University of Essex

News and Events Content Management System (NESSIE)

Web Development Team
IT Services
Version 1.3

Abstract

NESSIE stands for News and Events Syndication System and Information Editor. It is the University's news and events content management system. It is used University-wide by both the Communications Office and Departments to promote news, events and seminars without the need to use SharePoint Designer. You can also publish any events you upload through NESSIE to the overall, University-wide 'What's on at Essex' calendar on www.essex.ac.uk/events.

Scope

Learning outcomes

- Understand what NESSIE is and its application.
- Learn how to use NESSIE.
- Find out how to gain access to NESSIE.

Introduction

What is it?

NESSIE stands for News and Events Syndication System and Information Editor. NESSIE is the University's news and events content management system. It can be used to add news, events and seminars to the central university website or departmental websites using a web-based system without the need to use SharePoint Designer. You can also publish any events you upload through NESSIE to the overall, University-wide 'What's on at Essex' calendar on www.essex.ac.uk/events.

How does it work?

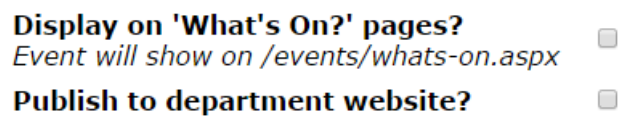
The system is used University-wide by both the Communications Office and departments to promote news, events and seminars.

Departments use NESSIE to promote news, events and seminars on a **news feed page** within their departmental website and the University-wide 'What's on at Essex' calendar. The news feed page lists articles that have been added to NESSIE. Some of the most recent items *may* also appear on the homepage of a departmental site, either pulled automatically from NESSIE **or** manually promoted.

The **Communications Office** use NESSIE to promote news and events on a **news feed page** that is linked to from the **right-hand navigation link along the top ribbon**. This actually links you into a whole news and events website, where the items on the page are pulled directly from NESSIE. When they are old enough they are automatically archived. The link to the RSS feed is displayed at the bottom of the News and Events website homepage.

The items on the revolving carousel are **not** automatically pulled from NESSIE nor are the **"upcoming events"** and **"latest news"** snippets that you see when you roll over the New and events tab at the top. Departments can request to submit an article for promotion on the homepage, updating the carousel text and image and the News and Events mega menu by e-mailing **wedm@essex.ac.uk**.

Departments are able to put events on to the University's 'What's On?' pages by ticking the box on the add event form:



Events on the 'What's On?' pages are searchable by the organiser, thus users can easily filter events in order to find your departmental events. The events added to the 'What's On?' pages can still be published on your own department's website.

Comms uses NESSIE to populate the news and events feed on the following corporate pages:

- the news feed: **http://www.essex.ac.uk/news**;
- the news archive: **http://www.essex.ac.uk/news/archive.aspx**;
- the events feed: **http://www.essex.ac.uk/events**; and
- the events archive: **http://www.essex.ac.uk/events/archive.aspx**.

The events on these pages are ordered by date.

The news RSS feed is also populated by NESSIE, and users are able to subscribe to this feed: **http://www.essex.ac.uk/news/newsfeed.xml**.

Getting started: Departments

How do I start?

To access the system which will allow you to add news and events to your department's webpages, go to: **https://www.essex.ac.uk/admin/events/event_management.aspx**. (we recommend you bookmark this address).

Permission requests should be directed to **wdt@essex.ac.uk**.

When you are prompted to **log in**, don't forget to type in **campus** before your **username**.

You should then see the event management page (see *Figure 1*).

Figure 1

When you first access this page, there may be no events in the database so instead of the above table you will see a message telling you that there are no events to display. When you start to add events to the database the table will become populated.

The event management page shows all events in a tabular format, displayed **alphabetically** by default. You can use the **drop down** list at the top to restrict the events you see, so you can view only news events,

seminars, events that are live, those that aren't (awaiting publication) or seminars that are occurring over the next seven days.

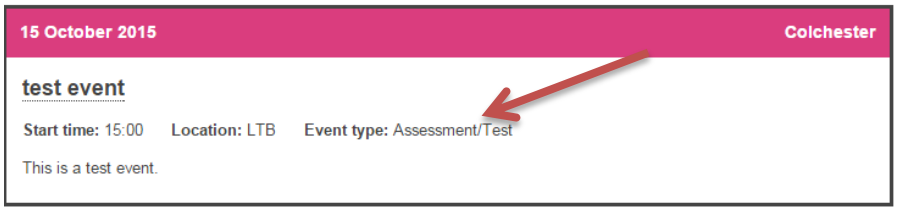
You can **sort** the events by title or date by clicking on the column headings. You can also **edit** an event from here, and **delete** events too.

Adding/editing an event

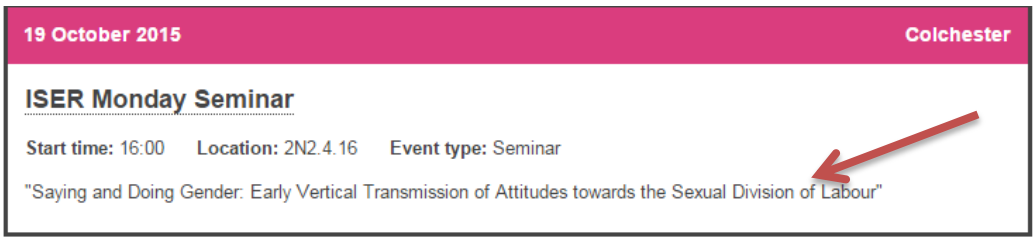
When adding an event, there are only two types of events you can chose from: **News** or **Seminar**.

Adding an event is fairly self-explanatory – there are only a few fields which require further explanation:

- The **sub-type** field isn't ever used by the departmental website, however, this is one of the searchable criteria on the overall 'What's On' calendar. Users are able to filter all the events on the calendar according to the sub-type of event. Thus, the sub-type you choose on this field will appear there.



- The **summary** field isn't ever used by the departmental website (hence is it not compulsory) but if you choose to upload the event on the 'What's On' calendar, then the information inputted in the summary box will appear on that page.



- When cutting and pasting into the content field, use the **Paste as plain text** option on the text editor.
- If including an image, ensure that the file size **does not exceed 3MB** and that the file type is either **jpg, jpeg, gif or png**. If you include an image, provide **alternative text** for it in the text box provided below the image.
- If **Publish to department website?** is ticked, the event is considered **live**, ie it will appear on the department website (it is possible to have events which are waiting to go live but have not yet been published, which is useful if event information is incomplete and you are waiting on further information).
- If **Display on 'What's On?' pages?** is ticked, the event is live and it will go on the University-wide 'What's On?' calendar.
- The **display from** and **display until** fields ensure that an event only appears when you want it to. *Note:* an event will only appear if the date falls between **display from** and **display until** AND if **Publish to department website?** or **Display on 'What's On?' pages?** has been ticked. This comes in useful if you wish to upload a lot of events and not have them display until a certain date;

you can tick the publish checkbox and they won't show until the **display from** date is reached (it is important to ensure you've published the event, otherwise it will not show).

- If you tick the **Mark as updated?** Field, when the event is displayed it will show **"UPDATED"** on the event detail page - this is useful if a venue changes, for example.
- If you tick **Open to the public?** then when the event is displayed it will show **"This event is open to the public"** on the event detail page.
- If **Cancelled?** is ticked the event will show **"CANCELLED"** at the top of the event detail page.
- Each seminar can be assigned to a series. To **add**, **edit** or **delete** seminars series click on the **Manage Series** button on the Event Management page.

The seminars can be viewed on your department's pages, simply use the URL below with your department's name included: http://www.essex.ac.uk/**<department>**/news_and_seminars/seminars.aspx

The events can be viewed on the University's webpage, simply using the URL: **www.essex.ac.uk/events**

You can find your event quicker by filtering all the events according to date, location, type and/or organiser.

The news events can easily be seen from the department's home page as the news feed should reside on it. Links to previous news events (and the news archive) are also available from here.

Editing/deleting events

- To **edit** an event, find the event on the Event Management page, and click on the **Edit** link beside it. You will be taken to a form where you can **modify** the event.
- To **delete** an event, find the event on the Event Management page, and click on the **Delete** link beside it. You will be asked to **confirm** whether or not you want to delete.

Allowing access to the system

You will need to inform the Web Development Team if you would like additional users to use the system so that they can give them access (email: **wdt@essex.ac.uk**).

If you administer multiple departments then you need to use this URL here to change between departments: **https://www.essex.ac.uk/admin/nessie/departmentadmin.aspx**.

Getting started: Comms

How do I start?

To access the news and events content management system, go to: **https://www.essex.ac.uk/admin/events/event_management.aspx** (you may wish to bookmark this address).

You will be prompted to login, please do so, not forgetting **campus** before your username. It is recommended that you use the latest version of Internet Explorer or **Google Chrome**.

You should see the following Event Management page after logging in:

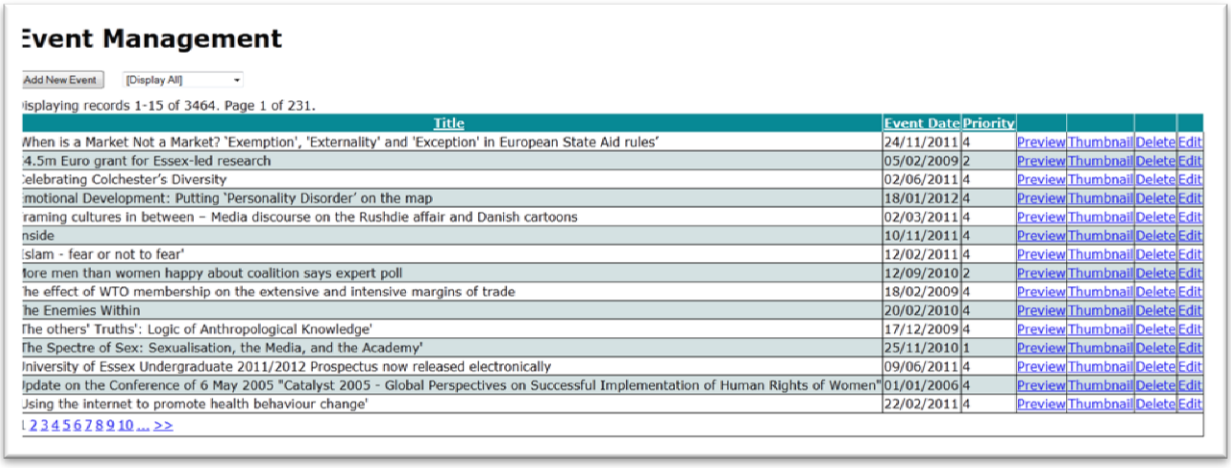


Figure 3

The event management page (*Figure 3*) shows all events in a tabular format, displayed alphabetically by default. You can sort the events by title, event date or priority by clicking on the column heading. Using the drop down list you can chose to show only news events, only arts and other events, only live news events or only live arts and other events.

On this page you can **delete** events, **edit** existing events and **preview** an event before it goes live.

Adding events

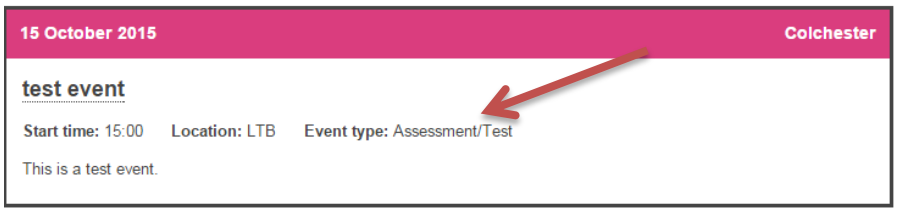
1. To add an event, click on the **Add New Event** button at the top.
2. You will be presented with a page with a drop down list. From this list you will need to pick from either **News**, **Arts**, **General** or **Other**.

   *The **News** option is used purely for press releases. **Arts** is used only for arts events. **General** and **Other** can be used to input any other events.*

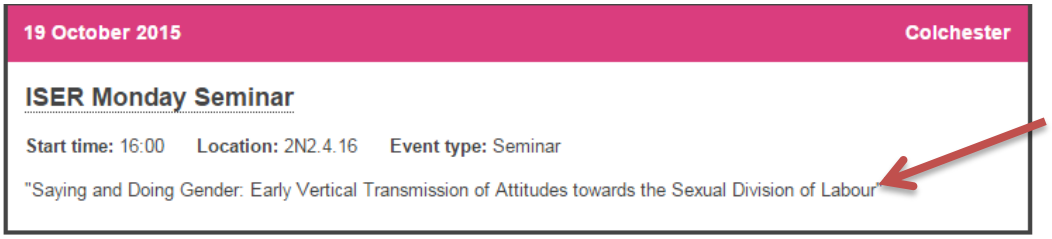
3. Once you **select** an item from the drop down list, the page will populate with the relevant fields. You will notice that some fields have already been populated with default information.

   Different event types do share some common fields, eg title, summary, content, priority, display from, display until, etc.

4. The **sub-type** field is one of the searchable criteria on the overall 'What's On?' calendar. Users are able to filter all the events on the overall University calendar according to the sub-type of event. Thus, the sub-type you choose on this field will appear there.



5. The **summary** field appears on the main events page, thus it would be best if this field was populated. Information that does not appear anywhere else should be used in this field. For example, you may wish to indicate the organiser, end time of the event, event duration, etc.



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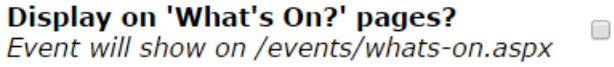
8. By default, the **display from** field is set to today and the **display until** field is set as two weeks from today (this can be changed).
9. If you need to highlight that an event has been updated (eg location has changed) you can tick the **Mark as updated** checkbox.
10. If **Display on 'What's On?' pages?** is ticked, the event will go on the University-wide 'What's On?' calendar.



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Previewing events

- To **preview** an event, use the **Preview** link on the Event Management page beside the event you wish to preview.
- The **Thumbnail** link is not currently being used.

Contacts

For queries or help

- email: **wdt@essex.ac.uk**

Useful resources

IT Training videos

- **http://www.youtube.com/uniessexit**