# Institutional Web Management Workshop - Timetable

This document gives the timetable for the Institutional Web Management workshop to be held at Newcastle University on 15-17 September 1998. Please note that the timetable may be subject to alterations.

| | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 09.00 | | Introduction | **Deploying New Web Technologies** Brian Kelly, UKOLN (9.00-9.45) |
| 09.15-10.00 | | **DataWeb: Three worlds collide** Victoria Marshall, RAL | **The DISinHE Centre, Accessibility and the Web** Paul Booth, DISinHE, Dundee (9.45-10.15) |
| 10.00-10.45 | | **Information Management & The Institutional Website - Promoting and Supporting Organisational Change** Jon Wallis, Wolverhampton | **Publish and be Damned? - Freedom, Responsibility and AUP** Colin Work, Southampton (10.15-10.45) |
| 10.45-11.00 | | Tea | Tea (11.00 - 11.15) |
| 11.00-11.30 | | **"He left the course 3 months ago?": Web-based front-ends to student databases** Nick Gould, Manchester | **British Council Case Study** Paul Squires (11.15 - 11.30) |
| 11.30-12.00 | Registration | **Events Online** Steve Emmott, KCL | Report Back from Parallel Sessions. |
| 12.00-12.30 | | **The Use of Online Databases to Manage Student Support and Learning** Terry Brown, Newcastle | Panel Session & Conclusions |
| 12.30-1.30 | Lunch | | |
| 1.30-2.00 | Intro (local) Workshop aims | | |
| 2.00-2.30 | **Commercial Database and Collaborative Web Development Tools** John Toomey, Balance Company | **Parallel Sessions:** | |
| 2.30-3.00 | **Commercial XML and HTML Authoring Tools** SoftQuad | • **Metadata Management** Coords.: Andy Powell and Brian Kelly | |
| 3.00-3.20 | Tea | • **Server Management** Coords.: Andrew Cormack and Helen Varley Sargan | |
| 3.30-4.15 | **'Dumbing Down' - making the UCE Website more accessible** Brian Lantz, UCE | • **Institutional Web Design** Coord.: Andrew Aird | |
| 4.15-5.00 | **Does Web Content Grow on Trees?** Andrew Aird, Goldsmiths | • **Web Tools** Coords.: Dave Hartland and Dave Lomas | |
| 5.00-5.30 | **Publishing And Devolving Maintenance of a Prospectus** Paul Browning, Bristol | • **Management Issues** Coords.: Colin Work and Damon Querry | |
| 5.30-7.00 | | Internet Gallery | |
| 7.30 | Dinner | Workshop dinner | |

# Summaries for Presentations

### 'Dumbing Down' - making the UCE Website more accessible Brian Lantz, UCE

**Summary**: The University of Central England's Website has gone through three versions. The first was simple, largely text derived from printed sources. Graphics were added in version two, with frames and some simple Javascript in version three. Version four is being developed with the support of a commercial firm with a view to making the site a better marketing tool which is more accessible, more interesting and with fewer gimmicks. This talk hopes to analyse the success of this process and provide pointers to how we hope to develop the site, with commercial support (?), over the next 18 months.

**Biographical Details**: Brian Lantz, after a background in environmental and local politics in Arizona, came to London in 1975 to qualify as a librarian. Captivated by the dream of 'cycling Europe', he was lured by the brilliant summers in the latter half of the 70s into staying. He hung up his bicycle in 1982 after moving to Birmingham where he had risen through the ranks to Assistant Director of Information Services. His current role as 'Webmaster' focuses strongly on developing web based services to support marketing and teaching/learning at UCE. For his sins, he also created and runs the bookshop cum library supply services of UCE Books.

### RAL Case Study - Victoria Marshall, RAL

**Summary**: This presentation describes Rutherford Appleton Laboratory's DataWeb service, which uses Microsoft's Active Server Pages (ASP) technology and a RDBMS. The first half of the talk will describe DataWeb and its key features (and indeed the disadvantages). The second half of the talk will be more informal - a series of horror stories and moments of success the various implementation issues were tackled.

**Biographical Details**: Victoria has worked at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory since 1989, and was one of the first pioneers of the web within the laboratory. She is currently corporate web manager, and departmental web manager, and is involved in a number of web-related projects including the DataWeb project to be described at the workshop.

### Does Web Content Grow on Trees? - Andrew Aird, Goldsmith's College

**Summary**: Rather than try to improve, manage and maintain the huge, unwieldy web site I inherited at Goldsmiths, I have developed a strategy of 'growing' three separate web 'trees'. These respectively address the provision of external information, internal communications and a teaching and learning web environment. The 'trees' acknowledge that institutional information derives from different roots, and has varying saliency and significance depending on the context to which it is applied. I will talk about:

- The design of these tree structures
- How they fit in with the generation and flow of information in the College
- Issues of ownership and internal politics
- The web trees of the future

**Biographical Details**: Andrew Aird studied music at Birmingham University and King's College, London. Working at Loughborough University in the early 1980s gave him access to personal computer technology, resulting in a career in music technology. Andrew specialised in applications for composing and publishing, and this aspect led him to become interested in the possibilities offered by the World Wide Web. His current role as Web Site Manager at Goldsmiths College is part-time; he also develops web solutions for music publishers, composers and performers. Swimming, skiing, concerts and visual art fill the scarce hours not spent thinking about, or working on, the web.

### Information Management & The Institutional Website - Promoting and Supporting Organisational Change - Jon Wallis, University of Wolverhampton

**Summary**: An institutional website represents a fundamental change in the nature of information provision (and if it doesn't something is seriously wrong). This change presents a major challenge to existing information management activities. This talk suggests the need for a methodical approach to support (and survive) the process of organisational change required. It is based on a combination of direct experience of running a University website and academic research into corporate information management. Brief case studies will be discussed to illustrate the major themes.

**Biographical Details**: Jon Wallis is Webmaster at the University of Wolverhampton, responsible for the overall design and general management of its website. He has been directly involved in developing the University's web presence from its inception. In 1995 he co-developed the first complete undergraduate prospectus on the web. In his spare time he is a senior lecturer in computing, teaching in the areas of networks, communications and distributed information systems. His research focusses on search engine technology and (inspired by his role as an institutional webmaster) the information management implications of corporate websites.

## Publishing A Prospectus - Paul Browning, University of Bristol

**Summary**:  The compilation and publication of a prospectus can be a long-winded process. The generation of an electronic version as an afterthought can mean a substantial delay before potential students can access course information via the Web. Conventionally there are four main stages to the process: collation/updating of the course information from academic departments and services, preparation of the combined text using word-processing/desk-top publishing tools, dispatch of the text for printing, then reverse engineering the text into a Web-deliverable version.
This talk will describe an attempt to re-order the last three stages so that the electronic version becomes available soon after the collation/updating of information. If the text elements of the prospectus are held in a database it becomes possible not only to generate the Web pages "on the fly" but also to devolve the maintenance of the information to the people that provide it. Web form-based interfaces are intuitive to use and familiar to many users (the browser has become an "everyday" application) - they render Web-publishing a more transparent process (no authoring application, no file transfer application, no server directory structure to navigate). Once the text of the prospectus is held in a database then a monolithic document can be easily produced; this can be imported into the desktop publishing tool that is still used to prepare the version to be sent to the printers. Importantly, though, the Web version is already world visible.

**Biographical Details**: Between 1986 and 1990 Paul was an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Cambridge. In 1991 he was appointed as Computer Officer in the Department of Earth Sciences, University of Bristol. In 1997 he was the Information Strategy Co-ordinator, University of Bristol.

## "He left the course 3 months ago?": Web-based front-ends to student databases - Nick Gould, University of Manchester

**Summary**: This presentation describes efforts to manage large student numbers by using Web-based interfaces to databases. The systems developed aim to allow teaching staff easy access to up-to-date student information such as tutorial attendance and work done records, thus allowing academics to spend less time on "paper-chasing". The presentation will discuss the techniques employed in developing Web-based systems and look at problems such as development-time and meeting user requirements.

**Biographical Details**: Nick is an Information Systems developer based in the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies in the University of Manchester. His role is to develop (mostly Web) applications to support teaching and administration.

## Events Online – Stephen Emmott, KCL

**Summary**: Descriptions of events, as with the events they describe, vary considerably. From a 30 minute talk to a 3 day workshop, the information that needs to be published rarely fits 'the institutional form'. This talk presents an events database that uses server-side XML to *let the content publish itself*. Events submitted via either a form or free text are served to the browser in the College house-style - allowing the institution to carry the publishing workload rather than the individual or their department.

**Biographical Details**: After studying Applied Psychology and then Cognitive Science and Intelligent Computing, Stephen went on to lecture in both Artificial Intelligence and Psychology. After two academic years he ventured into the commercial world with jobs in the emerging 'New Media' industry: Easynet, Cyberia, Netmare and finally Webmedia where he spent his last year as project manager for Which? Online. He joined King's College London as Web Editor in September 1997 and is currently exploring content management using XML.

## The Use of On-line Databases to Manage Student Support and Learning - Terry Brown, University of Newcastle

**Summary**: This talk will focus upon the use and development of World Wide Web (WWW) interfaces to relational databases housing student information. It will demonstrate the effective use of current and emerging internet technologies such as HTML, CGI and DBMS and will look at the functions XML and SSL can play in facilitating

remote administration and secure access to on-line databases to support students and tutors. The talk will highlight examples from a number of University and National projects which:

- Provide Online Personal and Academic Records for managing student progress and reflection
- Aim to deliver an on-line Virtual Medical Faculty
- Facilitate the management, administration and selection of student options (modules)
- Enhance electronic communication between students and tutors and provide administrative staff with tools to easily contact groups of students

The talk will demonstrate the success and issues involved in the use of on-line administrative systems as a medium for student support.

**Biographical Details**: Terry Brown has worked in the Faculty of Medicine Computing Centre since completing a work placement with them and then being hired to develop the University's WWW Student Support and Tutoring project. He has since added UNIX system administration skills to WWW programming and site design. His professional interests lie within the field of dynamic information delivery, Human Computer Interaction and secure Internet information transfer. His personal interests involve anything that can keep him away from technology for long enough to forget about it.

## The DISinHE Centre - Accessibility and the Web - Paul Booth, DISinHE, University of Dundee

This presentation will describe the work of the DISinHE Centre.

**Biographical Details**: Paul Booth is involved in the design, and administration of the DISinHE web site. His main interests lie in the Internet and its application. He is interested in ways of applying Internet technology while maintaining administration of the accessibility to all - without loosing visual appeal or technical prowess. Paul is the author of several award winning web sites, including "The Scotsman" newspaper's "Most Sussed" website has had involvement in writing sites for academic departments, students unions, commercial business and even an Access Centre.

## Deploying New Web Technologies - Brian Kelly, UKOLN, University of Bath

**Summary**: This presentation will give a brief review of the web architecture and then describe emerging web technologies (such as CSS, XML, RDF and HTTP/NG) which are addressing deficiencies in the web. Brian will then suggest models for deployment of these new technologies.

**Biographical Details**: Brian Kelly is employed as "UK Web Focus" - a national web coordination post. Brian is based at UKOLN, University of Bath. Brian has been involved in web activities since January 1994 when he was involved in setting up the institutional web service at Leeds University.

## Publish and be Damned? - Freedom, Responsibility and AUP - Colin Work, University of Southampton

**Summary**: Caught between staff and students insisting on their rights to publish on the web and management concerns about appropriate material, what is a "Webmaster" to do? This talk will summarise the key areas of risk in putting material on the WWW, identify potential liability and suggest ways of running a WWW service which minimises the institution's (and Webmasters!) exposure while catering for the users requirements.

**Biographical Details**: Following a brief stint as a librarian in Dublin, Colin joined the NISS project in 1988 later moving to Southampton University Computing Services where he became embroiled in information services in the widest sense - from telephone systems to information kiosks. As "Information Resources Manager" Colin heads up the Southampton Webmaster team. He has been active in a range of National activities and is currently a member of UCISA-TLIG. Colin wants to be a photographer when he grows up.

## British Council - Paul Squires, British Council

**Summary**: The British Council promotes British expertise and learning world-wide. It has exploited the power of the Internet to disseminate information and services to a global audience through it's distributed Web services. At present it maintains 16,000 HTML files which are delivered from a network of approximately 200 Web authors based in 109 countries. This network is complimented by 20 local Web servers located in the larger offices overseas which are mirrored on a daily basis.

Despite the disparate nature of the operations the site has maintained a strong corporate identity. This has been achieved through a combination of training and centralised quality assurance procedures. The operation now enables between 50 and 300 Web pages to be updated daily, co-ordinated by a core team of six. The site is currently being redesigned according to the Council's new vision and brand identity. The challenge lies with promulgating new corporate standards and technologies to Web authors world-wide whilst keeping abreast of Web developments.

**Biographical Details**: Paul Squires studied Film Studies and Information Technology at the University of North London and continued there as a lecturer and researcher into Web technologies. He joined the British Council in January of this year as the Webmaster.

# Summary of Commercial Presentations

## Cold Fusion, Fusion and TeamFusion - John Toomey, Balance Company

This presentation will describe software tools for integrating databases, and the collaborative development of websites. The presentation will be given by John Toomey of Balance (<URL: `http://www.balance.co.uk/`>).

## Commercial XML and HTML Authoring Tools, SoftQuad

This presentation will describe HTML and XML authoring tools. The presentation will be given by a speaker from SoftQuad (<URL: `http://www.softquad.co.uk/`>).

# Summary for Half-Day Parallel Sessions

## Metadata Management - Coordinators: Andy Powell and Brian Kelly, UKOLN

A half day session which will enable metadata issues to be covered in some depth. The session is intended for people who are familiar with metadata concepts and Dublin Core and who wish to deploy metadata on their website. The session will cover the use of tools to manage metadata, models for deploying metadata and related topics. The session will include presentations, discussion sessions and demonstrations.

## Server Management - Coordinators: Andrew Cormack, Cardiff University and Helen Varley Sargan, University of Cambridge

A half day session which will enable web server management issues to be covered in some depth. The session is intended for web server administrators. The session will cover a variety of server issues, caching, performance, security, etc. Note that this session will probably cover primarily Unix issues.

## Institutional Web Design - Coordinator: Andrew Aird, Goldsmith's College

A half day session which will enable web design issues to be covered in some depth. The session is intended for people who are responsible for the design of corporate web pages. The session will include preparing a design brief, a review of institutional web designs and general web design issues The session will include presentations, discussion sessions and demonstrations.

## Web Tools - Coordinator: Dave Hartland, Netskills and Dave Lomas, Salford University

A half day session which will enable participants to evaluate and discuss a variety of web tools. For example the session will enable participants to evaluate the Opera browser, which is designed for low-spec systems and discuss whether it is applicable for mainstream use and for a bulk purchase by CHEST. The session will include presentations, discussion sessions and demonstrations.

## Management Issues - Coordinators: Colin Work, Southampton and Damon Querry, University of Newcastle

A half day session on non-technical issues, which aims to provide advice, guidelines and practical tips on managing a WWW service identify key areas where further work can be done at a community wide level, and suggest some practical future activities.