

Quick Start Guide - *Website Hosting Platform for ECOM7001 Case study project & ECOM7001 Dissertation*



About the Project Website Hosting Platform

Students of ECOM7001 Case study project or ECOM7000 Dissertation can apply to the MSc Programme Office for using this platform to host their project websites, which tell others about their projects with details, such as project scope, timeline, demo, etc., which are mainly for their supervisors and stakeholders. Each group can have one web hosting user account.

This platform runs on Microsoft Windows Server and is powered by Plesk, which is a web hosting platform with web-based control panel and management tools. Despite various features and services are shown on the build-in help files on this platform, only some of them are provided to our students for their project web sites. Students are not bound to use this platform. Students should use commercial web hosting services if they find this system not adequate for their projects.

If students need to build an e-commerce website with real users and/or a company website with marketing purpose, do not use this platform as commercial activities would not be allowed by the license agreement and the University's policy on computing services. In case of violation, the MSc Programme Office and the University reserves the rights to suspend the web hosting account and any website without prior notice.

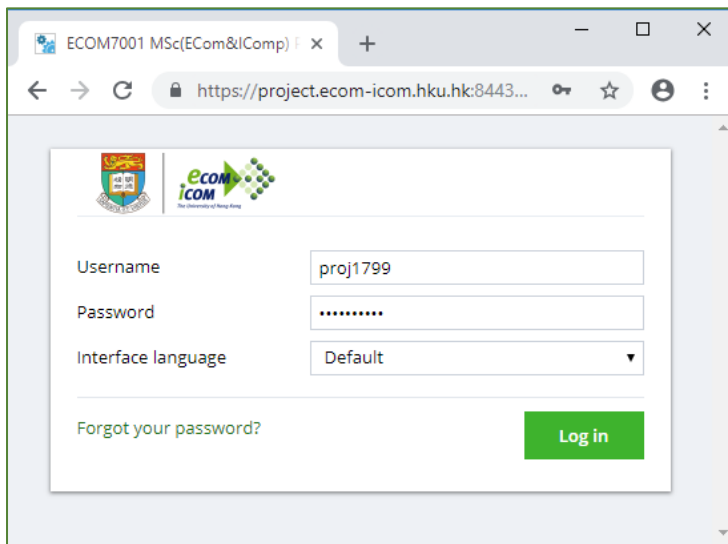
This Quick Start Guide shows the steps and introduces you the basic features so you can start building the project website of your group.

To build a simple website with a few pages, use the File Manager feature to create, edit and upload your webpage files. The main page of your website is `~/httpdocs/index.html` in the File Manager. Another option is to install WordPress CMS on your website to start with a website template. PHP, ASP.NET and MySQL databases are also supported. Use the Password-Protected Directories feature to select the folder which contains the information that you want to hide from the public.

See the following sections to start step-by-step.

Logging in

To log in to the website administration page, open a web browser on your computer and access this URL:
<https://project.ecom-icom.hku.hk:8443/>



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://project.ecom-icom.hku.hk:8443/>. The page features the ECOM ICOM logo and a login form with the following fields:

- Username: proj1799
- Password: [masked with dots]
- Interface language: Default

There is a "Forgot your password?" link and a green "Log in" button.

Enter your username, which starts with “proj” and then your project id. E.g. proj1799

Enter your password and click “Log in”

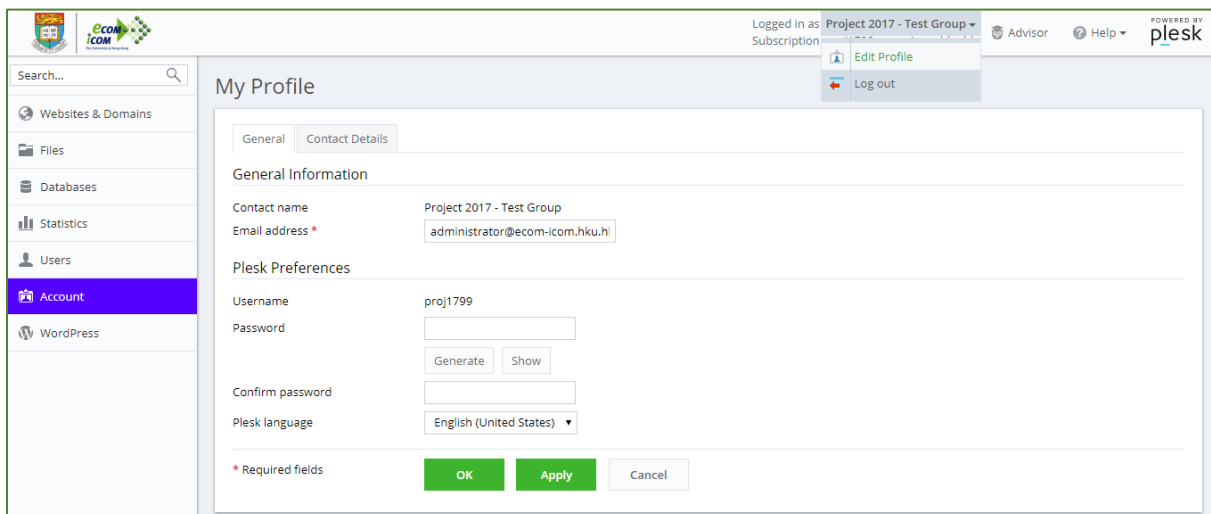
Change Password

You are advised to change your given password.

Click the “Account” on the left menu, then click “My Profile”.

or

Click your group name on the top right (e.g. “Project 2017 – Group 99”), then click “Edit Profile”



The screenshot shows the "My Profile" page in the website administration interface. The page is titled "My Profile" and has a left sidebar with a search bar and navigation menu. The "Account" menu item is highlighted. The main content area shows the "General Information" tab selected, with the following fields:

- Contact name: Project 2017 - Test Group
- Email address *: administrator@ecom-icom.hku.hk
- Username: proj1799
- Password: [empty]
- Confirm password: [empty]
- Plesk language: English (United States)

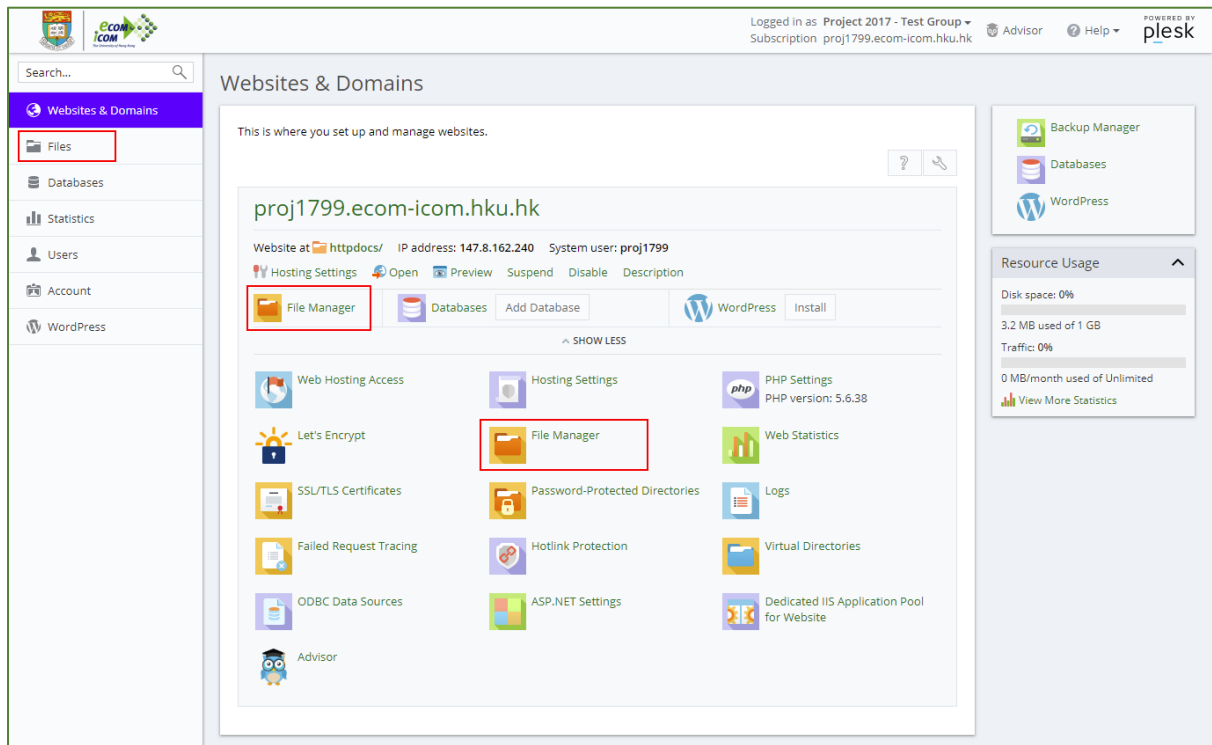
There are "Generate" and "Show" buttons next to the password field. At the bottom, there are "OK", "Apply", and "Cancel" buttons. The top right corner shows the user is logged in as "Project 2017 - Test Group" and has a dropdown menu with "Edit Profile" and "Log out" options.

Enter a strong password and click “OK”

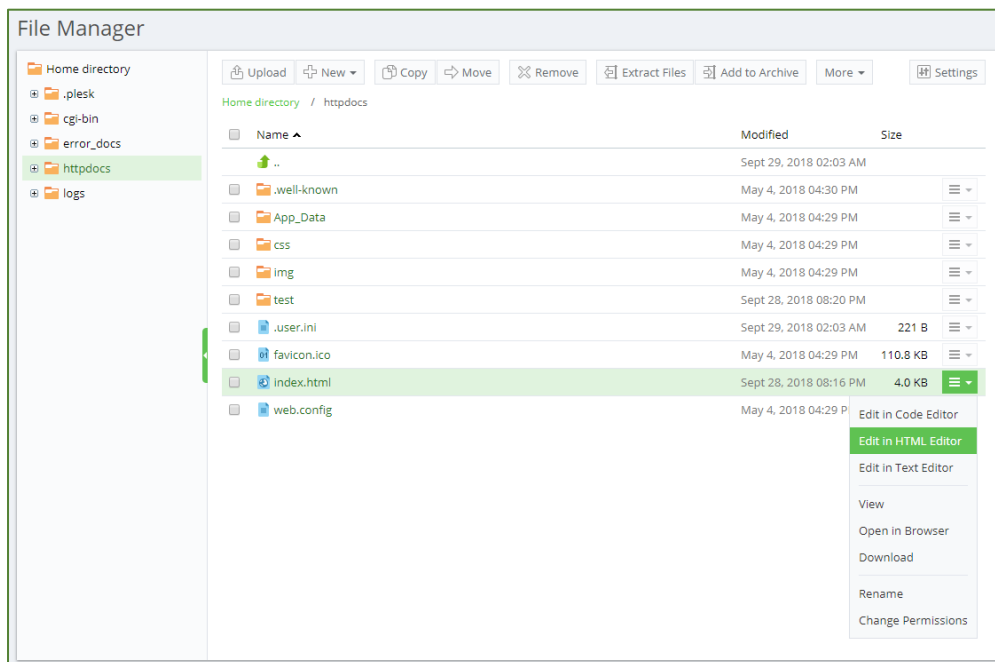
Use the File Manager for File Editing

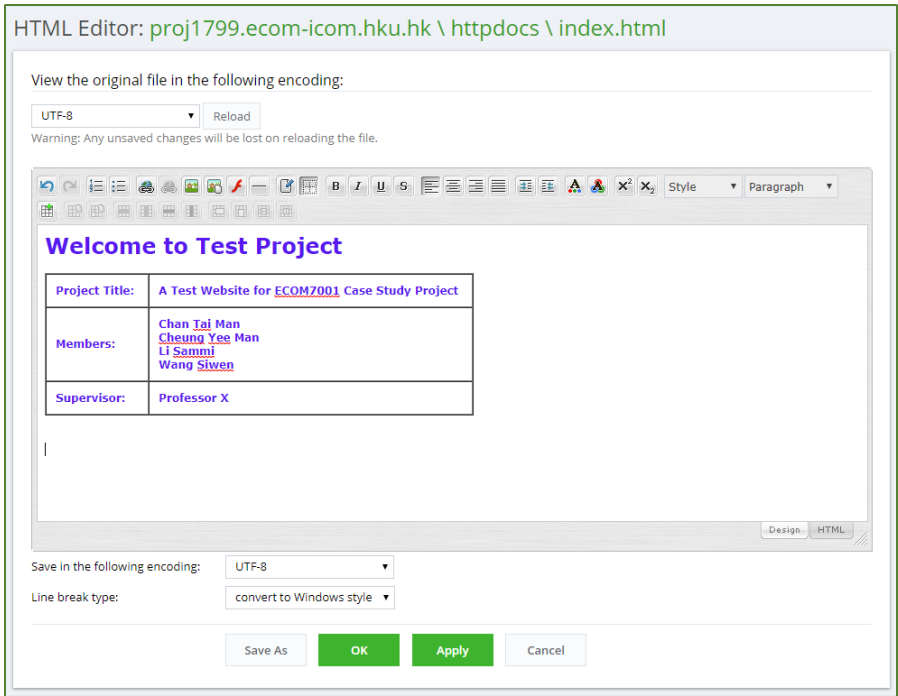
Now edit the main page of your project website.

Click “Files” on the left menu or “File Manager” in the middle of the page after login.



Find the file “index.html” under the “httpdocs” directory. This file is the main page of your website. Click the hamburger menu icon on the right of the file, and select “Edit in HTML Editor”.





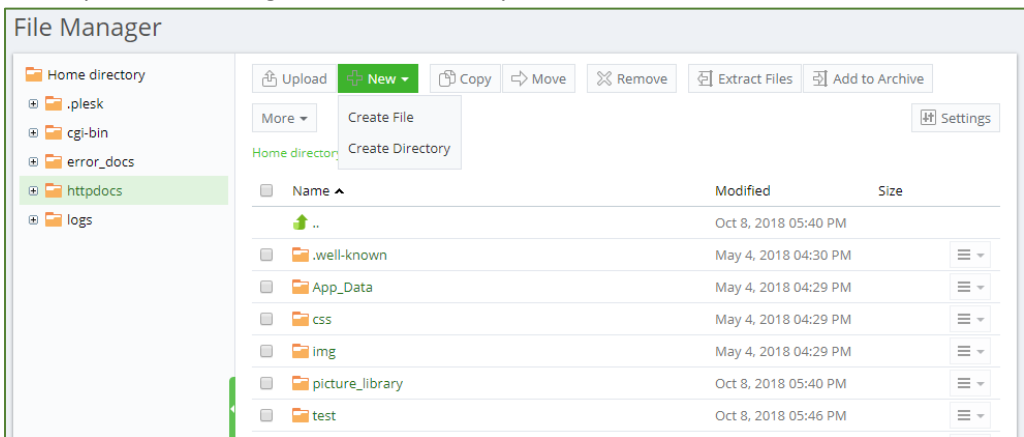
Once completed editing, click “Ok”.

You can also use the built-in Code Editor and Text Editor to edit the files. To learn the basics of website editing, you can refer to the website <https://www.w3schools.com/>.

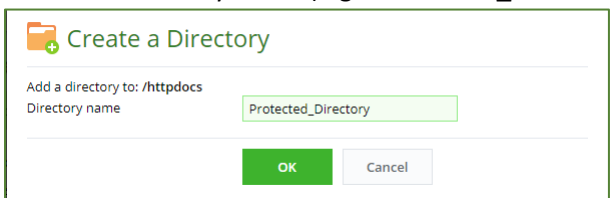
Password-Protected Directories

The files in the “httpdocs” directory is your public website and any files stored there can be seen by the public. If you want to protect certain directories and files in your website, you can use the "Protected Directories" feature.

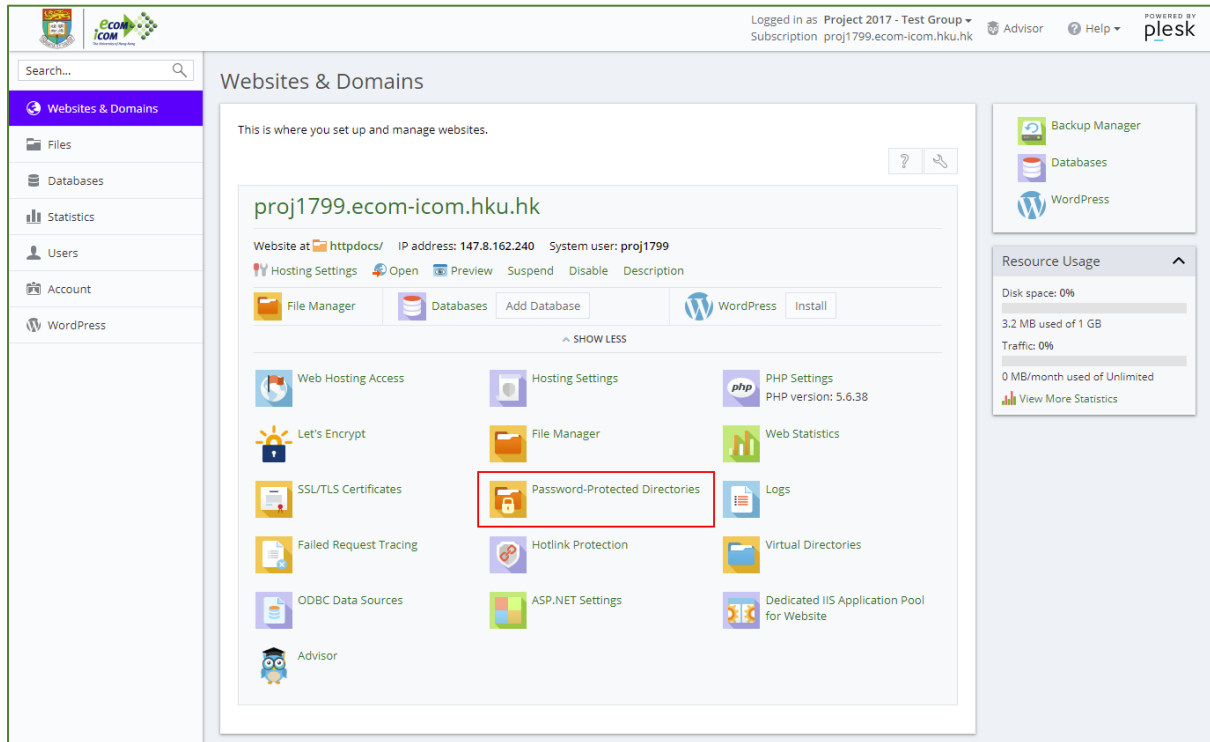
First, open “File Manager” and locate “httpdocs”. Then click “New”=>“Create Directory”.



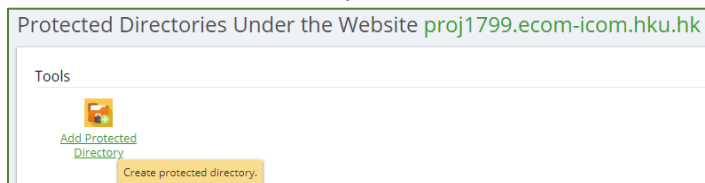
Enter the directory name (e.g. “Protected_Directory”). Click “Ok”



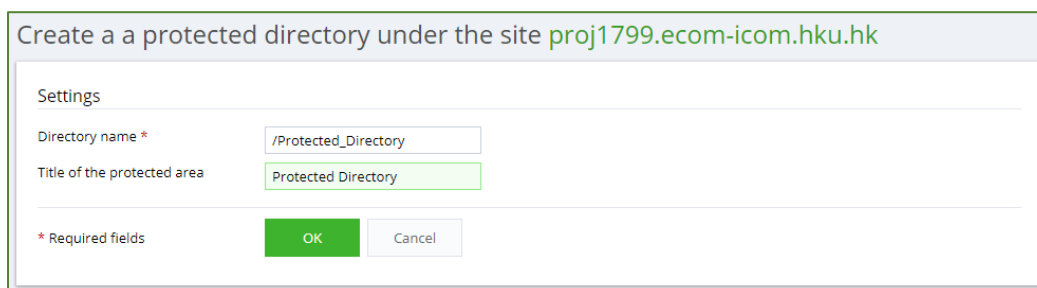
Go to “Websites & Domains”. Then click “Password-Protected Directories”



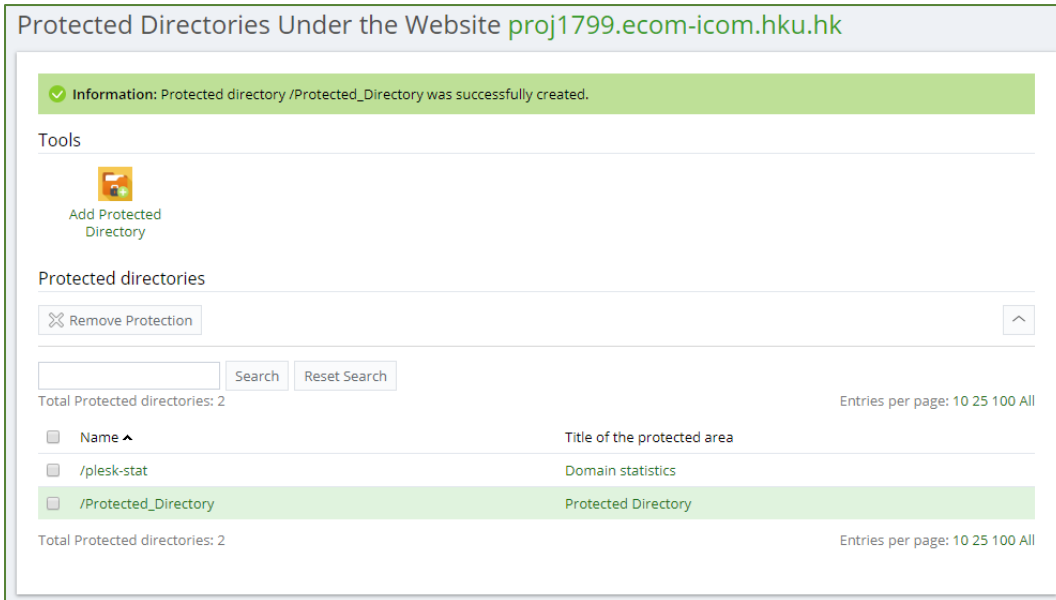
Click Add Protected Directory.



Enter the path of the directory relative to the website root directory and the title that will be displayed to users. Then click “OK”. For example, if you have created “/httpdocs/Protected_Directory” for storing the protected files, please enter “/Protected_Directory” here.



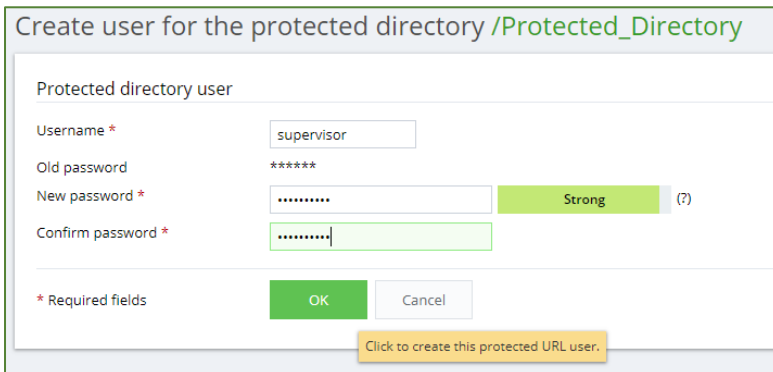
Please note that the “Password-Protected Directories” feature is only for you to specify which directory to be protected. If the directory does not exist in “File Manager” or you entered the path wrongly, there will be no effect on the path you’ve specified.



Next, you need to create a user and a password for accessing that folder. Any protected directory has its own set of users. If there is no user created for that password-protected directory, no one can browse that directory and its contents.

Now, click on the password-protected directory, and then click “Add a User”.

Enter the username and password. Then click “OK”.



You can now try to access the password-protected directory. (e.g. https://proj1799.ecom-icom.hku.hk/Protected_Directory/)

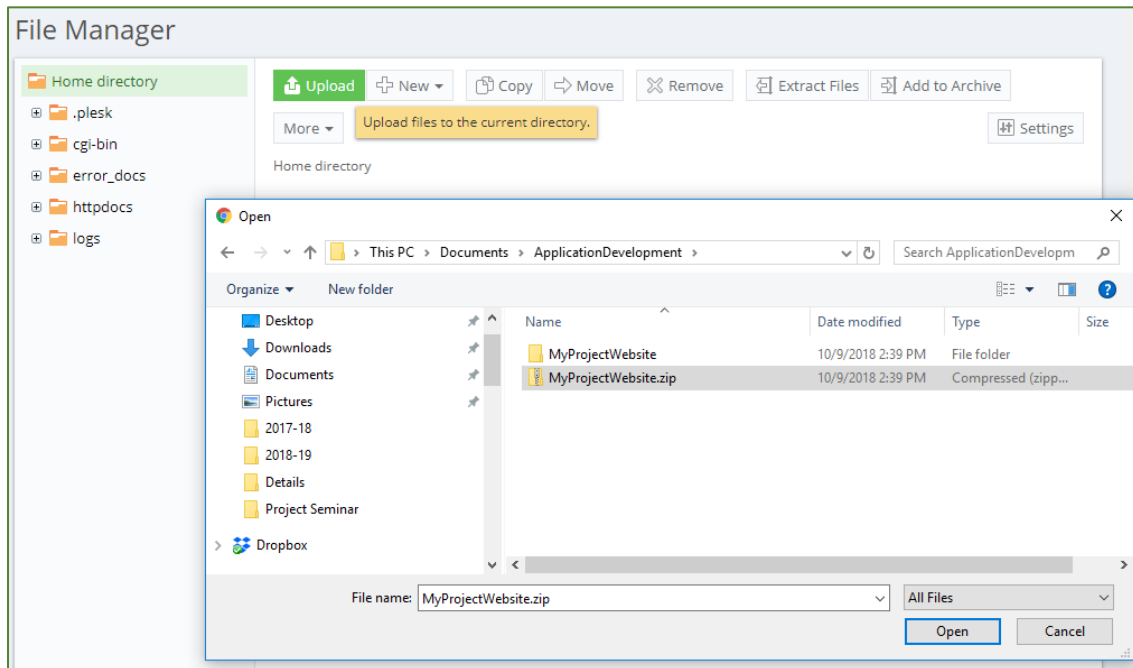
Upload Your Own Files

The “File Manager” allows you to manage your files, download files and also upload files from your computer.

First, compress the files in your computer into a single zip file. For Mac computer, select the folder containing the files in “Finder”. Then right-click and select “Compress”. For Windows computer, select the folder containing the files in “File Explorer”. Then right-click and select “Send to”=>“Compressed (zipped) folder”. A zip archive file will be created.

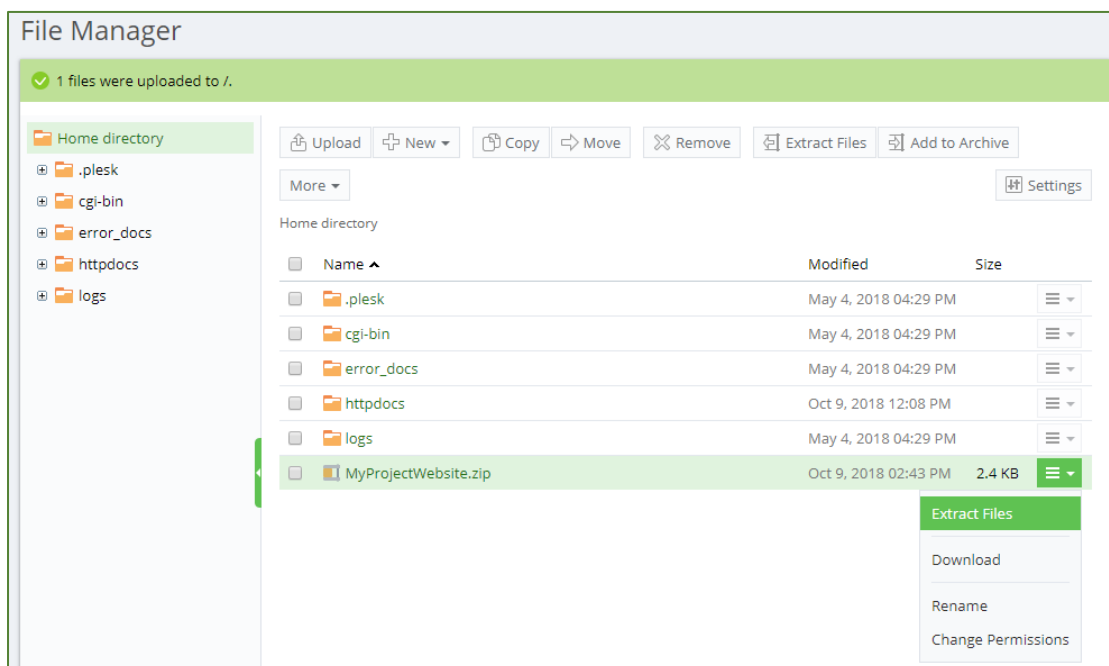
Now, on the Plesk website administration panel, click “Files” on the left menu or “File Manager” in the middle of the page after login.

Select the directory where you want the zip archive to be saved (e.g. “Home directory”). Then click “Upload” and select the zip archive file on your computer.



If the zip archive you are going to upload contain information that you do not want the public to access, do not upload to the directory “httpdocs” or any subfolder that are open for public.

Then select the zip archive file, click the hamburger menu on the right and select “Extract Files”. Click “OK”.

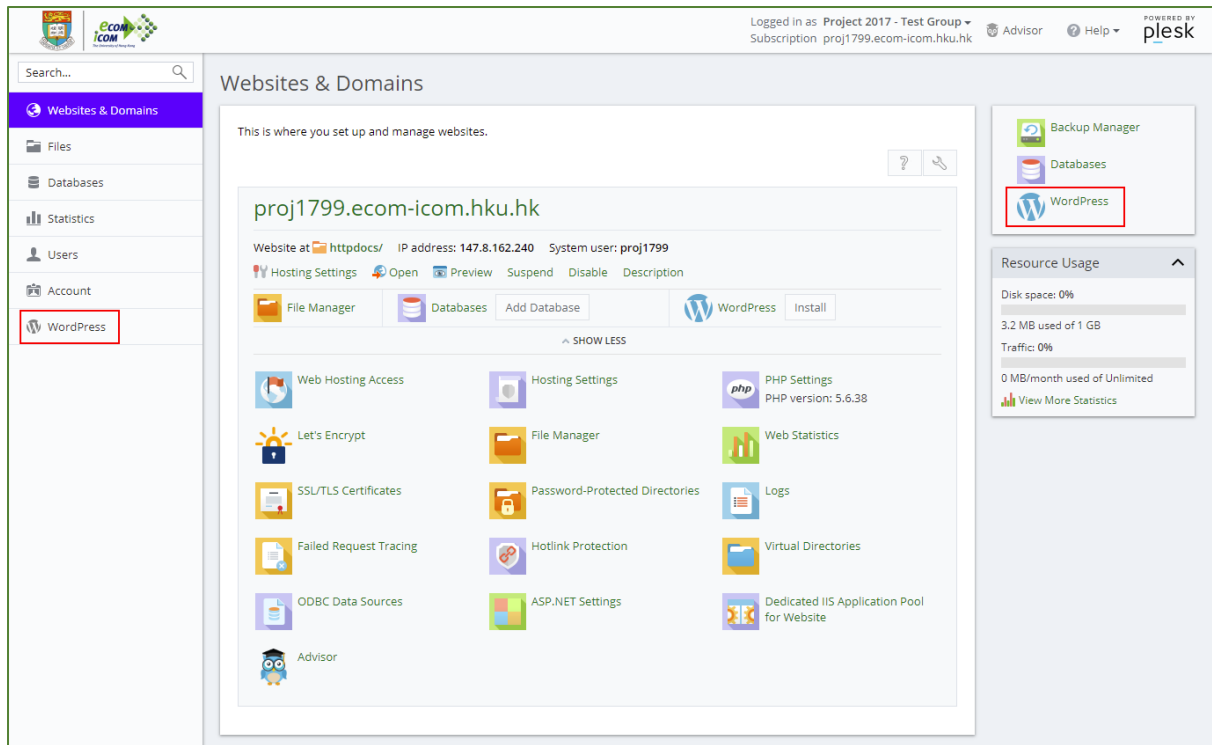


The directory will be extracted from the zip archive file. If you want the extracted files to save to elsewhere, use the “Move” or “Copy” functions in “File Manager”

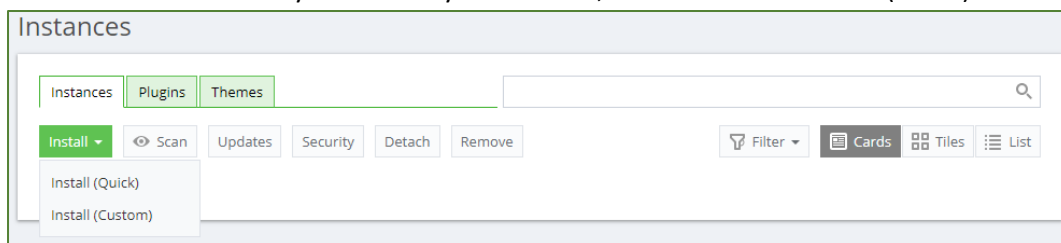
Enable WordPress

WordPress is one of the most popular website content management system. You can install it and use its template for building your project website instead of starting from scratch.

First, install WordPress on your website. Click “WordPress”.



To install WordPress on your root of your website, click “Install”=>”Install (Quick)”.

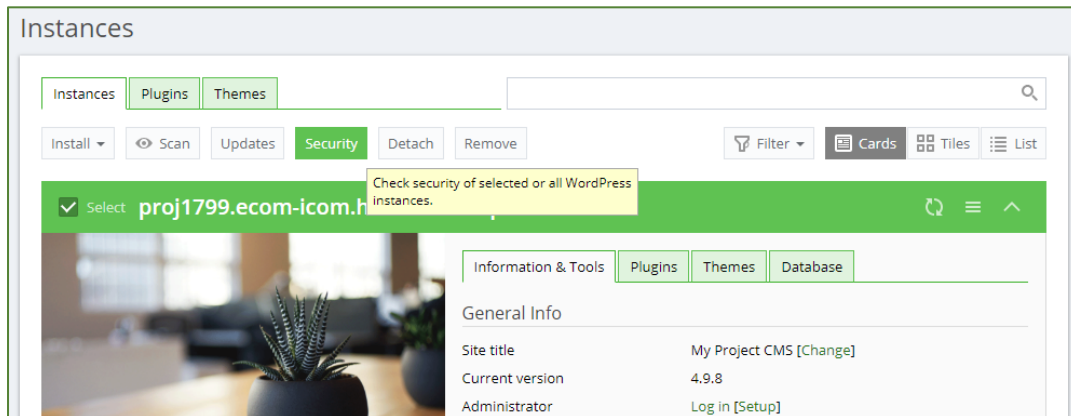


If you want to have WordPress in a subfolder, select “Install”=>”Install (Custom)”.

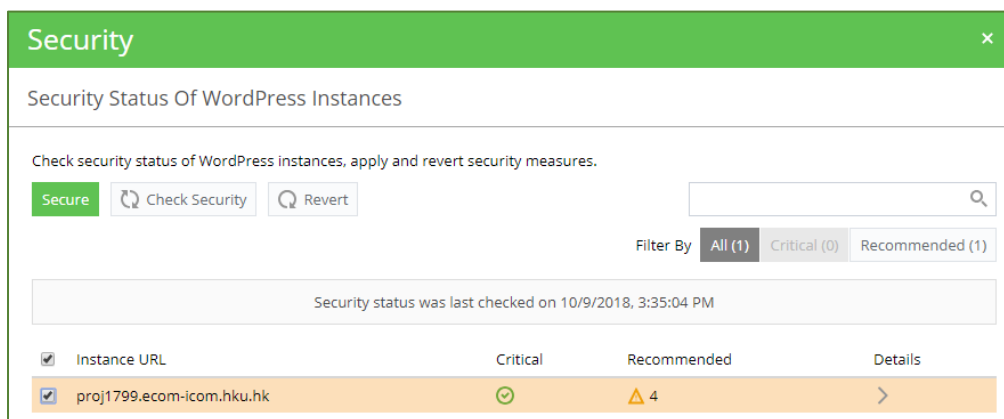
You can specify a the URL of your WordPress, the name and password of the WordPress administrator accounts, etc. Then click “Install”.

By default, only critical security settings are applied to your WordPress instance. All recommended settings should also be applied if those settings did not interfere what you want to do on your WordPress.

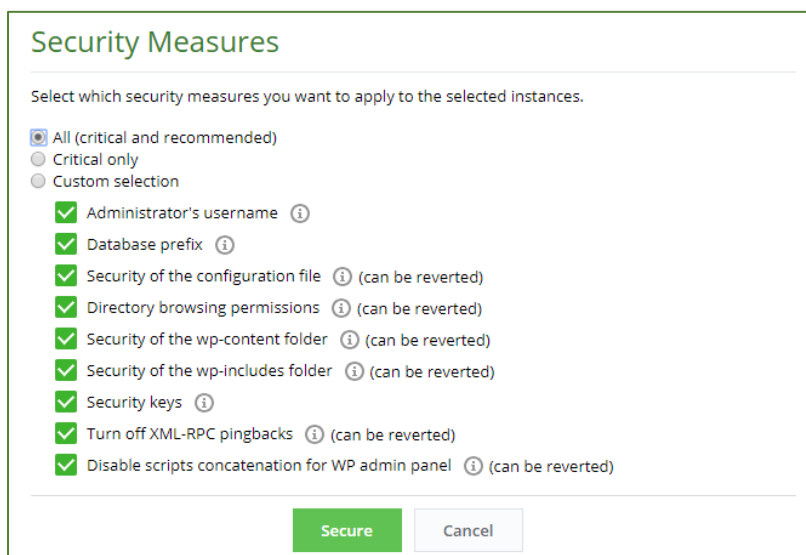
After installation of your WordPress instance, click “Security”.



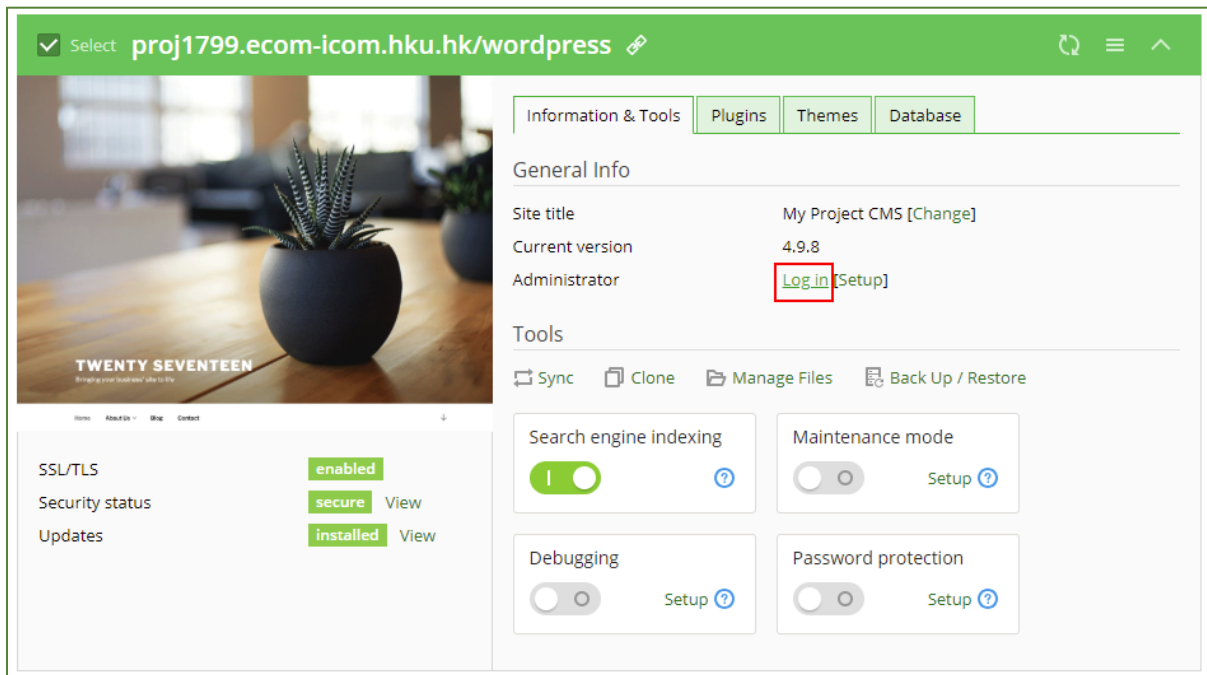
Then check your WordPress instance and click “Secure”.



Select “All (critical and recommended)” and click “Secure”.



Finally, click “Log in” to configure your WordPress instance, upload images and media files, customize the layout and update the contents of your website.



For more information on using WordPress, you may refer to these websites:

- <https://docs.plesk.com/en-US/onyx/administrator-guide/website-management/wordpress-toolkit.73391/#o78674>
- https://codex.wordpress.org/WordPress_Lessons

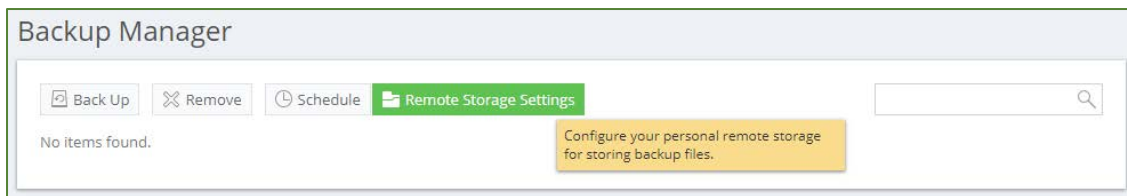
Backup Your Files

It is very important to back up the files of your project website by yourselves. The MSc Programme Office only has server level backup. In the unlikely event that the system clashes by any incident, only the whole server and users’ files will be restored back to a certain moment in the past. In other words, there is no file-based restoration service for individual users.

First, click “Backup Manager”.



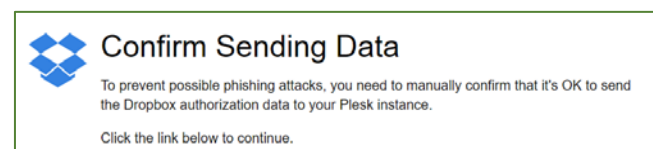
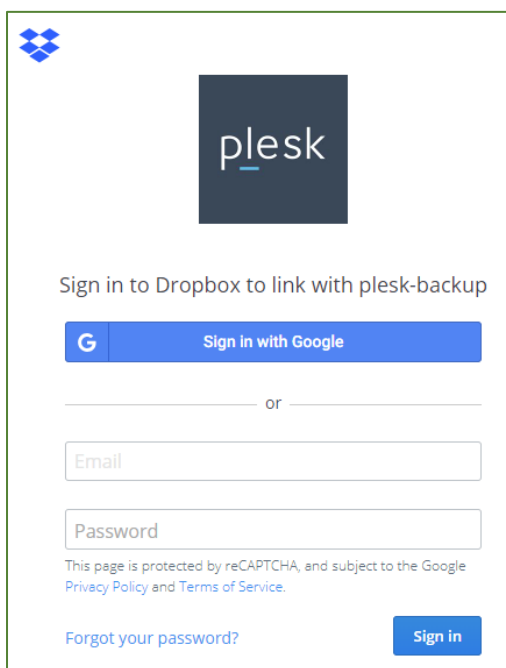
Click "Remote Storage Settings".



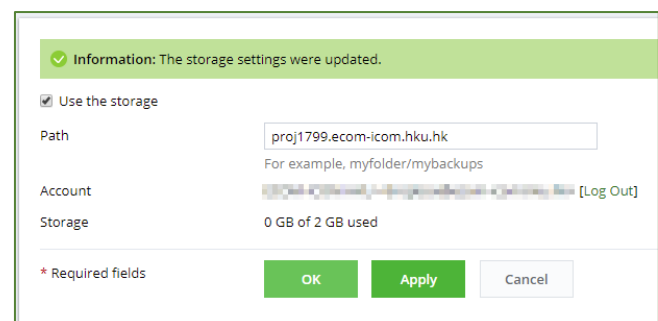
To back up your files, you'll need a Dropbox account or FTP account.

To setup Dropbox storage, you are required to provide the account information to login Dropbox and create the remote backup storage.

Click the link to confirm sending data.

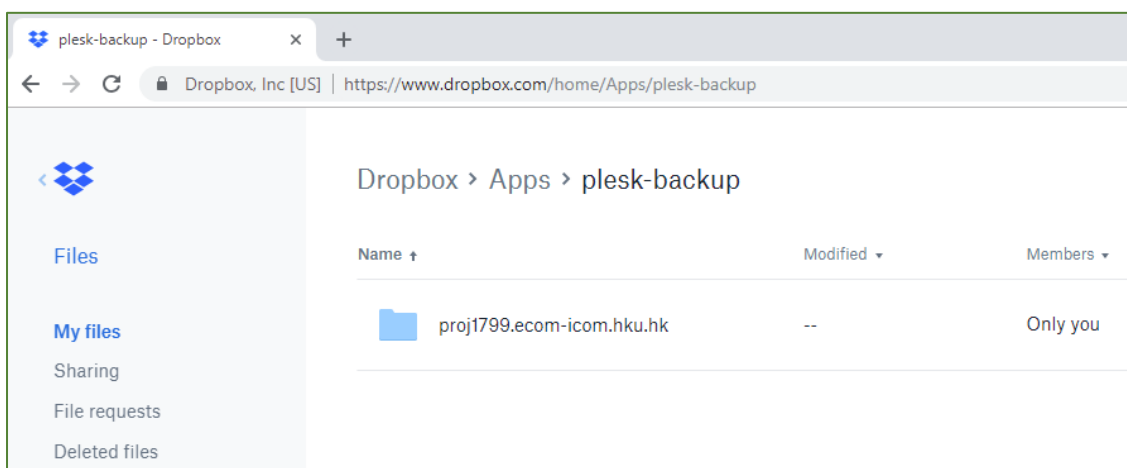


Click "OK".

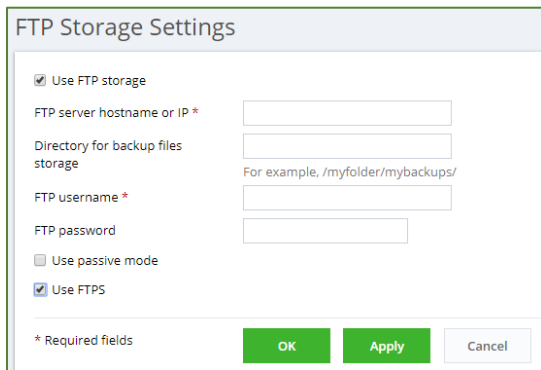


Note: To remove the Dropbox settings, click "Log Out".

Open the URL <https://www.dropbox.com/>. You can now find a folder created under "Dropbox > Apps > plesk-backup" for backup of your website. Remember to logout Dropbox.



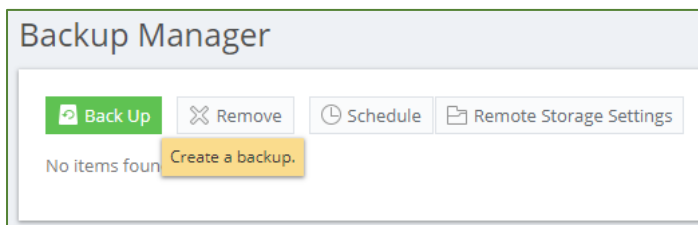
You can also use your own FTP service as the remote storage. But if your FTP server do not support FTPS secured connection, do not use FTP Storage for backup.



The screenshot shows the 'FTP Storage Settings' dialog box. It contains the following elements:

- Use FTP storage
- FTP server hostname or IP * (text input field)
- Directory for backup files storage (text input field) with a note: 'For example, /myfolder/mybackups/'
- FTP username * (text input field)
- FTP password (text input field)
- Use passive mode
- Use FTPS
- * Required fields (text)
- OK (green button)
- Apply (green button)
- Cancel (grey button)

After setting up remote storage, click “Backup” and then “Ok”.



The screenshot shows the 'Backup Manager' interface. It features a toolbar with the following buttons:

- Back Up (green button)
- Remove (grey button)
- Schedule (grey button)
- Remote Storage Settings (grey button)

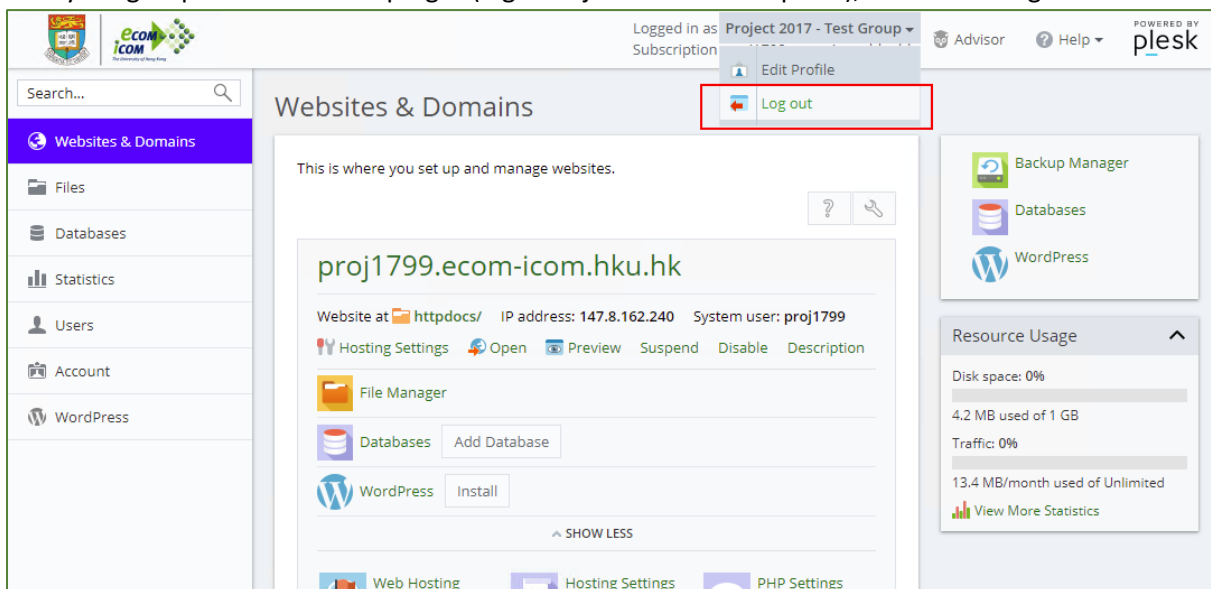
Below the toolbar, it displays 'No items found' and a yellow button labeled 'Create a backup.'

If you would like to use “Schedule” in the “Backup Manager”, only schedule the task on any weekdays from 9pm to 11pm.

Log Out

Finally, remember to log out the administrative panel.

Click your group name on the top right (e.g. “Project 2017 – Group 99”), then click “Log Out”



The screenshot shows the Plesk administrative panel. At the top right, the user is logged in as 'Project 2017 - Test Group'. A dropdown menu is open, showing 'Edit Profile' and 'Log out' (highlighted with a red box). The main content area is titled 'Websites & Domains' and shows details for a website at 'proj1799.ecom-icom.hku.hk'. The right sidebar contains 'Backup Manager', 'Databases', 'WordPress', and 'Resource Usage' (showing 0% disk space, 4.2 MB used of 1 GB, and 0% traffic).