



User Experience Programme

UK Data Service

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Preface

From July – Sep 2017, I have been working at the UK Data Service as a Senior User Experience Officer. During this time I have been tasked with:

1. Creating a detailed plan for a sustainable, coordinated, long-term User Experience Programme for the UK Data Service
2. Helping upskill staff in order to help them carry out this plan
3. Demonstrating some of the user experience research which can be done within some existing projects (Discover Review 2017 and Input into Access and Discovery f DSaP – Phase 1)

I have met with a wide range of staff (around 25) within different departments and at different locations within the Data Service. This has provided insight into the user research work which has been done to date, as well as knowledge about the ongoing work taking place throughout the Service as a whole. These meetings have shown a genuine enthusiasm from the majority of staff to become more user led, and to use user satisfaction as a measure of how well we are performing as a service.

This document outlines a proposed plan described in point 1 above. There are also details surrounding activities 2 and 3 these where they have played a role in shaping or supporting the plan.

Terminology

For the purpose of being clear what we mean in this document, some definitions of the terminology used are given below:

User Experience (or UX)

Encompasses the whole picture, and is the experience our users have when using a product or service

User Research

The work we do to investigate what users are doing, what their needs are, and who they are. The research can be via:

- directly contacting our users (e.g. interviews with users, surveys etc.)
- research into the user-related management information we hold (e.g. helpdesk queries, registration information)
- research via analysis tools such as Google Analytics
- research using our pool of previous user research work (with the aim that we do not repeat work we have already done)

User Testing

Testing products or services which may be live (or in development) in order to assess how the user responds to them, and whether we have met, or are meeting user needs

User-Related Management Information

This is the information we hold about our users as part of our day to day operations. For example:

- the information we gather about our users during the registration process
- the information we have as a result of our helpdesk queries (what the users are asking for via helpdesk)
- what data sets are downloaded, and how often (excluding open data)

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Quotes from Staff

“We need a focus group or a panel of users we can go to”

“We need to understand our users”

“We need to share”

“We don’t have the skills or any guidance for undertaking user research”

“I would like to see developments happening which relate to what users actually want”

“We need to get user input from the beginning of our projects”

“User research has a very small role in our decision making”

“I would like to see a reduction in calls as an outcome from the User Experience Programme”

“We have to have someone leading UX”

“We need guidance on what user research we can do, who is going to set it up, and who is going to crunch the data”

“I would like to know who our users are”

“I would love more user insights such as what the top 5 pain points are for them”

“I would like to see more consolidated reporting which is analysed”

“UX needs to be done before the developers are briefed”

“I would like to see some joined up thinking in relation to UX”

“To introduce UX work we need buy in from management, and we must be clear that it always needs to be done”

“We produce reports for DISAC, why don’t we have our own?”

“We need dedicated resource for UX”