



K16 SOLUTIONS

Heriot-Watt University



150 Partnership Countries



29,000 Students



5 Academic Schools

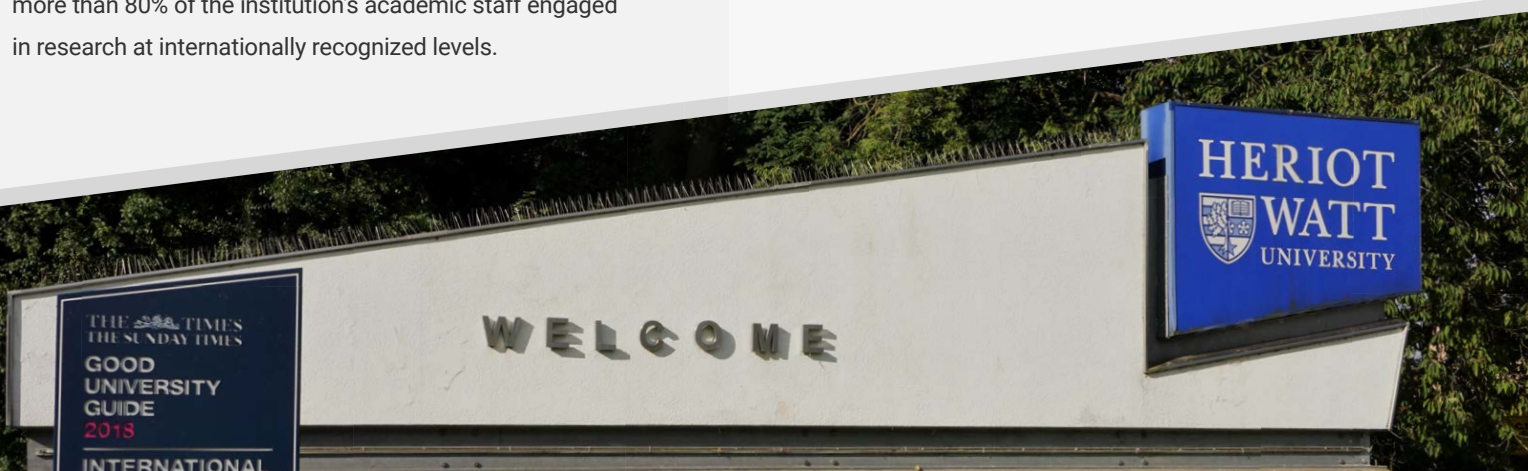


Scaffold Migration

From Skepticism to Trust: Heriot-Watt Relies on K16 Experience and Innovative Software for Easy Migration to Canvas

Based in Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University has five campuses: three in the United Kingdom and one each in Malaysia and Dubai. Its international presence is bolstered further with educational collaborative partners in 150 countries. The university has more than 29,000 students on the campuses and online. Founded in 1821, Heriot-Watt has five academic schools, three of which are STEM-focused (science, technology, engineering, math) plus a Social Sciences school that incorporates a business school and a textiles and design school. Research is a hallmark, with more than 80% of the institution's academic staff engaged in research at internationally recognized levels.

While moving from Blackboard to Canvas, Heriot-Watt wanted to make the process smooth for everyone, especially faculty. With the university's heavy STEM focus, it was also crucial that courses be migrated accurately, especially components such as complicated quizzes and complex math formulas. K16 Solutions used its deep experience with Blackboard and Canvas and its innovative Scaffold Migration software to move 2,500 courses accurately, in ready-to-teach form, and with minimal disruption for faculty.



CHALLENGES

Ensure Accuracy

Accuracy and completeness are critical for any course, but especially for STEM classes. At Heriot-Watt, STEM courses often contain intricate quizzes carefully created by professors. Instructors also labor over Latex plugins to present complex formulas in a user-friendly format to students. Those sophisticated pieces need to work properly after migration. **“It would have been weeks, if not months, to rebuild the quizzes,”** said Dave Baskill, project manager, Heriot-Watt University.

Reduce Digital Clutter

For courses offered for a long time, there was a lot of history accumulated inside Blackboard and much of it was not being used. **“That just hogs up your space,”** said Baskill. Heriot-Watt wanted to clear the unnecessary clutter, but it was difficult to identify the excess and then find these forgotten bits.

Avoid Burdening Faculty

Instructors are already busy, and external factors made Heriot-Watt’s faculty especially stretched during the migration. The last thing university leaders wanted to do was add another task to the workload. **“We figured it would be days of effort on our academic staff,”** Baskill said. A priority was ensuring faculty would not need to spend time cleaning up courses in Canvas so they could focus on other responsibilities.

SOLUTION

Baskill was skeptical that K16 could deliver what it promised; he’s heard plenty of rosy prognoses from contractors during his 35-year career. He agreed to allow K16 to conduct a pilot run to migrate some courses. Within days, Heriot-Watt saw that the K16’s Scaffold Migration software would get rid of over 95% of the problems the university faced.

“The business case became evident that the K16 services would reduce the cost, in both time and money,” said Baskill.

K16’s software walked through each course, page by page, deciding how to handle the content and identifying unused pieces that could be ignored to help with decluttering. **“K16 turns their in-depth knowledge into practical solutions quickly,”** said Baskill, noting solutions were delivered in hours, not months. **“I’ve yet to find something they can’t do,”** he added.

K16’s excellent working relationship with Instructure ensured a smooth process, including meeting GDPR compliance requirements. **“They are a truly trusted partner.”**

A skeptic no more, Baskill said K16 delivered more than promised, and its staff was always available.

“K16 exceeded in terms of service management. They’ve been super-responsive almost any time of day. They’ve been a lifesaver. What could have been a complex activity turned out to be a straightforward and smooth process.”

Dave Baskill, project manager, Heriot-Watt University

RESULTS

Experience Leveraged

K16's extensive experience, deep knowledge of Canvas and Blackboard, and cutting-edge technology resulted in on-the-nose guidance about how to proceed with the migration. Heriot-Watt credited K16's experience with a smooth transfer from start to finish. Also, faculty were able to make updates in their courses and replace sections of content without losing work during additional migration steps. **"K16's recommendations saved us weeks of analysis,"** said Baskill. **"They've consistently taken the worry away. Nobody worries about courses anymore. You can trust K16; it just happens."**

Accuracy Delivered

After the migration, Heriot-Watt sought feedback from faculty who had the most complex courses. **"They were absolutely delighted,"** said Baskill. Professors were concerned they would need to make huge efforts to redo complicated quiz banks, but very little was needed. For non-STEM courses, discussion boards migrated seamlessly and logically. **"We've yet to find an error caused by K16 in any of the courses,"** said Baskill. **"The quality has been 100%."**



Proactive Troubleshooting Provided

During migration, Heriot-Watt discovered a glitch with the Latex plugins. In one hour, K16 said it could fix the problem, and a day later K16 had resolved the issue for all courses. **"There is nothing they have not been able to fix, and very quickly,"** said Baskill. **"They can identify all the other courses with the problem, and repair everything."** Heriot-Watt also liked that K16 provided flexibility with its services. **"They give you options,"** Baskill said.



BY THE NUMBERS

