

SMIRK: the evolution of an IL training package

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In the beginning, there was SMILE...

SMILE is a blended learning package which teaches information literacy and communication skills.

It uses web pages and multimedia content.

SMILE was originally created as a JISC (Joint Information Services Committee) project.

We have updated and customised it.



The problem with SMILE

- New content did not fit easily into existing structure
- Not totally mobile friendly, OK on a tablet but very bad on a smartphone due to menu construction and placing.
- Blackboard user stats inadequate
- Blackboard login offputting for users
- Temporary fix – add set of deep links into individual modules in VLE (over 100!)



The way forward?

The choices:

- Either develop a new version of SMILE using HTML5, which involved rewriting all the templates and menus using Dreamweaver.
- Move SMILE onto our T4 CMS using new mobile friendly templates. Summer project to upgrade library web site - potential delays....
- Scrap the lot and start fresh!
- Look for other development options.



Jquery mobile

- Available as part of Dreamweaver 6
- Designed for small mobile sites with under ten pages
- Comes with a few standard style sheets, but you can create your own.
- Not much help available in the standard package, but I recommend the Youtube videos! They are great!

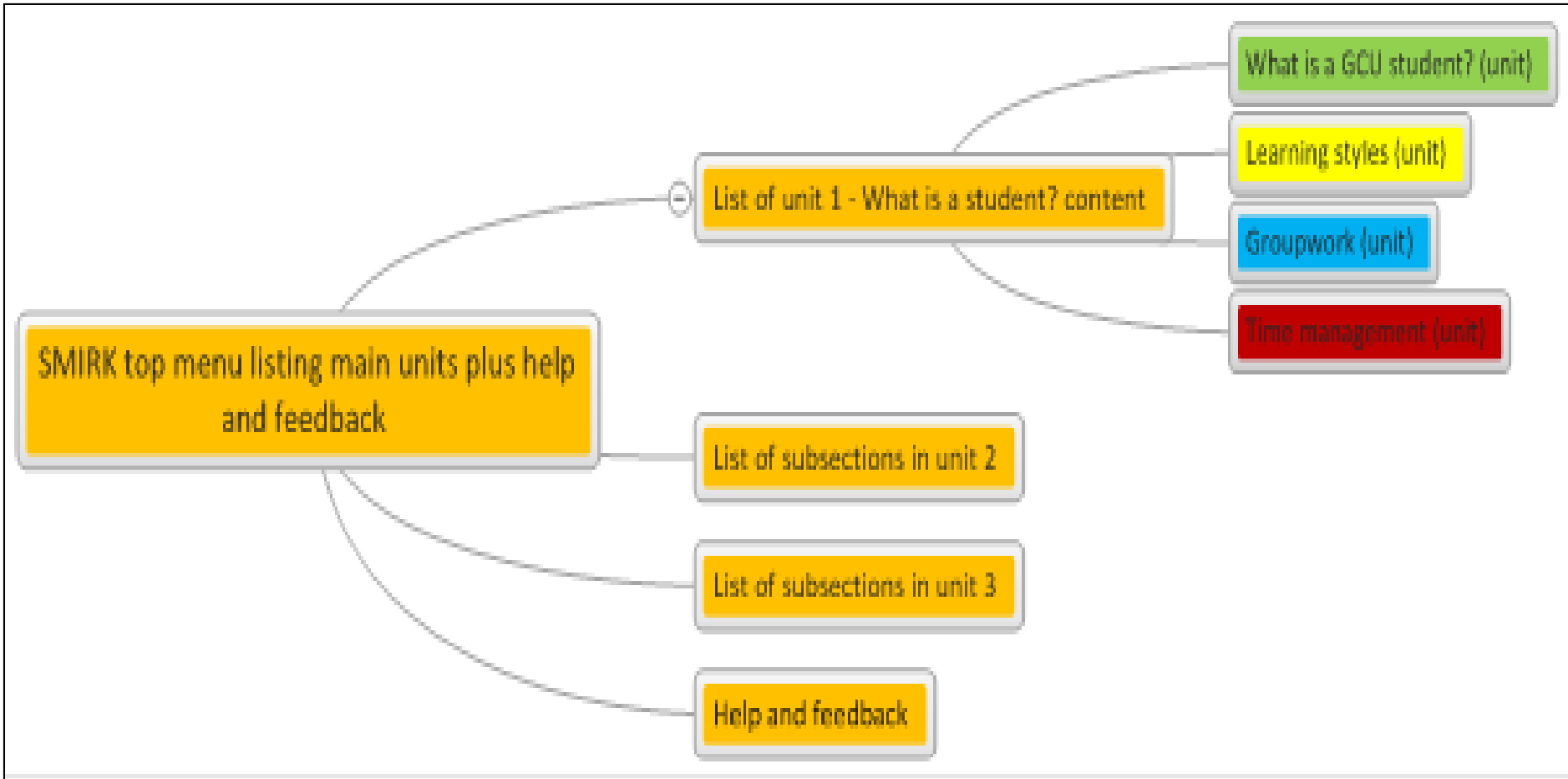


The issues

- Further rewrite content to cut down “wordiness”
- Shrink or remove illustrations
- Cut large units into small, bite sized chunks
- Figure out a way to use a template designed for very small websites to accommodate a monster



Nesting



Enter SMIRK



- So, after successfully building a site structure. Our package needed a name.
- I decided on SMIRK (the wee mobile Smile!)
- We needed an acronym, so:
 - **S**mall **M**obile **I**nfolit **R**ealworld **K**nowledge!



SMIRK main menu

Welcome to SMIRK - Your mobile SMILE	
Unit 1 - Being a student	➤
Unit 2 - Understanding the question including PICO and SPICE	➤
Unit 3 - Finding information	➤
Unit 4 - Evaluating information	➤
Unit 5 - Plagiarism and referencing	➤
Unit 6 - Writing skills	➤
Unit 7 - Your digital footprint and electronic communication	➤
Unit 8 - Research skills	➤
Unit 9 - Presentation and other skills	➤
Help and feedback	➤




SMIRK content


Relevance

Information such as an article or website is relevant if it is useful for your assignment. You can judge if a reference is relevant by checking:



- the number of times your keywords appear in the abstract or article
- the language used - this can indicate the intended audience for the article, for example, is it aimed at members of the public, students or academic researchers?
- whether the information is comprehensive
- whether the reference complements or contradicts your own knowledge or information you may have found elsewhere.





If the information you have found does not meet your needs, you will need to refine your search.

 **Activity**
Visit some websites. Consider:

1. Who is the intended audience
2. How much information is provided
3. Is the language natural or emotive?



The problem with SMIRK



You can't properly test a mobile site on your PC, so we made it live and asked library staff to have a go.

Feedback:

- Standard “back and forth” navigation is frustrating in a larger mobile site
- No automatic resizing to suit mobile device type (never assume!)

Gloom!



User community to the rescue!

As well as asking library staff for feedback, I had asked some of the wider user groups, such as LIS-InfoLit, LIS-CoPilot, and ALT-C

One of my fellow learning technologists came to my rescue with a great line of code! Resizing problem solved!

Back to work...



Enter SMIRK 2 ...



Revised version of SMIRK including:

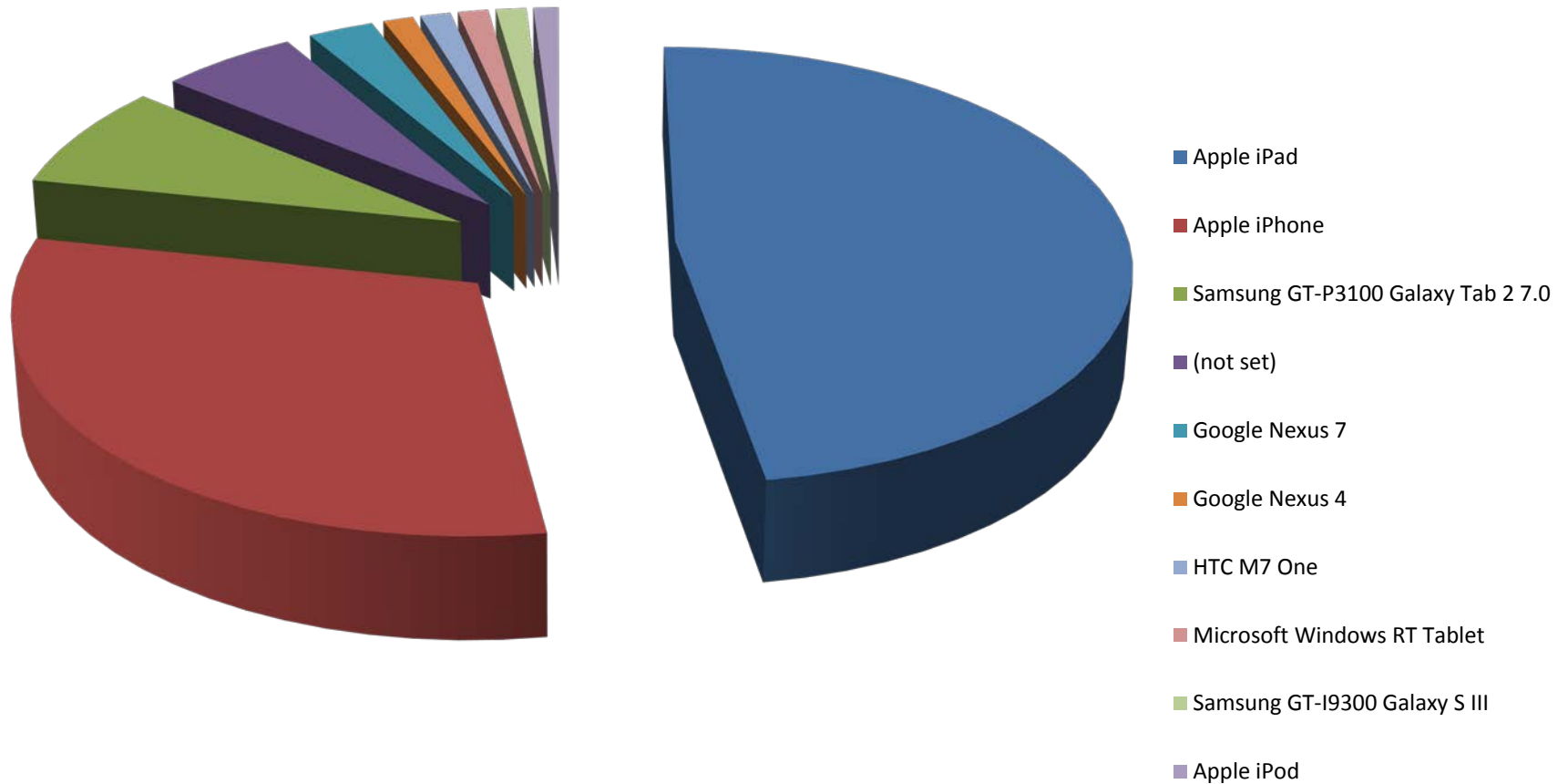
- Additional navigation in the form of back and forward arrows at the foot of each screen
- Jumps to next unit start pages and back to main menu
- Automatic resizing for different mobile devices

SMIRK 2 announced to user and internal GCU community

- So far a total 2,557 views



Mobile device use



Brighter futures begin with GCU



GCU use

- Established SMILE users have been given a set of SMIRK links in their modules.
- SMIRK will be promoted to students once trimester 1 is underway
- User feedback will be gathered from students and staff



What next?

GCU staff and students need a quick source of applied copyright information.

I am also the copyright advisor, so next stop, SMIRK answers your copyright questions!

SMIRK is an open access resource, so why not try it at:

<http://www.gcu.ac.uk/library/SMILE/SMIRK/Start.html>

If you like it, use it free!

SMIRK will be made available as an OER on Jorum.



SMIRK – the next chapter

SMIRK on T4 to take advantage of the increased mobile functionality. Will incorporate better menus and GCU branding.

Open access site as part of our main mobile library site.

Custom menus also on offer to suit different courses and levels.



Contact me for more information! m.kelt@gcu.ac.uk
<http://www.gcu.ac.uk/library/SMILE/SMIRK/Start.html>

Brighter futures begin with GCU

