

U21 Information Services Group Newsletter February 2005

Thank you to those who have contributed to this issue.

Please submit items for the June issue by 13th May 2005 as word documents to l.t.barwick@bham.ac.uk

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Universities news

University of Edinburgh

The use of balanced score cards

I have agreed to work with the University of Virginia to gather evidence concerning how libraries and information services in U21 are using balanced scorecard. I would welcome any input from other members on this. We expect to be able to report to members by the end of April.

Please contact Helen Hayes (hhayes@miscorp.ed.ac.uk) if you can help.

University of Queensland

HANG IN THERE – A New Tool for Distance Students

Isolation is now a thing of the past for distance students at the University of Queensland, thanks to a project that links these students to their academic community. Called *Hang in There* the new distance learning support kit overcomes the tyranny of distance that can prevent students in regional and remote areas from achieving the academic success they're capable of. *Hang in There* works because it draws on the real life experiences of distance students to provide a one-stop-shop of information, learning resources and handy hints in user-friendly print and web formats.

Distance education is very convenient for people living a long way from a university campus or for people who need a flexible study schedule to accommodate work commitments. But distance students often experience a lot more difficulty with their studies because of problems like limited access to lecturers, tutors, the Internet, support services, Library staff and other

students. *Hang in There* overcomes those problems because it takes the University's on-campus support services to the student, whether they live in Boulia, Brisbane or Bahrain.

Hang in There was an initiative of UQ's Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science, based at the University's Gatton campus where more than 90 percent of UQ's undergraduate distance students are currently enrolled. *Hang in There* has been in use since Semester 1, 2004 and was officially launched by Dr Lisa Gaffney, Dean of Students on 5th October. More information about the *Hang in There* distance learning support kit can be found at

<http://www.uq.edu.au/hanginthere/>

Making the most of the Cybrary is the UQ Cybrary's component of *Hang in There*. *Making the most* is a package of modules designed to guide the new user through the process of searching for information using Cybrary resources. There are four modules:

- Discovering the Cybrary
- Enhancing your assignment : using databases to find information
- Mastering your research skills : using the Internet effectively and efficiently
- Putting it together

The package of modules is useful for both external and internal students alike and can be found at

<http://www.library.uq.edu.au/external/NRAVS.html>

For more information please contact Karen Seymour, Manager, UQ Gatton Library (k.seymour@library.uq.edu.au)

The Australian Partnership for Sustainable Repositories

The University of Queensland Cybrary is currently involved in a four-way project entitled the Australian Partnership for Sustainable Repositories (<http://www.apsr.edu.au/>). Other partners are the Australian National University (ANU), the National Library of Australia (NLA) and the University of Sydney (USyd). The project aims to establish an Australian centre of excellence for the management of scholarly assets in digital format. It is being funded over three years by the Federal Department of Education, Science and Training.

A major focus of the project will be the critical issues of access continuity and the sustainability of digital collections. The project will use a base of demonstrator projects, embedded in developmental repository facilities within partner institutions, to test these issues.

The project aims to develop and share software tools, expertise and planning strategies through a centre of excellence for digital continuity and sustainability. Partners will participate in international standards and maintain a technology watching brief on developments in the field. Expertise in sustainable digital resource management will be developed through the partner relationships flowing from the project.

The demonstrator projects (called testbeds) are as follows :

- ANU: develop and populate a broad-spectrum repository using the DSpace software.
- USyd: investigate the sustainability of resources in a complex distributed repository environment.
- UQ: develop an integrated gateway to a range of existing distributed repositories of research output.

UQ's testbed, eScholarship@UQ, will investigate the feasibility of local harvesting of born digital and digitised UQ research material. Much valuable UQ research output is either hard to access, subscription-only published papers and articles or poorly indexed digital "grey" literature emanating from academic departments, schools and research centres, such as seminar presentations, working papers and technical reports. Other forms of research output, such as X-rays, laboratory results, pathology slides, reports of experiments, research datasets, and software, are also under-reported. eScholarship@UQ will expose this research via a central gateway that can be readily searched or browsed by discipline. The metadata will also be harvested and exposed by national and internal gateways and search engines. UQ is testing and developing software for the management of this complex process.

University of Nottingham

University of Nottingham strengthens Far East presence

The University of Nottingham is expanding its presence in the Far East with a new campus at Ningbo in China.

The purpose-built Campus, University of Nottingham Ningbo in China (UNNC), already has 250 students enrolled to start in September this year and is the first foreign higher education enterprise of its size in the People's Republic.

This is the second campus the University has established outside the UK. The first, in Malaysia, was the first ever branch of a UK University campus to be established abroad and welcomed its first intake in 2002. Currently based in temporary accommodation, the University's new campus 35km south of Kuala Lumpur will open for the 2005/06 academic year.

Staff from the University's IS department in Nottingham have been working at Ningbo since April 2004, preparing Library and IT facilities ready for the opening. Among the work

undertaken by the team is the improvement of the Internet connections within China, to allow fast and reliable Internet usage.

Once up and running, the UNNC computer systems will be linked with the University's systems in both Malaysia and the UK ensuring that support is provided across all three countries.

University of Birmingham

My.bham – institutional portal

This summer saw the arrival of a brand new internet service for all students at the University with the launch of the new University Portal – *my.bham*

my.bham is built to provide a single integrated space on the web to meet the growing expectations of students for online administration of their courses and to help develop online communities for academic and social interests.

my.bham will, over it's development, provide students with access to many different services ranging from access to their virtual learning courses, their email, calendars, library resources and the ability to manage their own 'account' details for their studies at the University as well as collaborating with other students on the same course. Students will be able to use a single-sign-on to gain access to the Portal and will be able to customize and add to the channels of information seen on screen.

One of the most important services available for the launch of the Portal was online registration for new students and ALL returning students – replacing the huge time consuming queues for registration and the associated form filling.

Students were sent a 'Student Guide to Registration', which gave them the instructions they needed regarding how to conduct registration on-line as well as information about how to pay tuition fees.

Digital library

The autumn term saw a new generation of library catalogue. The Digital Library is a rolling programme of projects that will deliver new library services like Talis Prism, and integrate these and existing services into the web-enabled campus through the institutional Portal. The result will be flexible services available anytime anywhere.

Small businesses get access to Europe

The University of Birmingham, Information Services is a participant in an EU funded project to provide European information to small businesses in the West Midlands.

The Local Cooperation Project is being lead by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and will create a website Signpost West Midlands which, as its name implies, signposts European information services in the West Midlands region. These services include lobbying and representation on behalf of the business community, general European information, EU legislation, employee recruitment, business partner matching, technological innovation and export advice. Each partner will guide companies to the most relevant source of information if they are unable to deal with the query themselves.

Making an Impact

We are participating in a national 'Measuring Impact Initiative' which is exploring the impact that Higher Education libraries make on learning, teaching, and research. The project is a joint LIRG (Library and Information Research Group) and SCONUL (Society of Colleges, National and University Libraries) undertaking. This specifically aims to develop a collection of qualitative research tools that can be re-used by other libraries. Institutions are focusing on a range of areas, from widening participation to enquiry desk usage, but Birmingham has chosen the broad area of research support, and in particular, will examine the effect that the Open Archives Initiative (<http://www.openarchives.org>), and our own Institutional Repository (<http://www.eprints.bham.ac.uk>) will have on researchers, over the next few years.

Ethos Project

The University of Birmingham is pleased to announce its involvement in the new national e-theses project, called EThOS (Electronic Theses Online Service). We are delighted to be working with the British Library and other CURL institutions on this exciting project. For details of the project see the article by University of Glasgow.

eLearning and the physical environment

The University of Birmingham has received JISC funding, under the JISC e-Learning Programme, to report upon the ways in which learning technologies are influencing the design of physical learning spaces in further and higher education institutions.

Virtual learning environments, mobile technologies, wireless LANs and broadband are just some of the technologies that are influencing how the University design, use and manage learning spaces. Through this study we hope to bring together examples of the wide range of current practice being implemented in post-16 education, publish a set of practical guidelines

on effective planning of learning spaces for managers and provide some possible 'institution of the future' scenarios.

University of Glasgow

EThOS Project

The UK is currently well behind many other countries in providing full text electronic access to theses produced in its HE institutions. The EThOS Project, funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and based at Glasgow University Library will address the issues relating to this and provide a working prototype for a national scheme.

EThOS (Electronic Theses Online Service) is an 18 months project which will deliver, a fully operational, easily scaleable and financially viable prototype UK e-theses online service. It will provide the supporting infrastructure, that will enable students, researchers and other end-users to search a UK Database of Theses (UKDoT) and to access full text theses from their desktop. It will also enable HE institutions, in partnership with the British Library to promote and increase usage of their theses output. EThOS will also provide the framework for a sustainable long-term service that will dramatically enhance access to, and use of the whole corpus of UK theses, which are an essential part of the UK's research output.

The key partners in EThOS are the Consortium of University Libraries (CURL) and the British Library with the University of Glasgow as the lead institution. The full list of partners is as follows: CURL and the British Library, Cranfield University, the National Library of Wales, The Robert Gordon University, SHERPA (consortium led by the University of Nottingham); University of Birmingham; University of Glasgow; University of Edinburgh; University of Southampton and the University of Warwick.

For further information, contact Colin Galloway, Deputy Project Director: 0141 330 6775 or email c.galloway@lib.gla.ac.uk.

eSPIDA Project

More information on the technical aspects of preserving digital assets is made available every day. However, there is little experience of implementation and assessment of the costs and benefits and bringing it into the mainstream of organisational planning. Only an integrated and committed strategy will secure an institution's assets for future generations. This project brings together Glasgow University Library, Archives and expertise in business and in technology to tackle the problem in an holistic way.

eSPIDA is an exciting project which will offer tangible results to questions which must be addressed in order to take digital preservation into the next phase – sustainable institutional implementation. The eSPIDA project (An Effective Strategic model for the Preservation and disposal of Institutional Assets) is funded by the JISC and based at the University of Glasgow. It has as its focus the creation of a model of the relationships, roles and responsibilities, costs, benefits and risks inherent in institutional digital preservation. This model will then be sold to various stakeholders, including senior management in order to unify, integrate and embed preservation practices within the University.

Further information can be obtained from Peter McKinney,
eSPIDA Project Research Officer; 0141 330 1986
Email: P.McKinney@compserv.gla.ac.uk

Universitas 21 Global

Universitas 21 Global named one of Singapore's Most Enterprising Startups

Business School receives 2004 e50.startup award, recognising Singapore's most innovative and enterprising young companies

SINGAPORE, Nov 8 2004 – Universitas 21 Global, the world's premier online graduate Business School offering a globally recognised MBA program, has secured a place on the prestigious e50.startup list. The award is organised by Accenture and The Business Times Singapore, and supported by the Economic Development Board (EDB) and International Enterprise Singapore. The results for the 2004 e50.startup list were officially announced at a gala dinner on Nov 5 held at the Raffles City Convention Centre. The event was officiated by Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, and Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry.

The judges comprising of senior executives from Accenture, The Business Times, EDB and International Enterprise Singapore were impressed with Universitas 21 Global's business model of providing online education to busy working professionals who could not afford to take time off work, and the Business School's unique corporate philosophy of treating their students as customers, with a priority on providing top-quality customer service.

Said Dr Mukesh Aghi, CEO of Universitas 21 Global, "We are honoured to have secured a place on the 2004 e50.startup list. This is a strong endorsement by the leaders in the business community about the success and viability of the Business School and its proposition of an online MBA program. We have worked very hard to market our product

globally and are pleased to see that our efforts are paying off. We will continue to put every effort to offer the best quality postgraduate education to students around the world.”

First truly global, online MBA program now available in Australia

E-learning makes higher education more accessible

October 13, 2004 - Recruitment and human capital solutions firm, Chandler Macleod Group, has signed a partnership with Universitas 21 Global, the world's premier online graduate business school. Under the agreement, Chandler Macleod Group will represent Universitas 21 Global across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands to promote the world's first truly global, online MBA program.

The Universitas 21 Global online MBA program will be launched across Australia and New Zealand in October and November.

The program is a joint venture between Thomson Learning, a global provider of tailored learning solutions for individuals and businesses, and Universitas 21, an international network of 16 prestigious universities. The joint venture member universities include McGill University, University of British Columbia, University of Virginia, University of Birmingham, University of Glasgow, University of Nottingham, Lund University, Albert-Ludwigs-Universitat Freiburg, University of Edinburgh, Fudan University, University of Hong Kong, National University of Singapore, University of Melbourne, University of Auckland, University of New South Wales and University of Queensland.

Stephen Cartwright, Managing Director of Chandler Macleod Group said “One of the biggest issues clients are currently facing is how to retain their staff, particularly as the market becomes increasingly candidate-driven. Training and further education is one of the most effective employee retention techniques. Encouraging employees to study for an MBA benefits both the organisation and the individual- as long as the MBA forms part of a long-term career plan,”

Dr Jeremy Williams, Director, Instruction and Assessment at Universitas 21 Global, said the MBA's course material had been developed by some of the most revered business academics in the world. It was then reviewed by U21pedagogica- a quality assurance and accreditation body wholly owned by the 16 member universities.

Dr Mukesh Aghi, CEO of Universitas 21 Global says, “Universitas 21 Global meets the demands of working adults who want to pursue higher education without sacrificing their career. In this global knowledge economy where economic growth is driven by knowledge, companies need to focus on retaining their staff and developing their key executives to be

knowledge leaders. Universitas 21 Global is dedicated to working closely with an established organisation such as Chandler Macleod Group to help corporates develop their staff to their best potential.”

Premier Online Graduate Business School Introduces New Customer Service Initiatives

Dubai, Oct 25 2004 – Universitas 21 Global has announced new value added services from its Customer Service Department. The news was unveiled at a student networking evening held in Dubai for its students around the Arab region.

Speaking at the function Dr. Mukesh Aghi, CEO Universitas 21 Global said, ”In addition to being the first online graduate Business School to offer a globally recognised online MBA program, Universitas 21 Global is also the only Business School to have a dedicated Customer Services Department to support its students. What makes Universitas 21 Global unique is that we ensure our students get the same degree of attention and service as that normally accorded only to valued ‘customers’. This translates into a very proactive, dynamic support system that is constantly evolving to keep pace with students’ changing needs.”

“We have great pleasure in announcing some exciting new schemes for the benefit of our students, which will be implemented by the Customer Service Department and will better enable students to get the most out of their MBA program. Kicking these off is the revamped website which has been given a complete make-over and now sports an entirely new look,” Dr. Aghi added.

As a value-add to their MBA students, the Customer Service team will be organising an Online Career Counselling Chat Session. Students can enrich their understanding of their own career paths and developments as well as keep tabs on the latest job and employment trends by chatting live online with specially invited HR professionals. The first session in November will feature Angelena Cala, Regional Director Futurestep, (Korn Ferry subsidiary) a leading executive search company.

In addition, students will soon have access to the new Universitas 21 Global Career Centre whereby they can manage their CVs online. Their CVs are also accessed by partner head-hunters of Universitas 21 Global, selected on the basis of their focus on jobs which require incumbents to have a reputable MBA, or be in the process of doing one.

The representative office based in Knowledge Village Dubai serves as a local point of contact for the students in the Arab region. The number of students enrolled from this region currently stands at 69.

Universitas 21 Global is now embarking on an extensive growth plan for the region, through strategic partnerships. With Dubai's online learning environment expected to grow to US\$24 million by the end of 2008, Universitas 21 Global is ensuring they remain at the forefront of that development, by actively pursuing new growth areas such as eLearning for corporates. The Corporates in the region are gradually accepting the benefits of providing employees with the opportunity to seek higher education, especially when it's an online program. Universitas 21 Global hopes to increase this number by showing them how exactly they stand to benefit in terms of enhanced performance by employees; no drain on company time since they can work and study simultaneously, and the immediate benefits of a course that is structured for real time application.