Web Content Strategy

Public Relations Office

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Contents

1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an approved Web Content Strategy through which the University can institutionalise the processes, policies and standards for the production of its web content, enabling staff to carry out their work as effectively as possible.

All sites under the bristol.ac.uk domain are strategic assets owned wholly by the University and thus, content published on all sites must comply with the terms set out in the Web Governance Policy.

2 Ownership

The Web Content Strategy is owned by the Web Executive and is modified and maintained and by the Web Editor Team and will be revisited and revised frequently, adapting to the ever-changing experiences and requirements of the University audiences.

3 Scope

The principal scope of the Web Content Strategy is all content produced and maintained on the University's implementation of *T4 Site Manager Content Management System* (CMS) and the users of the CMS who own and publish content to www.bristol.ac.uk.

4 Content Strategy

4.1 Rationale

4.1.1 What is a Content Strategy?

Content is the information conveyed in copy, navigation and the visual design of digital experiences.

A **Content Strategy** is the concerted effort to present content in meaningful, useful and relevant contexts within the user experience so that the right content reaches the right people, at the right times, for the right reasons.

4.1.2 Why develop a Content Strategy?

The benefits realised through the implementation of a Content Strategy for the University vary according to role.

Role	Benefits
Site Owners	- Faculty/School/Division website content is owned and actively maintained by named individuals - Only effective, high quality content is published and maintained reducing risk and resource commitment - Content is audited frequently and redundant, outdated or trivial content is removed

Site Administrator	• Content creation and delivery is demonstrably effective • Content is sustainable and will continue to be useful, engaging and appropriate to the University's goals over time • Ensure that the right content reaches the right people, at the right times, for the right reasons
Web Publishers	• Best practice in content creation and delivery is demonstrated • Guidance is published and maintained • Training is provided
Web Executive	• Unified approach to content lifecycle • Clear roles and responsibilities • Clear governance can be effectively applied

Web Editor Team	• Content created by Site Admins and Web Publishers is useful and usable:
	   o meets a real user need
	   o provides a better brand experience
	   o helps users take a desirable action

Table 1. Benefits realised through implementation of a Content Strategy

4.1.3 Why maintain a Content Strategy?

Website content quality degrades quickly and websites can easily become bloated with outdated, irrelevant and potentially damaging content.

By maintaining a Content Strategy:

- Web Publishers will be reassured that the content they create and maintain is sustainable

- Site Administrators will be reassured that they have greater control over who is responsible for content in their area

- Site Owners will be reassured that clear roles and responsibilities for ownership within the content publishing processes exist and are maintained.

4.1.4 Implementing the Content Strategy

This Content Strategy is written for the organisation and provides a structured approach to creating, managing and archiving content from that perspective.

The Web Editor Team will help Site Owners and Site Admins ensure that their websites benefit from this approach to content.

Tailoring of this guidance should be considered by the Editorial Group as it agrees the website's specific purpose and objectives to help to ensure the context of the content is preserved.

4.2 Organisational Identity

The University of Bristol is a complex organisation, but our mission is broadly consistent. However, as the environment in which we operate becomes ever more complex and competitive our stakeholders need a clear articulation of what makes the University of Bristol special.

HOW we present ourselves to the world has to be sophisticated. **WHAT** we present to the world has to be consistent and **WHY** we present ourselves to the world has to be considered.

Maintaining a consistent identity across our websites plays a key role in supporting that process.

4.2.1   Tone of Voice

Every organisation needs to project a distinct personality and voice. This should be the sum of its history, its people past and present, its place and its vision for the future. It is important that we nurture and protect our identity and manage its evolution carefully and proactively.

Our audiences vary in their priorities, their knowledge of the University of Bristol and their expectations. The basic principles of our written communications, however, are universal:

1. Keep the messages simple and consistent

2. Make the evidence that supports the messages compelling

3. As far as possible, make the messages unique to the University

Our written content and tone should be true to our vision and values, and reflect our personality. Wherever possible, we should use specific evidence to support what we are saying. This makes our overall message more compelling and more memorable – for example, to show how engaged our students are in the local community, we may want to include the fact that: "every year University of Bristol students contribute more than 100,000 hours of volunteering in the community".

Taken from: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/style-guides/documents/university-of-bristol-visual-identity.pdf

4.2.2   House Styles

The house style guide establishes house rules for language use, including punctuation, spelling and formatting, and aims to ensure consistency across University print and online publications.

The guidelines have been developed with the reader in mind, so that our communications are clear and appropriate to a general audience. We are unable to cover every aspect of language usage here, but we aim to clarify those areas where queries most often arise.

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/writing/house-style/

4.2.3   Visual Identity

In competing for the best students, faculty, and staff across on a global scale, it is imperative that we communicate in a clear and consistent visual identity. Consistent application of the University's visual identity strengthens each Division's/Department's value while reinforcing the collective value of the institution.

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/visual-identity/

5 Content

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1.1 Overview

The University currently hosts over 200 sites on the CMS which is accessed by c. 700 active users. Establishing and maintaining clear site ownership and accountability from domain-level to individual pages of content is key to delivering its objectives.

The table below provides an overview of the roles with responsibilities for web governance, access and content.

Role	Responsibilities
Site Owner	● Responsible for overall strategic direction of Faculty/School/Division site ● Ultimately accountable for content published on their sites ● Authorises staff to become Site Administrators
Site Administrator	● Responsible for the operational maintenance of a particular website or set of websites ● The primary contact for matters relating to the website ● May authorise other Web Publishers to maintain content on the website and will oversee the work undertaken by them ● Usually a single Site Administrator has operational maintenance of a website or websites, however, there may be up to three assigned ● Approves training for Web Publishers.
Web Publishers	● Responsible for editing and maintaining content for a particular website or set of websites ● Ensure the overall University web presence is up to date, easy to use for all users, and provides users with a positive impression of the University ● NOTE: May be based across many organisational units with the University, but usually within the organisational unit to which the website they maintain relates ● NOTE: The Web Publisher role is often integrated with other job responsibilities
Subject Matter Experts (SME)	● Members of staff with a clear understanding of a subject upon which Site Administrators/Web Publishers are writing ● Subject experts or subject specialists can be from within or external to the University ● They can provide insight and knowledge to create more informed and relevant content.

Web Editor Team	- PRO Web Team in Professional Services, Communications and Marketing Division - Directs content design on the University's public-facing websites - Directs content requests and has the authority to decide what actions to take with content that doesn't address the University's business goals or support user needs - Provides leadership, advice and guidance to Site Owners, Site Administrators and Web Publishers - Implements and ensures adherence to corporate policies - Aligns the web priorities of Faculties and other organisational units to the University's Strategy - Responsible for the visual identity of the University web presence - Reports to the Web Executive.
Web Executive	- Governs the ongoing, strategic development of the University's public-facing web presence - Provides leadership and authority to ensure that strategic development of the University's public-facing web presence supports the delivery of the University's Strategy and Vision.

Table 2. Overview of the roles with responsibilities for web governance, access and content

5.2 Editorial Group

An Editorial Group is responsible for the operational maintenance of its content area (website) on bristol.ac.uk, together with a remit to look at opportunities for strategic improvement in liaison with the Web Editor Team.

5.2.1 Scope

Editorial Groups are based on top-level websites with one group per website.

Top-level website examples include:

- bristol.ac.uk/students
- bristol.ac.uk/study
- bristol.ac.uk/research
- bristol.ac.uk/maths
- bristol.ac.uk/academic-registry

The scope of responsibility for a group extends to the web pages and subsections within a top-level website.

Where content covering a particular topic crosses multiple websites, the editorial groups involved should work in partnership to ensure the content is consistent and meets the needs of its users.

5.2.2 Membership

Membership will include:

- Site Owner

- Site Administrator

- Subject Matter Expert

- Web Editor Team member

The size of the Editorial Group may be scaled according to the specific content area it is responsible for.

5.2.3 Responsibilities

Each Editorial Group has responsibilities for the following operational tasks:

- Overseeing content planning, creation and maintenance

- Creating and adhering to an Editorial Calendar

- Managing the number of people with access to publish web content

- Identifying training needs of Web Publishers and ensuring appropriate training courses are attended

- Establishing a workflow for content management, whether it is for the creation or review of content

These responsibilities are mapped to the following roles as shown in the RACI matrix below:

Task	Responsible Does the work	Accountable Oversees the work	Consulted Influences the work	Informed Knows what's happening
Content planning, creation and maintenance	**Site Administrator**	**Site Owner**	**Subject Matter Expert**	**Web Editor Team**
Creating and adhering to an Editorial Calendar	**Site Administrator**	**Site Owner**	**Web Editor Team**	
Managing the number of people with access to publish web content	**Site Administrator**	**Site Owner**	**Web Editor Team**	
Identifying training needs of Web Publishers and ensuring appropriate training courses are attended	**Site Administrator**	**Site Owner**	**Web Editor Team**	
Establishing a workflow for content management, whether it is for the creation or review of content	**Site Administrator**	**Site Owner**	**Web Editor Team**	

Table 3. Editorial Group RACI

The RACI matrix explained

- Responsible - The role doing the work and responsible for completing the task
- Accountable - The role overseeing the completion of the work and accountable for its completion and quality

- Consulted - The role that may influence the work through consultation and input into the task

- Informed - The role that needs to know what's happening and that the task is being completed

5.3 Content Creation

5.3.1 Website Request form

The form provides an overview of the objectives and long-term management of the proposed website and enables the Web Editor Team to assess where and how the website may best appear on the University web presence.

Please contact web-editor@bristol.ac.uk or your Faculty Web Officer for access.

5.3.2 Core Content Statement

Creating content on behalf of the University is an act that should support the University's vision statement:

"Our vision is to sustain and improve upon our world-leading reputation for research, and embrace educational innovation that will nurture skilled, adaptable and resilient graduates." (Professor Hugh Brady, Vice-Chancellor and President).

To ensure that created content does support the vision, it is essential for each Site Administrator to work with the Web Editor Team to create core content statements that will determine where to focus effort in its creation.

A core content statement answers the following questions:

- What are the business goals?

- What are the content products?

- Who is the target audience?

- What are the audience needs?

An example core content statement for international student recruitment might be:

"To increase the proportion of high-quality international students on all our programmes we will provide inspirational case studies and practical advice and support to prospective international students in deciding where to study in the UK."

In this statement:

- **Business goal** - increase the proportion of high-quality international students on all our programmes

- **Content products** - provide inspirational case studies and practical advice and support

- **Audience** - prospective international students

- **User need** - deciding where to study in the UK

5.3.2.1 Business Goals

The high-level business goals for the University over the next few years are:

- Education and the student experience

- Research, innovation and partnerships

- Internationalisation and global relations

- Sustainability

5.3.2.2 Content Products

Content products are created or commissioned by the Editorial Group and should be identified through a series of core content statements.

5.3.2.3 Audience

The University has many stakeholders, both external and internal:

- Global research community (researchers, other HEIs, funding councils)
- Home and international prospective students (research postgraduates, taught postgraduates and undergraduates)
- Prospective students' opinion formers/influencers (parents/carers, schools; career advisors)
- Prospective staff (academic and non-academic)
- Alumni and friends
- Business and industry
- Local and regional community
- Media
- General public
- Current students (home and international undergraduates, taught postgraduates and research postgraduates)
- Current staff (academic and non-academic)

These user groups are categorised into generalised audience types called *personas*.

Personas are composite sketches that reflect real world behaviours, attributes, and attitudes. They will also identify what that type of user commonly needs when interacting with the University.

The Public Relations Office has documented detailed personas for several user groups to be used for general reference (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/style-guides/documents/uob-personas.pdf).

Personas are based on data from user research and are used as a frame of reference when creating new content in order to ensure that the content will satisfy a user need.

5.3.2.4 User need

Each user of the University website is looking to satisfy one or more needs. This need may be to find out how much a particular MSc programme costs; to find a study space; to find the start time for an event; to look up the contact details for an academic. All new and existing content should be created specifically to satisfy a user need.

5.4 Original vs curated content

5.4.1 Original Content

When creating content from scratch or adding content created by a colleague, make sure it is optimised for reading on a screen. Good digital content follows certain guidelines to be effective in

meeting the needs of users. You can find more advice on creating original content for the following types of media:

- Writing:
  - 'Writing effective web copy' (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/how/edit-content/write-effective-web-copy/)
- Images:
  - 'How to prepare images' (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/how/edit-content/prepare-images/)
  - 'How to use images' (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/how/edit-content/use-images/)
- Video:
  - University video-production guidelines (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/video-guidelines)

In addition, all content on bristol.ac.uk must adhere to the University web accessibility guidelines (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/policies/legal/access/).

5.4.2 Co-Created Content

Co-created content is content produced in partnership with an external organisation that is collectively more effective and more compelling to its audiences. If you are creating content with another organisation for use on a bristol.ac.uk site, it's important that there's a clear benefit for both parties.

There are also certain considerations to check when you are considering working on creating content with a partner:

- Their reputation, corporate values and CSR track record
- The relevance of their users and audiences and synergy with ours
- Their level of engagement, commitment and ability to deliver the content you need

Co-creation and co-production can be either lead by partners or the University of Bristol or can be jointly developed and produced. You should agree this clearly upfront. Managing any response and linking out to external partner sites should also be agreed in advance of the work being done.

You will need to reach an agreed style both visually and in terms of language, which is acceptable to both or all parties and which reflects common objectives of the content. Generally, apply generic standards of good writing and communication for the web: clear, honest and approachable rather than a particular organisational tone of voice to ensure there is no conflict or contradiction.

Please contact Marketing and Communications (communications-team@bristol.ac.uk) if you are discussing any competition or incentive, or if there is any element of financial sponsorship being discussed on either side. Equally, please contact this team if you are considering any form of advertising or product placement.

5.4.3 Curated Content

5.4.3.1 Internal curated content

Avoid duplicating content that is available elsewhere on bristol.ac.uk. This prevents creating a bloated website and creating a confusing user journey for visitors.

Always link directly to the original source, do not reproduce.

5.4.3.2 External curated content

Avoid duplicating content that is available elsewhere on external websites.

For example, content provided by government (statutory instruments, policy, legal, visas), non-government organisations (UCAS, funding bodies, charities, think-tanks etc.), and any other third party should be linked to from their original source rather than republishing on bristol.ac.uk.

Always link directly to the original source, do not reproduce.

5.5 Editorial Calendars

An Editorial Calendar supports the Editorial Groups in prioritizing tasks and efficiently processing content workflows from development to publishing.

This does not need to be a complicated or onerous process, by simply putting a date next to a page in a spreadsheet that you can use to track content, you are adopting a simple editorial calendar. The Web Editor Team are issuing responsibilities matrix spreadsheets to all Site Owners so that responsibility for content can be tracked at the page-level (see 5.7.1 **Content Inventory** for more details). In this spreadsheet, which will show all of a website's pages, there is a column provided to add a date for review.

5.6 University-specific Content

Popular content areas that are present on many websites within the University are:

- Student recruitment
- Research
- News
- Events
- People
- About

Here are some rules about how to deliver content within these areas.

5.6.1 Student recruitment

Study-related information aimed at prospective students should be located within a section named 'Courses and programmes', with subsections for undergraduates, postgraduates and other audiences (e.g. foundation).

The primary content in this section is a listing of the courses and programmes available, with each one linked to the relevant course/programme information on http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study.

Where additional content is required to complement core course/programme information, such content may be also be located in this section. Always discuss your needs with the Faculty Student Marketing Team (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/sraa/crsm/marketing/) when planning complementary course/programme information, to ensure that all content is effectively co-ordinated and promoted.

5.6.2   Research

The way research activities are organised and prioritised differs from faculty to faculty, presenting a challenge in providing a consistent method of informing users about research across bristol.ac.uk.

Research-project information must be entered into PURE so that it can be displayed publicly through Explore Bristol Research (EBR, https://research-information.bris.ac.uk/). However, it has been recognised that the current publications widget provided to integrate data from EBR into the CMS does not provide a fully satisfactory rendering of publication content. As well as extending use of this widget, there is also scope for IT Services to provide a projects widget which would remove the need to maintain projects content in the CMS and instead manage entirely within EBR.

If there is a requirement for a project to have its own website, this must be costed into the project in the planning phase. This should include cost of setup and onward maintenance.

Research IT and should be consulted so that it can be determined whether the scope of the site is deliverable in-house.

Public Relations will be providing some general guidance for staff area that will help to ensure a more consistent experience for users across all of the varied research themes and activities represented on the website.

5.6.3   News

Websites on bristol.ac.uk can add a dynamic news section to organise and surface regular news content. News items are added using a dedicated content form. When published, these automatically display on a news listing within the website, and usually in a listing of headlines on the department homepage as well. Latest news items can also be displayed on other areas of the website as needed.

News items are automatically listed in date order. The news listing is searchable by users, and filtered news listings (eg for a particular category of news) can be displayed.

More information on how to create and write news items: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/how/edit-content/news-events

5.6.4   Events

Websites on bristol.ac.uk can add a dynamic events section to organise and surface regular news content. Event items are added using a dedicated content form. When published, these automatically display on an events listing within the website, and usually in a listing of headlines on the department homepage as well. Event items can also be displayed on other areas of the website as needed.

Event items are automatically listed in date order, with the next event to occur at the top of the listing. Filtered news listings (eg for a particular category of news) can be displayed.

Past events are not listed automatically as we have found, through user research and user-data analysis, that such listings are not accessed with any regularity, therefore leading to unnecessary content bloat. Individual past event items are still live, however, and can be linked to if and when needed.

More information on how to create and write event items: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/how/edit-content/news-events

5.6.5 People

Explore Bristol Research (EBR - http://research-information.bristol.ac.uk/) is the public facing side of the PURE database. It displays a profile of every academic research academic (Pathway One, Pathway Two and some Pathway Three) in the University, editable by that staff member, as well as data on research outputs and activities.

Many departmental websites are using the People Profiler application to display staff details. This synchronises with information held in PURE so that the 'Overview' tab in People Profiler draws in information from an individual's 'Research interests' in PURE. People can still enter separate biography info into People Profiler. Publication data is also linked between PURE and People Profiler. Other tabs in People Profiler are populated by academics through People Profiler directly and not PURE. Staff without a PURE profile (eg professional services staff) can edit their information directly in People Profiler.

People Profiler is currently under review with an aim to replace it with a solution that will integrate staff profiles more effectively across bristol.ac.uk. For more information on this, contact your faculty web officer (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/public-relations/contacts/#web).

5.6.6 About

It is common to have a section providing an overview of the departmental unit relevant to the website. The best 'About' content will have specifics about the department that set it apart from competitors and shouldn't merely provide a broad summary of the general activities that the department engages it, details of which are likely to exist elsewhere on the department's website. The 'About' page is rarely looked at first by users and therefore should not be written as a general introduction or welcome.

Specific content to add in this section might include facilities; notable rankings, awards and other achievements; how the academic/student community compares to other institutions; regular activities that engage the general public.

5.7   Management

5.7.1   Content Inventory

The Editorial Group will have been assigned a site-level responsibilities matrix which defines responsibilities to the Site Administrator and Site Owner.

By adopting a page-level responsibilities matrix, the Site Administrator will always know:

- what content is within the website

- who owns it

- what state is it in

- what sections/content need action

The responsibilities matrix should assign named individuals (or roles) to the following:

- **Responsible** - The person responsible for editing the page

- **Accountable** - The person overseeing the editorial effort and accountable for its completion and quality

- **Consulted** - The person that may influence content through consultation and input into its creation and iteration

- **Informed** - The person that may need to know what's happening with that page/those pages

- **Updated** - Frequency of updates, e.g. quarterly, annually.

Page	URL	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Updated
Landing page	bristol.ac.uk/website					
Contacts	bristol.ac.uk/website/contacts					
About	bristol.ac.uk/website/about					

Table 4. Page-level RACI

5.7.2   Analytics

Web analytics show you statistical information on your website's visitors. Analytics are an important tool to guide the management and optimisation of your website.

The University web presence currently uses comScore Digital Analytix to monitor traffic and generate analytics reports. Site Administrators of websites built in T4 Site Manager can opt in to receive monthly reports from the Web Editor Team.

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/systems-and-tools/analytics/

5.7.3   Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is the process of improving the visibility of a website or a web page in search engines.

Search engines aim to provide users with a list of links to web pages that contain content relevant to the user's search terms. To do this, search engine software analyses web page content to determine how it should be indexed (for example, words are extracted from the page titles, headings and body content) in relation to likely search terms.

Websites that are well-structured, accessible and use valid HTML are ranked higher in search results.

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/how/find-site/

5.7.4 Quality

The Editorial Calendar provides the necessary structures to perform regular review of content quality. Quality is assessed using the following categories:

- Weak - writing for digital channels is very different from writing papers, personal correspondence. The Web Editor Team provide guidance to support effective writing for the web

- Redundant - are there pages that are covering similar or redundant topics that can be consolidated?

- Outdated - is content outdated/obsolete – such as events or timely content that should be deleted?

- Trivial - is content published that does not directly serve an identified business goal?

At all times, Site Administrators and Web Publishers must comply with guidance set out in the University web style guide http://www.bristol.ac.uk/style-guides/web/

5.7.5 Archiving

Websites that are no longer required can be captured and stored as a set of static HTML files and assets that provide a local browse experience through the site.

Requests to archive sites and remove them from the CMS should be sent to web-editor@bristol.ac.uk and the Web Editor Team will review and discuss requirements.

6 Content Management System

6.1 Responsive

6.1.1 Responsive Templates

Content for this section will be provided October 2016.

Current documentation for responsive templates is available in draft form here:
http://wwwdev.bris.ac.uk/aa/documentation/page-layouts/

6.1.2 Responsive Content Types

http://wwwdev.bris.ac.uk/aa/documentation/content-types/

6.2 Site Sections (navigation)

6.2.1 Information Architecture

Faculty

- Courses and programmes
- Research
- Facilities
- Services
- About

School and Department

- Courses and programmes
- Research
- People
- News
- Events
- About
- Contacts

7 Governance

7.1 Web Governance Policy

The University publishes an approved [Web Governance Policy](#) through which the University can institutionalise the processes, policies, framework and standards for the management of its websites enabling staff to carry out their work as effectively as possible.