



Foundation Degree in Interactive Design

Work Based Learning Module

William Artt – Course Director



## Introduction

---

- Foundation Degree in Interactive Design Course is focused on delivering industry experience
- Three modules provide opportunities for students to create projects for local businesses including –
- Multimedia Design Module (1<sup>st</sup> Year)
- Project Module/Dynamic Web Management – Creation of website for a business client
- Work Based Learning – 600 hours of work experience with a local company

# WBL Module - Overview

---

- The Work based Learning (WBL) module enables students to apply the knowledge and skills developed within the course in an environment where they will be exposed to a range of the practices and tools used by the Interactive Design sector.
- Students spend a period in relevant and supervised employment to allow them the opportunity to further develop these skills and knowledge alongside providing the opportunity to enhance their personal development and interpersonal skills.



# WBL Module - Overview

- The links with employers and industry, which the placement promotes, also helps the course committee to keep abreast of changing industrial requirements and standards.



# Sourcing Placements

- When seeking placement employers two objectives must be met -
  - **College Objective**  
To find placements that meet the placement module requirements i.e. Learning Objectives at the correct level and to the highest standard possible.
  - **Business Objective**  
To provide a placement where students can complete tasks/projects to the highest standard and quality as required and provide added value to the company. (The student should aim to become Indispensable in their role.)

# WBL Module - Overview

---

- The Work based Learning (WBL) module enables students to apply the knowledge and skills developed within the course in an environment where they will be exposed to a range of the practices and tools used by the Interactive Design sector.
- Students spend a period in relevant and supervised employment to allow them the opportunity to further develop these skills and knowledge alongside providing the opportunity to enhance their personal development and interpersonal skills.



# WBL Module - Grading

---

Grades are awarded for the following –

- Student project report – 60%
- Student journal/log – 10%
- Assessor feedback from work place visits – 15%
- Employer feedback – 15%

# WBL – Sample Project

## Citizen's Advice Belfast Web Project

- Three students were placed
- Placements were granted on the basis of a full interview carried out by a panel at Citizen's Advice
- Students were chosen on the basis of their portfolio, graphic and web designs skills and ability to work as part of a team



# Sample Project- Overview

---

- The client required a fully customized, interactive and responsive website which once completed could be updated in house after being provided with training.
- The brief provided by the client stated that the website needed
  - to be friendly
  - easy to use,
  - keep the user interested
  - be very informative in terms of advice which is their main mission.

# Sample Project- Overview

---

- The project team was managed by the Director of Citizen’s Advice Belfast and the Client Service Manager.
- The team were also answerable to the Board of Trustees who would give final go-ahead for each stage of the project.
- The project would be carried out in four stages – Research, Planning/Design, Development, Evaluation

# Stage One - Research

- A questionnaire was distributed to members of staff (volunteers and paid) to ascertain what their vision for the new website would be.
- A survey was distributed using Survey Monkey to other Citizen's Advice Offices to gain feedback on website requirements
- This was also distributed to the Board of Trustees





## Stage 2 - Design

- A range of design methodology was used to create the look and feel of the final product as per requirements outlined in the brief provided by Citizen's Advice, Belfast including Mind Mapping, Wire-framing and concept design using Photoshop

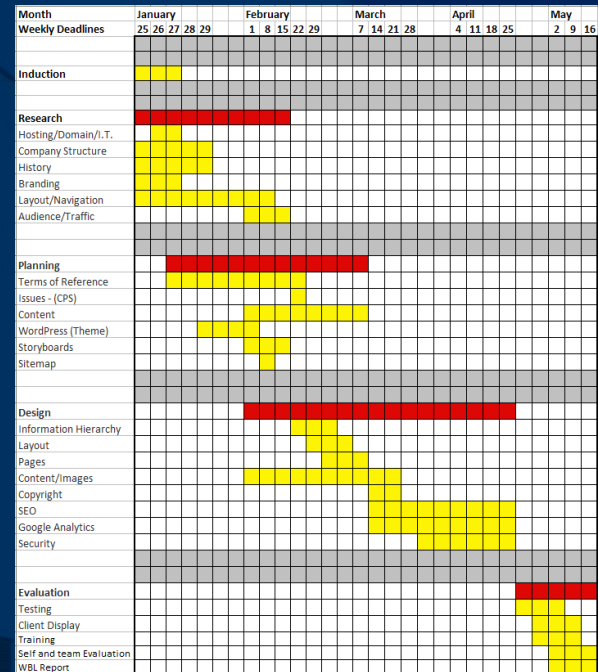






# Stage 2 - Design

- A range of methods were also utilised to manage the project including the use of Gantt Charts to manage deadlines and the development of a Terms of Reference.



## Stage Three - Development

---

- WordPress was chosen as the best software to use to develop the final product in agreement with the management and Board of Trustees at Citizen’s Advice Belfast.
- It was agreed that this would be the most cost effective method alongside the CMS System included which is popular due to it’s easy to use backend for updating by the in-house team which would be trained by the team to use once the website was completed.

## Stage Three - Development

---

- A suitable theme was chosen in partnership with the management team based on the design and planning carried out by the students.
- A wide range requirements were identified within the website brief to aid functionality and accessibility which was a priority
- The team researched and identified suitable systems and plugins which would meet these requirements.



## Stage Three - Development

---

These included –

- An online live chat system - Tawk.To.Tawk. an external software system that could be implemented within the site
- BrowseAloud - a powerful tool that can translate an entire website into many languages as well as a range of other features such as text to speak.
- Yoast S.E.O Plugin was also utilized to aid search engine optimisation. Google Analytics and Goggle Webmaster were also utilised once the site was live.

## Stage Three - Development

---

- The team was also given the responsibility of identifying and setting up suitable web hosting.
- The team researched several companies and after discussion and negotiation Big Wet Fish (a local company based in Carrickfergus) was employed to host the site in agreement with the Board of Trustees.



## Stage Three - Development

---

- The supplied brief also required the development of video content which would be included on the final website to promote the services and partnerships used by Citizen's Advice.
- The videos were developed by the team including filming and editing of the final products.





## Stage Three - Development

- A test site was developed using a local testing server which allowed the site to be developed gradually with each step of development being assessed and agreed by the management and Board of Trustees at Citizen's Advice Belfast.
- Testing sessions were also carried out at each stage of production and development. These sessions were carried out by staff and clients of the organisation.



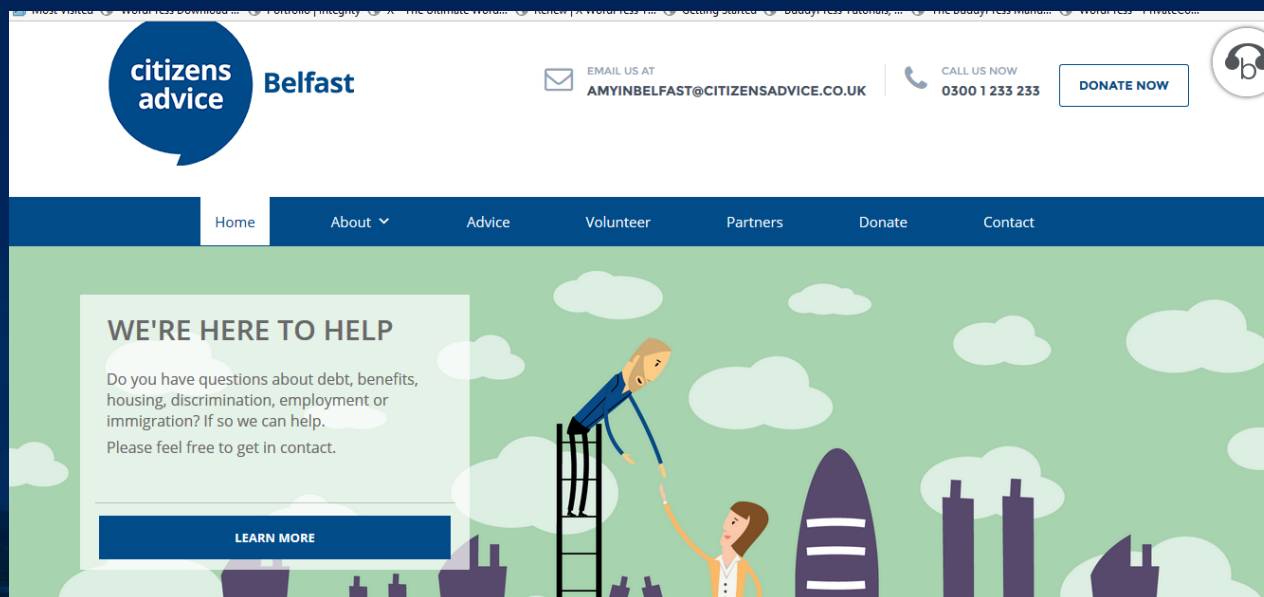
## Stage Three - Development

- The finished website was launched at a special event organised by Citizen's Advice Belfast at the Belfast Met E3 Campus on 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2016.
- The student team presented the site to invited guests and partners explaining the features of the website.



## Stage Three - Development

- The finished website can be viewed at - <https://www.citizensadvicebelfast.com/>





## Stage 4 - Evaluation

---

- Once the website was launched an evaluation of the project was carried out by the team through a series of questionnaires and surveys distributed to clients, staff and management of Citizen's Advice.
- The results were collated by the team and information gleaned through the evaluations used to make final alterations to the website.
- Final training was also provided to staff and volunteers on how to update and manage the website.

# NI Colleges BEST Awards 2016

- In agreement with the team Belfast Met entered the project into the 2016 NI Colleges Best Awards.
- The project was awarded 'The Software Prize' with the judges stating that they were extremely impressed by the scale and management of the project and the wide range of accessibility and interactive features included in the project.



# And now....

- All three students have progressed onto the BSc Interactive Media Design course at Ulster University
- Their services have also been further employed on a freelance basis by Citizen’s Advice and other companies helping the students to earn and build their portfolio.

