



The latest news and views from the team at EDINA

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Welcome to the Intern Edit

Dear Reader,

EDINA is proud to create edtech solutions for the education sector, by the education sector. We are uniquely situated within the University of Edinburgh, with close relation to students, academics, and professional staff alike.

Each summer, the University welcomes student interns across the organisation, providing work experience in engineering, marketing, software development, graphic design, and more. This summer, **9 students joined the EDINA team**. This edition is special as it's planned, written, and designed by the EDINA interns.

In geospatial services, our **Interface Redesign Interns** are redesigning the Digimap® subscriptions portal and administrative hub to improve our clients' and engineers' experience. Our **AI Data Extraction Intern** has been cleaning and collating the vast amount of data within Digimap, building a RAG model and now working on setting up a deployable service using Flask and Docker. Working with the Campus Maps team, our **Spaces for Students Intern** is travelling to every university building to identify study space availability for incoming students.

ELM® is continuously growing and our AI interns are hard at work researching potential new features. Our **Application Research Intern** is investigating audio processing software, and our **ELM Research Intern** is studying the geopolitical biases of local LLMs. We're also seeing improvements with Noteable®, where our **Noteable Intern** is creating new exemplar notebooks to make it even easier to learn and teach code.

Last but not least, our marketing team continues to share our products with the world. Our **Noteable and Digimap Marketing and Comms Intern** is repositioning and expanding the product related communication. Our **ELM Marketing and Events Intern** is researching student AI use and encouraging student engagement.

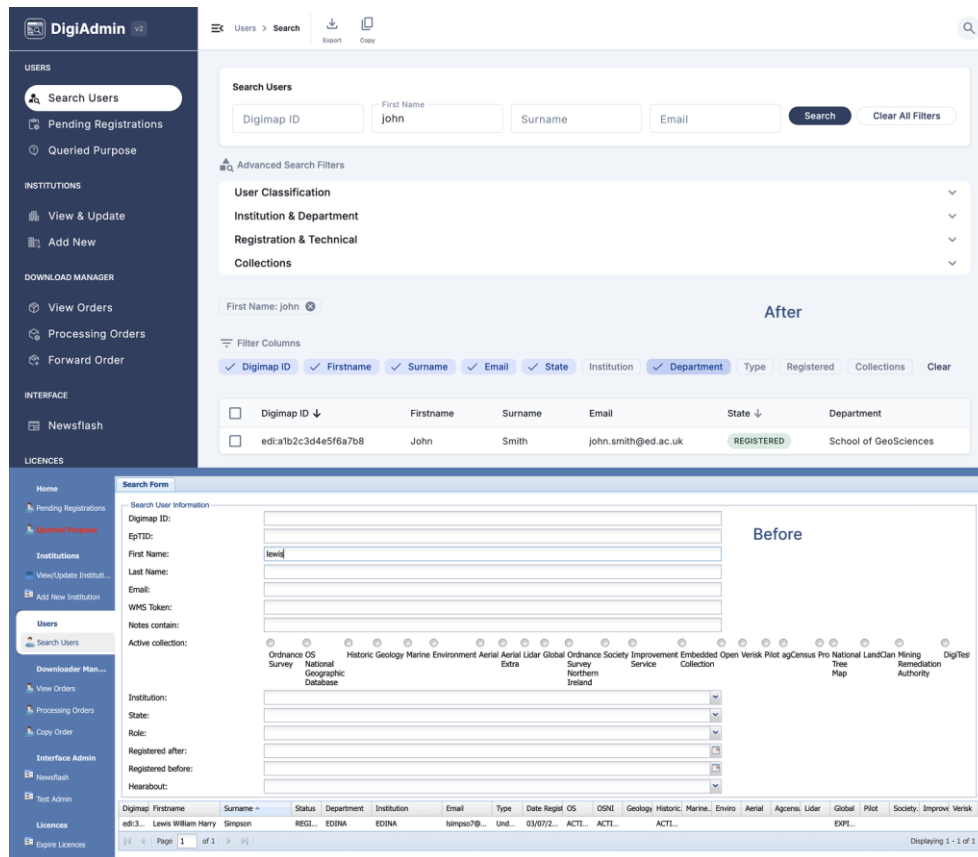
It has been a busy summer at EDINA and we are so excited to share with you all we, the interns, have been working on over the past two months.

Sincerely,

Hanna Gustafson and Sharanya Datta

EDINA Marketing Interns

Then v/s Now: Reflections on Two Summers at EDINA



Digiadmin portal: Before and After Lewis's work

Author: Lewis Simpson, Digiadmin Redesign Intern

Last summer, I spent six weeks at EDINA as a Digimap® Analytics Research Intern. I came in knowing only about common web analytics tools, like Google Analytics. By the end, I had researched over ten analytics platforms, implemented and tested four of them inside the dev Digimap site, and presented my recommendations. It was the first time anyone had handed me a genuinely open-ended problem and trusted me to figure it out myself. That feeling of being trusted with meaningful work is why I came back.

This summer, the work looks completely different. Last year I was evaluating tools. This year I am building one. I am redesigning the Digiadmin interface, the internal admin tool that the Digimap team uses to manage their services day-in, day-out.

I started by sitting down with every person who uses it, one by one, asking what works, what frustrates them, and what they secretly wish the tool could do. Those conversations surfaced pain points I would never have guessed on my own: workflows that had been worked around for years, features buried three clicks too deep, and data that was visible but not actionable.

From those notes, I sketched wireframes in Figma, tested them with the team, refined the designs through several rounds of feedback, and am now building the real interface in Angular v22 with Material 3 and TypeScript. The goal is to have the new interface in production by the end of the summer.

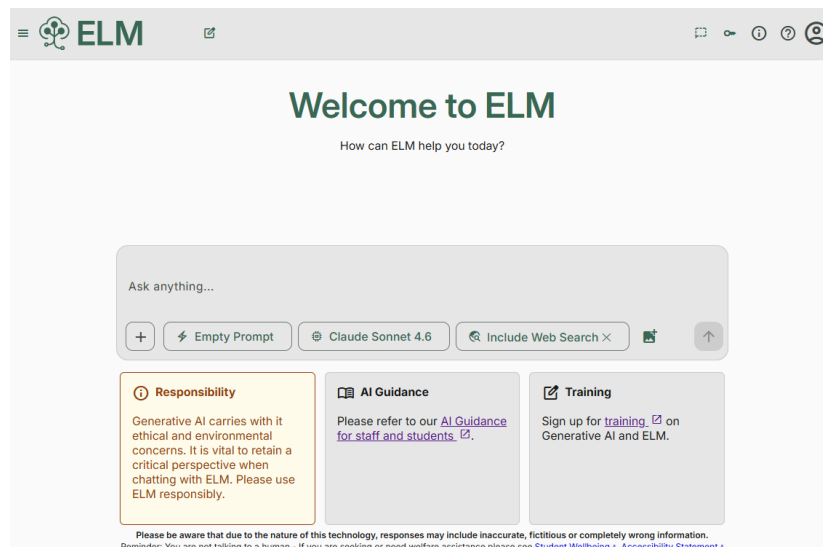
The shift from research to building has been the defining difference between my two summers here. Last year taught me how to work independently, evaluate options rigorously, and communicate findings clearly. This year is teaching me how to take something from a blank canvas through user research, design, implementation, and deployment, completing the full loop. It is the closest thing to real industry work I have experienced as a student.

What has struck me most, both then and now, is how seriously EDINA takes its interns. I am not fetching coffee or fixing typos in documentation. I sit in on stand-ups, raise merge requests, get my code reviewed, and have opinions that are actually listened to. That kind of respect is rare, and it is the reason I applied to come back.

I will leave this summer with a production interface I can point to and say, "I built that," from the first conversation to final deploy. But I will also leave with something harder to list on a CV: the quiet confidence that I can walk into a team, understand their problems, and build something that genuinely helps them do their jobs better.

Latest Product News

ELM®



The ELM web-based chatbot home screen

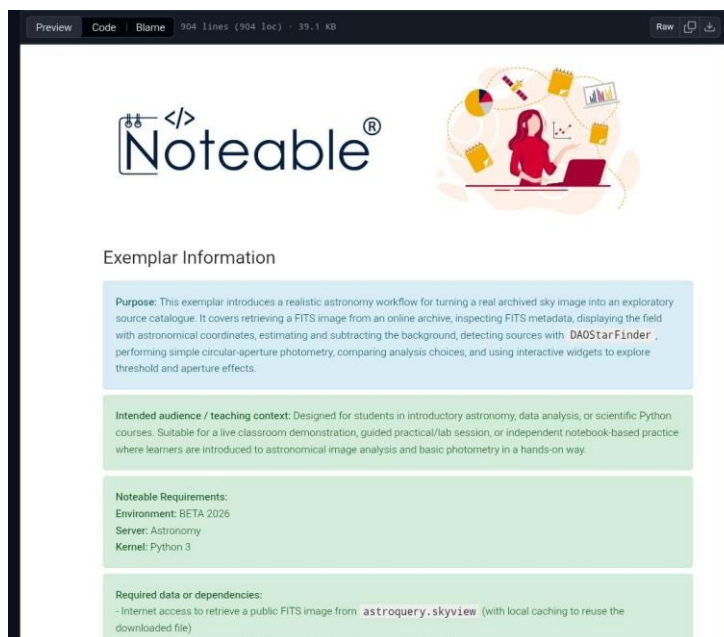
Author: Kaiwen Wang, ELM Research Intern

A big part of ELM's mission is giving our community a choice on how they want to use AI. We have already done this by allowing users to run a wide range of open, locally-hosted models which (generally) have less of an environmental impact. However, every new model has to match our criteria to be onboarded to ensure it aligns with ELM's and our user's requirements.

Over recent months we've been building an evaluation framework that evaluates LLMs. I have extended this work by evaluating the subtler biases a model can carry across languages and sensitive. For example, with Qwen - a model from Alibaba - I specifically focused on geopolitical biases which it might have due to its non-western origin.

Alongside this, we've been researching content-moderation models to keep ELM safe without getting in your way. Our focus here is cutting down false positives - when safe inputs are incorrectly moderated as unsafe. We believe we have found a new model, which not only has a higher precision (less false positives) but also runs faster than the incumbent moderation model.

Noteable®



Exemplar Information page

Author: Nik Yusuf, Noteable Intern

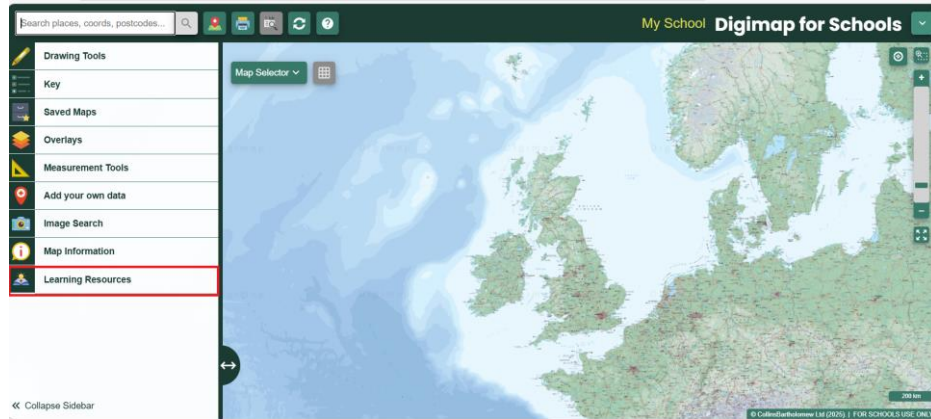
This summer, I've been working on a new set of Noteable 2026 exemplars across five major notebook servers: **Standard Python 3, Language and Machine Learning, Biochemistry, Geoscience, and Astronomy**. My aim has been to create notebooks that give users a clearer, more engaging introduction to what Noteable can offer across teaching, learning, and subject-specific exploration.

A large part of this work has involved reviewing older exemplars, testing them against current environments, and redesigning them with improved structure, clearer signposting, and more practical datasets. In many cases, I found it was better to create entirely new notebooks rather than simply update older ones, especially in fast-moving areas like machine learning, where I developed new exemplars around text, audio, and vision workflows.

Alongside this, I've also been testing libraries across the LIVE and BETA 2026 environments to help check that tools work reliably in practice. What has stood out to me throughout is how much Noteable reduces the friction of setup, dependencies, and classroom coordination, allowing staff and students to focus on the work itself.

If you would like to explore the exemplar drafts in more detail, they are also available on a public GitHub repository: [YusufNik/Noteable](https://github.com/YusufNik/Noteable).

Digimap®



Digimap webpage

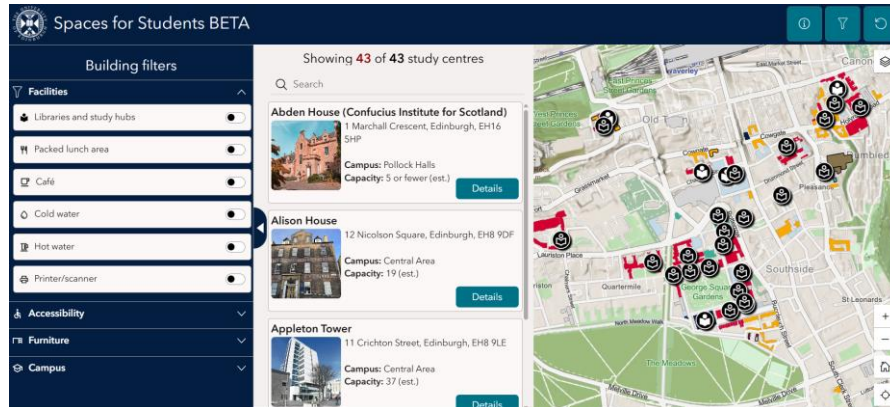
Author: Ash Thapa, Digimap Subscriptions Redesign Intern

Renewing or subscribing to Digimap should be one of the easiest things a school or higher education institution does with us, so over the past few weeks I've been rebuilding the subscription portal from the ground up with exactly that in mind.

The new portal guides you through the whole process step by step. You find your institution, choose your products, review the licences, and confirm your details, with a clear progress bar so you always know where you are and what's left. Your institution details now carry through automatically, so there's far less retyping, and a running order summary keeps the price and VAT in view the whole way. Before anything is placed, a full review screen lets you check every detail and jump back to fix anything in a single click.

All of this sits behind a fresh, modern and consistent interface, giving customers a smoother way to sign up or renew their Digimap subscriptions.

Spaces for Students®



Spaces for Students beta home screen

Author: Ellie Campbell, Student Spaces Data Collection and Analysis Intern

Spaces for Student is a new app, linked to the existing Campus Maps, which is designed to aid students at The University of Edinburgh in locating study spaces beyond the main library which suit their preferences. With the student roll rising to nearly 50,000 and only 2,230 desks in the Main Library, the demand for a project like this has never been greater.

When I began my internship back in June, the creation and design stages were virtually complete, so my responsibilities involved ground-truthing the data, by ensuring student users could actually access and locate all the spaces being offered, and bringing a student perspective to the team.

241 miles, 682 flights of stairs and 3 pairs of shoes later, we have successfully validated the numerical data, for example capacity, IT equipment and charging information and, as a result of student feedback, added photographs, general descriptions and accessibility comments for each of the study spaces. Throughout the process, the response from students, interns and staff has been overwhelmingly positive. In particular, the expertise and enthusiasm of the people working within the buildings has been invaluable, whether they have been offering improvements, scouring the building plans, suggesting potential new spaces or providing insight into student habits and preferences, their contributions have been influential.

Looking forward, the app is entering an exciting stage as the descriptions are polished and structures are finalised ahead of the launch in August. The commitment at EDINA to involving students in projects designed for their use is evident, and

Spaces for Students is no exception – from the initial focus groups to the final audits and marketing – keeping students at the heart of this project has been key to its success.

More than a Trend: Sustainability at the Heart of EDINA



Looking over city at sunset

Author: Sharanya Datta, Marketing and Communications Intern

“Education for Sustainable Development empowers people with the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours to live in a way that is good for the environment, economy, and society. It encourages people to make smart, responsible choices that help create a better future for everyone.”

UNESCO

As digital technology becomes an integral part of education, questions around environmental responsibility and sustainability are now more important than ever. EdTech isn't just about innovative applications; it's also about shaping a better, more sustainable future. During my marketing and communications internship with EDINA, I witnessed and experienced first-hand how sustainability isn't just a passing trend here, it's one of the core values for product development and business practices.

In this post, I'll explore how EdTech and sustainability are linked, and how EDINA products lead the way in making education greener and more responsible both for current students and educators. One example that has really stuck with me during my internship is how Digimap for Schools® utilises technology to not only deliver learning content but also drive meaningful conversations around climate change and sustainability. As it offers interactive, online teaching and learning resources, Digimap for Schools allows young minds to engage deeply with environmental debates. It creates a space for them to look closely at their local neighbourhoods, identify patterns and understand real world impacts. What stood out to me the most was the way these resources encourage a sense of connection to their local community and environment, inspiring students to become future climate activists and advocates for sustainability. In recent times, there has been an evident push for more environmental education in schools, Digimap for Schools has successfully positioned itself as a tool to bridge this gap and is shaping a new generation of learners who are not just aware but also inspired to make a real difference.

Sharing EDINA values and commitment is very insightful but it is important to highlight the broader impact of these values as well. Digimap for School's impact goes beyond classrooms and ripples down to stronger conversations within families, community and urges them to have local initiatives to bring changes. The importance of EdTech to promote sustainability has been acknowledged and urged by leading global organisations. According to UNESCO's global review report of how environmental issues are integrated in education, students worldwide want to learn more about sustainable development, yet a prominent gap remains between this demand and what education systems currently provide. Here's what surprised me the most: sustainability in EdTech is more than just reducing digital carbon footprints, it's also recognised as a core measure of quality itself. The 5E's impact argues educational tools should be measured by their efficacy, effectiveness, ethics, equity and environment. This holistic approach keeps sustainability at the heart of assessing the quality of a product alongside classroom performance.

It was this same approach that I experienced first-hand at EDINA, where these 5 pillars are crucial to product development. For example, ELM®, is a climate-sensitive access platform to a host of different LLMs. It is built with safety and inclusivity as its founding pillars. It focuses on offering access to locally hosted, greener, open-source optimised LLMs such as Llama and EuroLLM. These local models are hosted securely on Edinburgh University's award-winning data centres and energy efficient infrastructure. This allows for tracking and transparency of energy consumption associated with LLM use. The aim being to encourage mindful and responsible use of these increasingly important tools.

It has been truly amazing to be a part of a team that supports and recognises sustainability as a shared responsibility. I noticed it in meetings and weekly catchups, where every team member felt empowered when it came to discussing eco-friendly improvements, this showed a real sense of teamwork. What I've valued most is the honesty behind it all, EDINA is committed to being transparent about its environmental footprint, and is continually working to better understand, evidence, and reduce its impact. Being part of such a motivated team has inspired me to think more deeply about EdTech and how it can shape young minds and made me proud to help communicate these efforts as a marketing and comms intern.

Symbiosis: Redefining Student-Centred Education Technology



The 2026 summer EDINA Interns with Anne Robertson, EDINA and DDC Director

Author: Hanna Gustafson, ELM® Marketing and Events Intern

Education technology is embedded throughout the student experience. At The University of Edinburgh, we use Microsoft Outlook to view our timetables and school communications, Blackboard Learn to view our courses, Turnitin to check for plagiarism, and Google Scholar for research. Alongside others, these edtech applications are entrenched in our day-to-day academic lives, the quality of which is inseparable from the quality of our boarder education.

Many edtech tools are created by large technology companies for whom the university sector is but one of many clients. The university sector often serves as a loss leader, incentivizing continued use of a company's tools beyond a person's university years due to familiarity. While these edtech tools are largely well suited to their designated use cases, we as students are unable to provide input into their design. This is the top-down approach to education technology.

What if, however, the edtech industry takes a bottom-up approach? Students are the primary consumers of the sector. When students are given the opportunity to actively participate in the development of education technology, everyone benefits. When edtech hires students, students receive invaluable work experience, and companies receive invaluable student input. In turn, companies create better edtech products and, in theory, generate increased returns. At the same time, students receive edtech products better suited to their needs. Student employment is a mutually beneficial relationship between company and interns in a manner that centres students as the ultimate beneficiaries of education technology. It is a symbiotic relationship.

The EDINA internship programme is but one example of this phenomenon of mutual benefit in action. As the ELM Marketing and Events Intern, part of my job entails conducting focus group research into student use of AI. Over four summer sessions, we have gained insight into student AI use cases, use barriers, preferred tools, shifting teaching dynamics, policy and ethical concerns, and opinions on ELM. This information will shape the ELM roadmap and development priorities over the coming year, ensuring that EDINA's efforts are concentrated not on what we think students need but on what they actually need to thrive.

Not only are students influencing the ELM roadmap through input, we are also actively involved in the realisation of this roadmap. A key concern which emerged through the focus group research project is the high environmental impact of AI. Our ELM Research Intern, Kaiwen, is taking action into this insight by researching new locally-hosted LLMs to add to ELM's offerings. This development is student-driven and student-implemented.

This outline of our work on ELM is merely a case study illustration of the benefits of student employment which proves its commercial viability. EDINA should not be viewed as a paradigm of student engagement. To do so assumes student engagement is a bar which can be reached or a one-size-fits-all process which can be replicated. This is not the case. Instead, student engagement is a continuous consideration throughout the edtech imagination, development, and implementation process.

With the burgeoning AI boom and growth of the technology generations, technology is now an indispensable part of education. With innovation comes responsibility, and it is the responsibility of the edtech sector to pursue student engagement for the mutual benefit of edtech and students alike.

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