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PARIS
05.Feb.2019
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apereo

USER CENTERED SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

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UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

41,000 STUDENTS

14,700 STAFF

3 COLLEGES

20 SCHOOLS

3 PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

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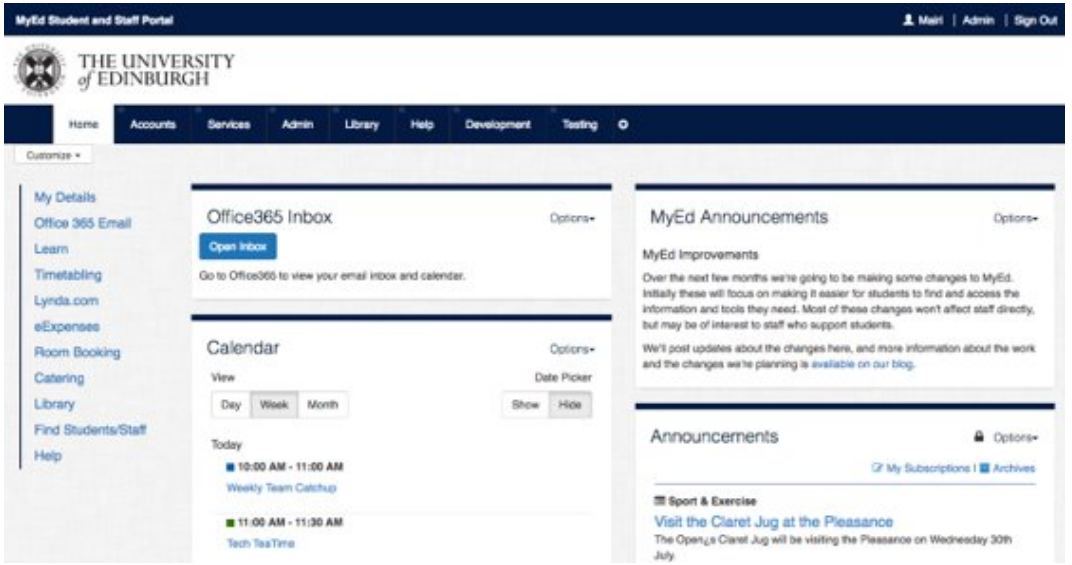
WHAT IS IT? ITS ASPIRATIONS?
DECOUPLED FRONT END
USER INSIGHTS; AND PROCESSES
INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE AND UI
FUTURE PROVSION

USER CENTERED PORTAL

UPORTAL AT EDINBURGH

- 2003: We created MyEd, based on **uPortal 2.1.3**
- …some upgrades happened
- 2017: We upgraded to **uPortal 4.3** with the **Respondr theme**
  - A new responsive design in line with University website



A DIGITAL EXPERIENCE WHICH MAKES THE USER FEEL THE UNIVERSITY'S ONLINE ENVIRONMENT IS CENTERED AROUND THEM

MyEd Vision

WHAT WE KNOW – COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

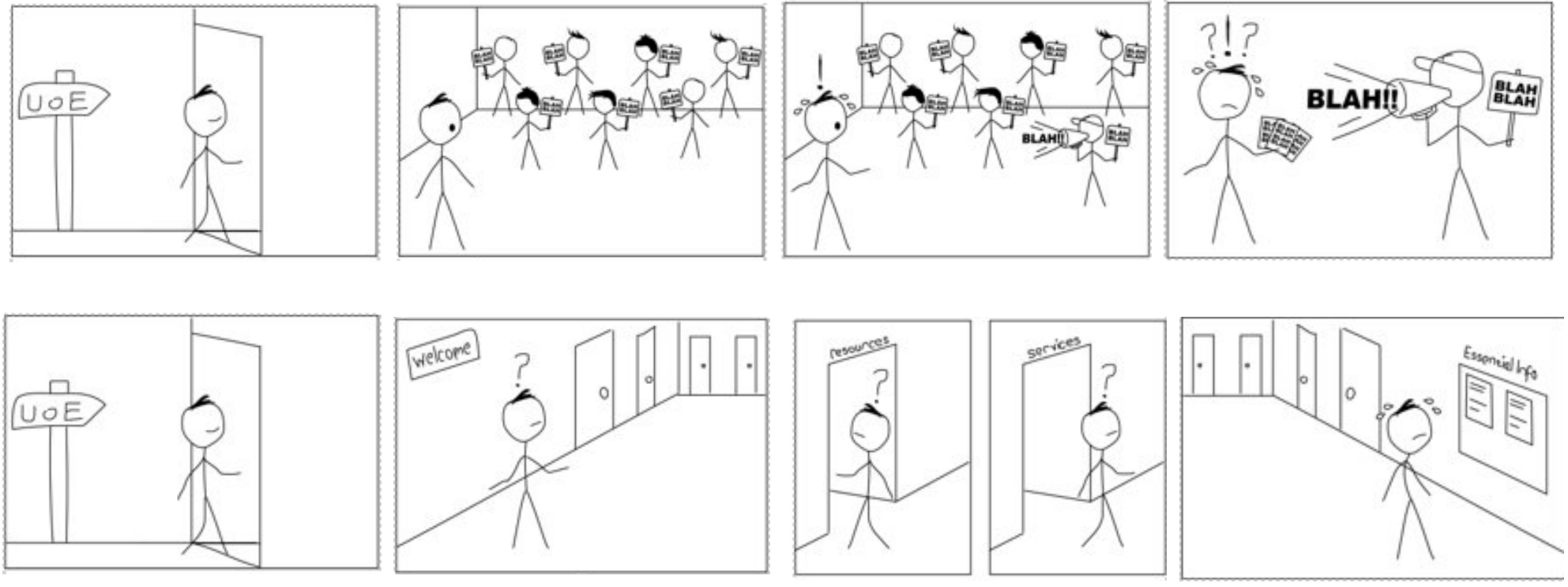
- "I can cope with MyEd but it took me a while to get used to it"

- "It's very **disorganised**. It's full of sections with unhelpful headings and most parts aren't relevant"

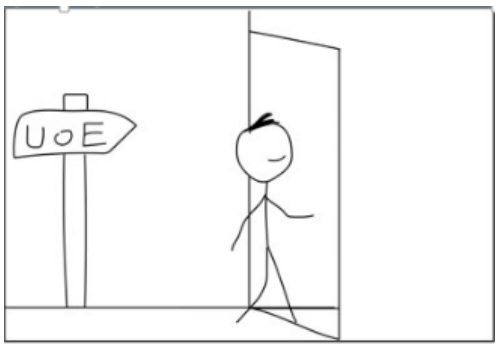
- "The point is **not having all that information over you** when you search for something specific"

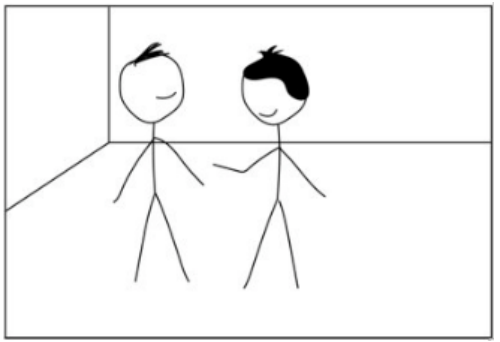
- "It's been 3 years and **8 times out of 10 I click in the wrong place** in MyEd"

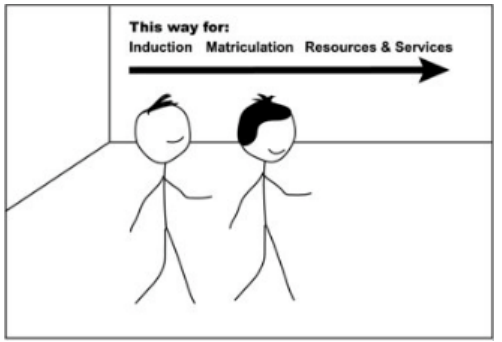
CURRENT EXPERIENCE

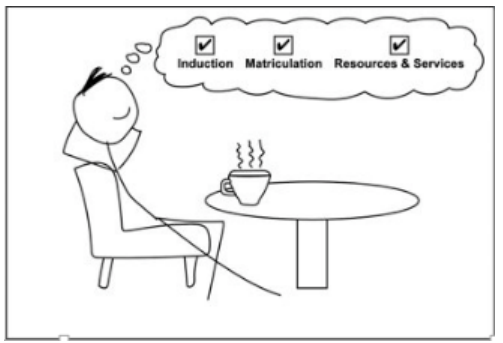


EXPERIENCE WE'RE WORKING TOWARDS









PRESENT SERVICES, TASKS, AND CONTENT IN THE PORTAL ORGANIZED AROUND THE STUDENT'S (USER'S) PERSPECTIVE, NOT SYSTEMS OR DEPARTMENTS

User Centered Portal – Proposal

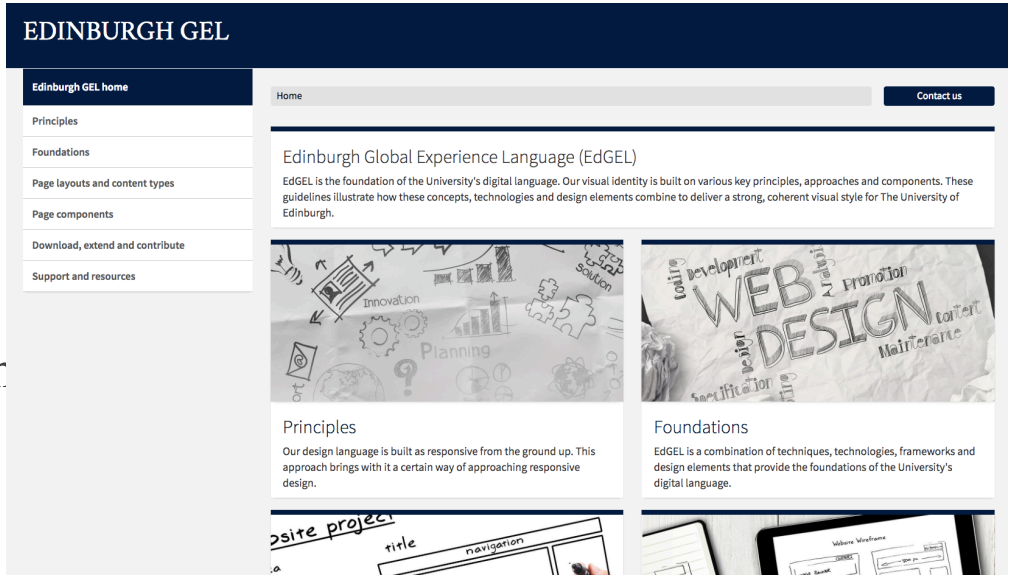
UCP CONCEPTS

- Task based
  - Visually integrate elements from diverse systems related to a task
- Contextual content
  - Show users what they need when they need it

FIRST STEPS

- Working towards uPortal5
- User Research
- Information Architecture (IA)
  - Content Audit
  - UI
  - Migration Plan

CONSCIOUS DECOUPLING

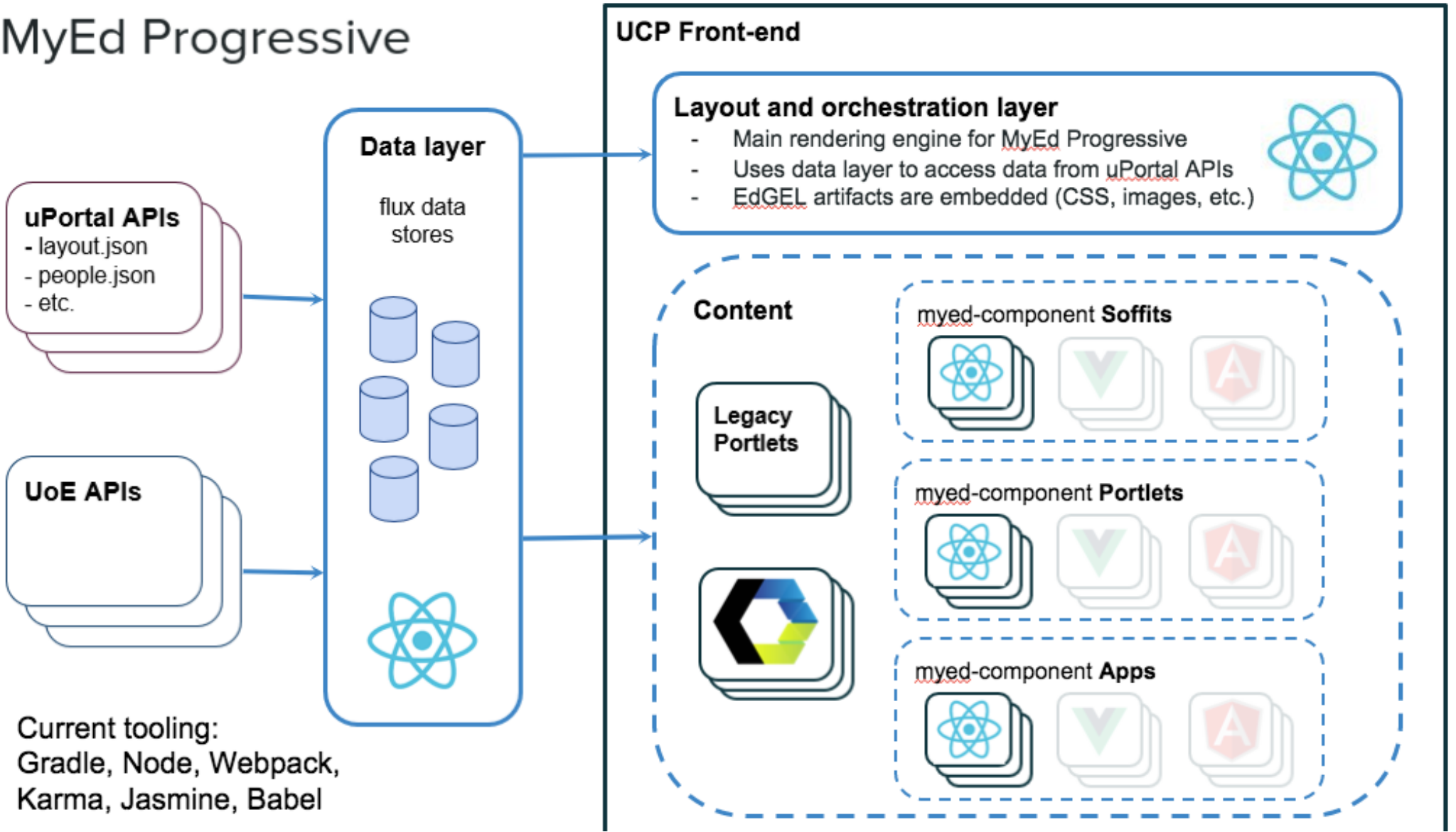


- Wider University context
  - Break down the monoliths
  - Improve consistency
- uPortal has powerful set of core sub-system
  - Rending engine is very complex
- We want to use **EdGel**
  - Edinburgh Global Experience Language
  - Provides consistent UI for University web applications and sites
  - Self contained, extensible Bootstrap-based distribution of CSS & JS
  - Not easy to integrate fully with uPortal skin

OUR APPROACH

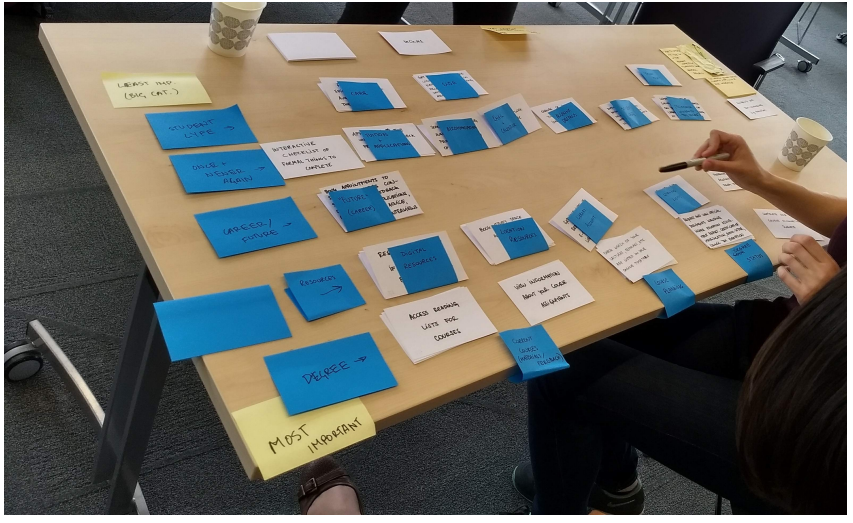
- Technical framework built to decouple the front-end from uPortal
  - But kept to use sub-systems
- React front-end – **MyEd Progressive**
  - Mobile First
  - **90%** of content accessed via MyEd Progressive
  - Validated top tasks for users
  - Mega menu for accessing tasks
  - Finding content
    - Favourites
    - Searching
  - You might like
    - Contextual data driven to user

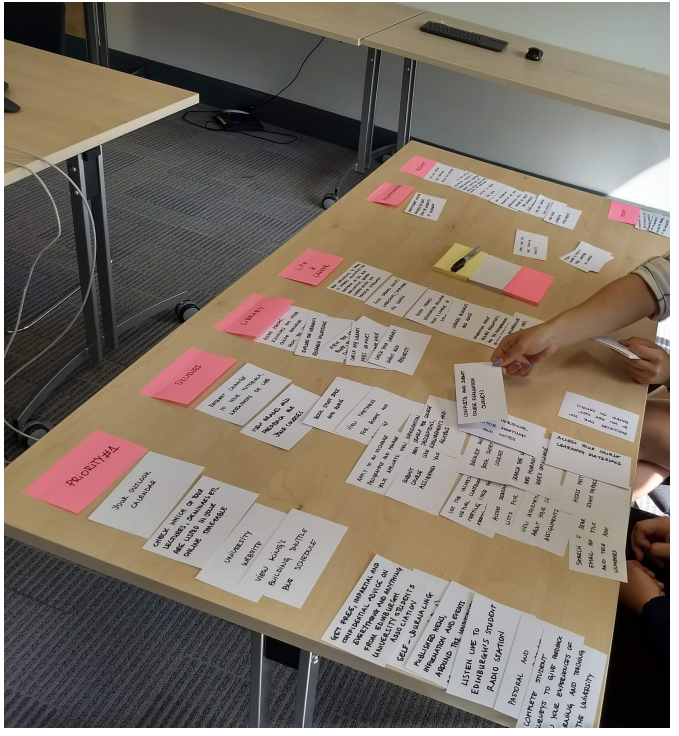
MyEd Progressive



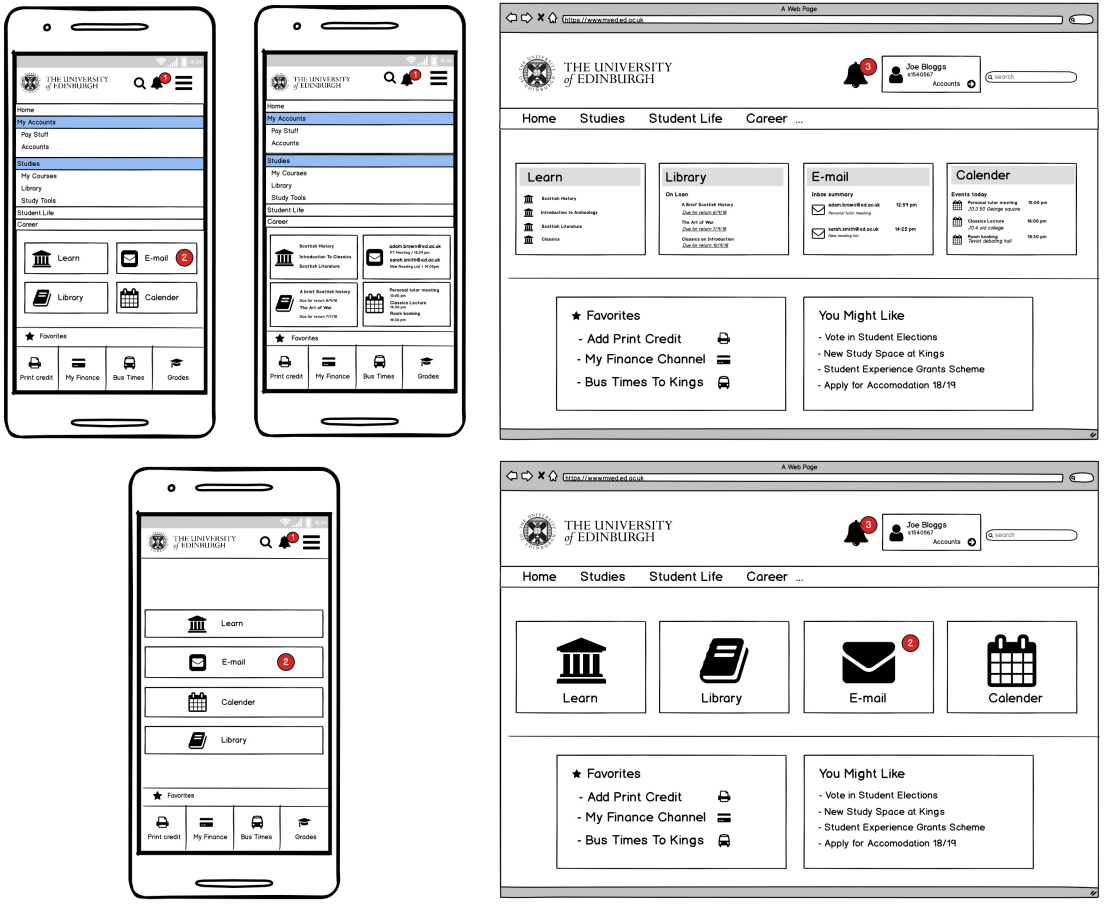
PRESENTATION AND CONTENT

- User Research activities
  - Physical open card sort activity
    - Task based descriptions; not Services!!
    - An emerging grouping of tasks and IA layout
    - First iterative prototype based on new IA



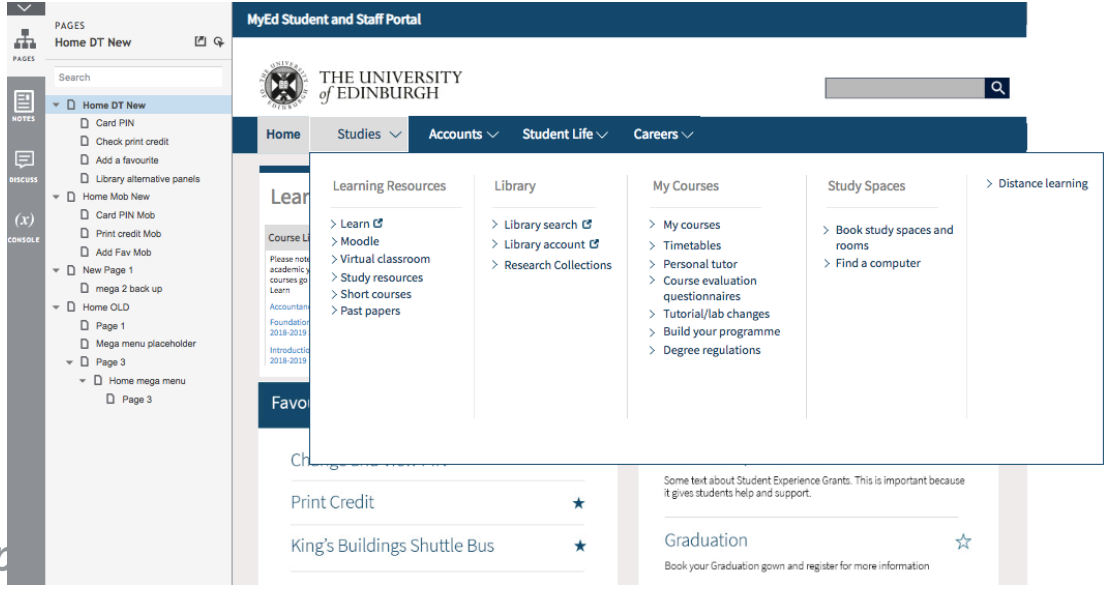


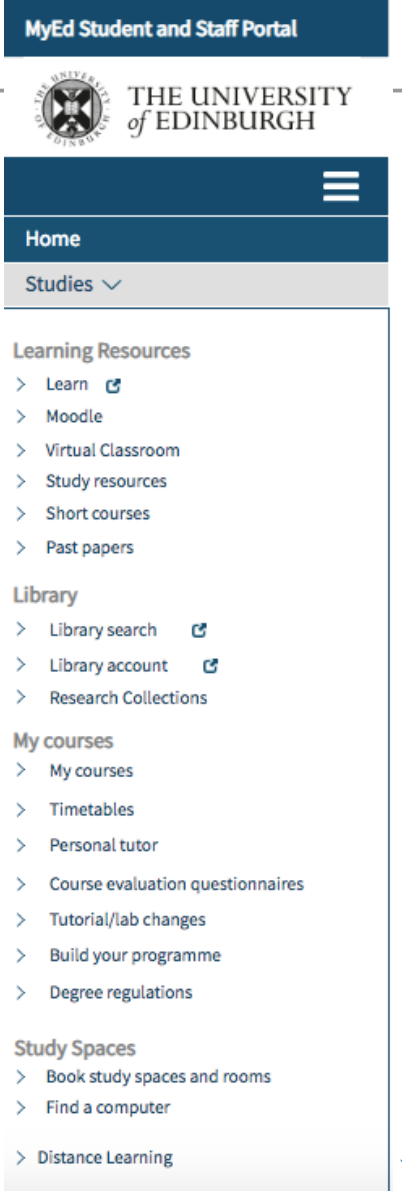
INITIAL PROTOTYPES



USABILITY TESTING

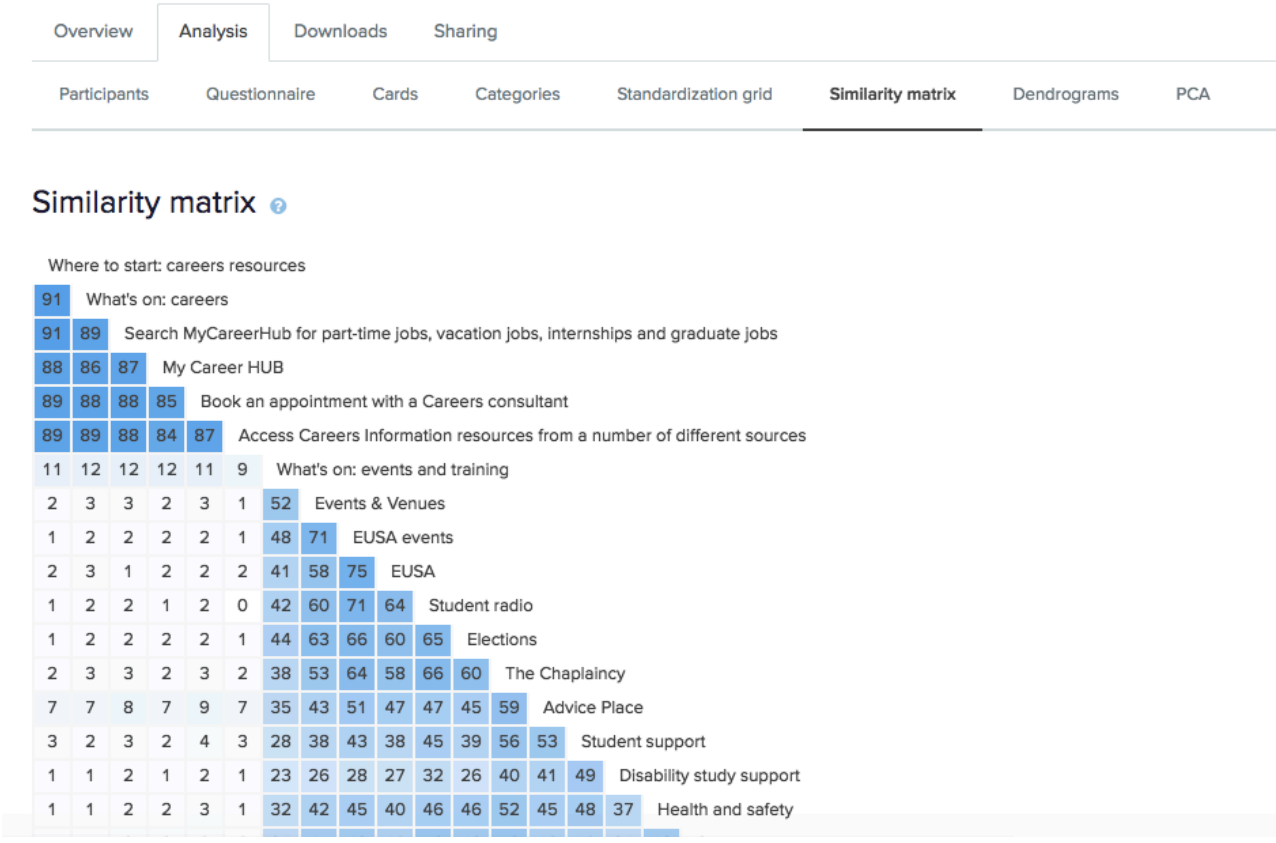
- Usability testing on first prototype; testing:
  - A mobile first approach
  - Content display and interactions
  - 3 levels of content; based on preliminary card-sort analysis



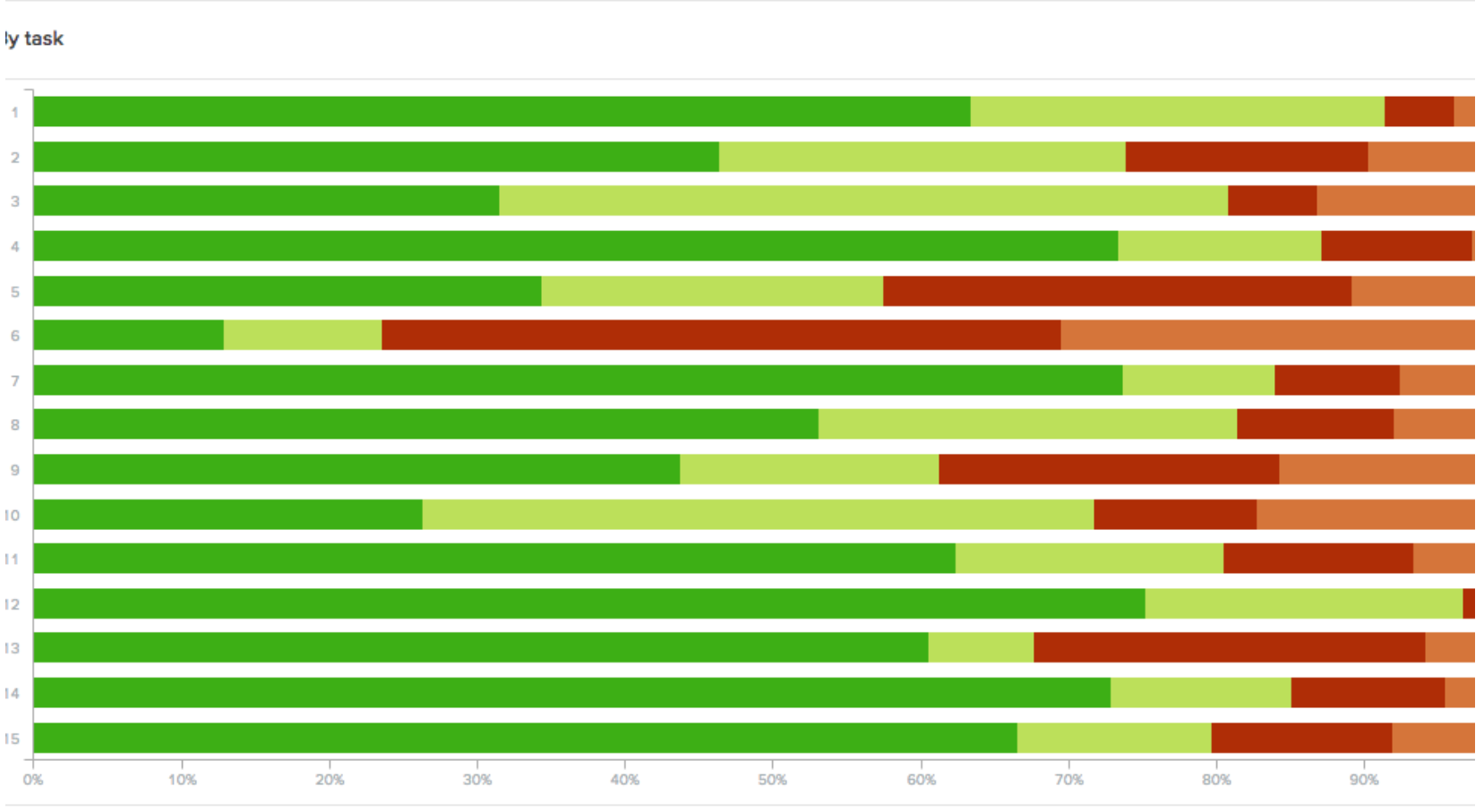


VALIDATING INITIAL CARD SORT ACTIVITIES

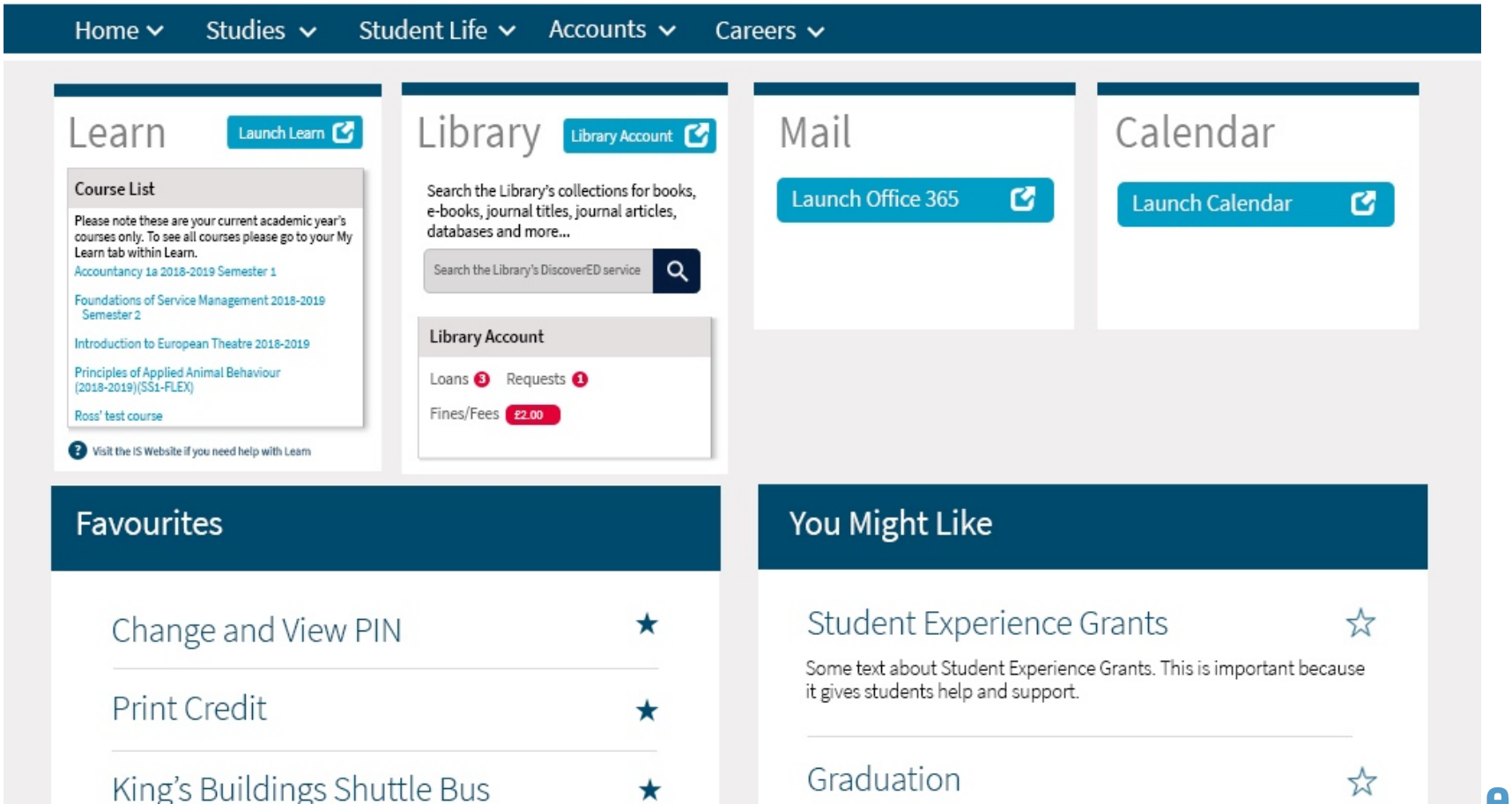
- Closed sort task sort activity
  - 1000+ responses
  - Validating grouping of tasks and access to services and content
  - Validating naming conventions



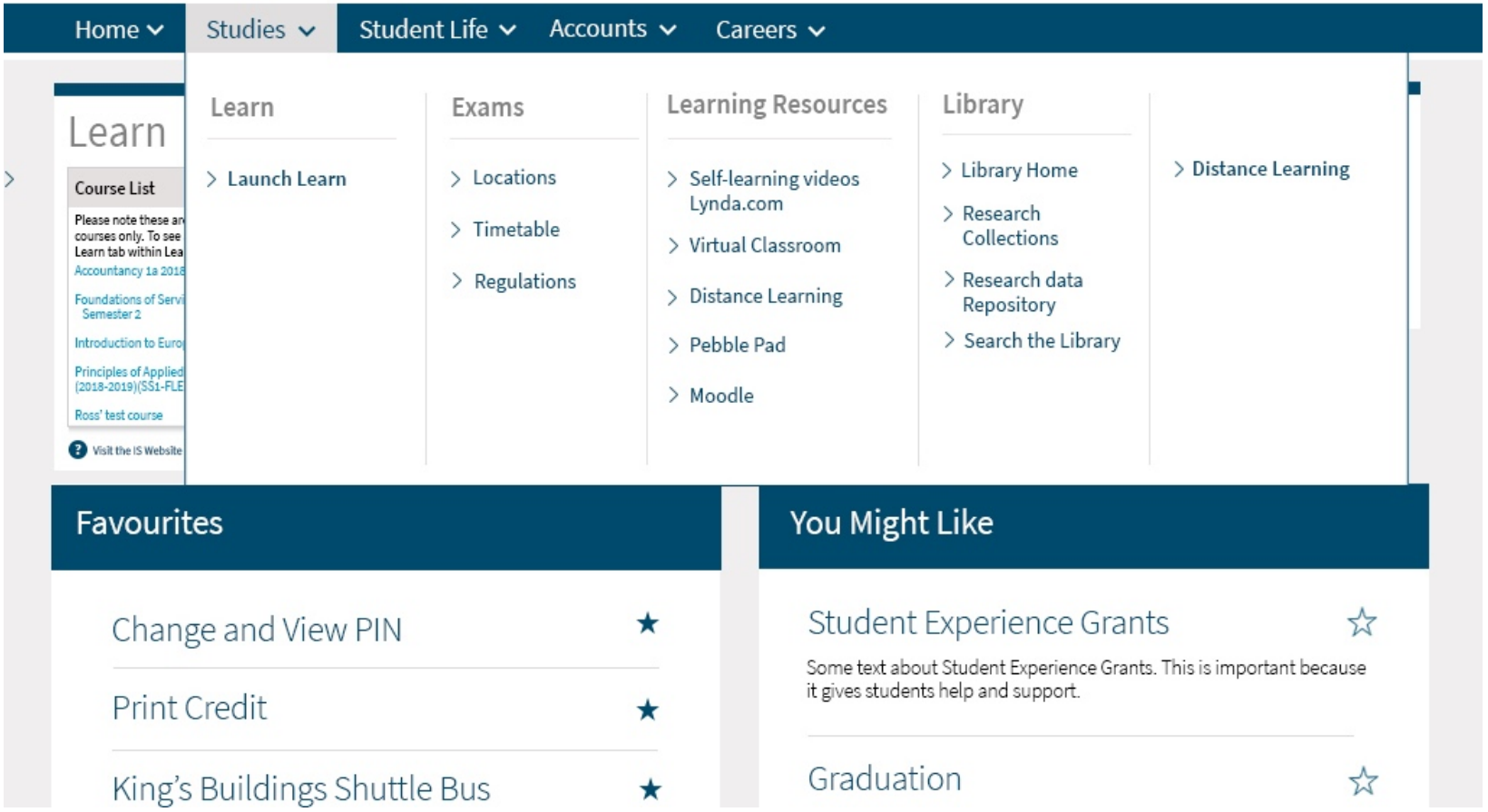
TREE TEST RESULTS; FINALISE MENU LAYOUT



CURRENT MYED PROGRESSIVE: POWERED BY REACT

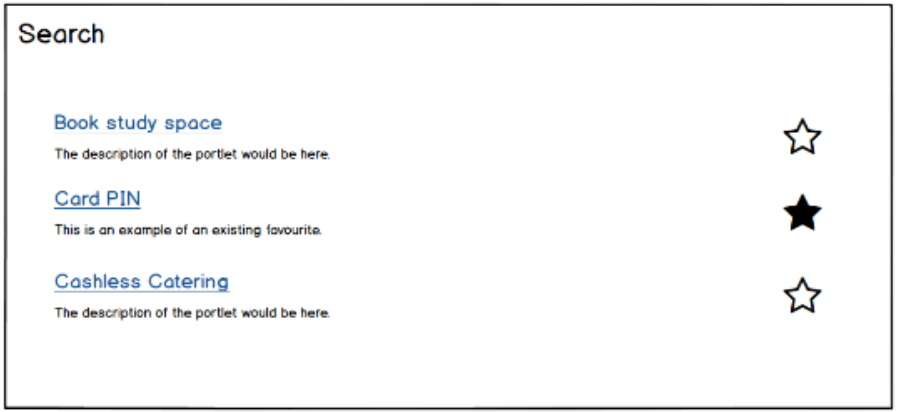


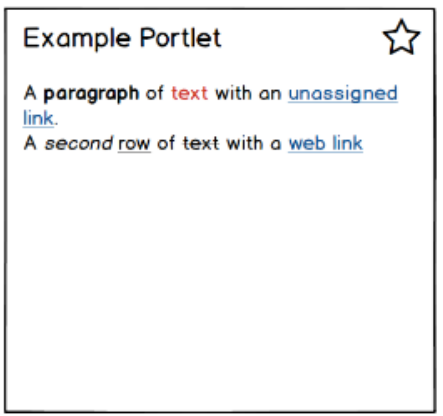
MYED MENU - MEGAMENU



FAVOURITES

- In development
  - Provide users list of favourites on their homepage
    - Removing other customization options
  - Investigating existing APIs used by Favourites and Favourites Carousel portlets
  - Aware of esco-content-menu web component ☺
  - Usability testing planned for this





Alternative method of adding favourites within portlets.

WHAT'S NEXT

- **Promote to LIVE**
  - Preview opt-in for students and staff Q1 2019
  - Full switchover summer 2019
- **Ongoing service improvements**
  - Apply User Experience (UX) processes learnt over past 12 months
  - Utilise notifications, where appropriate
- **Open Apereo 2019**
  - Proposal submitted to look further into UX opportunities within the project
    - Insights
    - Methods
  - Project update proposal

PRESENT SERVICES, TASKS, AND CONTENT IN THE PORTAL ORGANIZED AROUND THE STUDENT'S (USER'S) PERSPECTIVE, NOT SYSTEMS OR DEPARTMENTS

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WHAT IS IT? ITS ASPIRATIONS?
CURRENT STATE
HOW IT IS BEING USED?
FUTURE PLANS
GET INVOLVED!

FIOSAN (FORMERLY KNOWN AS NOTIFICATIONS BACKBONE)

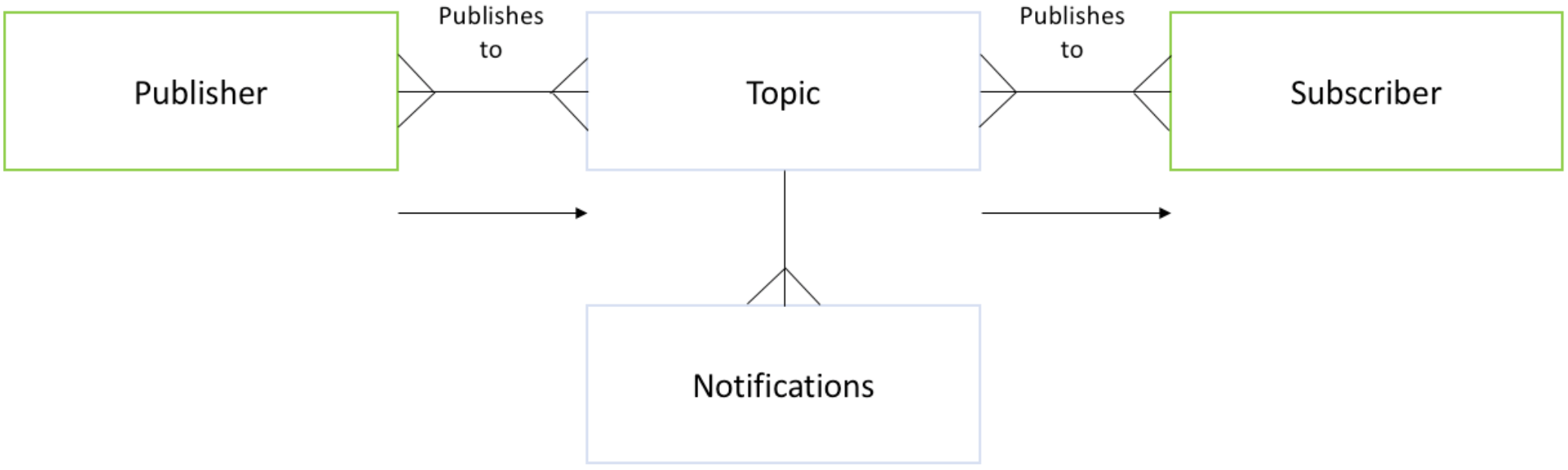
apereo incubating

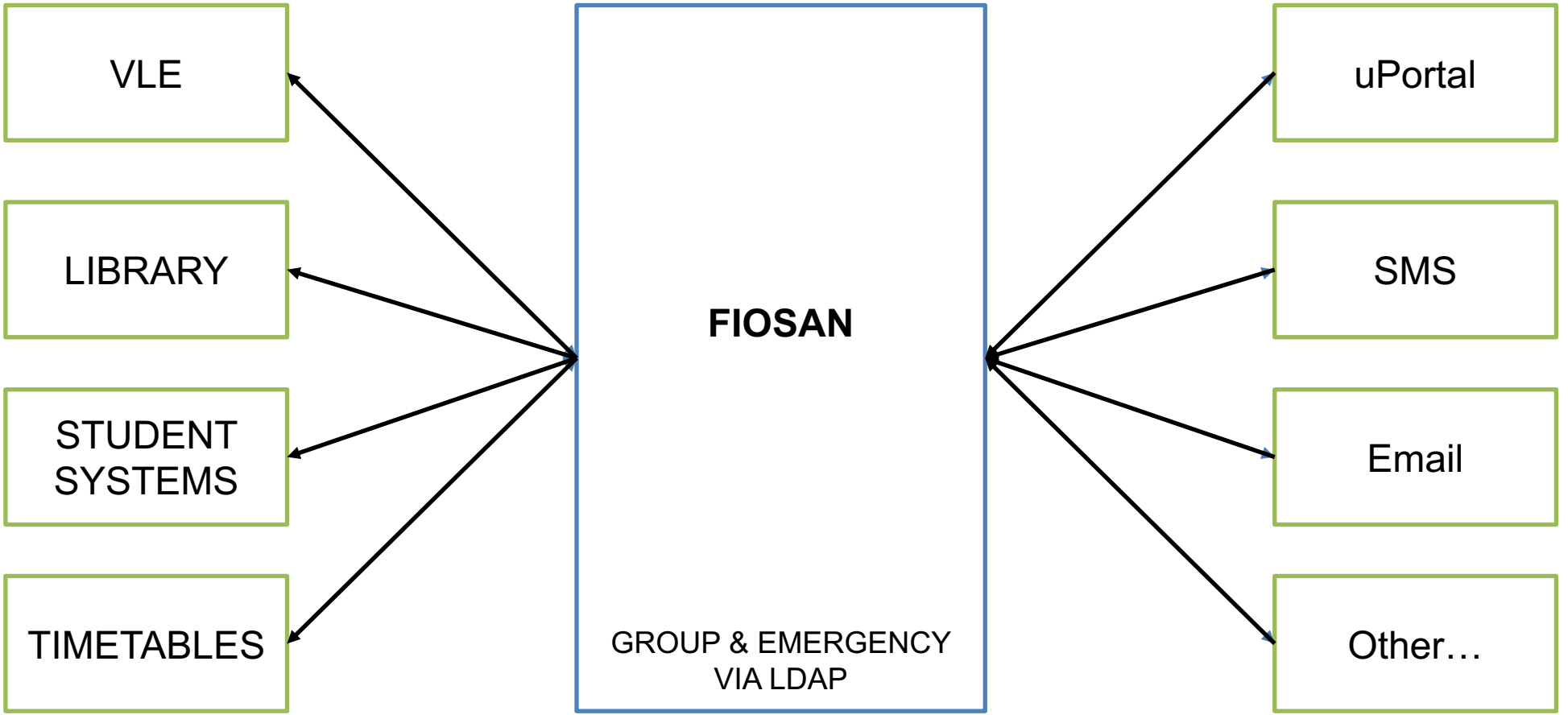
AIMS OF FIOSAN ~~NOTIFICATIONS BACKBONE~~

- Transform task-related communications in HE
- Improve end user experience, integrating with institutional systems/sources of notifications
- Standardise and simplify key communication processes:
  - Better targeted comms with students and staff
  - Better completion rates for key tasks and activities
  - Cross media communication in emergency cases
  - Potential to track success of approach, leading to better designed communication strategies

WHAT IS FIOSAN?

- Cross-system solution for personalized notifications
- Enable notifications to be created-by and distributed-across multiple systems
- Provides:
  - High throughput of notification message handling
  - Security mechanism to ensure security and SSL encryption of notifications
  - UI to allow for support and administration of pubs/subs
  - Audit messaging
  - Ability to push a single notification to multiple subscribers

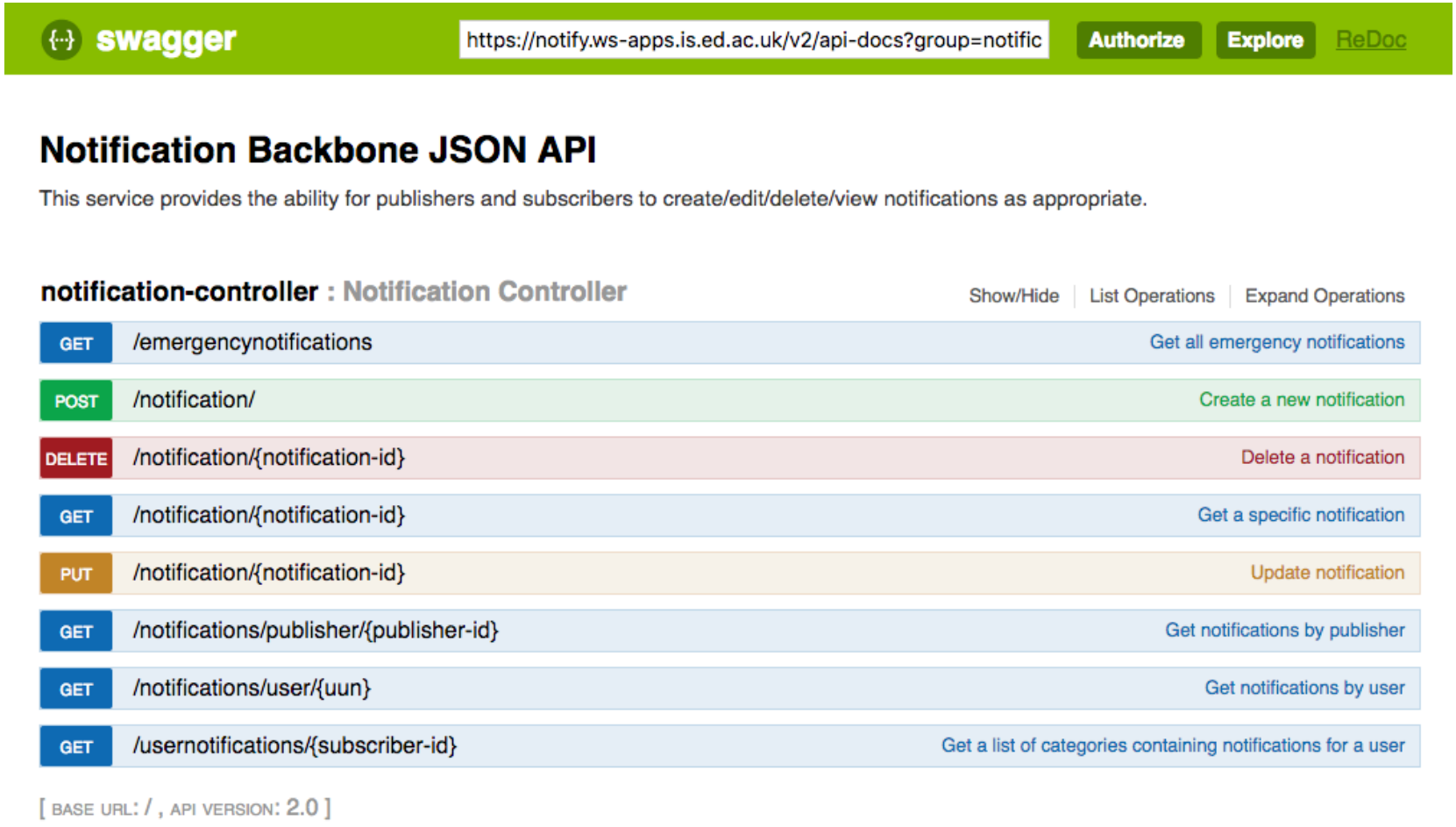

Publisher
Publishes to
Topic
Publishes to
Subscriber
Notifications


VLE
LIBRARY
STUDENT SYSTEMS
TIMETABLES
FIOSAN
GROUP & EMERGENCY VIA LDAP
uPortal
SMS
Email
Other…

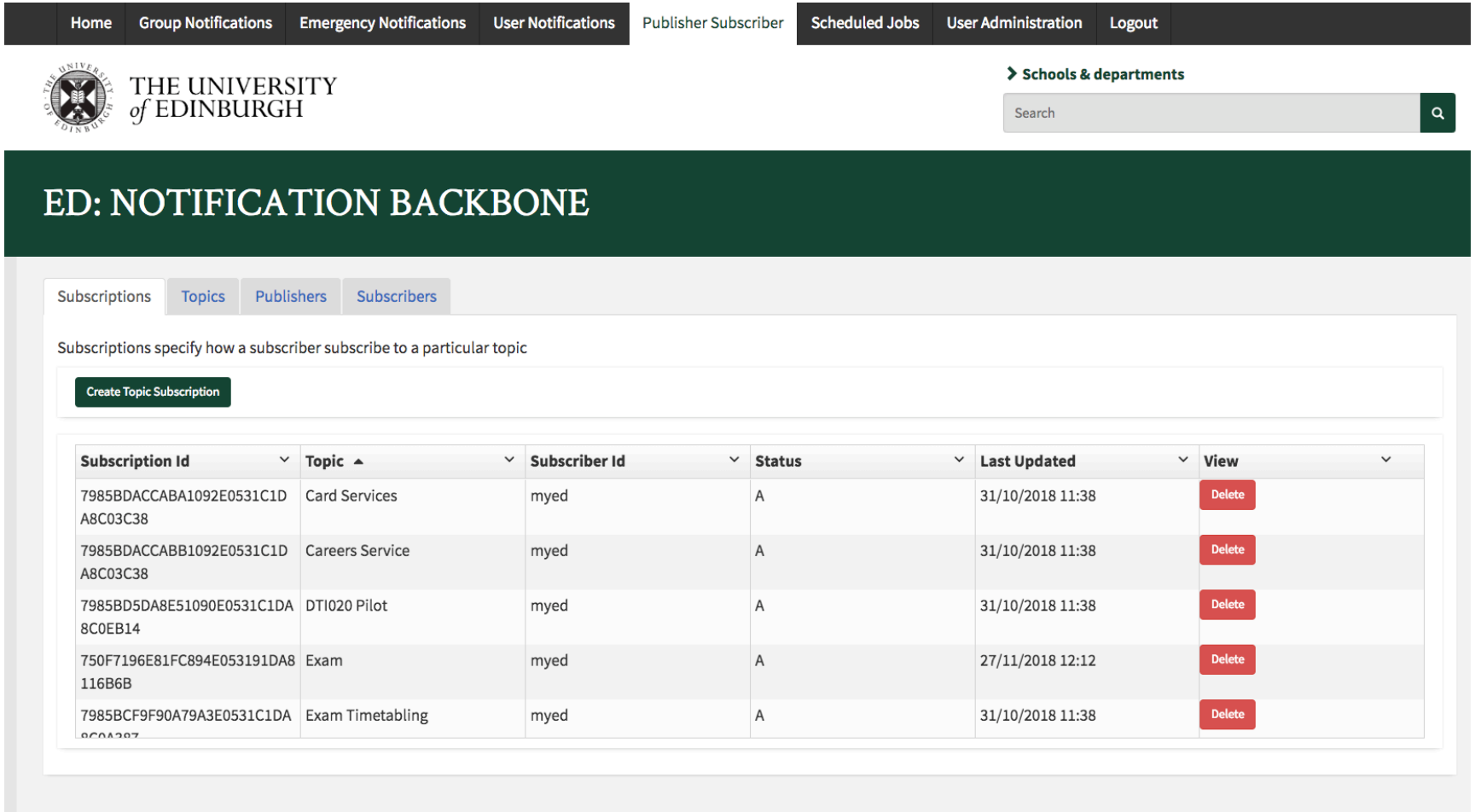
WHAT IS IT?

- All components are Java
  - underlying Oracle Database back end.
- For the components we use the Spring framework, with the following main dependencies/libraries:
- **Spring Boot 1.2.x**
  - **Spring-boot-starter-web**
  - **Spring-boot-starter-data-rest**
  - **Spring-boot-starter-data-pa**
- **JSON-path**
- **Swagger** (at time of writing 1.0.2)
- **Oracle JDBC Driver**
- **Spring-security-oauth2**
- **Spring-cloud-starter-security org.jsoup HTML parser**

MICROSERVICE API



USER INTERFACE



CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

- An Apereo Incubating project
- Shared at Open Apereo 2018 (as Notifications Backbone)
- Recently released on GitHub
  - Microservice: https://github.com/uoe-is-apps/notification-ms/
  - UI: https://github.com/uoe-is-apps/notification-ui
- Unicon/State Center Community District already involved
- Presented at uPortal Winter Summit January ’19
- Looking to understand level of interest within community
  - Assistance in building future sustainability
  - Project roadmap

INTERESTED PARTIES (SO FAR!)

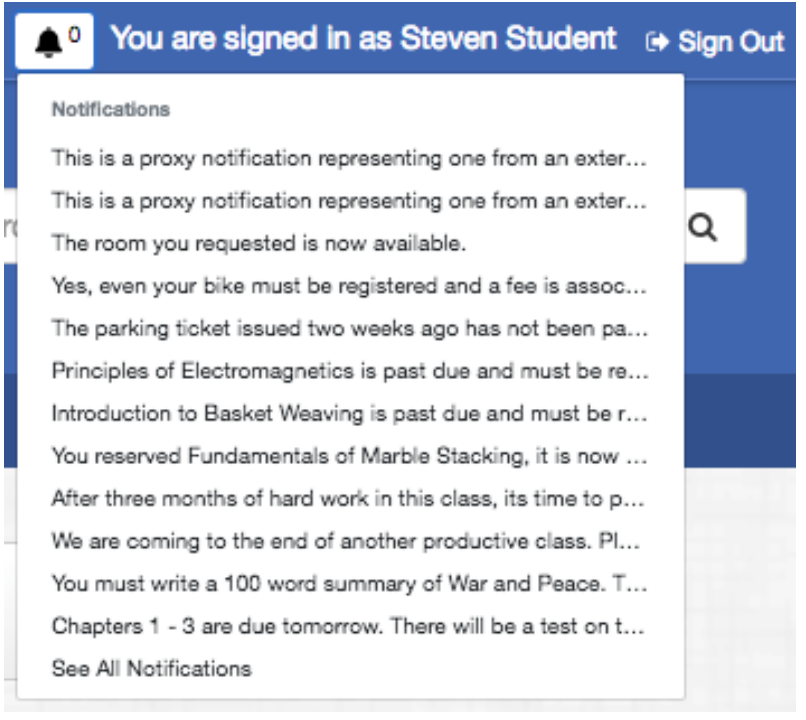
- University of Edinburgh
- Unicon
- State Center Community College District, CA
- Cal Poly Pomona, CA
- Brigham Young University
- Sorbonne University – to follow up with post uPortal Winter Summit ☺
- University of South Dakota – to follow up with post uPortal Winter Summit ☺

POSSIBLE USE CASES

- Call to action academic and administrative tasks
- Informational and awareness sharing
- Multi-channel emergency communications

HOW IT IS BEING USED AT EDINBURGH

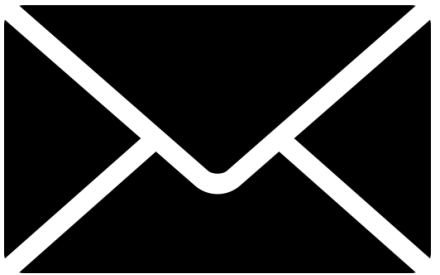
- **Publishers**
  - Exams; availability and changes
  - Surveys teams
  - Library: item reservations etc. – in development
  - Manual & Emergency
  - Internally known as ‘Notifications Service’
- **Subscribers**
  - MyEd/uPortal
- **User insights**
  - SMS and email not being explored currently



HOW OTHERS ARE LOOKING TO UTILISE FIOSAN

- Multi-channel emergency comms (via UI)
  - Email
  - SMS (Twilio)
  - uPortal

Created by Arafat Uddin
from Noun Project



Created by Rockicon
from Noun Project

uPortal SM

NEXT STEPS

- Understand interest within community
- Open up roadmap discussions with interested users
- Governance
- Work towards Incubation Exit Criteria
- Possible future integrations:
  - Institutional systems
  - Browser notifications
  - PUSH
  - WhatsApp, Facebook
  - More…

GET INVOLVED

- Apereo Incubation page: https://www.apereo.org/projects/fiosan

- View on GitHub:
  - Microservice: https://github.com/uoe-is-apps/notification-ms/
  - UI: https://github.com/uoe-is-apps/notification-ui

- Mailing Lists:
  - fiosan-dev@apereo.org
  - fiosan-user@apereo.org

PROPOSING **FIOSAN**

- FIOSAN
  - Pronounced *Fi-san*: https://learngaelic.scot/dictionary/index.jsp?abairt=fiosan&slang=both&wholeword=false
  - Plural or diminutive of Fios ("a wee piece of knowledge") AND a message (in computing)

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

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