# Project Initiation Document – RPB/08/08

## Document Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Notes on Revisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>22/01/2008</td>
<td>R Mitchell</td>
<td>For discussion with Web Team</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
<td>30/03/2008</td>
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<td>0.4</td>
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# Table of Contents

1. **PROJECT OVERVIEW** ................................................................................................................................. 3  
   1.1 WEBSITE REDESIGN .......................................................................................................................... 3  
2. **PROJECT OBJECTIVES** .............................................................................................................................. 4  
   2.1 TOP 20 METRICS .................................................................................................................................... 4  
   2.2 SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES ..................................................................................................................... 4  
3. **SCOPE & TIMESCALE OF THE PROJECT** ............................................................................................... 4  
   3.1 RELATED PROJECTS ............................................................................................................................ 7  
   3.2 OUT OF SCOPE ..................................................................................................................................... 7  
4. **RISKS, CONSTRAINTS AND ASSUMPTIONS** ............................................................................................ 7  
   4.1 RISKS ................................................................................................................................................... 7  
   4.2 CONSTRAINTS ..................................................................................................................................... 7  
   4.3 ASSUMPTIONS ..................................................................................................................................... 8  
5. **RESOURCE FOR THE PROJECT** ................................................................................................................ 8  
   5.1 FINANCE ............................................................................................................................................. 8  
   5.2 RESOURCES ....................................................................................................................................... 8  
6. **MANAGING THE PROJECT** ...................................................................................................................... 8  
   6.1 ISSUE CONTROL ................................................................................................................................. 8  
   6.2 ACTIONS REGISTER ............................................................................................................................ 9  
   6.3 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT .......................................................................................................... 9  
7. **COMMUNICATION PLAN** .......................................................................................................................... 9  
8. **PLANNING** .............................................................................................................................................. 9  
9. **APPROVAL** .......................................................................................................................................... 9  

**APPENDIX 1 - STRATEGIC WEB DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH** ................................................................. 10  
   KEY THEMES AND OPPORTUNITIES ........................................................................................................... 10  

**APPENDIX 2** .......................................................................................................................................... 14  
   RISK & ISSUES LOG ................................................................................................................................. 14
1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

This project will redesign and relaunch the corporate homepages, establishing a flexible design scheme and site structure which can subsequently be rolled out to all Schools and Services.

The project forms a key part of a wider ‘web redevelopment programme’ which aims to create a sector-leading, ‘future proof’ web presence for the University.

This programme has three main strands:

1. A programme of competitor website analysis, being undertaken by an external consultancy, to identify strategic web issues and suggested next steps for the University.

2. The redesign of the University website, incorporating the recommendations of the external research, to establish an attractive and contemporary site and to support Schools and Services to adopt the redesign.

3. The procurement and implementation of a Web Content Management System, to create an easy-to-use framework for the publication and management of web-based content, as outlined in this PID.

The overall programme of work is being overseen by Professor Neil Armstrong as DVC External Affairs through a Task and Finish Group under the dual assurance arrangements.

1.1 WEBSITE REDESIGN

The current corporate homepages were developed by the Web Team and launched in January 2004. They were redesigned in February 2005 to incorporate the University’s new visual identity.

As part of the implementation plan for the new visual identity all Schools and Services were required to adopt the corporate templates by September 2006. At the time of writing, all Schools have adopted elements of the corporate template. The vast majority have adopted it fully. The templates have continued to develop to adapt to the requirements of the Schools and Services that have adopted them.

Using the findings of the Strategic Web Development research, we will develop and implement a new online extension of the University’s visual identity which will be contemporary, attractive and sufficiently flexible to allow imaginative, innovative and radical design approaches to be taken. All Schools and Services will be supported to adopt the new design scheme.
2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project aims to:

- Develop an attractive, flexible and contemporary new visual design scheme for the University website, as defined by the Design Brief
- Create a more user-centric corporate website, i.e. one which is based on an understanding of our users and their needs
- Ensure that the corporate website is structured to help important audience groups to find important content and services quickly and easily
- Ensure that the corporate website can effectively communicate key messages about the university, including delivering specific messages to important audience groups at appropriate times, as defined in the External Affairs Plan
- Deliver a new set of corporate homepages using the new Web Content Management System

There are further objectives for the ongoing development of the website which require a longer term, strategic approach to deliver. Some of these objectives have emerged from the Strategic Web Redevelopment Research report, the results of which are summarised in Appendix 1.

2.1. TOP 20 METRICS

This project will improve the delivery of information and services to the University’s key audiences and therefore contribute to the following metrics:

- International Population
- PG Population (PGT and PGR)
- UG Entry Standards
- National Student Survey

2.2 SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

An effective and widely-used University web site will reduce the need for printed communication.

3. SCOPE & TIMELINE OF THE PROJECT

This phase of the website redesign will encompass the development of a simplified University homepage and main gateway pages to ensure that users can find important content and services quickly and easily.

The following areas of the existing University site will also be redesigned and rebuilt:

- Undergraduate and Postgraduate Study
- About the University
- About Exeter and the Southwest
- News and Events
- International Students
- Scholarships and Bursaries
- Information for Current Students
- Information for Staff
- MyExeter staff and student portal
• Working at the University
• Accommodation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Project Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Scope:** | • Information gathering  
• Audience definition  
• Planning and scoping |
| **Dates/Duration:** | January - March 2008 |
| **Deliverables:** | • Site specification documents, including accessibility standards  
• Completed PID  
• User-testing plan  
• Project web pages |
| **Provided by:** | Web Team |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Develop site structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Scope:** | Development of structures:  
• Content view  
• Site view  
• Page view  
• User view |
| **Dates/Duration:** | March - May 2008 |
| **Deliverables:** | • Content inventory  
• Numbered (new) content outline, including major sections and new material  
• Site map  
• URL/Folder structure  
• Wireframes of major pages  
• Navigational menu listings  
• Consistent naming and labelling scheme  
• List of key user paths and accompanying wireframes |
| **Provided by:** | Web Team |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Design Visual Interface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Scope:** | • Creation  
• Confirmation and testing  
• Hand off |
### Phase 4: Build and Integrate

**Scope:**
- Planning
- Building and integration
- Testing

**Dates/Duration:** April - August 2008

**Deliverables:**
- URL structure for CMS
- Working templates, integrated into CMS
- Quality Assurance (QA) plan and schedule
- Bug/Issues log
- Completed site

**Provided by:** Web Team/IWS Team

### Phase 5: Launch and Post-launch

**Scope:**
- Delivery
- Launch
- Maintenance

**Dates/Duration:** July - August 2008

**Deliverables:**
- Live site
- Training for colleagues maintaining new pages
- Production style guide and resource pack
- Edited archive of project documentation
- Project review report
- Maintenance plan
- Future developments and release plan
- 12-18 month roll-out schedule
- First site activity report
Web Redesign Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provided by:</th>
<th>Web Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 3.1 RELATED PROJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Expected Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web Content Management System</td>
<td>April 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 OUT OF SCOPE

This phase of the redesign project does not include the redesign of School or Professional Services websites. Also out of scope are sites for:

- Business support
- Employability
- Development and Alumni
- Sport
- Conferences and Hospitality

However, work on these important areas will, in many cases, begin before the end of this project, and be undertaken by the Web Marketing Officers within the Web Team, who provide dedicated support to several Schools and Services.

During the second phase of the redesign project the Web Team will support all Schools and Services to adopt the new design scheme as appropriate.

### 3.3 CORNWALL CAMPUS

The redesign and improvement of the Cornwall Campus website will begin in parallel with the redesign process for the corporate homepages. Decisions on design schemes and sites structures must consider how the Cornwall Campus web presence can be integrated.

However, the issues which will determine the success of websites for the Cornwall Campus extend beyond the scope of this redesign project.

The Project Board has recommended the need for a separate project to examine the structure, content and ongoing maintenance of the Cornwall website with School and Service Managers and the Chair will approach the Projects Office to seek assistance to take this forward.

### 4. RISKS, CONSTRAINTS AND ASSUMPTIONS

#### 4.1 RISKS

Risks will be recorded in the project Risk Log, to be maintained under the control of the project manager. The risk log will be published to the project web site. A copy of the risk log will be included as an appendix to this document.

#### 4.2 CONSTRAINTS

- The Project will be delivered by the Web Team within CaP, using existing personnel and resources.
- The Project must be delivered before the beginning of academic year 2008/09.
4.3 ASSUMPTIONS
No assumptions have been made at this stage.

5. RESOURCE FOR THE PROJECT

5.1 FINANCE
- A new Grade E post of Web Designer has been appointed to within the CaP Web Team to oversee the visual design of the new website.
- A budget of £500 has been made available to cover incentives for user-testing participants.

5.2 RESOURCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Role</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
<th>Days per Week</th>
<th>Timescale of Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Sponsor</td>
<td>Sean Fielding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan to Aug 08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Board</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Apr to Aug 08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Team</td>
<td>Web Team</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jan to Aug 08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Rob Mitchell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan to Aug 08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Sean Fielding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaP</td>
<td>Ann Pollard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaP</td>
<td>Amanda Brook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaP</td>
<td>Stuart Franklin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Services</td>
<td>Keith Zimmerman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Services</td>
<td>Steve Vinall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Services</td>
<td>Sarah Snow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel &amp; Staff</td>
<td>Stacey Zerbe</td>
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<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Biosciences</td>
<td>Linda Peka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Rob Mitchell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.5 Training requirements & ongoing training provision
Those areas of the existing website which fall within the scope of this Project are largely maintained by the Web Team. Colleagues in CaP and other services edit and maintain content within these areas and these colleagues will be trained to do so using the new Content Management System.

6. MANAGING THE PROJECT

6.1 ISSUE CONTROL
All issues will be recorded in the project issue log. The Project Board will review the outstanding issues. The Project Board will assign responsibility for each issue. It will be the responsibility of the Project Manager to report against these at the next meeting of the Project Board.

A list of issues will be published on the Project Website.
6.2 ACTIONS REGISTER
Actions arising from Project board meetings, project team meetings or other relevant sources will be recorded in a project action log. Progress towards the completion of outstanding Actions will be reviewed at the appropriate meetings.

A list of actions will be published on the Project Website.

6.3 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
- All relevant Project Documentation will be published on the Project Website.
- Hard Copies will be maintained under the control of the project manager.
- Documents for meetings will be circulated by email.
- An email address for communicating with the project will be established.

7. COMMUNICATION PLAN
A Communication Plan is in preparation for approval by the Project Board.

8. PLANNING
A headline project plan has been completed, for discussion by the Project Board in April. A full project plan outlining key milestones will be prepared once this document has been agreed. Any plans will be published to the project web site.

9. APPROVAL
This signature signifies approval of the content of the Project Initiation Document and acceptance for the start up of the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Sponsor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Customer</td>
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<td>Project Manager</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX 1 - STRATEGIC WEB DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH
KEY THEMES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Background
• Stamp Consulting were commissioned in August to undertake a programme of competitor website analysis and to identify strategic issues, opportunities and suggested next steps for the University to inform the redevelopment of our website and to highlight key areas for future development.
• The report was received in December.
• Stamp Consulting will be invited to present their findings to the Web Redevelopment Programme Task and Finish Group in March.
• We have also joined the ‘World Top 100 Universities Research’, a consortium project which will provide a detailed analysis of the websites of the World Top 100 universities and a report on the current University of Exeter site, showing how it compares with those of the top 100.

The report
The report details a wide-range of issues and opportunities for the University with examples of good practice from the universities surveyed. These are broken down into the following ‘Key imperatives’:
• Keeping pace with changing standards in communications
• Meeting strategic aims: corporate values and “living the brand”
• The “Exeter experience” and differentiation
• Online brand expression
• Extending Exeter’s generic profile
• Addressing diverse audiences
• Addressing undergraduate admissions
• Site restructuring and navigation
• Services available
• Content management change and SEO issues
• Stakeholders relationships and engagement
• Stakeholder engagement and “mutual dependency”
• Social networking
• Massively multiplayer educational gaming
• Future development and evaluation

Several key themes recur throughout the report, including:
• The need to maintain consistently high standards in web and email communications. In 2015 a cohort of students will arrive who were born with the World Wide Web. Their expectations will be very high.
• The need to use the website both to monitor progress against and demonstrate delivery upon key strategic aims and institutional values.
• The opportunity to enhance student and staff engagement strategies to deliver genuine added value to internal audiences, thus raising the standards of ‘the Exeter experience’ and differentiating the University from peers and competitors.
• The scope to more effectively and consistently communicate the University’s brand values and the important benefits (rather than just the features) of our activities.
• The importance of ensuring that future digital strategies support and integrate with long term corporate strategies and profile-raising initiatives.
• The need to shorten planning horizons to deliver new content and features to the web quickly.
• The benefit of using a balance scorecard approach to monitor the performance of the website.
More than 60 specific issues, actions and opportunities are developed in the report. These are summarised in the table below. This table also indicates whether these are issues which could be addressed during the web redevelopment programme or whether they require strategic consideration. The table also indicates whether addressing these issues would give the University an opportunity to lead our competitors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues, Actions and Opportunities</th>
<th>Addressed through redevelopment</th>
<th>Addressed through strategy</th>
<th>Opportunity to lead</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Keeping pace with changing standards in communication</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Invest to keep pace with ongoing change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constantly evaluate, adjust and improve web-based services</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implement quality assurance to ensure consistently high standards</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td><strong>Meeting strategic aims: corporate values and ‘living the brand’</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use website to update on strategic aims of the University and progress towards these</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate the University as a thought leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allow all stakeholders to take part in organized initiatives</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The ‘Exeter Experience’ and differentiation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop SMS notifications for common tasks, eg registration, class times</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop mobile communications for student support</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop the web as a one-stop-shop for stakeholder services</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continue personalization of services</td>
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<td>Promote the human aspects of University services e.g. by using real staff members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop 'live interactions' with the University</td>
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<td><strong>Online brand expression</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a distinctive visual interface and style to set tone and reinforce brand messages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilise third party endorsement to communicate brand values</td>
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<tr>
<td>Articulate the benefits of the University rather than just features</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use spokespeople to articulate brand values and personality</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formalise levels of autonomy for Schools and Services</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td><strong>Extending Exeter’s profile</strong></td>
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<td>Ensure web and digital strategies are aligned with corporate strategies</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop strategic links with organisations that can enhance and develop the University's profile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase engagement with new-to-Exeter target audiences</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use mash-ups to create new applications for a wider range of stakeholders</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop Video News Releases</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop podcasts as standard for all Schools and Services</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a web-based 'incubator strategy' to reach more distant audiences e.g. school children, families of alumni, those with interests in specific subjects</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing diverse audiences</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider streaming audiences into distinct segments of the site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop personalized pages for returning visitors</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider opening up public access to portals</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop new microsites or peer-to-peer discussions to replace outdated information in large PDFs etc</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Web Redesign Project</strong></td>
<td><strong>Project Initiation Document</strong></td>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Develop a more effective Employer brand | x  
| Develop effective online candidate management | x  
| **Addressing undergraduate admissions** |  
| Market X-media more directly | x  
| Provide more information for potential undergraduates in a dedicated microsite | x  
| Use real staff and students as spokespeople | x  
| Develop online ‘personal guides’ for video tours and information about the University | x  
| **Site restructuring and navigation** |  
| Streamline homepage links | x  
| Use homepage space as a billboard for key messages and/or news | x  
| Prioritise clear, useful search over lists of links | x  
| Consider ‘people who search for this also…’ functionality | x  
| Consider ‘most popular links’ functionality | x  
| Develop bespoke icons and colourways to reinforce visual branding | x  
| **Services available** |  
| Develop ‘Ask Exeter’ functionality for 2-way feedback | x  
| Use appropriate external links and signpost these clearly | x  
| Provide as many services online as possible to appear modern and technical | x  
| Exploit the use of Mash-ups (creative combinations of existing, sometimes external, services to deliver new functionality – e.g. linking our Virtual tours and picture galleries to Google maps). | x  
| **Content management and SEO** |  
| Shorten planning margins to get new ideas and content live as quickly as possible | x  
| Integrate CRM activity with web communications | x  
| Develop an SEO strategy to maximise audience draw and to broaden presence and profile - consider using external consultancy | x  
| Increase use of affiliates and associates to raise global profile | x  
| **Stakeholder relationships and engagement** |  
| Allow users to tailor content to create an Exeter homepage of their own choice | x  
| Promote our network for local businesses to raise national profile | x  
| Encourage users to ‘forward’ pages to their friends and contacts | x  
| Develop CRM and database generated marketing | x  
| Develop more coherent stakeholder management to turn stakeholders into advocates e.g. through blogging | x  
| Develop “semi-managed” positive blogs e.g. by student ambassadors or through advocacy programs | x  
| Consider methods to establish lifelong links to Exeter e.g. email for life | x  
| Embrace user-generated content | x  
| Consider developing online virtual identities e.g. Second Life for innovative events and services | x  
| **Further development and evaluation** |  
| Ensure that information about web developments and initiatives is effectively cascaded across the University to encourage buy-in | x  
| Use the web to open up the review and analysis of ideas and developments online | x  
<p>|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand and enhance student and staff engagement strategies including</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more interactive communications e.g. update seminars, open house</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discussions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use KPIs and Balanced Scorecards to monitor web performance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider using the web to publish live data on wider aspects of</td>
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<tr>
<td>University performance</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rob Mitchell  
Web Editor  
March 2008
## APPENDIX 2

### RISK & ISSUES LOG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Risk Description</th>
<th>RAG Status</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Date Identified</th>
<th>Date of last Update</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Probability</th>
<th>Proximity</th>
<th>Current status</th>
<th>Counter-measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RL1</td>
<td>Project deadline is missed</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>RM</td>
<td>03/04/08</td>
<td>21/04/08</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Prompt action if any deviation from the project plan occurs. e.g. reduction of project scope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL2</td>
<td>Design scheme is not effective</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>RM</td>
<td>03/04/08</td>
<td>21/04/08</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Ensure effective consultation and user-testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL3</td>
<td>Familiarity with existing site causes poor feedback from staff and students on launch of new site</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>RM</td>
<td>03/04/08</td>
<td>21/04/08</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Ensure effective communication and consultation prior to launch. Familiarise staff and students with the new site before launch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL4</td>
<td>Content Management System (CMS) is not delivered on time</td>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>DCC (CMS project)/ RM</td>
<td>03/04/08</td>
<td>21/04/08</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Prompt action if any deviation from the project plan occurs. Ensure training is effective and thorough to allow rapid start-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL5</td>
<td>CMS fails</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>DCC/ IWS</td>
<td>03/04/08</td>
<td>21/04/08</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Ensure that new pages can be delivered without the CMS if necessary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Issues Register

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Identifier</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>RAG Status ((R, A, G))</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Date Identified</th>
<th>Date of Last Update</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Proximity</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Action Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### RL6
- **Description**: Resources (i.e. Web Team members) are not available due to unavoidable absence
- **Author**: Green
- **Owner**: RM/AP
- **Date Identified**: 03/04/08
- **Date of Last Update**: 21/04/08
- **Category**: High
- **Proximity**: Medium
- **Status**: High
- **Action Required**: Prompt action if resourcing changes. e.g. adjustment of project schedule

### RL7
- **Description**: Requests for other web projects with higher priority
- **Author**: Amber
- **Owner**: RM
- **Date Identified**: 03/04/08
- **Date of Last Update**: 21/04/08
- **Category**: Low
- **Proximity**: Medium
- **Status**: Immediate
- **Action Required**: Redesign project must take priority. Ensure that other projects are correctly prioritised and planned and that stakeholders are communicated with.

### RL8
- **Description**: Disruption to the web presence during Clearing
- **Author**: Amber
- **Owner**: RM/AB
- **Date Identified**: 03/04/08
- **Date of Last Update**: 21/04/08
- **Category**: High
- **Proximity**: Medium
- **Status**: Medium
- **Action Required**: Ensure that the Clearing website can stand alone. Coordinate launch with Admissions Office. Be prepared to delay launch if risk is high.