THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY WEBSITE PROGRAMME

Annual Report

2013 / 2014

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An introduction from University Website Programme Director, Dawn Ellis

The academic year 2013-14 has been one of innovation, discourse and development for UWP. We have made major headway with our planned move to the new Drupal-based CMS, EdWeb, and are proud of its foundation in user-centric principles.

We have been excited by the roll-out of the PURE widget across the University website, allowing our University's world-class researchers to feature up-to-date details of their work online. And we were delighted to be shortlisted for the ICT Connect Awards, in recognition of our team's work to remove privacy-invasive cookies from the University website.

The year ahead promises further achievements: with the new CMS and the responsive-design of the website on the verge of delivery, our team is preparing for a smooth transition to the new system. We are also looking ahead to further close collaboration with the Student Experience Project and the Global Academies, to build on the work we have carried out this year both to prioritise the experience of the University's students and to highlight the important collaborative work of its research teams.

The UWP Annual Report 2013-14 details our team's activity across the board, from editorial through to development and the wider community beyond.

I hope you enjoy reading about our work.

Dawn Ellis
Director, University Website Programme

1. Overview

The University Website Programme (UWP) coordinates the management and development of the University's corporate web publishing framework and its associated services. Our Annual Report 2013-14 provides an overview of our activity across the academic year.

Highlights and key achievements of the year

- Continued positive engagement and improved user experience across key strategic themes – Student Experience Project and Global Academies
- Roll-out of the PURE widget, our tool to raise the profile of the University's research activity
- New training courses to furnish the web publishing community with additional skills
- Dissemination of our work at conferences including DrupalCamp, UX Scotland and IWMW 2014
- Launch of a suite of cookie-compliant widgets, to build on our work to remove privacy-invasive widgets from the University website
- Improvements to the University's search engine service
- Developing new easy-to-use content management system for launch in 2015
- Producing responsive design for mobile and new Global Experience Language for all web publishers

See Appendix 1 – Vision & goals

Awards

Winner - **Standard of Excellent Award 2013**, Web Marketing Association

Shortlisted - **Connect ICT Awards 2014**

Bronze Award - **University of Edinburgh Sustainability Awards 2014**

2. Improving the online user experience

As well as supporting the broader University website user community, UWP works closely with several University-wide strategic strands to harmonise and improve the online user experience.

2.1 Student Experience Project

In line with the University's commitment to delivering an outstanding student experience online, UWP started working directly with the Student Experience Project (SEP) in May 2013, with the contribution of financial support for one full-time equivalent.

We have successfully developed our approach as an 'enabling' resource to SEP, working effectively in partnership with SEP strands and across University business units. The additional member of staff funded by SEP has enabled bespoke training and support to be provided to colleagues involved in the Project, over and above that provided to the rest of the University website management community. This dedicated resource has also enabled website enhancement projects to take place: researching and communicating user requirements, developing and rationalising existing online provision and then handing over ongoing management.

Our goals for working with the Student Experience Project are to:

1. Improve the online student experience;
2. Make content management efficient and free up staff time;
3. Facilitate and encourage collaborative working;
4. Promote principles of good user experience, task, and content management.

There was a 43% increase in page views of 'You said, We listened' pages from January to June 2014 compared to similar content in the same period in 2013. The Student surveys website provides students with examples of how their views are acted upon, thereby encouraging participation in future student surveys.

Examples of successes to date:

Improvement of the online experience

- A thematic structure and dynamic homepage for the 'Students' content based on users' approaches to information.
- Refocused 'Student surveys' content to support 'You said, We listened' campaigns.

Made content management efficient to free up staff time

- Web publishing, writing, usability and analytics and social media training for each SEP strand.
- Developed, published and managed the ‘Enhancing the student experience’ corporate website.

The site has had 23,000 unique page views since publication in October 2013: 70% were from internal visitors on the University network. In a staff survey 72% agreed that the site effectively communicated the aims and activities of the Student Experience Project.

- Recommended a wiki for staff about ‘Surveys’ content, facilitating easier updating and a more appropriate repository for confidential information.
- Created a dynamic homepage for ‘New students’ website, giving site managers increased flexibility to expose selected content, particularly useful for time-sensitive content.

Facilitated and encouraged collaborative working

- User-centred tools and techniques to facilitate collaboration with departmental experts
- Three collaborative sessions involving 20 staff from 10 units of the University to develop process and content for the most common information needs of current students

Promoted principles of good user experience, task, and content management

- Advice and support for SEP and other staff for creating, structuring and publishing content for induction, student surveys, peer support, preparing for study and graduation
- Use of analytics to help inform decision-making, for example the location of 2014 content for ‘Preparing for study’.

There has been a 100% increase in unique page views of the ‘Preparing for study’ content for new students from August to September 2014 compared to the same period in 2013, informing further work to develop and enhance this website.

In the coming year, UWP will continue to work closely with the Student Experience Project to develop a more user-friendly, customer-focused web presence for ‘Student support’ content, guided and informed by research and user-centred design tools such as personas.

A theme-based, user-focused, multi-channel digital experience which meets and supports student needs throughout their academic life.

Continued work on the EdWeb CMS will support the extension of a more consistent user experience, as well as a better experience on multiple devices. The Edinburgh GEL project to develop an experience design framework (see page 19) aims to harmonise of the user experience at a system level, including the online services used by students like MyEd, EUCLID and Learn.

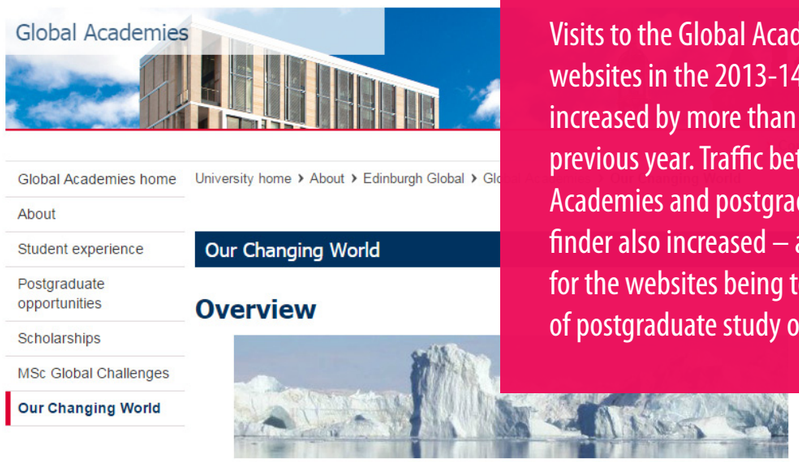
2.2 Global Academies

In 2013-14, we continued our work with the Global Academies staff to maintain and develop their suite of sites, coordinating with the University's aim to promote the success of the Academies as centres of trans-disciplinary and international research collaboration.

This year, our focus was on identifying and implementing improvements as new sites became established, reviewing objectives and looking for opportunities to promote the sites as a collective group. We worked closely with Academy staff on activities outside of the main websites, including piloting a centralised approach to email newsletters.

Site improvements have included working with the Academies to integrate PURE data into staff profiles to raise the profile of their research activity – an important aspect of the University's strategic plan for 2012-16 – and restructuring the Our Changing World website to maximise the potential of this popular lecture series content within the Global Academies website.

We also set up a wiki to support communications and encourage collaborative working between Academy staff. We continue to provide insights and dashboard overviews of website activity through quarterly statistical analysis and reporting and are now enhancing this to integrate reporting on digital marketing and social media activity.



Visits to the Global Academies suite of websites in the 2013-14 academic year increased by more than 116% on the previous year. Traffic between the Global Academies and postgraduate degree finder also increased – a key objective for the websites being to raise awareness of postgraduate study opportunities.

2.3 Supporting the website user community

As part of our aim to maintain consistency across the website, UWP provides support to web publishers across the University, with technical assistance and training available to all, regardless of web platform.

Demand has continued for new sites coming into our centrally-managed and supported CMS, Polopoly. This year, we assisted with the launch of sites from Biological Sciences, the Orthopaedic Surgery, Clinical Trials Unit and Enhancing the Student Experience, amongst others.

All sites in Polopoly will be migrated into EdWeb by UWP during 2015. See page 19 for more details.

See Appendices 2a & 2b – Polopoly implementation across the University

See Appendix 3 – Website rollout and content development focus

3. Educating and empowering our colleagues

We are committed to the provision of a continuously improving range of training, support and community events that promote a relevant, focused, accessible and quality website for the University.

3.1 Training, support and knowledge sharing

With the University committed to developing the knowledge, skills and capabilities of our staff, UWP has continued to provide training to the web publishing community. This year we trained well over 600 staff to use the services provided by UWP. Promoting best practice and allowing access to new tools enables our colleagues to maintain the highest quality of web presence: our training allows them to create, edit and improve their sites based on a solid understanding of, and appreciation for, their visitors and visitor behaviour.

3.1.1 Core training

Polopoly training

Regular Polopoly training continues to be in demand, with over 180 staff members trained to use the system since August 2013. Uptake of the sessions continues to be high, with site managers seeking to keep their sites relevant in the run-up to EdWeb migration. 86% of attendees reported that the session was very useful.

Writing for the Web

This editorial training covers best practice in crafting and organising information for the web; advice on legal obligations when creating content; and how to improve the accessibility and discoverability of content. Writing for the Web is consistently over-subscribed: since our last Annual Report, 297 attendees have attended courses.

Google Analytics training

Google Analytics has been in use since November 2008 to report website visit statistics, providing accurate data on website visitor activity that enables website managers to enrich their website strategy toolkits and take appropriate decisions. Our training helps our community understand and identify the behaviour of their target audiences, allowing them to better tailor their sites to measure progress towards their strategic goals and performance indicators. We also provide ongoing support for existing Google Analytics users.

See Appendix 4 – Training take-up over the academic year 2013-14

Upgrades and enhancements

Training and support documentation and session content have been updated following significant reorganisation of the Google Analytics dashboards and reports. The new session format has been piloted and runs regularly.

Publishers can now track specific events within their web pages and benefit from click counts on navigation, links and downloads.

One of the biggest achievements regarding Google Analytics was the roll out of page-wide event tracking within the Polopoly websites, accompanied by relevant usage guidelines. This functionality enables web publishers to track specific events within their pages by providing click counts on most popular user actions, including navigation, email links and file downloads, an element that is missing from the out-of-the-box Google Analytics service.

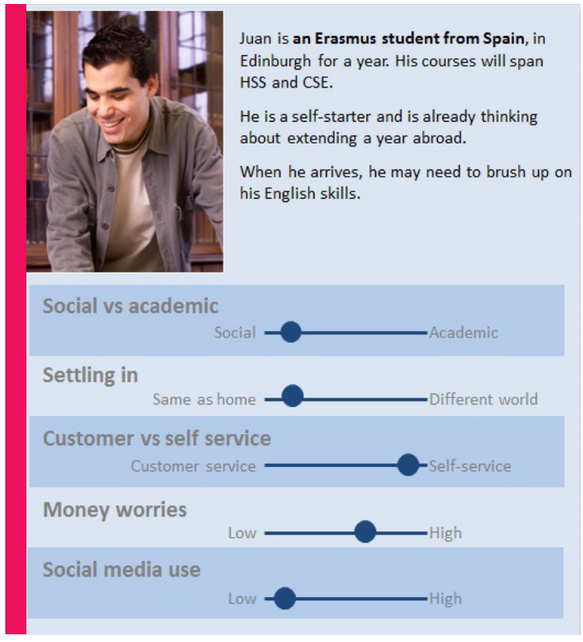
3.1.2 New training

We piloted three new training sessions: Personas and Prototyping, which introduce tools and techniques for web editors to help them assess and improve the quality of their sites and developments, and Social Media, aimed at those new to social platforms, to promote adherence to University guidelines and to protect the brand and reputation.

Persona training

The course taught attendees a methodology for creating and employing imagined but representative users of their sites to critically review their web estate and identify actionable insights for improvement. 95% of attendees rated the quality of the presentation as either excellent or good.

> Would recommend it to colleagues and will try using personas on future projects.
>
> **Persona training attendee**



Prototyping training

Our prototyping course aimed to allow participants to develop their use of prototyping (and particularly the University's tool, Balsamiq) as an effective way to explore potential developments, communicate ideas and undertake user testing. 100% of the attendees rated the activities on this very practical course as extremely useful.

> Great intro to Balsamiq, now have the confidence to go back to my desk and use it.
>
> **Prototyping training attendee**

Social media training

A piloted course in social media sought to provide an introduction to using social media to represent the University, with hints and tips as to where to go next.

> Very useful overview. Good reassurance that I'm thinking about the right things or reminders of ones I hadn't considered.
>
> **Social media training attendee**

3.1.3 Web publishing support and communications

Web Publishers' Community

Our monthly Web Publishers' Community meetings highlight best practice on all matters related to University web publishing. In the last year, our presentations have regularly included updates on the EdWeb CMS project, but have also covered topics including improved widgets, web analytics updates, consuming PURE data, social media use and the technical presentations covered advanced EdWeb use.

See Appendix 5 – Web Publishers' Community activity

Website support clinics

This year we rebranded our support clinics to reflect the fact that we offer advice on more topics than only the central content management system: we also advise about web analytics, content strategy, information architecture, site appraisal and more. More than 80 appointments were made by colleagues from across the University over the course of the last year.

Communications updates

We updated our communications process to reflect the range of activities and support we offer and minimise unnecessary emails to the web community. We split our notifications and wiki presence into three, reflecting Polopoly, EdWeb and general web support strands. This allows us to focus our emails towards those who are affected and to keep the traffic on our mandatory mailing lists to a minimum.

We expect that these changes will encourage increased engagement and simpler communications on all matters within the University web community.

UWP Blog

We introduced a new blog this year to promote the day-to-day activities of our team, including development work on our new Content Management System, training and events on offer to all University staff and demonstrations of our commitment to an excellent user experience. More exposure to the background, personalities, ideas and rationale behind our services will help our users better understand our core activities.

www.bit.ly/uwp-blog

3.2 Website appraisals

Since 2012 Website Appraisals have helped to maintain consistent editorial standards and ensure that the University complies with privacy and accessibility legislation. Our appraisals follow University goals to pursue consistency in quality and experience across our information technology and to embed the principles of equality and inclusion throughout our work.

In the last year, UWP has carried out annual appraisals for over 50 Schools and Units around the University; 'on-demand' website appraisals are also available to departments by request.

Website appraisals give us the opportunity to engage with our user community and to promote the support and training we offer.

Website Appraisals include results from:

Manual site checker

checks websites against University guidelines; identifies issues such as having the correct website navigation, an introductory sentence at the start of content pages, using regular, meaningful subheadings to break up page text.

Automated site checker

3rd party software, Sitebeam, checks issues such as spelling, broken links, accessibility.

Cookie checker

3rd party privacy-invasive cookies are identified and guidance is given for removal.

Google Analytics

provides statistics about the website's most popular pages to help site owners manage their well-used content.

Future actions

We are researching ways of improving the appraisals by adding new features to help editors engage and evaluate their sites, and to make them ready for transition to the new CMS. Our new Content Freshness Tool has also recently been released to allow users to view how much time has elapsed after the last edit of every page of their site and then conduct a proper content review.

See Appendix 6 – Website appraisal trends

We have developed a new Content Freshness Tool, which enables web publishers to find out how old their website content is.

3.3 Ensuring legal compliance: Cookies

Our Online Privacy Project was shortlisted for the 2014 Connect ICT Awards for the Public Sector for a 'project manager or project team that can demonstrate best practice in the successful development and delivery a project'.

Shortlisted for the 2014 Connect ICT Awards

UK legislation set a deadline in May 2012 to enforce usage guidelines of cookie technology in websites. UWP took immediate action and worked with the user community to eliminate bad or illegal practice.

Two years on from the legal enforcement deadline, the University has continued to make changes towards full compliance. These changes are in line with or exceeding the compliance of other Russell Group universities.

Our cookie audit produces considerable amounts of data, which is used to inform the web community about actions they can take to remove 3rd party privacy-invasive cookies.

Over the last two years, we have removed over 3,000 instances of 3rd party privacy-invasive cookies from Polopoly-driven webpages and introduced cookie-safe widgets to enable web publishers to use popular services such as YouTube without introducing cookies to their sites.

UWP is continuously developing our work with cookies, to ensure that we are well-positioned to respond quickly to changes in technology or legislation.

We have removed over 3,000 instances of 3rd party privacy-invasive cookies from Polopoly-driven webpages.

With the help of UWP widgets, the web editorial community is now being more proactive about choosing services that do not introduce cookies to their sites.

See Appendix 7 – Cookie-safe widget usage for Polopoly webpages

See Appendix 8 – List of widgets managed by University Website Programme

4. Integrating world-leading research online

With one of the University's three strategic goals dedicated to Excellence in Research, there is a high demand within the collegiate University for up-to-date research achievements to be featured on the website and easily accessible to users.

The UWP team has developed more ways of working with data held in the PURE database to help raise the profile of the University's research activity across our website.

We developed the 'PURE profile embed widget' as a direct response to recommendations made during consultations with key stakeholders in 2010 and 2012. PURE provides an easy way to embed researchers' profile and publication information, held in the PURE system, into any website; the widget dataset is automatically updated overnight.

The widget was released at the end of September 2013, before the closing dates of the Research Excellence Framework audit.

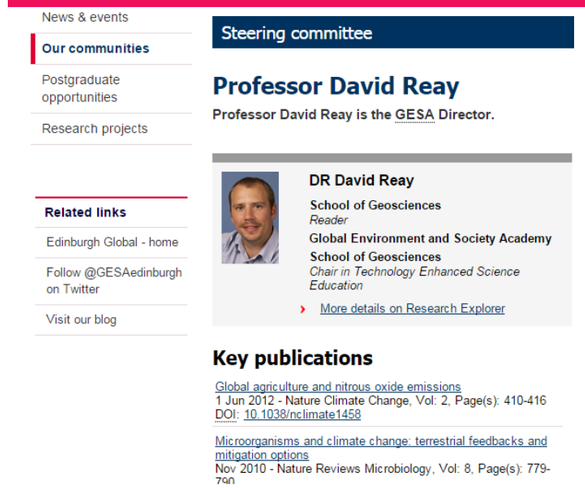
Further work completed includes:

- Investigation and changes to the widget code to make it sustainable and quicker, to enable further research data to be downloaded from the PURE core system to the widget
- A list of enhancements has been identified and prioritised, to lead into investigation and development work

Future actions

1. Continue to collaborate with colleagues in Schools, IS and the PURE team
2. Investigate and develop enhancements to the PURE widget
3. Pursue integration of PURE profile and publication details into EdWeb

The PURE widget provides an easy way to embed researchers' profiles and publication information into any website.



5. Service Management

UWP manages the central University website as well as the underlying Polopoly Content Manager services, providing a reliable and award-winning service to the University community.

Across the academic year 2013-14 we delivered reliable website and CMS services to the University community, and no major issues occurred. As focus has shifted towards delivering the new CMS service, rather than developing more for Polopoly, less overall support work has been needed to address unplanned incidents on Polopoly. This has enabled us to spend more time ensuring that the support team is adequately trained for their work with the upcoming service.

See Appendix 9 – Technical Peer Group

5.1 Upgrades and enhancements

In September 2013 we were awarded a Standard of Excellence Award from the Web Marketing Association for the University website, for its new design and associated usability improvements. The new design was developed and implemented in close collaboration with colleagues in Communications & Marketing and Information Services.

Winner of a Standard of Excellence Award from the Web Marketing Association, 2013

Following the Graphic Design Refresh project, which delivered a new look and feel across the University Website during the summer of 2013 and helped us win the Standard of Excellence Award, three projects were successfully signed-off during 2013-14.

These focused on:

1. delivering extended search functionality within the Polopoly Content Manager;

2. analytical reports looking at how Polopoly websites are structured and what kind of functionality they require;

3. new server infrastructure, which will ensure a robust service until migration to the new CMS is complete.

5.1.1 New search interface

An upgraded search interface was introduced into the Polopoly CMS, which has enhanced the existing functionality. This enables website editors to find content in Polopoly through multiple search fields. This functionality was well received and it is now a part of the Content Migration Toolkit.

5.1.2 CMS use information

As part of the work to understand existing CMS content and usage, this project delivered reports which analysed Polopoly content. These reports facilitated a better understanding of how websites are structured, as well as what type of functionality they require. This information is feeding into migration planning for the new CMS service, EdWeb.

5.1.3 Infrastructure upgrade

Two activities were undertaken throughout the academic year to ensure that the infrastructure will remain as robust as possible until Polopoly's planned decommission. The back-end database has been upgraded to meet with University standards and contractual agreements, and to ensure vendor support. The second activity was to upgrade all University website front servers for the test and live environments, resulting in quicker website loading times, higher website and content manager service availability and assurance of a continued strong service.

5.2 Google Search

Our work to enhance search provisions facilitates quicker and easier access to website resources, coordinating with the University's aim to provide an efficient and modern environment.

5.2.1 Improving our search engine

The global search engine is an integral part of the core University website and is also used by School websites outside the Polopoly infrastructure, such as Schools of Law, Philosophy, Psychology and Language sciences, the Edinburgh Research Explorer and Accommodation Services. In total we support nearly 500,000 pages.

The current University of Edinburgh website search engine was launched in January 2013 using Google's Site Search infrastructure and in-house development work to enhance the basic functionality.

These enhancements included:

- Presentation of filtered search results per website in a new tab, which helps by presenting results within the context of a specific school or support group, providing better clarity to search users.
- Provision of phone numbers and email addresses in separate tabs, previously inaccessible on the site.

5.2.2 Future plans for the search service

As UWP continuously works to provide a resilient and useful search service, the goal for 2014-15 is to research further functionality that reduces the time it takes to find suitable content. These investigations will lead to new search functionality deployments throughout the year and will feed into a search provision project planned for of 2015-16, which will lead to the next version of the University search service.

See Appendix 10 – List of indexed pages

6. Preparing for the new responsive website and tool, EdWeb

As part of the development of the new CMS, EdWeb, UWP and Communications & Marketing continue to work on the appearance and navigational behaviour of the website to iteratively improve the online experience for website visitors, while striking a balance between design flexibility for schools and maintaining overall University brand coherence.

6.1 2014 Design development for EdWeb

Our design changes will underpin the look of all of our website services and provide a consistent user experience from desktop to mobile.

6.1.1 Catering for small screen devices

The new design will cater for small screens, enabling easy mobile access to the University website. The new website's responsive design means the webpage layout reorganises itself automatically based on the size of the screen being used.

6.1.2 The Global Experience Language (GEL)

Website design has historically been managed much like print design: concepts are approved and, from this, a design is delivered for the website. This design remains in place for a number of years before a redesign process is initiated.

This approach can be costly and in an organisation such as ours – with many websites and online services managed independently – it is impossible for everything to remain in synch.

To begin to address this issue, an Experience Language is being developed. This approach is being used successfully in a number of organisations, for example The BBC (www.bbc.co.uk/gel) and Stanford University (openframework.stanford.edu).

This design toolkit, the Edinburgh GEL, for developers of all online interfaces will be managed collaboratively by UWP and Communications & Marketing, and has the support of managers of key University services (MyEd, Wiki, PURE, EUCLID, Learn).

The key benefits:

- Transparency for University developers and design agencies about expectations for online interface design;
- Examples and code available to speed up website and interface design;
- A mechanism to manage ongoing incremental evolution of interface design to keep pace with collaborative CMS development;
- Scope to extend to apply to all online systems – not just websites.

The Global Experience Language (GEL) brings a new approach to university website design.

6.2 New CMS development

In preparation for the migration to the new CMS, we have designed a suite of guidance materials, training and editorial support.

6.2.1 Phased transition

We are not simply transferring content from one CMS 'pot' to another as we move from Polopoly to EdWeb. We are moving the people and processes that are fundamental to sustainable, quality content management practices. This is no small undertaking.

A plan is in place which includes the delivery of a Migration Handbook, training, auto-migration, editorial checking and handover. Full transition is due to complete in December 2015.

Over the course of 2014-2015 training and support services will have to scale up to meet the needs of the CMS user group, which is expected to grow well beyond the current cohort of around 700 staff.

UWP is prioritising usability within the new CMS development.

6.2.2 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. UWP is prioritising usability within the new CMS development, and investing time and effort in engagement with ordinary users throughout the development process.

Furthermore, the importance of accessibility has been at the forefront of our CMS development from the start. With the University's commitment to protecting diversity and equality, one of our key objectives has been to produce both CMS and website that are accessible to all users. The 'CK Editor', for example, the main editorial screen within EdWeb, is a 3rd party tool that was researched and selected specifically for its accessible functionality.

See Appendices 11a & 11b – Website management & infrastructure model
See Appendix 12 – Five considerations that underpin our work

Accessibility has been at the forefront of our CMS development from the start.

7. Beyond UWP

Our involvement in the wider technology, research, support and student communities, within which we are positioned as a Higher Education service provider, has been an important part of our goal to disseminate our research, share our practice, develop our knowledge and learn from others.

7.1 Engagement with the digital community

As part of our ongoing engagement with broader technology developments, UWP attended and delivered papers at a number of conferences in 2013-14, placing our work and research at the forefront of international dialogues concerning CMS development, UX and technology in Higher Education.

UWP's work remains embedded within the wider digital community, with Programme Director, Dawn Ellis, a member of the Scotland Advisory Committee for the British Council and Chair of the British Council's International Digital Advisory Board.

The phased approach to development of and migration to EdWeb ensures a seamless transition.

Stratos Filailthis

'The way forward with Drupal for The University of Edinburgh' 9-10 May 2014, DrupalCampScotland 2014

User experience management is happening in other sectors and bringing about huge cultural change. It's only a matter of time before it hits our sector in a big way.

Neil Allison

'What's with UX in Higher Education?', 17 July 2014, IWMW 2014

We use personas to improve consensus and user focus in our development teams.

Neil Allison & Bruce Darby

'Making Personas Work', 17 July 2014, IWMW 2014

19-20 June 2014, UX Scotland, attended by Neil Allison, Bruce Darby

7.2 Social and environmental responsibility

We are committed to minimising our environmental impact. In 2014 UWP participated in the University's Sustainability Awards, achieving Bronze status for our ongoing work to increase energy efficiency and recycling within our offices and to raise awareness of sustainable travel, environmental responsibilities and mental health, amongst other areas, within our team.

Our commitment to a sustainable workplace was recognised with a Bronze award at the University's 2014 Sustainability Awards.

7.3 Responsibility to students

In recognition of the University's aim for Excellence in Education, and its strategy to equip students with employable skills through work-based learning, UWP welcomed an undergraduate student intern from the Informatics Department, who worked with us to develop our new Content Freshness Tool.

This tool will be an important part of our suite of widgets, which assist web publishers in appraising the content of their websites, particularly as web publishers reconsider their content with the upcoming move to EdWeb.

As part of our support for the University at the Festivals website, we provided bespoke training and assistance to equip a University of Edinburgh student intern with skills in Polopoly, Writing for the Web and Google Analytics.

We also have an arrangement with Edinburgh Napier University, where we take on an intern each year from the School of Computing.

Our student intern developed a new content appraisal tool, which has recently been launched as part of our suite of widgets available to web publishers.

8. Conclusion

In a busy and productive year for the team, UWP has maintained consistently high standards of service, training and support to the web publishing community and users of the Polopoly CMS, while simultaneously developing and preparing for our new CMS, EdWeb.

With the University's strategic goals in mind, we have pursued consistency in our development and editorial work; prioritised research activity in our website enhancements; developed new training resources to enhance further the skills of the web publishing community; reached out to wider communities in the University and beyond; and committed ourselves to enhancing the student experience online.

The importance of the user experience, meanwhile, remains integral to UWP's developments, as we continue our work to prioritise accessibility and usability across our CMS and website.

UWP's work in 2013-14 paves the way for the launch of the new CMS, EdWeb, and its associated training and support services.

All this to take us to a place where we have a flexible, easy-to-use content management system, which delivers responsive webpages full of engaging content fit for the world-leading University that is Edinburgh.

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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.

We will:

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

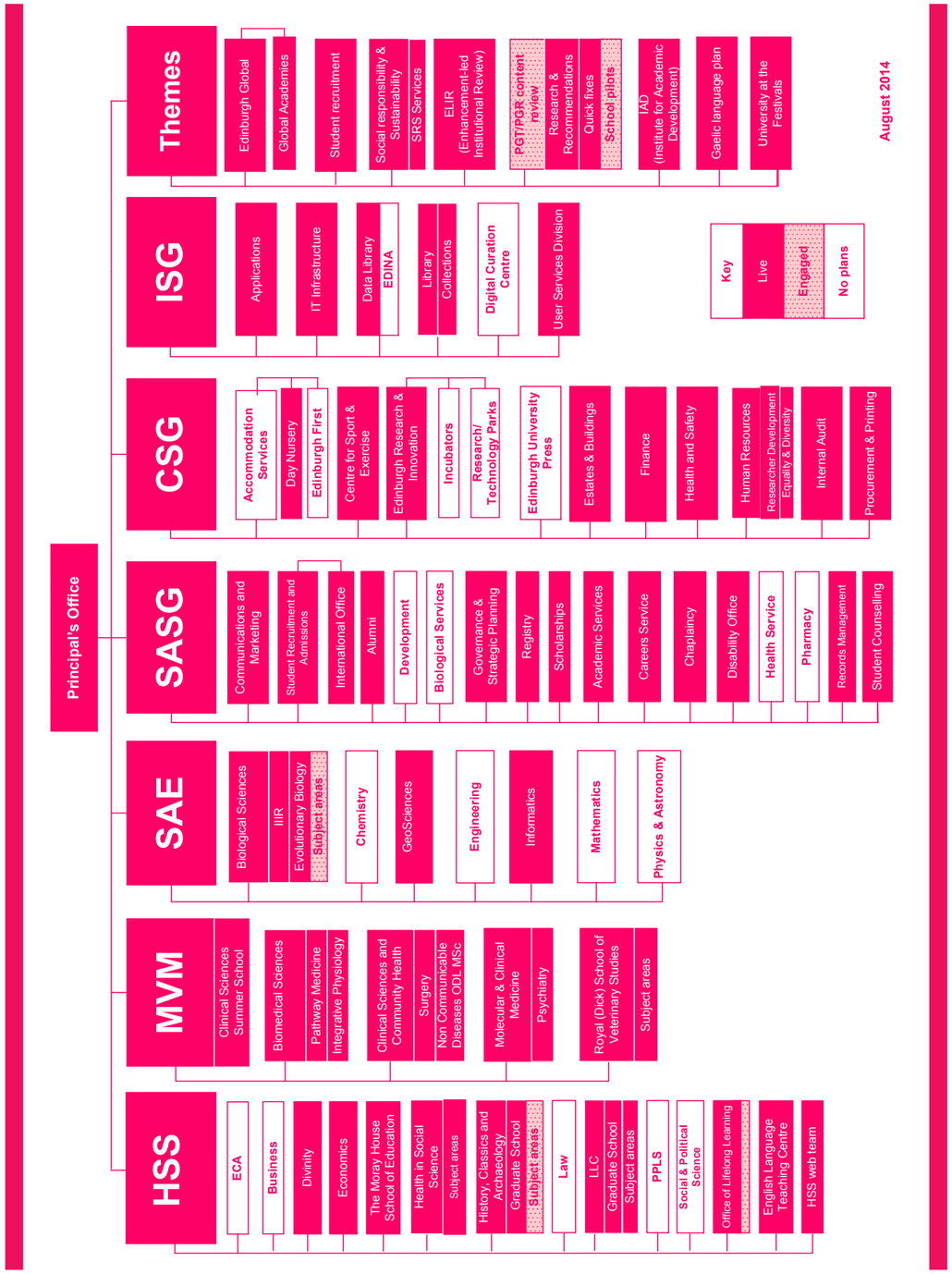
Goal 2 Educate and empower colleagues to become more engaging and efficient in their use of online tools.

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.

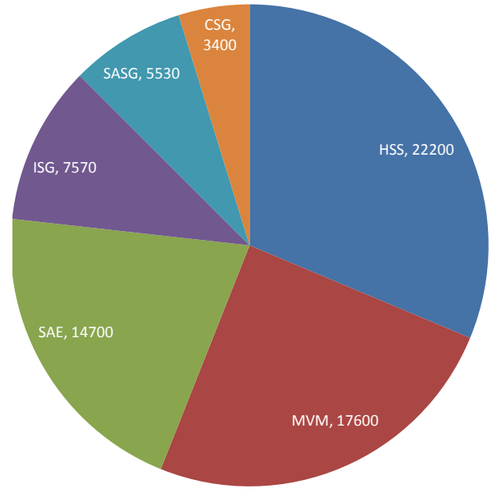
Goal 5 Exploit new technology wherever and however it helps colleagues deliver their business goals.

University chart showing Polopoly implementation



Polopoly implementation across the University

Pie chart showing pages by organisational unit



Editors by organisational unit

Academic units	Editors
Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS)	187
Medicine & Veterinary Medicine (MVM)	102
Science & Engineering (SAE)	32

Support groups	
Information Services Group (ISG)	186
Student and Academic Services Group (SASG)	161
Corporate Services Group (CSG)	122

Total editors: 790

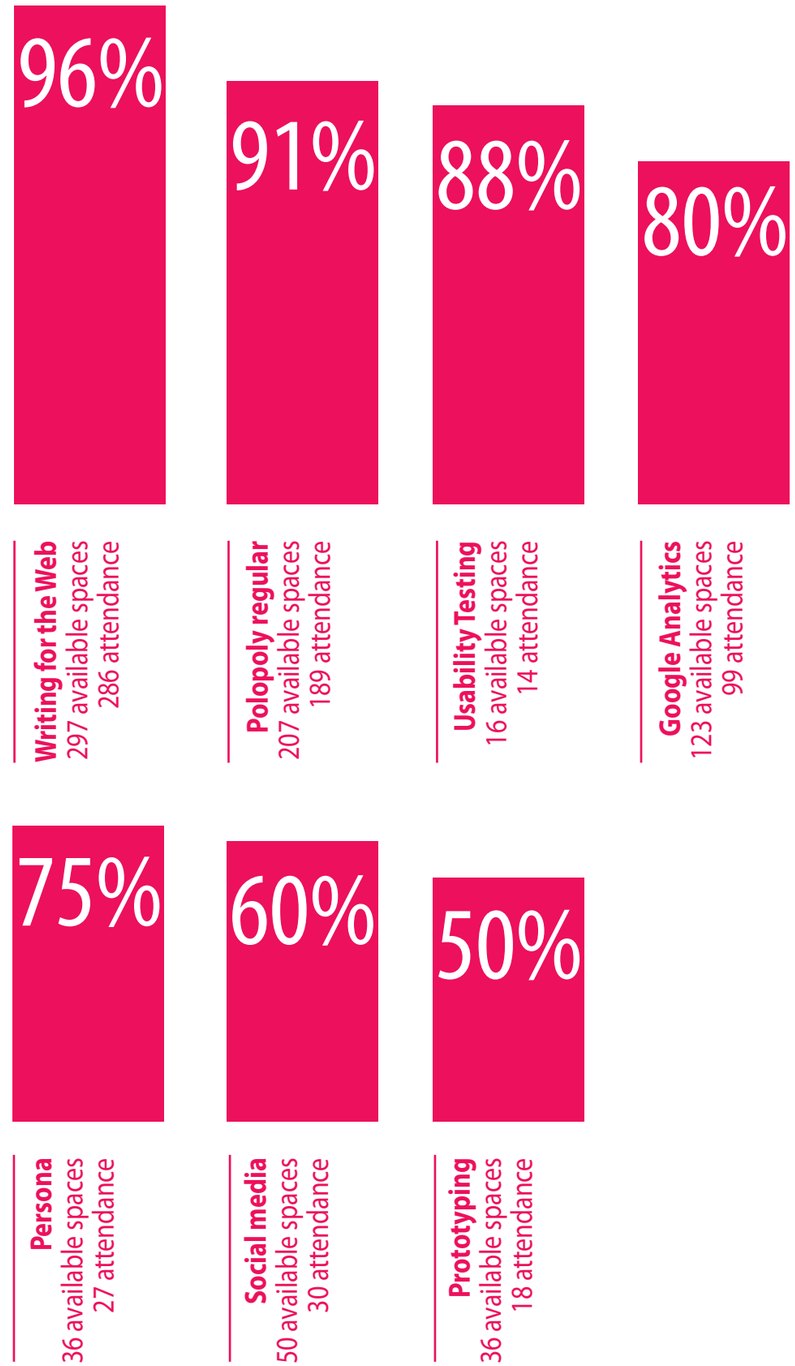
Total pages in Polopoly framework: 71,000+

Website rollout and content development focus

The University Website Programme team provides customer liaison, project management and editorial management to deliver websites outlined below in the academic year 2013/2014.

College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine	School of Clinical Sciences • Orthopaedic Surgery Health Services Research Unit
College of Science & Engineering	School of Biological Sciences • MSc in Biochemistry • MSc in Synthetic Biology & Biotechnology
Strategic themes	Edinburgh Global • Our Changing World Student Experience Project • Enhancing the Student Experience

Training take-up over the academic year 2013/14



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 2014	• Drupal update • New website design and navigation briefing • Google Analytics Event Tracking and Polopoly
May 2014	• Drupal update • The Drupal editorial experience • Website usability testing case study • Integrating the Lothian Bus Tracker API with your web content
Apr 2014	• Cookie and Privacy Legislation - Progress 2 years on • Drupal update • Living with rich text in Drupal
Mar 2014	• Drupal project update • How and why to use prototyping • Consuming data from PURE web services and incorporating into a Drupal site
Feb 2014	• Drupal project update • Using personas to deliver more user-centred content and services • XML feeds and the bookable rooms site
Jan 2014	• Drupal project update • Using social media for official University presences • Short URLs, aliases and redirects • Polopoly beta search
Dec 2013	• Drupal project update • Summary of mental model research around web page creation • Google analytics new interfac
Nov 2013	• Quarterly UX (User Experience) Interest Group session
Oct 2013	• Demonstration of new cookie free Google Maps widget • New University CMS development
Sep 2013	• Top 5 considerations for a consistent University website Information Architecture • Integrating PURE into Polopoly • Consuming an XML data feed into a Drupal website and integrating this with Polopoly
Aug 2013	• Graphic design refresh and IA guidelines update • Web strategy workshops follow up • Thriving in a world of change - Future friendly content

Website appraisal trends

A number of recurring issues with University websites have been identified over the last 2 years:

Issue	Solution
Spelling erros	Quick fixes made on all sites by UWP editorial team.
Broken links	
Incorrect or no Alt text	
Link titles missing or incorrect	
Acronym or abbreviation tagging missing	
Incorrect or no metadata	
Inappropriate use of title case	Enagement with site manager so quick fixes can be carried out by editors without affecting other content.
Regular subheadings	
Missing introductory text	
Right hand navigation incorrect	
Unfriendly URLs	
Incorrect contact link	
External links from homepage	
3rd party privacy invasive cookies	Engagement with site manager to use UWP solutions.

List of sites appraised 2013/2014

College of Humanities and Social Science:
Go Abroad - Staff Toolkit
Go Abroad - Student Exchanges
Postgraduate Academic Administration & Admissions
Undergraduate Academic Administration
Undergraduate Admissions
Visiting and exchange students
School of Divinity
School of Economics
School of Health in Social Science
- Clinical Psychology
- Counselling & Psychotherapy
- Nursing Studies

School of History, Classics & Archaeology
- Archaeology
- Classics
- Graduate School
- History

School of Literatures, Languages & Cultures
- Graduate School
- Celtic and Scottish Studies
- English Literature

Division of European Languages & Cultures
Moray House School of Education
- Graduate School

College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine:
School of Biomedical Sciences
School of Clinical Sciences and Community Health
The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

College of Science & Engineering:
School of Biological Sciences
School of GeoSciences
- Masters Programmes

Student and Academic Services Group:
Academic Services
Alumni - Alumni Services
Careers Service
Edinburgh Global
Human Resources
Institute for Academic Development
International Office - Study Abroad
Scholarships and Student Funding Services
Student Disability Service

Cookie-safe widget usage for Polopoly webpages

The number of instances of cookie-safe widgets on Polopoly pages significantly increased across 2013-14.

Widget	2013	2014	Counteracts
Video Publisher	260	500	YouTube, Vimeo videos
Social Share Include	201	249	Social media share buttons
Document Publisher	23	30	Document embed instances
Twitter Feed	9	31	Twitter feeds
Google Maps	-	10	Google Maps embed instances

List of widgets managed by UWP

Widget	Description
Content Freshness Widget	This widget displays the tree structure of a particular website created in Polopoly and colours the pages in red that have content over the selected time threshold. If a page further down the tree structure is coloured red, all respective upper ancestors in the hierarchy will appear in red also. Please note that this widget will only work on web pages created in Polopoly.
Cookie Audit tool	This tool checks your website against the University Website Programme cookie audit data.
Document publisher	This tool converts your PDF documents, magazines and slideshows into a viewer plugin that you can include on your pages.
Image resizer	The image resizer tool automatically converts an image file into the full range of Polopoly image sizes.
Google Maps embed	This tool allows you to create a customised cookieless Google Map that does not use privacy-invasive cookies. The tool will provide you with a small amount of HTML code which you can use to embed the map on your Polopoly website.
PURE profile embed	Search for a researcher and display their PURE profile on your web-site.
Twitter widget	Display a cookie free Twitter feed on your website.
URL shortener	Quickly shorten any large ed.ac.uk URL to a edin.ac short URL.
YouTube / Vimeo video publisher	This tool takes your YouTube or Vimeo video URL and outputs a small amount of HTML code you can use to place it on your Polopoly website.

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 2014	• Status of the 2013/14 UWP programme • The New University-wide CMS project • A Technical Overview of the new CMS
Aug 2013	• The UWP programme of work for 2013/14 • Google analytics code update: progress and next steps • IA update and reflections on graphic design refresh • Process and progress of User Stories for the new CMS

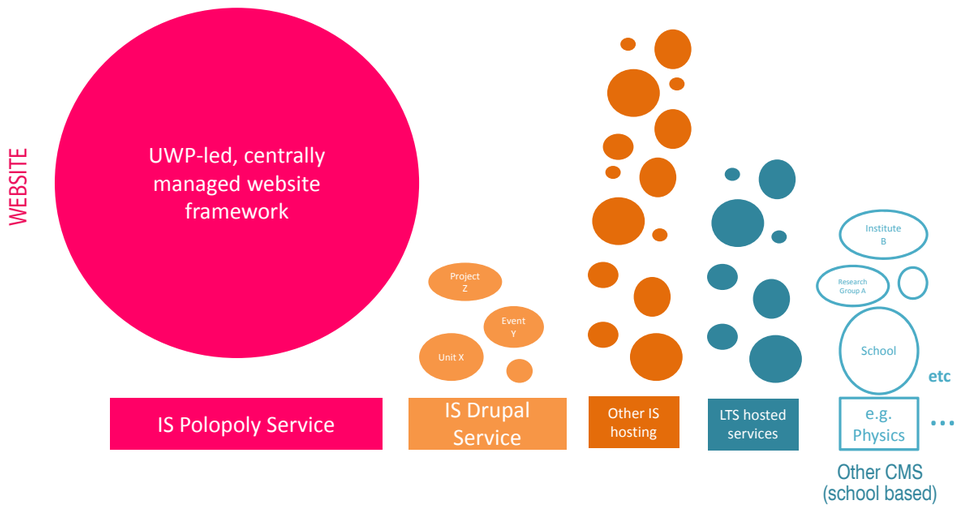
List of indexed pages

A full list of websites that are set up to be indexed by the global University search facility, as well as an estimation of the indexed number of pages per website. These estimations are provided by Google's search tool and provide an approximate estimation of the total indexed pages.

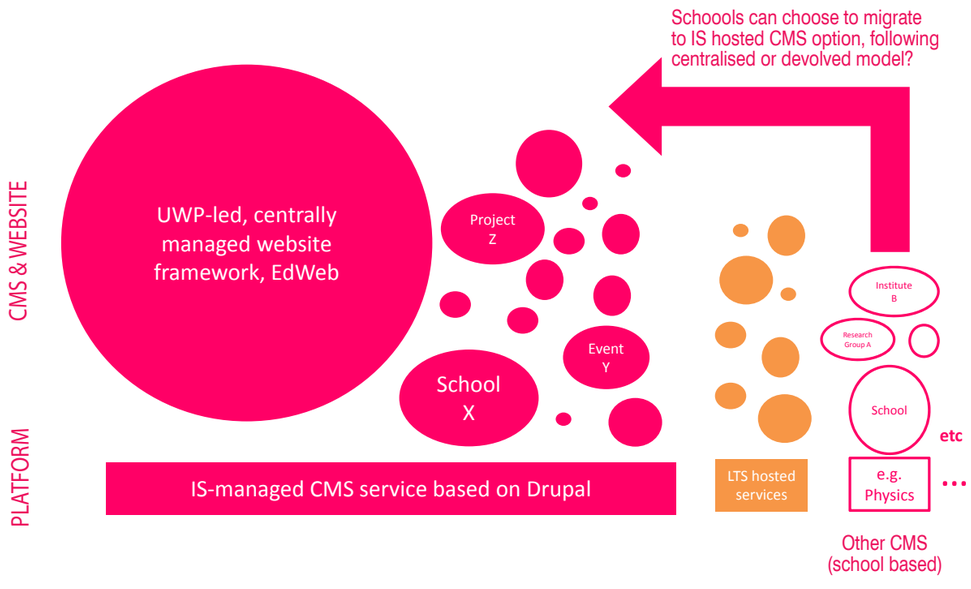
Domain	Indexed pages estimation (provide by Google)	
*.ed.ac.uk	Polopoly (www.ed.ac.uk)	102,000
	Non-Polopoly	473,000
	Total (*.ed.ac.uk)	575,000
www.eupplublishing.com		76,900
www.dcc.ac.uk		17,600
www.crfr.ac.uk		843
www.hgu.mrc.ac.uk		768
www.scphrp.ac.uk		406
www.euanmacdonaldcentre.com		235
www.edinburghfirst.co.uk		231
www.annerowlingclinic.com		210
www.igmm.ac.uk		141
datalib.edina.ac.uk/mantra		76
Total		672,000+

University website management & infrastructure model

Current set-up (2011-2012)

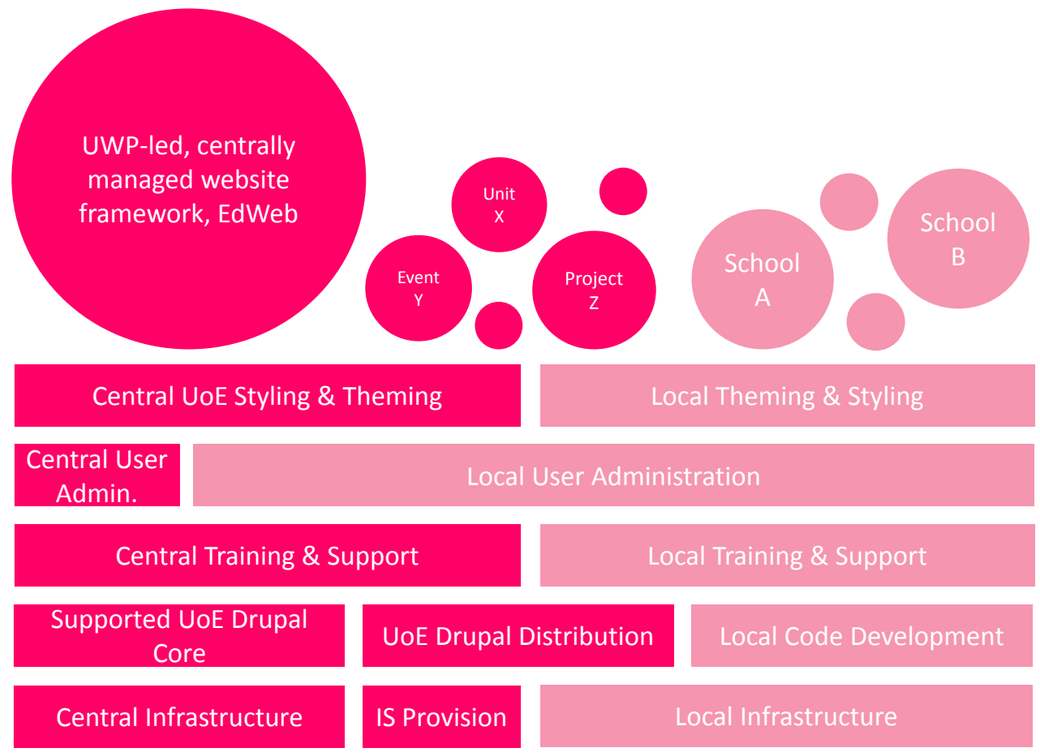


Proposed future framework



University website management & infrastructure model

A flexible management framework



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.

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

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