

DOMAIN REGISTRATION AND URL (WEB ADDRESSING) DEFINITION AND MANAGEMENT

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL CHANGES

General changes

The principal amendments made in this revision are set out in UPR IM19¹

“1 INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the policy, responsibilities and arrangements for domain registration and for the definition, assignment and management of URL web addresses to University web-based information and services. The policy aims to ensure that web-based information and services are structured in a way that provides the most effective access to information for the intended users.

2 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document the following definition will apply:

‘URL’:

(‘Uniform Resource Locator’) a web address used to identify a particular service or resource delivered via a web browser.

3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Chief Information Officer

3.1.1 The Chief Information Officer (or nominee) is responsible for the:

- a management, implementation and use of the University main domain name: ‘www.herts.ac.uk’;
- b definition, approval and management of all URL web addresses for University web-based information;
- c registration of all University URL web addresses for all domain names and is the University’s nominated registrar for all University URL web addresses and all domain names;
- d application to JANET for ‘.ac.uk’ domain names.

3.1.2 The Chief Information Officer (or nominee) will consult with the *Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business and International Development)* (or nominee) concerning web addresses, including shortcut addresses relating to the University external website and its subsites and to agreed microsites.

4 REQUESTS FOR NEW WEB ADDRESSES

Requests for new web addresses, those using ‘herts.ac.uk’ and other domain names should be sent to dns.reg@herts.ac.uk. A minimum of five (5) working days’ notice is required for the approval, registration and assignment of a new web address.

5 PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

5.1 Web addresses should always use all lower case letters and contain no spaces, underscores, hyphens or URL encoded characters.

¹ UPR IM19 ‘Internet, On-line Communications and Social Media’

- 5.2 The website or service name used for a web address:
- a should be transparent and easily understood by the intended user;
 - b should clearly, unambiguously and succinctly describe the service to be delivered;
 - c should take account of names in common usage;
 - d should not refer to the name of the server or the product used to deliver the service.
- 5.3 The 'herts.ac.uk' domain is the University's primary registered domain and should be used for the majority of information and services provided by the University;
- 5.4 **Use of the 'herts.ac.uk' domain**
- 5.4.1 The web address 'www.herts.ac.uk' is used for the University external website.
- 5.4.2 All material published to this web address will be publicly accessible and the *Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business and International Development)* (or nominee) has full editorial control of all content published via this web address.
- 5.4.3 To enhance the optimisation of search rankings for the external website, the 'www' prefix to the 'herts.ac.uk' web address is reserved for the exclusive use of the University external website.
- 5.4.4 None of the published web addresses for other University web-based services should include the 'www' prefix. To meet user expectation and for ease of use, if a user enters the 'www' prefix when requesting other services, re-direction to the correct service will be provided.
- (Note: Therefore, a member of staff entering 'www.staffnet.herts.ac.uk' would be re-directed automatically to 'staffnet.herts.ac.uk' with the latter address displaying in the browser address bar.)
- 5.4.5 The format '[servicename].herts.ac.uk' is to be used for University web-based services other than the University external website.
- (Note: Examples would include:
'netmail.herts.ac.uk' for web access to the staff email service;
'staffnet.herts.ac.uk' for the University staff intranet;
'hr.herts.ac.uk' for the HR system staff portal.)
- 5.4.6 Agreed 'microsites' that relate to the work of the University but that are not 'subsites' of the University external website should use the web address format '[micrositename].herts.ac.uk'
- (Note: Examples of currently agreed microsites would include:
'kaspar.herts.ac.uk' and 'heritagehub.herts.ac.uk'.
- Naming conventions for, and registration of, agreed microsites where it is not appropriate to use the 'herts.ac.uk' domain are given in section 6.)
- 5.4.7 Specific web content or a service with a registered 'herts.ac.uk' domain can also be referenced by a shortcut URL or web address.
- (Note: This will facilitate the effective marketing of a significant section of a website or a specific service by providing a memorable and short web address for users. Shortcut URLs of this type currently take one of two forms, for example:
- 'go.herts.ac.uk/[shortname]' (therefore, 'http://go.herts.ac.uk/cpdhealth' is used instead of 'http://www.herts.ac.uk/more/professional-development-in-health/home.cfm')
- or
- 'www.herts.ac.uk/[shortcutname]' for a shortcut to a distinct part of a larger site such as 'www.herts.ac.uk/law'.')

6 Use of other domains

- 6.1 The use of other non 'herts.ac.uk' domains requires prior agreement and is acceptable only when the website or service is:
- a an externally funded service or website (for example: 'www.dynamicsofvirtualwork.com');
 - b a collaborative funded or delivered project with multiple external partners (for example: 'www.tabsanetwork.org');
 - c a commercial venture (for example: 'www.uhonline.co.uk').
- 5.2 The Chief Information Officer may agree to the registration and purchase on behalf of the University of other non 'herts.ac.uk' domain names to protect the University from the use of web addresses by others that may confuse users searching for University web addresses and services or that may give rise to direct competition using web addresses similar to those used by the University. Web addresses obtained for these reasons should not be published or used."

Mrs S C Grant
Secretary and Registrar
Signed: **1 January 2016**