

# HCI CW2 Individual Report

Greig Huth - s1532620

Group 87

## 1 Heuristic Evaluation Reflection

### What went well?

- Doing the evaluation helped a lot when trying to figure out the specifics of what works in the design and what doesn't, rather than making broad non critical statements. At first i was just browsing the mock-up in an unfocused manner but after i looked at the heuristics it was easier to translate my thoughts into words.
- I was able to gain an appreciation for others perspectives. There is no one size fits all design, people react differently to different stimuli and i learned that its important to keep this in mind when dealing with a topic as subjective as human perception.

### What went less well?

- Try to relate them more to the problem definition rather than look at them in a vacuum. I found it hard to form my criticisms around their specific problem definition rather than just looking at the design at face value.
- I had trouble relating some of my criticisms to specific heuristics. The ideas i had didn't always fit neatly in one category so it was a challenge to work out how to describe these thoughts in simple terms.
- Because some parts of the design we were given were obviously unfinished it was hard to understand which parts of the design were intentional and which parts were artefacts of this still being a work in progress.

**If you had to go back and start over, what would you change?** I would review the heuristics more thoroughly and try to get a better understanding of what they mean before i jump in to the evaluation.

**What did you learn from your group members?** One of my team members identified the issue of the quick access page being difficult to access, and i had not really considered this. I looked at the bell and thought it was a good thing, it follows popular conventions for alerting people (using stark colours and the bell icon) and considered it a positive aspect of the design. My team however did not agree, they argued that the quick access page should be somewhere else and that it doesn't make sense to have this icon represent that. This was because we interpreted the meaning of the bell and quick access page differently. I learned that at the end of the day, designs are always going to be subjective and you need to do what you can to try and appeal to a wide range of audiences.

## 2 Evaluation Reflection

### What went well?

- Planning went well, we were quickly able to identify 5 strong design aspects to evaluate
- Running the study was a bit rocky at first but we got there in the end, we made sure at least two people were present for each study so the work could be split and one person could focus on notes and the other on asking the questions.
- We put all the results (times for each task for each participant) in a spreadsheet and generated graphs, means and standard deviations. These helped us understand the raw data and see how the participants varied from task to task. We also made transcripts for the interviews and that meant we could look for common words or observations made by participants to try and identify trends.

**What went less well?** The tasks could have been better thought out. When we first designed them we thought it would be okay but when it came to running the study we realised that a couple of the tasks were not worded very well and lead to the participants sometimes getting confused about what was expected of them.

When running the study we had no good way to represent the case when the participant was unable to complete the tasks. We quickly decided on an arbitrary 3 minutes but we should have thought of a better way, because some of them kept trying and had to be told to stop and some just gave up entirely before then. We should have considered these different outcomes and done a better job of representing them.

**If you had to go back and start over, what would you change?** Do more trial runs of the study. Poor time management meant that we didn't have enough time to properly do trial runs of the study. Even though we did not have as much time as we would of liked, i now see the critical importance of doing this. Poorly designed tasks meant that we did not always get the evaluations we were looking for and instead just ended up confusing the participants.

We should have also tried to fix some aspects of the design before running the studies. For example not all of the links work on every page so some page that should be accessible from anywhere on the site are not, this caused a lot of problems when evaluating because some participants got visibly frustrated when the design worked sometimes and didn't work other times.

## 3 Ethics

**Respect for persons** All of the participants were volunteers and they were asked to sign a consent form so we had their explicit permission to do the study. In our script we made sure to remind people that any and all thoughts they have about the design are valid and they shouldn't be afraid to speak their mind.

**Beneficence** Our study requires little physical participation (moving a mouse across a screen) so there is a low risk of physical harm.

**Justice** Each person was treated fairly, we had a script we wrote to make sure we treated everyone the same and asked everyone the same questions. No participants were given precedent over others. Some of the participants were people i am personally friends with but we made sure to consider everyone's perspectives and thoughts in our results.

**Respect for law and public interest** We haven't manipulated the results in any way to try and affirm any of our perspectives. We took them as is and did our best to work out how to interpret and use the studies in our conclusions about the design.

## A Heuristic Evaluation Reports

On next page.

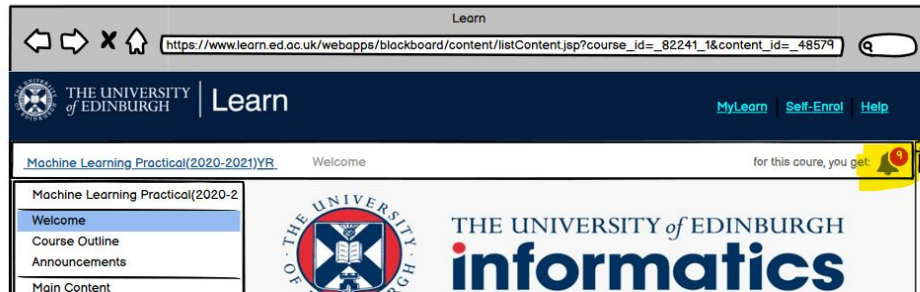
**HE Number:** GH - 1

**Problem/Good Aspect:** Good

**Name:** Notifications are clear

**Heuristic:** 1. Visibility of system status

**Interface Aspect:** red number and bell icon



**Explanation:** The contrasting colours as well as the “alarm” iconography make it very clear to all types of users that this part of the design means there is something you need to pay attention to.

**Severity Rating:** n/a

**Frequency:** common, every single user will see this

**Possible solution and/or trade-offs:** <For problems, propose at least one possible solution. For both problems and good aspects, briefly mention some trade-offs.>

**Relationships:**

*#2 match between systems and the real world*

(bells in the real world are used to alert people about things such as the time, or a class ending)

*#8 aesthetic and minimal design*

Bell is easy to see and easy to read

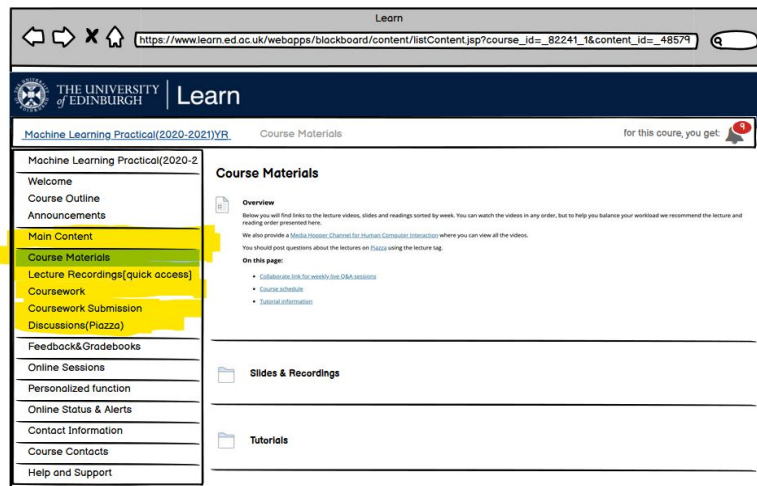
**HE Number:** GH - 2

**Problem/Good Aspect:** problem

**Name:** “Main content” element is unclear if its a link or a heading.

**Heuristic:** #4 consistency and standards

**Interface Aspect:** links in side bar



**Explanation:**

Clicking on “Main content” does not link to a page so it's not consistent with the rest of the sidebar.

**Severity Rating:** 2

**Frequency:** common, every single user will see this

**Impact:** users at a glance would find it confusing on where exactly they should go to look for the bulk of the course content. They would probably try clicking on “main content” and then would realise that's not where they should be looking

**Persistence:** This problem would be learned eventually but the first couple of times a user accesses this system they would probably have to think about it again and would absentmindedly try clicking on “main content” to no avail.

**How I weighed the factors:** I gave it a 2 because it doesn't break any functionality of the system but it's more that simple cosmetic annoyance. It's also a problem that will face them every single time they interact with the system. I see users being repeatedly annoyed but this until they eventually learn how it works

**Possible solution and/or trade-offs:** The solution would be to either remove it entirely and let the content of the sidebar speak for itself. Or, use a heading that looks different to the rest of the sidebar, to aid distinction.

**Relationships:**

*#6 recognition rather than recall*

At a glance the user isn't going to know what to do, so they will have to remember how it works rather than being able to intuit how it works from the design

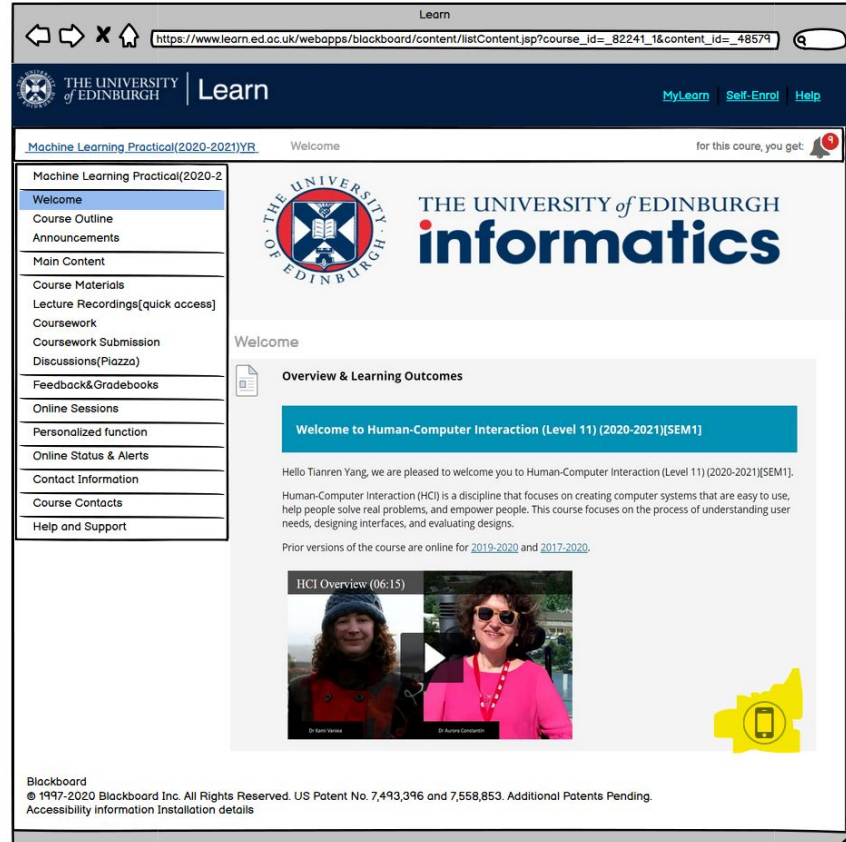
**HE Number:** GH - 3

**Problem/Good Aspect:** problem

**Name:** The purpose and functionality of the phone icon aren't clear

**Heuristic:** #6 recognition rather than recall

**Interface Aspect:**



**Explanation:** The phone icon is unclear, when clicked it asks you to “add modules to phone” but it's not clear in the design or descriptions what this actually does. There is also no way to check which modules “added” to the phone and which ones aren't.

**Severity Rating:** 1

**Frequency:** common, seems to be on every page

**Impact:** it's easy to deal with, it doesn't seem to be part of any core design choices and as such doesn't seem like it's too important to interact with. Users would still be able to use the design fairly easily

**Persistence:** unless the users want to use learn on their phone they wont interact with this very often

**How I weighed the factors:** i gave it a 1 because its not a problem with the element inherently its more a problem with communicating this to the user, a simple graphic change or small description would go a long way

**Possible solution and/or trade-offs:** perhaps change the phone with a "+" or some combination of the 2? This would help convey that you are "adding" something and customising your experience

**Relationships:**



**HE Number:** GH - 4

**Problem/Good Aspect:** good

**Name:** show progress through lectures and the weeks in the “quick access” menu

**Heuristic:** #8: Aesthetic and minimalist design

**Interface Aspect:**

### Lecture Recordings

Week 1 - Introduction to MLP	<div><div></div></div>	Status:
Week 2 - Introduction to MLP	<div><div></div></div>	Status:
Week 3 - Introduction to MLP	<div><div></div></div> 23:46/50:00	Status:
Week 4 - Introduction to MLP	<div><div></div></div>	Status:
Week 5 - Introduction to MLP	<div><div></div></div> 0:00/75:00	Status:
Week 6 - Introduction to MLP	<div><div></div></div> 0:00/43:56	Status:

**Explanation:**

The colours and icons help users see which content they have engaged with and which content they haven't at a glance.

**Severity Rating:**

**Frequency:** fairly common, not every time the user logs on but a lot of the time

**Impact:** Helps users quickly keep track of their progress and learning

**How I weighed the factors:** overall id say this has a huge benefit to users, its colours are intuitive and it makes sense at a glance

**Possible solution and/or trade-offs:** if you havent engaged with the content at all perhaps use a different colour as well as a different icon? To help tell them apart

**Relationships:**