

An app for applicants



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Jonathan Hook is Lecturer in Interactive Media in the Department of Theatre, Film and Television. His teaching covers topics including programming, 3D environment design, and virtual and augmented reality. His research explores the human-centered design of interactive technology, with a particular focus on creativity support tools. jonathan.hook@york.ac.uk



Chris Fulford is an undergraduate student in the Department of Theatre, Film and Television. He has created multiple iOS apps over the years and, outside of his studies, is available as a freelance mobile developer. cf857@york.ac.uk

Mobile apps are widely used by a number of institutions in the United Kingdom, such as Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester and Warwick, to aid recruitment and support the transition from school to university. To this end, an interdisciplinary team of staff and students from the Departments of Chemistry and Theatre, Film and Television combined their expertise to design and produce the first mobile app to support admissions at the University of York.

The work was completed as part of a 10-week summer project in 2016 with the aid of a grant from the Summer Internship Bureau. The internship was awarded to Chris Fulford, an undergraduate studying on Theatre, Film and Television's Interactive Media BSc. Chris designed the app for prospective applicants and visitors to the Department of

Chemistry, with features including a campus map, promotional videos, news feed, links to resources to aid the school-university transition, employability information, life as a student and details about admission days. The internship offered Chris invaluable experience of applying the user-experience design and software development skills he is learning on his course, in response to an authentic design brief and the needs of real users. Chris gained a great deal from the internship, as he comments:

'Working alongside the Department of Chemistry proved to be a rewarding experience for myself as I was able to successfully design and tailor a product to



Some of the design team

their specifications. This taught me how to manage my time efficiently, alongside allowing me the opportunity to create my very first Android mobile application.'

Approximately 250 applicants downloaded the app ahead of their interview, with the total number of downloads exceeding 500. Feedback from applicants has been very positive. For example:

'Also, I must thank you for introducing me to the Chemistry@York app, which is a service I haven't seen any other university employ. It has given me insightful information about York as a university, the students that study with you and the chemistry department.'

To facilitate inclusivity, the app is available free to download from both Google Play and Apple Store platforms. This project aligns with the institutional

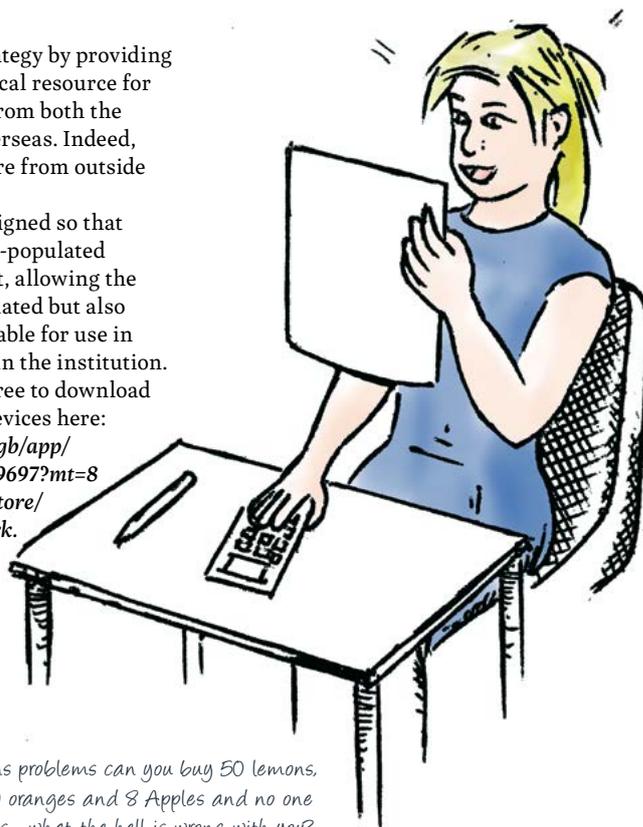


left: Screenshot of the app

internationalisation strategy by providing an additional technological resource for prospective applicants from both the United Kingdom and overseas. Indeed, 49% of app downloads are from outside the United Kingdom.

The app has been designed so that the framework can be re-populated with appropriate content, allowing the resource to be easily updated but also making the app translatable for use in other departments within the institution.

The app is available free to download on Apple and Android devices here:
<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/chemistry-york/id1155539697?mt=8>
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.ac.york.Chemistry&hl=en_GB



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