Preparing pre-existing content for migration
into Contensis CMS

To ensure quality and consistency, it is essential to audit existing content before migration to our content management system. Work through this checklist, asking yourself the questions posed, and remedy where applicable.

Content
- Is your content concise and to the point? If not, reduce the volume of text, keeping just the relevant facts. Use bulleted lists where appropriate.

- Is all your content still relevant and been kept up to date?

- Avoid complex sentence structures. Try to include just one idea or concept per sentence.

- Is the content written well and engaging to the user? If it feels dull and flat, consider getting advice from a web copywriter.

- When writing web content use front loading, ie put the essential or more important information first and then follow with further details.

- Use active ahead of passive words – 'We won the award' is shorter and easier to comprehend than 'the award was won by us'.

- Consider why particular content is on the website. Is it useful to your audience? Has this been backed up by visitor stats? Think less about what you might want to say and more about what your users might be trying to find.

- Is your content directed towards an external audience? If not, might it be better placed on an internal system?

- Use clear and simple language. If some of your content is highly detailed and technical and needs to remain so, link to it from a summary page to a lower point in the site architecture.

- Is your page content written as one large block? If so, break it into more manageable paragraphs with sub-headings. Describe only one idea per paragraph.

- Does your page just contain text and lack visual interest? Blocks of text can be broken with photographs and design elements.

- Remove content that is duplicated on the main university site (ie why Nottingham, Nottingham life, campus facilities, maps etc) and link to it instead. Duplicate content can negatively affect search ratings.

- Does your site use 'click here'? If so, replace these with contextual linking. Rather than 'click here for the undergraduate prospectus,' use, 'Undergraduate prospectus'.

- Has the content been checked for spelling and grammatical errors?

- Check your site for broken links. Follow links to external sites to make sure the content you link to is still relevant.

- Does your site use centre aligned or justified text? All text should be left aligned for ease of scanning and readability.

Imagery
- Are images used of a high enough standard of quality? Are they pixelated? Do they appear washed out or too dark. Do they lack visual impact or interest? Is the image colourful enough and do the colours look realistic? Are the images suitable and relevant to the content?

- Are images in the right file format? (Use .png for flat colours such as simple logos or line diagrams and .jpg for photography or images containing gradients)

- Has the file size of photographic images been optimised for web use? As a rough guide; small thumbnails should be around 1-5kb, small photographs 15-25kb, large photographs up to 35kb and large background images no more than 90kb.

- Have images been resized to fit the available space in a graphical editor?

- Are any images used in the page at an optimal size and position and consistent with other images across your site?

Site structure and navigation
- Can the user make an educated guess as to what type of information appears beneath each navigation label?

- When looking at sub-pages, consider whether there is a consistent logic as to why these pages are grouped together and within the section they are in.

- Keep label names short and memorable. Are all acronyms used in navigation explained at least once prominently on the site?

- Keep the number of navigation labels for each level of hierarchy between five and nine. Users navigate by storing label names in their short-term memory before making a decision. At number greater than nine, it becomes difficult to do this and thus impedes navigation.

Search engine optimisation
- Are your page headings succinct and memorable and relevant to the content?

- Give careful consideration to the page title tag based on what keywords your users may be searching for. Make sure all pages have unique titles.

- Think about what your users would search for – try searching yourself in Google and then look at your content and tweak accordingly. Ensure key search terms are in the content of your page and for the most important, put them in your sub-headings.

- If you are using keywords, check that are they relevant and also mentioned in the content of the page.

- Are your sub-headings nested correctly? Only use one <h1> tag per page and make sure <h3>'s are always under an associated <h2>.

- In most circumstances the page title should be the same as the <h1> tag.

- Have you filled in the meta data for each page? What you fill in for the meta data may appear in the search results.