This year’s lab development plans
The latest plans for the enhancements to the University’s open-access computing labs over the summer vacation have been published in the ‘Future Developments’ section of EUCSinfo, at http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/new.html

While the document describes most of the likely options which will take place, the plans have not been finalised and there is still time for any feedback to be considered. The planned timetable is shown in an appendix, but we emphasise that the dates are current estimates and are under regular review. It is also possible, of course, that the timetable could be affected by technical problems encountered at the point of implementation.

The University’s C&IT Committee (formerly the Director’s Advisory Group, DAG) has supported our request that departmental course organisers should inform Computing Services of their teaching requirements in time for us to include these in the lab software build which will take place in June 2000. We realise this may be difficult for some academic staff, but it is the only way we can guarantee to have a consistent set-up, tested on all different hardware configurations, by the start of the new session. Obviously, once a release is set up in all labs, we would consider any late requests to see if they could be incorporated without compromising the released system, but there can be no guarantee of implementing such late requests.

Please send any feedback to Christine Rees (email C.Rees@ed.ac.uk).

Andrew McKendrick (EUCS)

The new email service
The latest progress report on the enhancement of the University’s email service, including the move to the IMAP protocol, is in the ‘Future Developments’ section of EUCSinfo, at http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/new.html

New servers are being installed to handle staff and student email, and new email clients have been chosen for the open-access computing labs (Pegasus for Windows PCs, Outlook Express for Macs). Mail clients being investigated for general use include Outlook, Outlook Express and Netscape Communicator. The new mail servers will be introduced over the summer.

Keith Farvis (EUCS)

Computing Services alerts
The EUCS Web site – EUCSinfo – has a ‘Service Alerts’ section containing information about scheduled interruptions to lab, computing, network and other services, and progress reports during unscheduled breaks in service.

Mailing lists are available if you would like to receive notifications by email: see the section ‘Receiving alert notification by email’ at http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/alerts/

Graeme Wood (EUCS)

Building faults online
A new online system for reporting building faults came into operation in May, enabling the Works Division to operate more efficiently, and allowing any staff to check on the progress of any building fault report. The new service is at http://www.ebis.estates.ed.ac.uk/repairs.htm; click on the ‘Access to Repairline...’ link to look up an existing fault, or ‘Repairs & Defects...’ to find out how to become an authorised representative and fault-reporter for your building.

Angus Currie (Estates and Buildings)

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Enclosed with this issue:
Software Distributed by Computing Services
Major hardware theft

The University has experienced the downside of being one of Europe’s major academic computing centres. During May, thieves broke into EUCS premises at The King’s Buildings to steal critical components from computers housed there. Local MIS and Library services were affected, along with various pan-European research collaborations.

The recovery strategy implemented by EUCS was able to get several of the services restored within 24 hours, although operating at reduced capacity utilising lower specification equipment from other systems. Security has always been a priority, but is now being further reviewed to take account of the possibility that professional thieves are being hired to ‘steal to order’.

The University has a difficult task in balancing access for its students and staff against the vulnerability of expensive equipment. Your own personal computer is less at risk now than a few years ago when memory and processor chips were rare and expensive, but unpleasant things do still happen – and while your computer can be replaced, information is often the more valuable commodity, and should always be carefully backed up.

We all need to be vigilant, and report suspicious behaviour or incidents to the University’s security department (tel 502257, or in a real emergency, simply 2222).  

Brian Gilmore (EUCS)

Were you smitten by the love bug?

PC users throughout the world are still recovering from the effects of the ‘VBS worm’ sent out into the Internet – accidentally or deliberately – by someone in the Philippines.

As soon as it learned of the problem with this message, with its hallmark ‘ILOVEYOU’ subject line, EUCS set the local mail server to intercept further arrivals before they could do any harm (and trapped several hundred this way).

This filtering can only be set up once a rogue message has been identified, however, and the ‘ILOVEYOU’ message is only one of several hundred items of ‘malware’ that are released every month. All computer users should take great care to protect their work against this and the ‘copycat’ worms it has sparked off. As always, please do not run any unknown email attachment or software unless you are absolutely sure of its origin and safety.

If you don’t use antivirus software, you should! The University has a site licence for Network Associates VirusScan, and you can find out how to install it at http://mft.ucs.ed.ac.uk/pcvirus/avsoftware.html

There is general advice about junk email at http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/fmd/unix/docs/mail/junk/advice.html

Garry Scobie (EUCS)

Incident Response Team

The ever increasing incidence of what can generally be called ‘hacking attacks’ against the University network and attached systems, or exploiting vulnerabilities in those systems to attack others on the Internet, has led Computing Services to set up a more formal system to handle such incidents.

The IRT (Incident Response Team) activities will be taken on by the Network Support Team under Jim Leitch. This will include logging all suspected incidents, liaising with the national CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) and the University’s Audit and Security Officer, ensuring that incidents get investigated by the appropriate personnel and ensuring that those outwith Edinburgh who report incidents get a timely response.

Normally incidents are reported from external sources, or from network traffic monitoring. If however, you suspect that your system has been attacked, then you should in the first instance report it to your local computing officer or EUCS Support Team (to eliminate simple system faults); they will then inform the IRT (irt@ed.ac.uk or tel 507750) if they suspect the system has been compromised.

Scott Currie (EUCS)

PC purchasing

The latest news on the national PC tender (mentioned in April’s issue of BiTs) is that it is likely to go ahead in March 2001. It will be for PCs only, not Macs or UNIX boxes (Sun/SG/Compaq). Meantime, Edinburgh’s tenders for PC and Apple are due for return by 30th May; so far there have been 28 responses from PC suppliers and three from Apple suppliers.

George Reid (Procurement)

Scotsys

Scotsys has dropped “Computers” from its name to reflect its broader interests and services, and revamped its Web site, at http://www.scotsys.co.uk/

While these general pages show the full range of its public services, the information specifically for Edinburgh University is not readily accessible from here. You can reach it through the EUCSinfo or Procurement pages, of course, or go direct to http://www.scotsys.co.uk/education/prices/edinburgh/ednotes.html

Maureen Dolan (Scotsys)

SELLIC

The May issue of news from the SELLIC project is now available, at http://www.sellic.ed.ac.uk/updates/update0500.html

Wilma Alexander (SELLIC)
Oracle Campus Agreement

MIS has signed a Campus Agreement to license Oracle software for the University, permitting academic and administrative use with an unlimited number of users. This agreement allows the University to retain its well-proven Oracle database platform and to extend access to it. As more services move to Web-based delivery the numbers of users are growing rapidly, and without this agreement it would not be possible to meet user demands within existing financial constraints.

If you would like to take advantage of the agreement please look at http://www.mis.ed.ac.uk/services/ or contact Mark Ritchie, the Infrastructure Manager in MIS.

Simon Marsden (MIS)

Microsoft Windows

The Microsoft Windows operating system first arrived in the University in 1985, and several versions are now in use. A beginner’s guide to each version, and its EUCS support status, is given at http://www.uces.ed.ac.uk/isd/lss/ol/os/windows.html

Jenny Arnott (EUCS)

GENSTAT and GLIM site licence

EUCS now has site licences for the statistical packages GENSTAT and GLIM.

GENSTAT is a highly flexible and powerful statistical programming language. GLIM is designed to fit generalised linear models. More information is on EUCSinfo at http://www.uces.ed.ac.uk/isd/lss/ol/socsci/stats/

Both packages are available for Windows 95/98/NT and Solaris, at a cost of £50 p.a. per copy each. Please send orders to EUCS Purchasing, JCMB, The King’s Buildings.

Charlotte Moon (EUCS)

Computer-based learning

EUCS is providing several training packages which run on Windows PCs to enable people to learn to use a range of common applications from their own desktop computers. For each title you simply download a self-extracting file from an EUCS server, then run a setup file to install the package on your PC.

The range includes Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint. You can find them by looking up the package names in the EUCSinfo A-Z index, or by going direct to ftp://ftp.mft.uces.ed.ac.uk/iss/

Jenny Arnott (EUCS)

Teaching with Numeric Data

In both its local and national roles, the Data Library is leading a JISC-funded project to examine problems and solutions in supporting the Use of Numeric Data in Learning and Teaching, with broad participation from national datacentres, local support staff, and academic data users.

Numeric datasets are under-used in teaching and learning, so the project aims to generate knowledge about good practice, and pitfalls faced by teachers, learners and support staff wishing to use national data resources. Partners include the Data Library and EDINA, the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the LSE, The Data Archive and MIMAS.

A Task Force has been established, made up of experienced academic users and supporters from various disciplines. A sample survey of Higher Education departments will be conducted, case studies will be developed and put on a Web site, and a Mailbase discussion list has been established to promote discussion of problems and solutions.

More information about the project is on the Web at http://datailib.ed.ac.uk/projects/datateach.html

Robin Rice (EUCS)

AHRB bid success for EdVEC

EdVEC – the University’s Virtual Environment Centre – has won major funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) for a collaborative project with the Edinburgh College of Art to explore the use of virtual environment technology in the applied arts. The grant is worth a total of £340k and is to run for four years.

The focus will be the development of ‘haptic’ tools, which provide tactile as well as visual feedback, for applied artists such as jewellery makers and ceramicists. The eventual aim is to develop completely new ways of working using virtual spaces and materials. The proposal was well received academically, being attributed the highest A+ rating and awarded highest priority for funding.

Roy Middleton, Mark Wright (EUCS)

Electronic imaging & Visual Arts

EVA 2000 Scotland, Edinburgh, 26-29 July 2000

This is the 11th Anniversary Year of EVA Conferences, ‘the foremost European Electronic Imaging Events in the Visual Arts’. The venues are Abden House and the National Museums of Scotland.

The main aim of EVA 2000 Scotland is to provide a forum for the user, supplier and scientific research communities to meet and exchange experiences, plans and ideas. Participants will receive up-to-date news on new EC and international cultural initiatives and projects.

Further details are available from the organisers, VASARI UK (tel 01252 653049, fax: 01252 679386, email: jamesrhemsely@cix.co.uk), or on the Web at http://vasar.co.uk/eva/scotland/index.htm

Bruce Royan (SCRAN)
The Mondex smartcard

The University and Bank of Scotland have decided not to continue the joint project under which a Mondex electronic purse facility is provided on smart cards issued to students at the University.

The University retains an active interest in smart cards and electronic cash, though, and is continuing to look at ways in which they may become a feature of University life in the future, as costs fall with the wider acceptance of chip cards. As well as new cards for students in October, the plan is to have cards for staff next April, and for all visitors from the following October.

Michael Anderson (Vice Principal)

Paying for printing in the open-access computing labs

A new self-service payment point has been installed in the Main Library foyer, next to the lifts, which allows users to pay into their printing accounts any time during Library opening hours. The machine accepts the following coins: 10p, 20p, 50p, £1 and £2.

This facility is in addition to the existing staffed payment points:
- Appleton Tower level 4, 8am-4pm and 6-8:30pm, Monday to Friday
- Main Library EUCS Reception, 9am-4:15pm, Monday to Friday
- KB Centre level 2, 8am-9:30pm, Monday to Friday

(Note that this method only covers printing in the labs: payment for EUCS service printers such as vc23 and ps15 is not covered by it.)

Norman Douglas (EUCS)

DIY in the Library

The Library has installed three self-issue machines which enable readers to issue and renew books without going to the service desk. The machines provide clear, animated instructions on a colour screen, and having scanned the barcodes on the reader’s library card and the book(s) to be issued, they desensitise the book security strips and print out an itemised receipt which includes the due date of each item.

Two machines have been installed in the Main Library and one in the Darwin Library at The King’s Buildings. Their use will be closely monitored, as it is envisaged that this will be the start of an ongoing programme, over some years, to introduce self-issue to other parts of EUL.

Pam Clouston (EUL)

Note: Change cannot be given for use in this machine by either Library or Computing Services staff.
Software Distributed by Computing Services

This leaflet contains information about the software packages distributed by Computing Services. We can supply these packages because there is an Edinburgh University site licence (code SL), or because of special purchase arrangements (code SP), or because the software is in the public domain (code PD). If you have any of the software on this list, you should note that, just as with software bought commercially, you may not make and pass on copies to anyone unless you have permission to do so. Making copies without permission infringes the conditions of most of the agreements through which this software is supplied, and could lead to the licence being withdrawn.

Some products can only be used on University-owned computers, while others can be purchased or rented for use on your home computer. The latter are indicated with a letter P beside the package name. Different pricing and purchasing arrangements may apply to personal copies.

Details of software and hardware requirements, and of the conditions under which the software can be used, are available from the contacts shown. Where no name is given, please contact:

EUCS Purchasing  tel: 0131 650 4942
EUCS, JCMB, The King’s Buildings  email: EUCS.Purchasing@ed.ac.uk

All prices include VAT, and are per copy unless otherwise stated.

We can obtain competitive prices for many other software items also: for a quote, please contact EUCS Purchasing.

Charlotte Moon (Software Co-ordinator, EUCS)

Microsoft Select Scheme  SP

This is a special purchase arrangement with Microsoft, which covers a range of popular Microsoft products. Full price and ordering information is available online, at

http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/tsd/software/Special/msoft_menu.shtml

FileMaker Volume Licence  SP

This is a special purchase arrangement with FileMaker (formerly Claris), which covers FileMaker and Claris HomePage. Full price and ordering information is available online, at

http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/tsd/software/Special/claris.shtml

Cherwell Frame Agreement  SP

This is a special purchase arrangement with Cherwell, for selected products including EndNote, ChemDraw and ModelMaker. Full price and ordering information is available online, at

http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/tsd/software/Special/cherwell.shtml

Corel Academic Licence  SP

Special packs and licence-only copies for a range of Corel products. Full price and ordering information is available online, at

http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/tsd/software/Special/wp.shtml

Adobe Education Purchase Plan  SP

Flexible purchase of media, manuals and licences for selected Adobe products. Full price and ordering information is available online, at

http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/tsd/software/Special/adobe.shtml

SPSS Science Products Deal  SP

Purchase or rental options for a selection of specialised packages from SPSS, including Systat. Full details are online at

http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/tsd/software/Special/spss_sci.shtml
CAL

Learning to Learn SL
Self-teaching package covering exam and study techniques.
Platforms: Windows
Contact: Christine Rees, EUCS (tel: 503335)

Communications

eXceed P SL
An X-server for PCs.
Platforms: Windows 3.11/95/NT
Price: Windows 95 and NT — £50;
Windows 3.11 — £60;
Licence-only copies — £20.
Documentation: From supplier

LAN Workplace Pro P SL
Allows PCs on a Novell Netware fileserver or EdLAN to communicate using Telnet with Edinburgh’s mainframes or world-wide.
Platforms: Windows 95/NT, DOS
Price: £50 p.a. per department, or £20 per copy.
Documentation: EUCS Sales Points

Data analysis & extraction

Oxford Molecular Software SL
A range of packages for molecular modelling and structural analysis is available, plus a protein database.
Please ask for a current list.
Platforms: Various
Price: POA
Documentation: From supplier

SASPC91 SL
For the interrogation and analysis of the 1991 Census Small Area and Local Base statistics.
Platforms: DOS
Price: £50 per copy, plus £25 p.a.
Documentation: Included

Database software

OpenIngres SL
Relational database management.
Platforms: Sun
Price: POA
Documentation: EUCS Sales Points

ORACLE SL
Relational database management.
Platforms: Sun
Price: POA
Documentation: From supplier

Geographic and mapping

ARC/INFO P SL
Geographical information system (GIS).
Platforms: Windows, Various
Price: £70 p.a.
Documentation: From supplier

ArcView P SL
Enables exploration of geographic databases in various formats.
Platforms: Windows, Sun, Mac
Price: £70 p.a. for ArcView.
Add-ons Spatial Analyst, Network Analyst and 3D Analyst £20 each p.a.
(Sun & Windows only).
Documentation: From supplier

Graphics

AVS SL
Comprehensive 3D scientific visualisation package.
Platforms: Various
Price: POA
Documentation: From supplier

AVS Express SL
Comprehensive 3D scientific visualisation package.
Platforms: Windows 95/NT, Irix, Digital Unix, Linux, Sun
Price: POA
Documentation: From supplier

Deltagraph SL
Graphics package for Windows and Mac.
Platforms: Mac, Windows 95
Price: Licence £30, disks £50
Documentation: Manuals from supplier – POA

Imagine SL
Remote sense image processing for spatial/GIS applications.
Platforms: Various
Price: POA
Documentation: From supplier

Imagine Orthomax SL
Add-on to Imagine for basic photogrammetry projects.
Platforms: Various
Price: POA
Documentation: From supplier

PV Wave SP
Data analysis and visualisation.
Platforms: Sun
Price: POA
Documentation: From supplier

Toolmaster/Uniras SL
Technical presentation and data analysis application.
Platforms: Irix, Digital Unix, Sun
Documentation: From supplier
Interactive image manipulation program for X Windows.
Platforms: Sun
Price: Free
Documentation: Included with product
Contact: Download directly from ftp.cis.upenn.edu

Mathematics
Maple V
Mathematics package which can perform many symbolic and numeric calculations; also has a library of functions for visualisation and programming.
Platforms: Sun, Various
Price: £25 p.a. for departments. £25 one-off for students and staff requiring home use.
Documentation: From supplier

Miscellaneous
Inside Information
Monthly index of articles about PC software and hardware in a range of popular computing magazines.
Platforms: Windows
Price: £35 p.a.

Programming languages
EPC Fortran 77
Validated native-code Fortran 77 compiler with full support for the ANSI X3.9-1978 Standard.
Platforms: Sun
Price: £75 per copy, plus £15 p.a. maintenance
Documentation: EUCS Sales Points

EPC Fortran 90SL
A full implementation of the new ISO standard.
Platforms: Sun
Price: £500 per department, plus £75 p.a. maintenance
Documentation: From supplier

Salford FTN95 compiler
Fortran 95 compiler for Windows 32-bit computers.
Platforms: Windows 95
Price: £250 p.a. per department, or £50 per copy.
Documentation: From supplier

Sun Products
Sun compilers and tools.
Platforms: Sun
Price: Free, but must have Sun maintenance contract.
Documentation: From supplier

NAG Fortran 90 Library
Fortran 90 subroutine library.
Platforms: Sun
Price: £50
Documentation: From supplier

NAG Fortran Library
Comprehensive collection of Fortran 77 routines for the solution of numerical and statistical problems.
Platforms: Windows 95/NT, Digital Unix, Sun
Price: £50 p.a.
Documentation: From supplier

NAG Graphics Library
Library of Fortran 77 graphics routines.
Platforms: Unix
Price: £15 p.a.
Documentation: From supplier

Statistics
BMDP
Comprehensive set of statistical analysis programs.
Platforms: Sun
Price: £75 p.a.
Documentation: EUCS Sales Points

Clustan Graphics
Data clustering program.
Platforms: Windows 95
Price: CD-ROM £10
Documentation: From supplier, £5 inc p&p

DataDesk
Data analysis package suitable for a wide range of statistical analyses.
Platforms: Mac, Windows 95
Price: £75 licence plus CD-ROM, £50 licence only
Documentation: From supplier, £19.50
Genstat  SL  
GENSTAT is a highly flexible and powerful statistical programming language.
Platforms:  Sun, Windows  
Price: £50 p.a. per copy  
Documentation: From supplier

GLIM  SL  
Interactive statistical modelling and data manipulation.
Platforms:  Sun, Windows 95  
Price: £50 p.a. per copy  
Documentation: From supplier

Minitab  P  SL  
Easy to use statistical analysis.
Platforms:  Windows 95, Mac  
Price: Windows: £75 per copy; Mac: £55 per copy  
Documentation: Included

SAS  SL  
Data access, management, analysis and presentation (including graphics).
Platforms:  Sun, Windows  
Documentation: From supplier

SPSS  SL  
Data analysis package suitable for a wide range of statistical analyses.
Platforms:  Sun, Mac, Windows 95  
Price: £50 p.a. per copy  
Documentation: From supplier – £35

SPSS additional modules  P  SL  
Additional modules for use with SPSS (Amos, Answer Tree, Data Entry, TextSmart, Trial Run).
Platforms:  Windows 95  
Price: £20 p.a. each or £50 p.a. for all five  
Documentation: From supplier

Text editors
MicroEmacs  P  PD  
Full-screen text editor, also available on most other systems in the University.
Platforms:  Sun, DOS  
Price: Free (please supply a formatted disk)  
Documentation: EUCS Sales Points  
Contact: Keith Nicol, EUCS (tel 504926)

VUED  P  PD  
Front-end for MicroEmacs to allow the use of menus and function keys.
Platforms:  Sun, DOS  
Price: Free (please supply a formatted disk)  
Documentation: EUCS Sales Points  
Contact: Keith Nicol, EUCS (tel 504926)

Utilities
Lasergraphics WinRascol BLL generator driver  SL  
Allows any Windows application to produce a .BLL file for the Lasergraphics 35mm camera in Medical Illustration.
Platforms:  Windows 95  
Price: £20  
Documentation: Included

VirusScan  P  SL  
Anti-virus software.
Platforms:  DOS, Windows 95/NT, OS/2, Mac  
Price: Free to EU staff and students  
Documentation: EUCS Sales Points