

UX Design Report Frankie Snow

by Frankie Snow

Submission date: 14-Jan-2026 01:12PM (UTC+0000)

Submission ID: 273253128

File name: 50599_Frankie_Snow_UX_Design_Report_Frankie_Snow_717897_259700869.docx (6.99M)

Word count: 2265

Character count: 12875

Assignment 1 - User Experience (UX)
Design Analysis

User Experience Design (ACCA6034)
Frankie Snow (2305483)

Contents

Product Selection 3

Initial Review 3

UX Design Principles 4

 Navigation 4

 Hierarchy and Visual Structure 4

 Aesthetics..... 4

 Usability 5

 Mobile First 6

UX Analysis 6

Recommendations for Improvement..... 9

Conclusion..... 10

Bibliography 11

Product Selection

The product that I have chosen to analyse is the universities 'HWB' application, it is a directory application used by both staff and students to access different parts of the university's intranet. [1]

I decided to choose this for my analysis as I feel that I have had an in-depth use of this application over the last few years and feel that there are many areas to analyse and feedback on.

Initial Review

My first experience using the product was generally positive, my first impression upon loading the app was that the branding was recognisable– it was consistent with the universities overall image. Something that stood out to me straight away was the choice of colour for some of the tiles, they were not cohesive with the rest of the applications branding.

Navigating this application was easy most of the time, features that I would use the most were clearly signposted. As I explored the app more, I found that some of the menus were cluttered and disorganised, making it difficult to find specific features.

As well as cluttered menus, the mobile application has an issue in which certain tiles produce an error message instead of taking the user to the expected page – after testing, this issue was present across multiple mobile devices but not when the page is accessed on a web browser.

The app experience is smooth and positive for users looking to quickly check emails or their timetable, however, becomes more frustrating to navigate if searching for a specific function due to request errors or cluttered menus. The colours and aesthetics of most of the application are appealing to the eye however there are some jarring elements of its design.

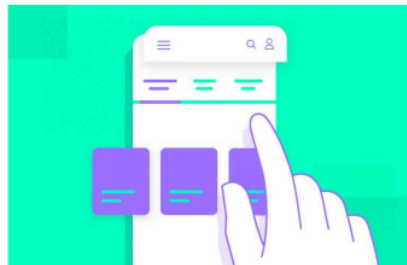
It met my expectations for what this application should be at a basic level, however for more complex requests, users would be better off accessing the site on desktop. With a few improvements, this product could offer an even better user experience. [6] [7]

UX Design Principles

Navigation

The first design principle I have researched is Navigation; this is defined as the user's ability to move through a product effortlessly and with confidence.

For a product to have good navigation, labels must be clear and familiar, the user should never feel lost and important elements need to be easy to see at a glance. As well as this, a consistent layout is needed to build user trust and easy learnability, and logical shortcuts increase efficiency of menus. [4]



[14]

Hierarchy and Visual Structure

This refers to the organisation of content in a way that users are able to quickly understand importance, easily navigate and efficiently complete tasks.

Organising content by importance through the use of colour, size, positioning or spacing gives users a clear picture of what to look at first and ensures pages/menus are easy to skim-read and understand and can reduce user confusion.

Users' attention will naturally gravitate to top and centre of a page, or to large/bright text, utilising this when designing will help to create pages that are easy to navigate with a predictable flow. The user's ability to correctly predict gives a sense of satisfaction when using a product, contributing to a positive user experience. [5]



Eyetracking by Nielsen Norman Group nngroup.com NN/g

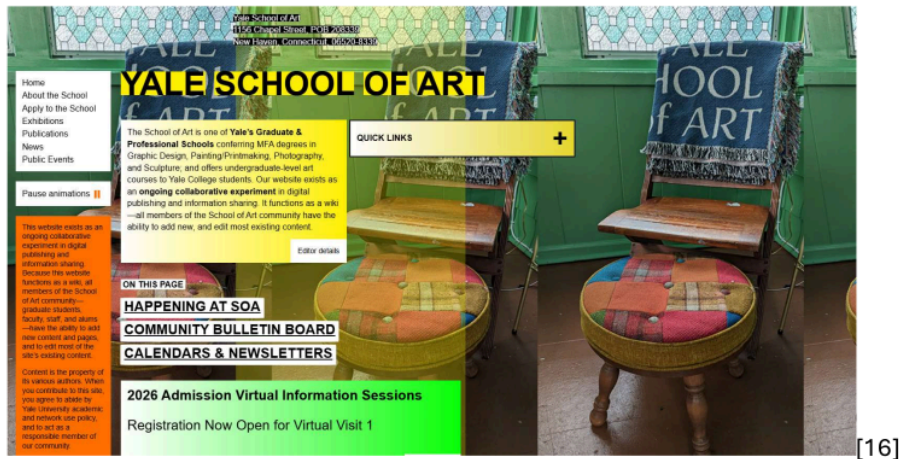
[15]

Aesthetics

This principle explores how a product is able to be visually pleasing and engaging while supporting usability, not by replacing it.

The use of a clear and consistent visual elements, such as typography, colours, layout; can help to create a clean and easy to navigate user interface. As well as this, a strong branding can help with recognisability and user trust, while improving visual appeal.

Clickable elements need to be easy to see, and pages should be minimal and uncluttered, leaving enough white space to reduce cognitive load and improve user focus. [3]



[16]

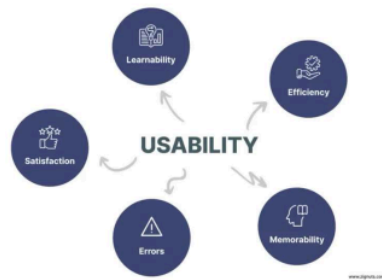
Usability

Usability describes how easy it is for users to learn and use a product to achieve their goals within it.

Learnability is a key part of this, users respond better to familiar patterns and clear layouts, which then creates memorability through consistent design. Clear labels and readable text help to optimise flow and allows users to learn shortcuts to the content they're looking for, creating a smooth and enjoyable user experience.

As well as this, a focus on eliminating errors helps to keep user immersion.

When errors are encountered, clear error messages to explain what went wrong are essential to a positive user experience. [2]



[17]

Mobile First

Lastly, I have researched 'Mobile First'; this is the prioritisation of mobile users by designing for smaller screens at the beginning.

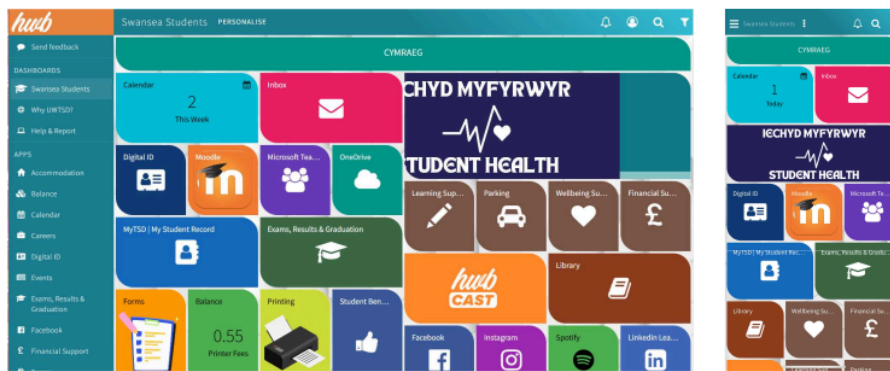
Mobile first makes simplicity and clarity a priority in design, this is important when creating applications that will be used across multiple platforms and is a focus on actions and content that are essential. This helps to build a consistent image across platforms and helps to optimise user-end performance and loading speeds.



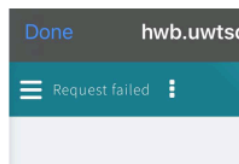
[18]

UX Analysis

The Hwb application is fairly balanced when it comes to navigation; tiles are labelled, often using familiar images or recognisable icons to aid with this, and the layout is consistent across both mobile and desktop platforms. This allows the user to learn the product and scan quickly for important information.



However, the excess of tiles can be overwhelming for new or in-experienced users and sifting through tiles and menus can be time-consuming and in-efficient. In-app feedback loops also are lacking efficiency – it is too easy for users to accidentally return to the main page instead of going back a step.



The visual structure/hierarchy seen within the Hwb application is customisable to the user's needs, allowing users to modify the location of each tile, or to remove them entirely – handy for manually organising features most important to you as a user. [10]



As mentioned above, users' attention will naturally gravitate towards to top and centre of a page, or to the brightest or largest option. While the app allows for the movement or removal of tiles, it doesn't allow for users to change the size of tiles. This could be another layer of customisation that will allow users to tailor the application better to their needs and wants.

Hwb shows very strong and recognisable branding, keeping in line with the rest of the universities content by using the brand colours and typography, creating a good sense of user trust and familiarity.

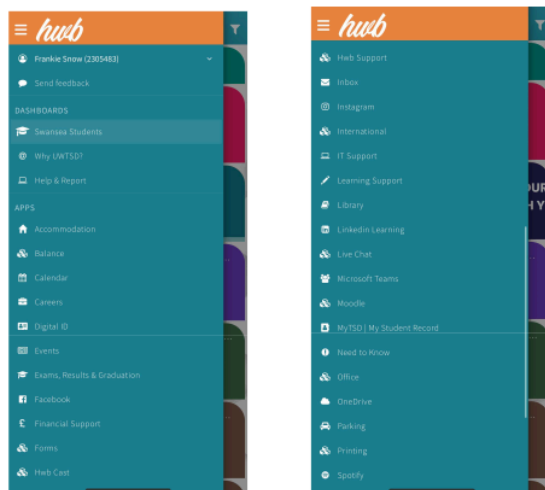
On the other hand, the pages could have improved aesthetics while still preserving usability. Some tile colours are not visually appealing and can feel disjointed with the

rest of the brand. While the app does allow for customisation, this only applies to the theme of the main menu.



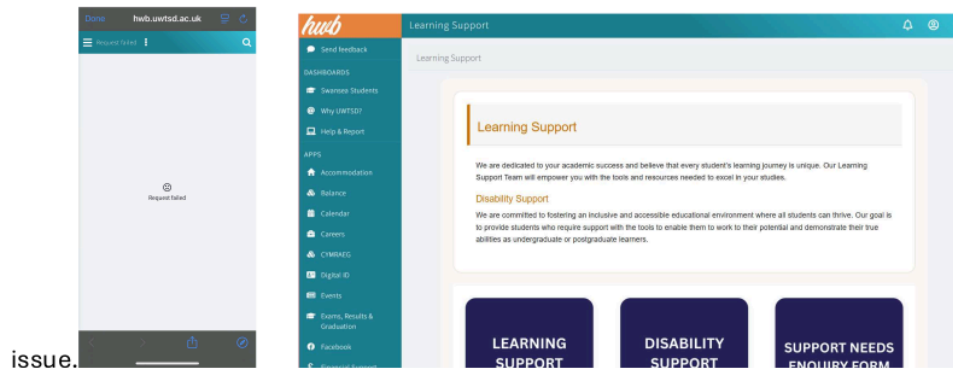
In terms of usability, it's a mixed bag. As mentioned previously, the app features clear labels for each tile, allowing for efficient use. As well as this, there is the ability to customise the application layout, allowing users to decide which tiles are important to them by re-organising or removing.

That said, usability is weak when it comes to hidden menus and app errors. The side bar is a poorly organised menu. The layout is unclear, and flow is not well optimised for ease of navigation. Additionally, the app runs into many errors when trying to access specific tiles – the error messages displayed give the user no explanation of the issue and are essentially a brick wall.



Hwb is both a desktop and mobile application, insinuating that it is made to be used both stationary and on the go – the inclusion of mobile devices suggests that a mobile-first design should be employed. Hwb shows thought of this by using adaptive screen sizes and a simple layout – showing most content on the main page.

However, loading speeds seem generally poorer on mobile, regardless of type of connection (Wi-Fi or mobile data) showing a lack of optimisation. As well as this, errors are more common, certain tiles when accessed on mobile will yield a 'request error' message and will show no content – these same tiles on desktop work without an



issue.

Recommendations for Improvement

In this section I have provided some recommendations for improving the UX design and enhancing the user experience of the chosen product based upon the principles described previously.

Menus

To improve the usability and the navigation of the application, I recommend reorganising and removing some of the tiles on the home page, as well as making use of a deeper site map to help reduce the clutter when opening the application and creating better visual appeal for users.

A specific example of this could be creating support tile that redirects to a page listing different types (learning, financial, etc...) instead of having separate tiles for each, creating an overwhelming main page for users.

As well as this, the side menu will need attention when reorganising, there are many options in this menu that could be better categorised or removed, making use of elements such as vertical dropdown menus within this [8] [9].

Feedback Loops

A move that will lean more towards a mobile-first approach while also aiding in navigation would be to improve the feedback loops within the application. Currently,

arrows used to move forwards and backwards are occasionally dysfunctional, causing pages to reload rather than move backwards a step.

If adding new menus as previously suggested, creating a clearly marked pathway backwards and forwards as users move through the application will allow for a less frustrating user experience.

Visuals

To improve the aesthetics of the application, my suggestion would be to employ a more cohesive colour scheme across all tiles visible on the home screen, as well as an option allowing for full customisability of these colours as seen with the personalisation of the menu already present within the app.

As well as this, considerations for adding an accessibility friendly mode with adjusted colours for as colour-blindness if that is a concern when changing the colour scheme. This adjustment of the aesthetics will allow for better visual flow and appeal to users.

On top of this, added user customisability for tile size and/or shape could also provide a more appealing user experience as they are able to tailor the visual structure to their needs. [11]

Errors and Load Speeds

An improvement in the quality of error messages and loading speeds will have a positive effect on usability and show that the application is leaning more towards mobile first. Creating clearer error messages will reduce the time users spend reloading pages, reducing frustration. [13]

As mentioned previously, certain tiles on the main page will consistently produce errors instead of directing to the intended page. If these pages are unable to load on mobile platforms, removing the option to access these from mobile devices would make more sense, provided there is direction to the browser site to access said pages. This will help to reduce error messages and create a smoother user experience when using on-the-go. [12]

Conclusion

To summarise, the Hwb is a generally well-designed application and fulfils its purpose acting as a 'hub' of all useful information and links other university applications. I feel as though this is a mostly well-rounded application when applying principles of UX design, while still having room for improvement.

These areas that I have identified, while they may appear small at a glance, all contribute to the overall user experience and can affect how users interact with a product.

Bibliography

- [1] "myday," Uwtsd.ac.uk, 2026. <https://hwb.uwtsd.ac.uk/dashboard/anonymous> (accessed Dec. 04, 2025)
- [2] "What is Usability - The Ultimate Guide," The Interaction Design Foundation, Jun. 2016. <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/usability/> (accessed Dec. 04, 2025)
- [3] A. Paschal, "How do aesthetics impact usability in UX: The aesthetic-usability effect - LogRocket Blog," LogRocket Blog, Nov. 07, 2024. (accessed Dec. 04, 2025) <https://blog.logrocket.com/ux-design/aesthetic-usability-effect-ux/> (accessed Dec. 04, 2025)
- [4] S. Wixted, "UX Navigation: Your All-In-One Guide to UX Navigation Design," WebFX, Jul. 09, 2021. <https://www.webfx.com/blog/web-design/ux-navigation-design/> (accessed Dec. 16, 2025)
- [5] "Visual Hierarchy: Making User Experiences Easier to Understand :: UXmatters," Uxmatters.com, 2024. <https://www.uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2024/02/visual-hierarchy-making-user-experiences-easier-to-understand.php> (accessed Dec. 16, 2025)
- [6] C. White, "What does A UX designer actually do?," Careerfoundry.com, 2019. <https://careerfoundry.com/en/blog/ux-design/what-does-a-ux-designer-actually-do/> (accessed Dec. 16, 2025)
- [7] Chelsea, "What is UX (User Experience) and why is it important? | Workshopper," www.workshopper.com. <https://www.workshopper.com/post/what-is-ux-and-why-is-it-important> (accessed Dec. 16, 2025)
- [8] "Flat vs. Deep Hierarchies in Information Architecture (IA) (Video)," Nielsen Norman Group, 2024. <https://www.nngroup.com/videos/flat-vs-deep-hierarchies/>
- [9] "Vertical Navigation (Video)," Nielsen Norman Group, 2022. <https://www.nngroup.com/videos/vertical-navigation/> (accessed Jan. 01, 2026)
- [10] K. Gordon, "Good Visual Design, Explained," Nielsen Norman Group, Nov. 14, 2025. <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/good-visual-design/> (accessed Jan. 03, 2026)
- [11] "Visual Design Principles in Action (Video)," Nielsen Norman Group, 2025. <https://www.nngroup.com/videos/visual-design-principles-in-action/> (accessed Jan. 03, 2026)
- [12] "Create Efficient Error Messages (Video)," Nielsen Norman Group, 2025. <https://www.nngroup.com/videos/efficient-error-messages/> (accessed Jan. 03, 2026)

- [13] Jesper Kjeldskov, "Mobile Computing," The Interaction Design Foundation, 2010. <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/book/the-encyclopedia-of-human-computer-interaction-2nd-ed/mobile-computing> (accessed Jan. 05, 2026)
- [14] "Mobile navigation: patterns and examples," www.justinmind.com. Available: <https://www.justinmind.com/blog/mobile-navigation/> (accessed Jan. 14, 2026)
- [15] J. Nielsen, "F-Shaped Pattern For Reading Web Content (original eyetracking research)," *Nielsen Norman Group*, Apr. 16, 2006. Available: <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/f-shaped-pattern-reading-web-content-discovered/> (accessed Jan. 14, 2026)
- [16] Yale School of Art, "Home - Yale School of Art," *Yale School of Art*, 2009. Available: <https://www.art.yale.edu/> (accessed Jan. 14, 2026)
- [17] "10 UX Design Principles & Importance | Boost Usability & UX," Zignuts.com, 2025. Available: <https://www.zignuts.com/blog/ux-design-principles-and-importance>. (accessed Jan. 14, 2026)
- [18] GeeksforGeeks, "What is Mobile First Design?," *GeeksforGeeks*, Nov. 09, 2023. Available: <https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/websites-apps/mobile-first-design/> (accessed Jan. 14, 2026)

UX Design Report Frankie Snow

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

66/100

GENERAL COMMENTS

This submission demonstrates a clear understanding of core UX principles and applies them appropriately to a familiar, real-world product.

The analysis identifies relevant usability, navigation, and mobile-first issues, with sensible and user-focused recommendations that are clearly linked to observed problems.

However, the discussion is often descriptive and would benefit from deeper critical evaluation and more selective synthesis of theory. Stronger analytical depth and tighter justification of claims would strengthen the overall argument.

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

PAGE 3

PAGE 4

PAGE 5

PAGE 6

PAGE 7

PAGE 8

PAGE 9

PAGE 10

PAGE 11

PAGE 12