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| **Site 1 – URL** | https://www.mmu.ac.uk/study/why-manchester-met/city/food-and-drink |
| Why did you choose this site? | This was one of the top results in Google when searching for “Guide to good food for MMU Students”. It provides few names of places that students could go to but there is limited detail around address, reviews or prices. The layout of the website however was very user friendly as it was housed on the mmu.ac.uk domain. |
| **Site 2 – URL** | https://www.theunionmmu.org/articles/cheap-places-to-get-hot-food-on-campus |
| Why did you choose this site? | This was another top result in Google when searching for “Guide to good food for MMU Students”. It provided additional detail about prices and linking to website/social media channels of the food vendors. |
| **Site 2 – URL** | https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/RestaurantsNear-g187069-d8269216-Manchester\_Metropolitan\_University-Manchester\_Greater\_Manchester\_England.html |
| Why did you choose this site? | Tripadvisor is by far one of the most popular websites for researching food vendors and it has a range of useful information. However, it is limited in its appeal to students because website functionality is built around restaurants, although it does give the user the ability to filter by price ranges. |

You should assess the conformance of each site to each criterion and indicate your judgement using a rating of 1 - 5 where 1 = low conformance and 5 = high conformance. Additional comments are required to illustrate and explain your scoring.

**Reminder:** You are assessing competitor sites to look for both good and bad practices, innovations, industry practices and/or standards. Things you might want to replicate; things you might want to avoid. It will also give you an insight into the client’s industry, and potential ideas of the type of target audience.

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|  |  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **Refer to site 1, 2 or 3 in your comments.** |
|  | **Consistency** |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Overall visual identity is consistent throughout the site, e.g. colour, fonts etc. | 5 | 3 | 5 | Site 3 is by far most visually consistent and has the most prominent search functionality, which is not surprising given this website specialises in providing recommendations for places to eat. Site 1 also has really good design and navigation but is not built for food recommendations, while Site 2 has the worst visual identity and navigation out of all three. |
|  | Design and navigation elements are consistent across pages, e.g. menu in same place, page titles etc. | 4 | 3 | 5 |
|  | Search is in prominent and consistent location (n/a if no search) | 2 | 3 | 5 |

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|  | Efficiency |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Essential information is located at the top of the page and scrolling is not required to access primary navigation. | 5 | 5 | 5 | All sites display essential information at the top of the page and scrolling is not required to access primary navigation. Mouse clicks for retrieval tasks could be improved on site 1 as the content on the page is really zoomed in. All site’s pages are quick to load with no noticeable lags caused by imagery. |
|  | Mouse clicks for identified information retrieval tasks are recorded within acceptable range, e.g. not unnecessarily clicking and clicking to reach content. | 4 | 5 | 5 |
|  | Images and non-informational graphics don’t compromise download speed, e.g. pages slow to download. | 4 | 4 | 5 |
|  | Architecture |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Depth vs breadth of information structure is appropriate to the content and functionality within the site, e.g. not too many sub-sections. | 5 | 5 | 4 | Site 1 and site 2 have a concise structure while site 3 could be further improved. Site 1 is more organisation centric, site 2 is more user centric while site 3 has a clear focus on user needs. |
|  | Information categories are user-centric, not organisation-centric, e.g. do the menu labels, headings, sub-headings make sense? | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|  | **Reassurance** |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Navigation is usable and consistent. It supports user orientation within the site. | 4 | 4 | 5 | Site 1 and 2 have very good and usable navigation, while site 3 provides excellent and succinct navigation. All sites have a homepage link on each page. Link differentiation is present on all sites. Links to internal pages and their differentiation have not been observed on the sites. Contact details are reasonably easy to obtain on Site 3 and 1, while Site 2 provides the most direct way of contacting the site. |
|  | Each page has a link to the home page, or the same navigation scheme that is on other pages. | 5 | 5 | 5 |
|  | Links that have been visited are differentiated from those that haven’t been visited, e.g. if the link colours are non-standard are they still consistent? | 5 | 5 | 5 |
|  | Links to internal pages are differentiated from links to external sites. | na | na | na |
|  | If a user wishes to contact the organisation directly, are contact details easily available? | 4 | 5 | 3 |
|  | **Clarity** |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Information headings and links are labelled descriptively to clearly communicate their destinations, e.g. do links lead to where you would expect? | 5 | 4 | 5 | Information heading and links are labelled descriptively on all three sites and lead to the expected landing pages. There is no surprises or confusion when navigating the website. Information has logical unit structure across all pages; however, this could be further improved on Site 2. Hierarchy of importance is established across all three pages, but this could be improved further on Site 2. |
|  | Information is divided into logical units, e.g. does the division by sub-pages make sense? | 5 | 4 | 5 |
|  | A hierarchy of importance is established, e.g. is important information featured prominently? | 5 | 4 | 5 |
|  | Authority |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | The person or organisation responsible for the information on a site is clearly indicated on all pages of the site, e.g. can you identify the author/owner of the information? | 2 | 2 | 2 | All sites provide a contact page and the overall owner of the sites can be established as the organisation; however, the person that is responsible for the site is not provided. Site 2 for example, has an article that doesn’t specify the author. |
|  | Currency |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Content is up-to-date and current. | 4 | 4 | 5 | All content seemed to be up to date and current with Site 1 not specifying publication of content and site 2 providing publication dates. Recent content is prioritised to be shown in the news section at an overall site level across all three sites, however this element is missing on individual pages. |
|  | The currency of the information is clearly marked through a publication and/or expiry date. | 2 | 5 | 5 |
|  | Recent or popular content is prominent, e.g. news or other highlighted section. | 4 | 4 | 4 |
|  | Readability |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Font size is readable with standard browser settings. | 5 | 5 | 5 | All sites had legible font sizes, and Site 3 had a good information organisation; Sites 1 and 2 might use some improvement. On all three sites, screen densities are balanced, and page and line widths are set to a value that makes reading pleasant. |
|  | Scanning is supported through the information structure, e.g. can you skim read the page and pick out key elements? | 3 | 2 | 5 |
|  | Screen density is balanced with ‘white’ space, e.g. appropriate balance between text, images and blank space on each page. | 5 | 4 | 5 |
|  | Page width and line (text) lengths are comfortable to read. | 5 | 5 | 5 |
|  | Corporate Identity |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Visual identity is consistent across all pages, e.g. use of colour, logo etc. | 5 | 5 | 5 | Visual identity is consistent across all three sites and appropriate for most of the audience. |
|  | Visual identity is appropriate for the majority of the audience. | 5 | 5 | 5 |
|  | **Relevance** |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Content type and tone is relevant to the audience. | 5 | 5 | 5 | While the tone of Site 2 is also highly relevant to the target demographic, it is also easy to comprehend and engaging. Site 1's content type and tone are very appropriate to the target population, offering a wonderful user experience. The tone and content of Site 3 are exactly what the audience wants and are well accepted. |
|  | If icons are used, do they communicate clearly in place of a text link or as a support for a link? | 5 | 5 | 5 |

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|  | Animations or scrolling text (if used) add to the information content or context of the site, e.g. do they help or hinder? | na | na | na | Animations and scrolling text were not present on all three sites while the non-textual content was appropriate and supported the content, making it relevant to the user. |
|  | Non-textual content, e.g. graphics, conveys meaning and is relevant to the user. | 5 | 5 | 5 |
|  | **Accessibility** |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Is there any indication that the site complies Web Accessibility guidelines (WCAG2)? | 5 | 5 | 5 | All sites comply with WCAG2, while Site 1 and 3, conform to best practices. Site 2 could be further improved in this area. Skio links are not present on any of the sites. |
|  | Does the site conform to best practices such as alt text, good colour contrast etc? | 5 | 4 | 5 |
|  | Does the site have any accessibility features such as skip links? | na | na | na |
|  | **Browsers** |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Does the site display correctly in the Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari and Opera browsers (all available in the MRL)? | 5 | 5 | 5 | All sites display correctly on Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari and Opera browsers. |
|  | **Mobile** |  |  |  | **Comments** |
|  | Is the site mobile friendly? | 5 | 5 | 5 | All sites are user friendly, responsive and maintain usability features on mobile. |
|  | Is the site responsive to different screen sizes and screen orientation? | 5 | 5 | 5 |
|  | Does the site maintain its usability on mobile devices? | 5 | 5 | 5 |

**Comparative analysis**

Summarise your findings by identifying 5 key points. These may be *'good'* points, elements on the competitor sites that you want to include in your own site design and build. Alternatively, they may also be *'bad'* points, element that you will want to ensure you avoid.

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| **Key Points** | **Description** |
| **1** | **Emphasise Visual Consistency:** Ensure that the website has a visually consistent design throughout all pages, with a prominent and easily accessible search functionality. This will make it easier for users to navigate the site and find what they are looking for quickly. |
| **2** | **Focus on Consistent Design and Navigation:** All elements of the website should have a consistent design and navigation, to provide a seamless user experience. This includes things like the font, color scheme, and navigation menu placement. |
| **3** | **Highlight Prominent Search Functionality:** Make sure that the search functionality is prominent and easily accessible, so that users can quickly find what they are looking for. This could involve having a search bar at the top of the page, or having an advanced search option for more specific queries. |
| **4** | **Optimise Information Retrieval:** Ensure that all essential information is displayed at the top of the page, without requiring users to scroll. This will make it easier for users to quickly access the information they need. Additionally, the site should be optimized for efficient information retrieval tasks, so that users can find what they are looking for with minimal mouse clicks. |
| **5** | **Focus on Appropriate Information Structure:** The website's information structure should be concise and focused on user needs. This will make it easier for users to find what they are looking for, without having to sift through unnecessary information. If possible, consider using tools like categories, subheadings, and a site map to help users quickly navigate the site. |