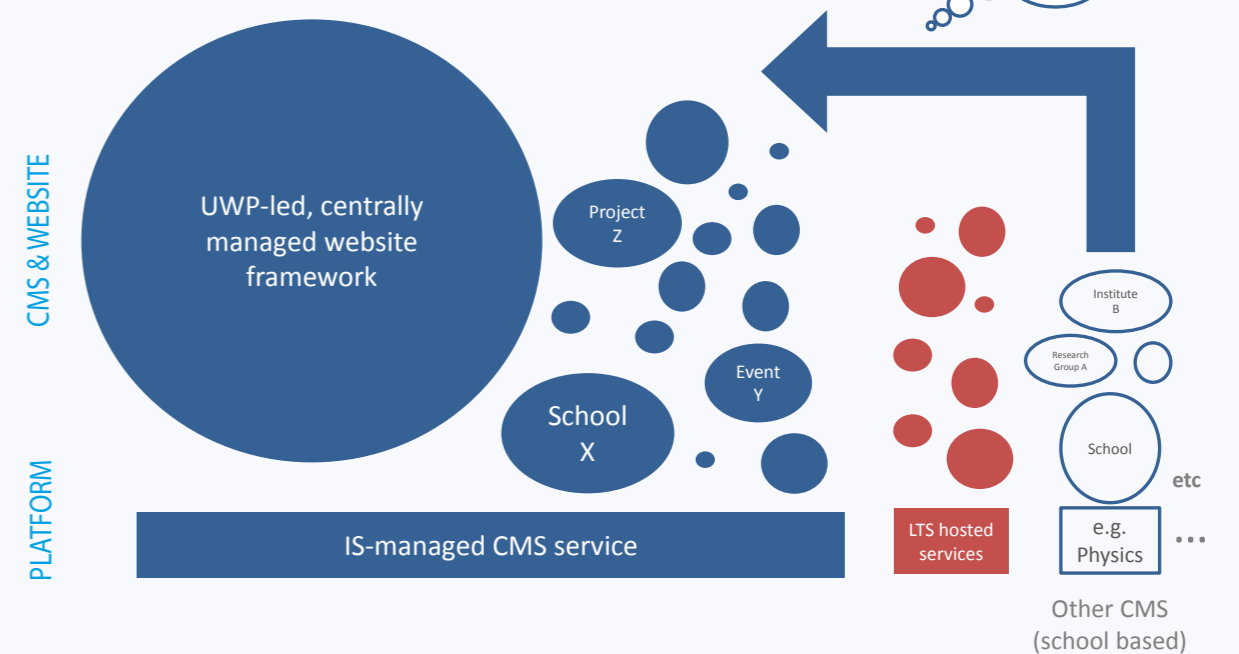- Ends July 2014

Development phases 5+
- Taking place in 2014-15
- Web forms, website feedback mechanisms, prioritised non-mandatory functionality

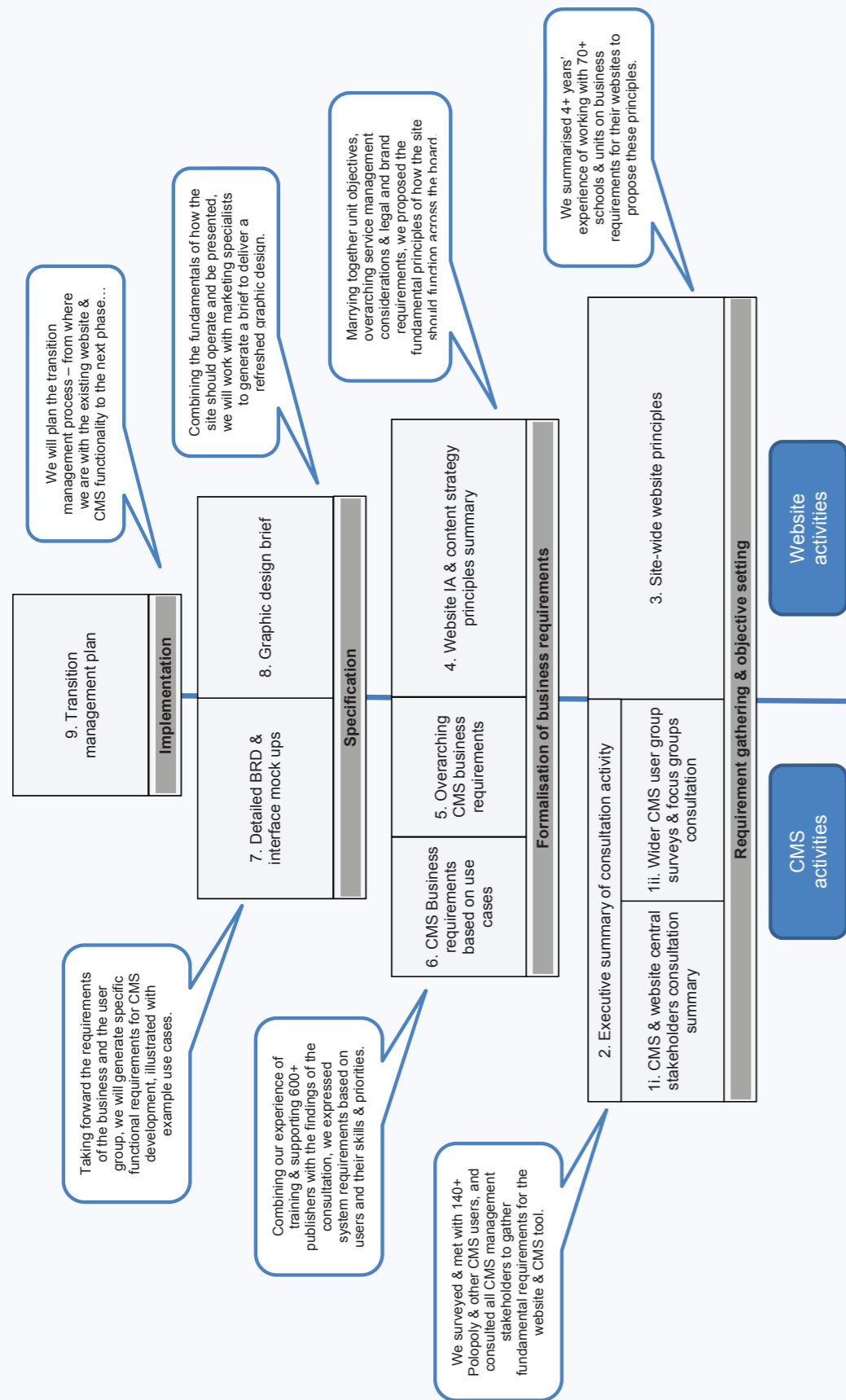# University website management & infrastructure model

Current set-up (2011-2012)

Proposed future framework (2012 onwards)

CMS & website review & engagement overview

We will plan the transition management process – from where we are with the existing website & CMS functionality to the next phase…

Combining the fundamentals of how the site should operate and be presented, we will work with marketing specialists to generate a brief to deliver a refreshed graphic design.

Marrying together unit objectives, overarching service management considerations & legal and brand requirements, we proposed the fundamental principles of how the site should function across the board.

We summarised 4+ years' experience of working with 70+ schools & units on business requirements for their websites to propose these principles.

Taking forward the requirements of the business and the user group, we will generate specific functional requirements for CMS development, illustrated with example use cases.

Combining our experience of training & supporting 600+ publishers with the findings of the consultation, we expressed system requirements based on users and their skills & priorities.

We surveyed & met with 140+ Polopoly & other CMS users, and consulted all CMS management stakeholders to gather fundamental requirements for the website & CMS tool.

Implementation
- 9. Transition management plan

Specification
- 8. Graphic design brief
- 7. Detailed BRD & interface mock ups

Formalisation of business requirements
- 4. Website IA & content strategy principles summary
- 5. Overarching CMS business requirements
- 6. CMS Business requirements based on use cases

Requirement gathering & objective setting
- 3. Site-wide website principles
- 2. Executive summary of consultation activity
  - 1i: CMS & website central stakeholders consultation summary
  - 1ii: Wider CMS user group surveys & focus groups consultation

Website activities

CMS activities

Summary of consultation activity

Priorities for the new CMS include:

- Improving usability
- Revising the editorial approach
- Greater flexibility in look and feel (see below)
- Enhancing content management tools
- Alerts, reporting, resource discovery
- Greater local control over user admin
- More sophisticated external integration options
- CMS search functionality
- More speed enhancements
- Better website search

What does "greater flexibility" mean?

More page layouts:

- Ideally with the opportunity to develop locally
- More space for local identity and branding
- More colour palettes
- More sophisticated integration options
- More opportunities for technical development contributions from across the University

It was agreed that we should retain and enhance the below:

- Consistency of the website
- Editorial, navigation, information architecture
- Standards, guidelines & quality assurance
- Pre-defined styles & formatting help
- We just need more flexibility
- Training & support services
- Potential for sharing

Improving the website primarily means supporting the people that manage it. We will continue to support publishers & enhance understanding of website usage and enhance the technology we use to help us work better, smarter & faster. We will look at potential new governance and management models to be more inclusive of college and school based teams.

Five Considerations

The following Five Considerations were proposed and agreed in October 2010 by the Interim Oversight Group and continue to underpin our work.

Consideration 1

Rise above the constraints of current business processes and local cultural silos and encourage more joined up thinking

It is important to consider the knock-on implications of establishing a devolved publishing framework.

The effort required to ensure sufficient coordination around design evolution and technical development is not yet certain. What is certain is that not all colleagues have fully assimilated the implications of sharing the same system, nor of being part of a framework which aims to ensure consistency of user experience.

Consideration should be given to the impact to the whole of any proposed changes. Effective collaboration and successful results can only be seen when colleagues make time to be open, clear and pragmatic in their approach. Efforts to establish stronger stakeholder liaison need to be supported by management teams in all Support Groups, Colleges and Schools.

Consideration 2

Maintain a user-focused approach

The Project established a user-focused approach right at the beginning of its work, defining target audiences and getting agreement from Schools and Units to deliver content and functionality which was to be driven by user need.

It would be very easy to slip back into an organisational approach, considering content providers and forgetting the end user. More time should be allocated to testing the content delivered and looking at user impressions to fully embed the user–focused approach. Only then will we be able to move the content and functionality to the next level.

Consideration 3

Resist the urge to be technology driven for technology's sake

These straightened times mean we need to have ruthless focus and make investment decisions to benefit the majority, so that we can capitalise on progress so far, and maintain the goodwill of the user community.

It is sometimes easy to be swept away on a wave of excitement around a proposal to do something new. Future investments in the adoption of new technologies need to be business-driven. We should not decide to just do something because we can, but because we can see how our customers might benefit from it.

Consideration 4

Encourage more creativity

We have come a long way in recent years in terms of delivering a consistent web presence for the University's "corporate information". Are we providing what our visitors want? Is it enough?

There is probably still much to be done in order to get this right, to learn from each other and our external users and to further streamline content. However, this is all about the University pushing out, broadcasting what it wants its stakeholders to see, but what about the Web 2.0 world? Should we be doing more on a corporate, strategic level to facilitate the use of web 2.0 technologies around the University? To, for example, improve recruitment? Initiatives are out there in the Schools. What can be shared? Can anything be usefully facilitated centrally?

What boundaries do we need to push? What else should we be considering to develop our vision for 2015?

Consideration 5

Consultation, consultation, consultation

Any decisions based on the outcome of the University Review should be communicated thoroughly and exhaustively. Tacit approval should not be assumed for any future central initiative. Time and resource should be allowed for wide-ranging and deep consultation of any central plans for any sweeping changes to our online presence.

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