

UWE-FET UFIF4L-20-2 IS Practice 2010/11 Logbook Entry No. 1			Marks	
PROLOGUE	Author: Martin Francis 90944425	Project: Pegasus [p1]	a	2
	Period covered from: 27.01.11	to:10.02.11	Date written:07.02.11	
	Task: Benchmarking Exercise: Competitive analysis of other university complaint web pages		b	2
	Rationale/context: I felt it [p2]would be a sensible strategy to analyse other successful universities to see what approach they implemented on their web pages regarding complaints, to see if any best practise could be learnt. This will help with our recommendations and design, particularly if a successful university has an excellent procedure or design that we could emulate. It also gives credibility to recommendations as it gives a strong case for senior stakeholders to buy into and sign off our proposals.		c	2
PLAN	Selecting universities to benchmark against Analyse the top two most successful universities according to the key measures quoted by John Rushford, Vice Chancellor, so our project would be aligned with UWE strategic objectives of improving against that criteria: Rankings in 2010: 1. Times Good University Guide 2. NSS Overall Satisfaction (which measures student experience) Top 2 were Oxford and Cambridge, but had they always been good? – so in addition, I analysed the university which had made the biggest improvement, Lancaster University which had risen from 23rd to 10th – as improving is the task UWE wants to achieve.		d	0
			e	1
			f	2
			g	2
	Analysis methodology Analyse each University's complaints web pages, plus UWE's current pages using a heuristic evaluation approach. This asks 28 questions, from the initial search for the page & how quickly someone could actually complain, to whether the universities have made barriers to complaining because their procedure is not accessible or too difficult to follow. I used three sources to construct the heuristic evaluation: 1. IBM - http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/webservices/library/us-analysis.html 2. Brian Alt - http://www.marketingexperiments.com/improving-website-conversion/online-competitive-analysis.html , 3. boxes and arrows, http://www.bboxesandarrows.com/view/competitive_analysis_understanding_the_market_cont_ext And adapted their recommended questions to better suit the complaints pages.			
ACTION	I constructed the list of heuristic questions based on the sources list above as planned. Next I read through the evaluation list, taking each complaint page in turn, giving it a score of 1-5, 5 being the best. I also wrote some brief notes alongside the score as I felt appropriate and might be a useful insight. Then I wrote a brief report (1000 words approx) well I have summarised what I have learned from the heuristic questions. It was good to note that not one of the universities analysed had a particularly outstanding way of tackling complaints and that our proposed solution, if implemented, would mean that UWE would score the highest according to the heuristic evaluation approach. This gave me confidence in the proposals and recommendations our group had come to, as if adopted UWE would have a better solution than the best universities.		h	2
			i	2
			j	2
			k	0
REVIEW	In answering the question [p3]"Do the most successful universities have an excellent procedure in tackling complaints?" the question has been answered and it is No. But the heuristic questions have provided some useful pointers about what to do and what not to do to make the UWE complaints procedure more usable. For example none of the universities have provided an online form that could be quickly accessible to a blind person.		l	2
			m	0
			n	2
			o	2
REFLECTION	One limitation is that I cannot access the internal systems of each of the universities so do not know what additional facilities they have provided. I can only test for the initial contact, that is how easy or hard it is to start a complaint on their public website. Benchmarking against best practise competitors is always useful, but where it has been found that our group's proposed solution is not present in the top universities then we have to be mindful to use other evaluation techniques to ensure we are not "over engineering" a solution to the problem. For example we should look carefully at User Testing, for example a co-operative evaluation to test whether our solution is actually useful.		p	2
			q	2
			r	2
			s	2

EPIILOGUE	Supporting evidence attached: Competitive Analysis (Word Doc) Heuristic Questions (Excel spreadsheet)	t	2	
	Presentation and quality	u	2	
	<p>Conclusions/other remarks:- This was a useful examination of others that will add to the artefacts that show we have researched our solution thoroughly. It's a team effort and this is just one part of a larger body of work which will show either we have come up with a good solution or not.</p> <p>Very good almost throughout and if you are clearer in the definition, SMART, of the task you were doing, this would be near perfect. That definition would then more appropriately lead to clear success criteria which could then be reviewed.</p>	Other/ tutor points	v	2
		w	2	
		x	1	
		y	1	
	Total /50:	41		
*2 = provisional mark:	82%			