Survey of University staff website tasks

Summary

The survey shows that a relatively small core group of tasks is considered important by most staff.

The number one task, finding contact details was almost twice as popular as any other. It collected more votes than the 40 least popular tasks combined.

The nature of the findings was as anticipated, and in line with other research conducted on website use.

It is recommended that similar, smaller-scale surveys be conducted with internal audiences to inform the development of key support group service websites.

Contents

About the survey

An online survey conducted in October 2007 asked University of Edinburgh staff to pick 5 tasks from a randomised list of 64. The list consisted of tasks or reasons staff may have for using any of the websites published by the University.

They were then required to rank their 5 tasks from most to least important. Participants also had the opportunity to add any tasks important to them that were not included in the list.
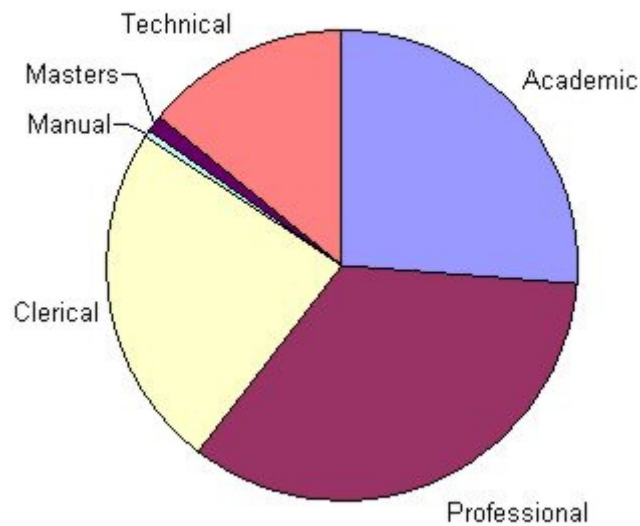
The survey was inspired by a similar piece of research conducted by Gerry McGovern on the use of intranets. Read more about Gerry McGovern's work and download his report – 'Intranets: what staff really want': http://tinyurl.com/26pysb
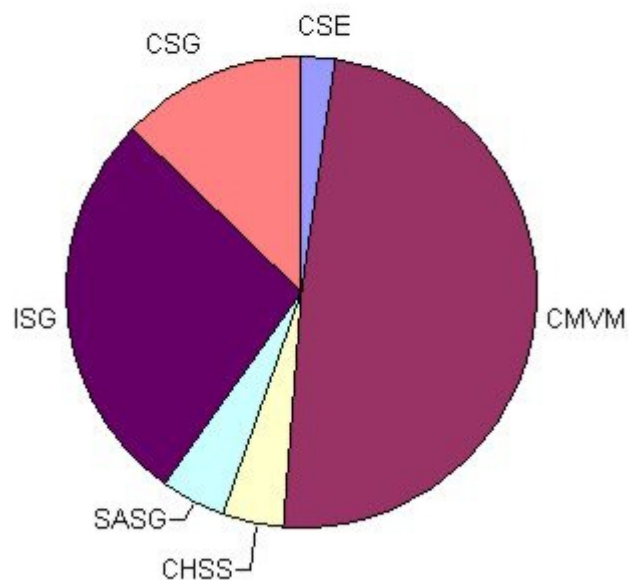
Demographics

Over 600 members of staff visited the survey, with 344 completing the task and contributing to the data in this report.

Participants by role

Participants by College or Support Group

CMVM - College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine	CSE - College of Science and Engineering	CHSS - College of Humanities and Social Sciences
SASG - Student and Academic Services Support Group	ISG - Information Services Support Group	CSG - Corporate Services Support Group

Results overview

The survey data has been collated twice. Once counting each task voted equally, and once with a weighting applied based on how participants ranked them. Top ranked tasks scored 5, next most popular 4, through to 1 for the lowest ranked of the five tasks selected.

The application of a weighting has little effect on the results:
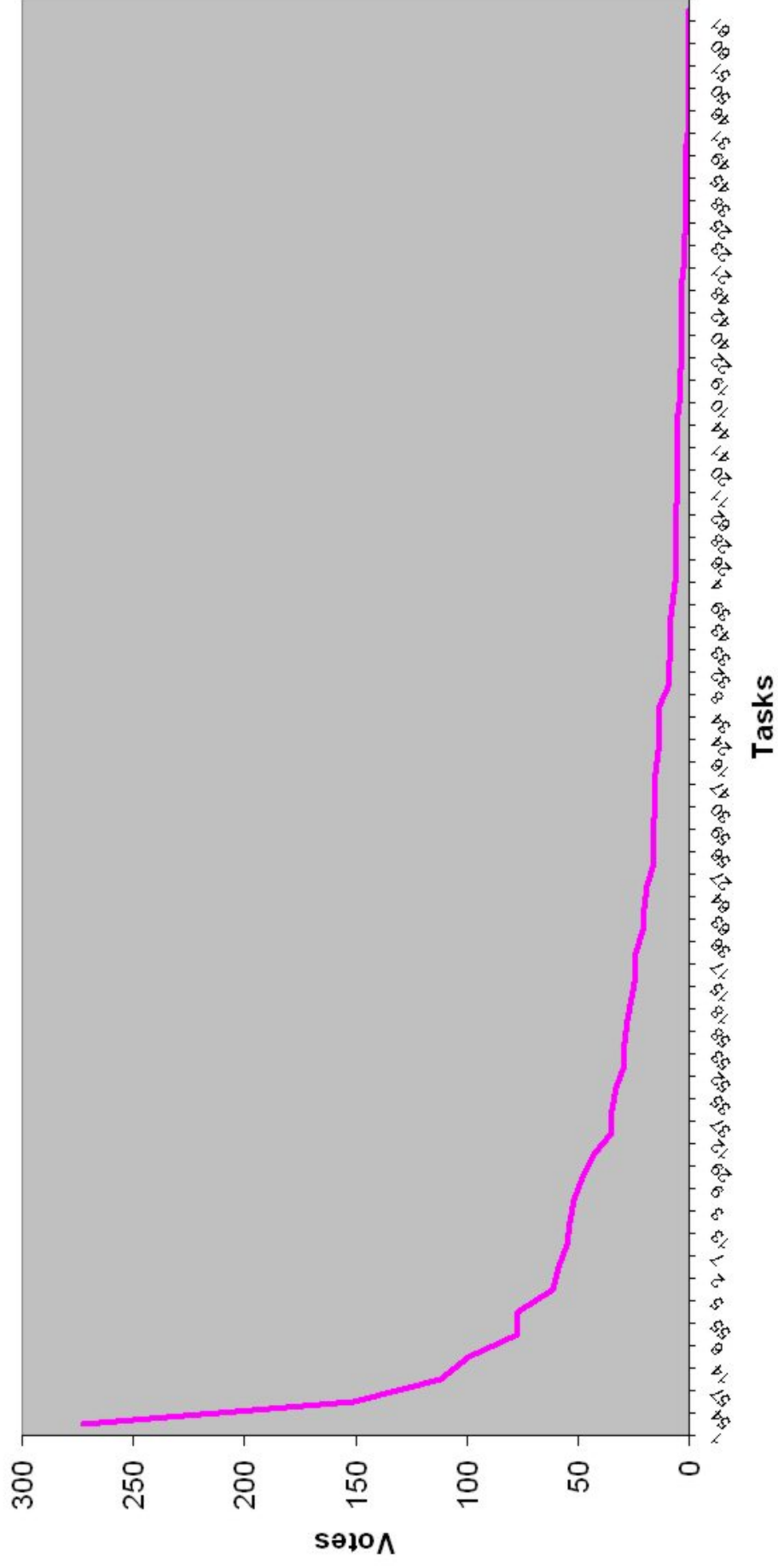- The relative importance of the top tasks is accentuated
- The top three tasks remain the same
- Some minor reordering of tasks below top 3

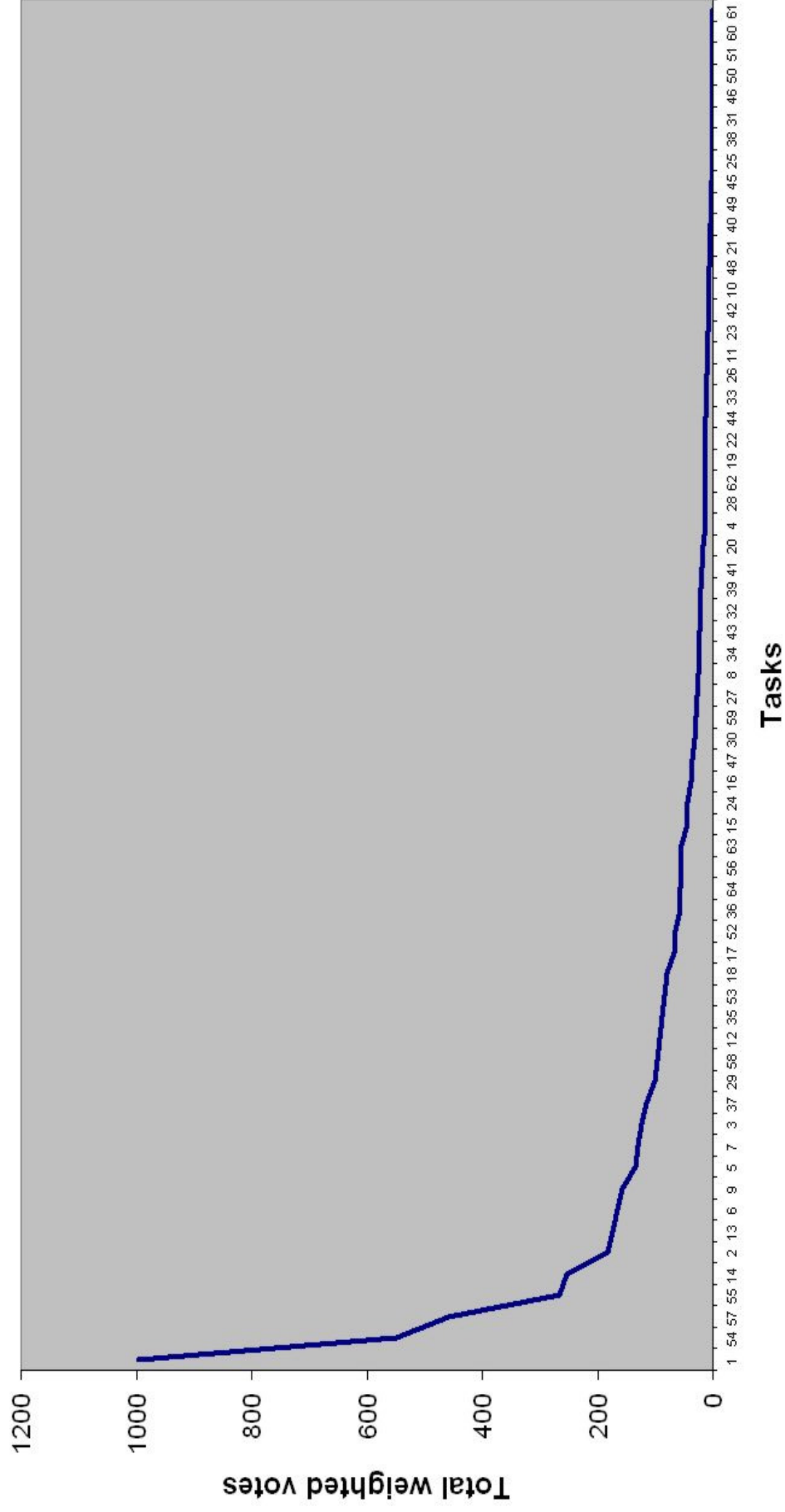| Without vote weighting	With vote weighting
Top 2 tasks – 25% of votes	Top 2 tasks 30% of votes
Top 6 tasks – 50% of votes	Top 6 tasks – 53% of votes
Top 20 tasks – 80% of votes	Top 18 tasks – 81% of votes

Top twenty tasks

Ranking	Without vote weighting	With vote weighting
1	Find staff (phone directory, etc.)	Find staff (phone directory, etc.)
2	Log into MyEd	Log into MyEd
3	Library resources	Library resources
4	Find a department (maps, postal addresses etc.)	Log into your local intranet
5	Job vacancies	Find a department (maps, postal addresses etc.)
6	Log into your local intranet	Policies, procedures, processes
7	University news	IT support
8	Policies, procedures, processes	Job vacancies
9	Pay / salary details	Book a meeting room
10	IT support	University news
11	Forms download	Pay / salary details
12	Book a meeting room	Forms download
13	Find a location	Health and safety guidelines
14	Claim expenses (travel, etc.)	Find a location
15	Health and safety guidelines	E-learning (e.g. accessing a VLE - Virtual Learning Environment)
16	Research and development	Claim expenses (travel, etc.)
17	University calendar (term dates, public holidays etc.)	Research and development
18	Meeting minutes, committee papers etc	Meeting minutes, committee papers etc
19	E-learning (e.g. accessing a VLE - Virtual Learning Environment)	Technical manuals and documentation
20	Technical manuals and documentation	Training

Task importance (unweighted)

Votes

300
250
200
150
100
50
0

Tasks

Task popularity (weighted by relative importance)

Tasks

Total weighted votes

1 54 57 55 14 2 13 6 9 5 7 3 37 29 58 12 35 53 18 17 52 36 64 56 63 15 24 16 47 30 59 27 8 34 43 32 39 41 20 4 28 62 19 22 44 33 26 11 23 42 10 48 21 40 49 45 25 38 31 46 50 51 60 61
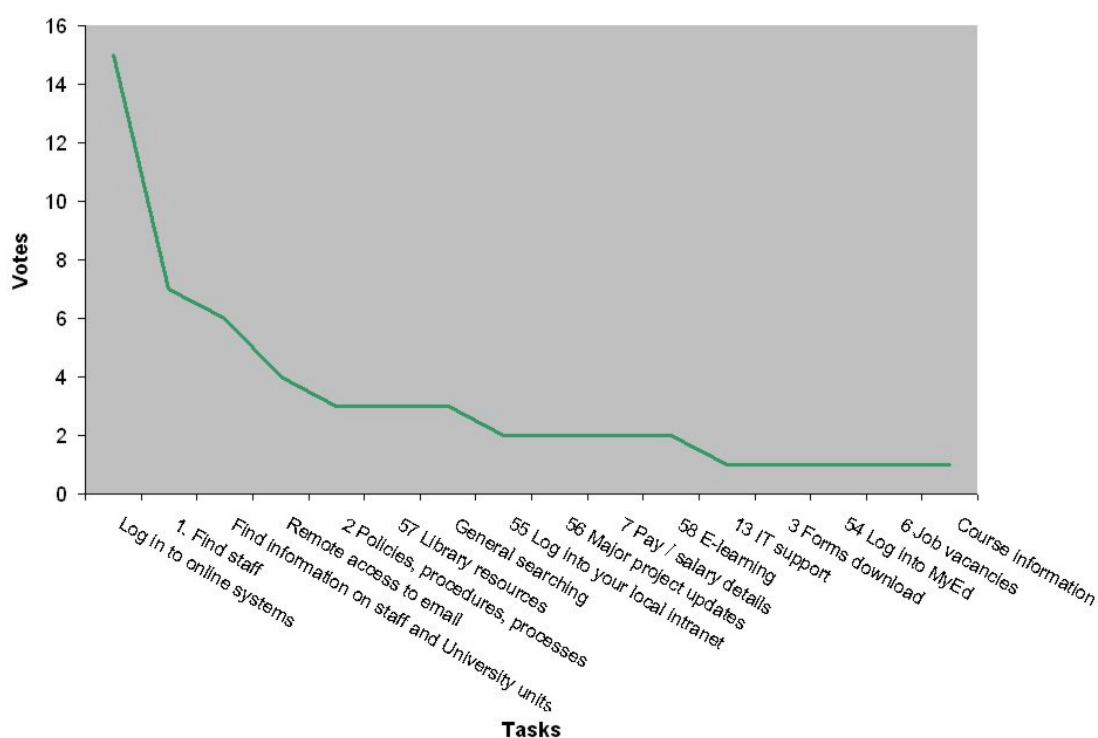
Additional tasks

Participants also had the opportunity to describe other tasks they performed online if they felt any of their top five were not present in the list. The majority of these responses could be mapped onto existing items in the task list. These categories were created to accommodate the remainder:

- Log onto online systems (e.g. HR, EBIS, WISARD)
- Find information on staff and departments
- Access email remotely
- Find course information

Open comment tasks

See also: table of tasks on page 10

Complete results

Without weighting

Task	Task ID	Votes	%	Cumulative %
Find staff (phone directory, etc.)	1	273	16%	16%
Log into MyEd	54	151	9%	25%
Library resources	57	112	7%	31%
Find a department (maps, postal addresses etc.)	14	99	6%	37%
Job vacancies	6	77	4%	42%
Log into your local intranet	55	77	4%	46%
University news	5	61	4%	50%
Policies, procedures, processes	2	59	3%	53%
Pay / salary details	7	55	3%	56%
IT support	13	54	3%	59%
Forms download	3	52	3%	62%
Book a meeting room	9	48	3%	65%
Find a location	29	43	3%	68%
Claim expenses (travel, etc.)	12	35	2%	70%
Health and safety guidelines	37	35	2%	72%
Research and development	35	33	2%	74%
University calendar (term dates, public holidays etc.)	52	29	2%	75%
Meeting minutes, committee papers etc	53	29	2%	77%
E-learning (e.g. accessing a VLE - Virtual Learning Environment)	58	28	2%	79%
Technical manuals and documentation	18	26	2%	80%
University events	15	24	1%	82%
Training	17	24	1%	83%
Purchasing and procurement guidelines	36	21	1%	84%
Check and manage course information	63	20	1%	85%
Manage student records	64	19	1%	87%
Employee offers, staff discounts etc	27	16	1%	87%
Major project updates (e.g. EUCLID, building works progress, organisational changes)	56	16	1%	88%
Transport information (e.g. Shuttle bus times, cycling options, parking permits)	59	16	1%	89%
University facts and figures	30	15	1%	90%
Supplier information	47	15	1%	91%
Complete a timesheet	16	14	1%	92%
Information for external audiences (prospective students, business & industry etc)	24	13	1%	93%
Press releases	34	13	1%	93%
How to guides	8	9	1%	94%
University Governance	32	9	1%	94%
Sports and social clubs	33	8	0%	95%
Wikis	43	8	0%	95%
Find an image / graphic	39	7	0%	96%
Employee benefits	4	6	0%	96%
Update my personal details (e.g. contact details, name changes, staff card)	26	6	0%	97%
Learning	28	6	0%	97%

Recycling and energy efficiency	62	6	0%	97%
University organisational charts	11	5	0%	97%
Collaboration (Communities of practice, discussion forums, etc.)	20	5	0%	98%
Book catering	41	5	0%	98%
University magazines	44	5	0%	98%
Annual leave / holiday	10	4	0%	99%
Marketing support and materials	19	4	0%	99%
Book travel (flight, hotel, etc.)	22	3	0%	99%
Acronym, abbreviation, glossary finder	40	3	0%	99%
Pensions	42	3	0%	99%
Set up a video conference	48	3	0%	100%
Information from the Principal	21	2	0%	100%
Best practice guides	23	2	0%	100%
Staff dining facilities and cafés	25	1	0%	100%
RSS feeds	38	1	0%	100%
Blogs	45	1	0%	100%
Set up a conference call	49	1	0%	100%
Vision, mission, core values	31	0	0%	100%
Crisis management	46	0	0%	100%
University history	50	0	0%	100%
Book a courier	51	0	0%	100%
Staff counselling	60	0	0%	100%
Healthcare information	61	0	0%	100%

With weighting applied

Top ranked tasks scored 5, next most popular 4, through to 1 for the lowest ranked of the five tasks selected.

Task ID	Task	Weighted votes	%	Cumulative %
1	Find staff (phone directory, etc.)	997	19%	19%
54	Log into MyEd	548	11%	30%
57	Library resources	459	9%	39%
55	Log into your local intranet	266	5%	44%
14	Find a department (maps, postal addresses etc.)	253	5%	49%
2	Policies, procedures, processes	182	4%	53%
13	IT support	173	3%	56%
6	Job vacancies	166	3%	59%
9	Book a meeting room	157	3%	62%
5	University news	133	3%	65%
7	Pay / salary details	129	3%	67%
3	Forms download	123	2%	70%
37	Health and safety guidelines	116	2%	72%
29	Find a location	100	2%	74%
58	E-learning (e.g. accessing a VLE - Virtual Learning Environment)	96	2%	76%
12	Claim expenses (travel, etc.)	93	2%	78%
35	Research and development	87	2%	79%
53	Meeting minutes, committee papers etc	84	2%	81%
18	Technical manuals and documentation	79	2%	82%
17	Training	68	1%	84%

52	University calendar (term dates, public holidays etc.)	64	1%	85%
36	Purchasing and procurement guidelines	57	1%	86%
64	Manage student records	57	1%	87%
56	Major project updates (e.g. EUCLID, building works progress, organisational changes)	55	1%	88%
63	Check and manage course information	55	1%	89%
15	University events	45	1%	90%
24	Information for external audiences (prospective students, business & industry etc)	45	1%	91%
16	Complete a timesheet	38	1%	92%
47	Supplier information	36	1%	93%
30	University facts and figures	31	1%	93%
59	Transport information (e.g. Shuttle bus times, cycling options, parking permits)	29	1%	94%
27	Employee offers, staff discounts etc	28	1%	94%
8	How to guides	26	1%	95%
34	Press releases	24	0%	95%
43	Wikis	24	0%	96%
32	University Governance	21	0%	96%
39	Find an image / graphic	20	0%	96%
41	Book catering	18	0%	97%
20	Collaboration (Communities of practice, discussion forums, etc.)	16	0%	97%
4	Employee benefits	13	0%	97%
28	Learning	13	0%	98%
62	Recycling and energy efficiency	13	0%	98%
19	Marketing support and materials	12	0%	98%
22	Book travel (flight, hotel, etc.)	12	0%	98%
44	University magazines	12	0%	99%
33	Sports and social clubs	11	0%	99%
26	Update my personal details (e.g. contact details, name changes, staff card)	10	0%	99%
11	University organisational charts	8	0%	99%
23	Best practice guides	8	0%	99%
42	Pensions	7	0%	99%
10	Annual leave / holiday	6	0%	100%
48	Set up a video conference	6	0%	100%
21	Information from the Principal	5	0%	100%
40	Acronym, abbreviation, glossary finder	4	0%	100%
49	Set up a conference call	3	0%	100%
45	Blogs	2	0%	100%
25	Staff dining facilities and cafés	1	0%	100%
38	RSS feeds	1	0%	100%
31	Vision, mission, core values	0	0%	100%
46	Crisis management	0	0%	100%
50	University history	0	0%	100%
51	Book a courier	0	0%	100%
60	Staff counselling	0	0%	100%
61	Healthcare information	0	0%	100%

Categorised additional tasks

Participants were given the opportunity to identify other key tasks they perform on the University website. The 54 responses have been categorised as below. A number preceding a task indicates one which was included in the survey. Tasks without preceding numbers are new categories.

Task	Votes	%	Cumulative %
Log in to online systems	15	28%	28%
1. Find staff	7	13%	41%
Find information on staff and University units	6	11%	52%
Remote access to email	4	7%	59%
2. Policies, procedures, processes	3	6%	65%
57. Library resources	3	6%	70%
General searching	3	6%	76%
55. Log into your local intranet	2	4%	80%
56. Major project updates	2	4%	83%
7. Pay / salary details	2	4%	87%
58. E-learning	2	4%	91%
13. IT support	1	2%	93%
3. Forms download	1	2%	94%
54. Log into MyEd	1	2%	96%
6. Job vacancies	1	2%	98%
Course information	1	2%	100%