

## New EUCS training suite opened



Vice-Principal Michael Anderson opened the new EUCS training suite at 19 Buccleuch Place on 24th January, and in doing so paid tribute to the cooperative work of several University organisations and subcontractors in refurbishing the premises in such a short time. (The former EUCS training suite, on Level 3 of Appleton Tower, was handed over to Informatics in mid-December following the fire which destroyed their building on South Bridge.)

The suite comprises four training rooms, two on the ground floor (with space for 12 attendees each) and two in the basement (with space for 8 and 9 attendees), coffee rooms and office space.

In addition to the suite of rooms at 19 Buccleuch Place, EUCS has a training room at The King's Buildings (Room 209a, EUCS, JCMB).

A new schedule of training courses covering the period February–September has just come into operation. Please refer to <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/iss/courses/>

*John Murison (EUCS)*



*Three of the EUCS tutors who were present at the opening: Beth Egan, Crystal Webster, Veronica O'Malley*

## INSPEC presentation

The Library is hosting a talk on INSPEC, a key research tool for physics, computing, and electrical engineering, on **Tuesday 4th February** from 2–3pm in JCMB Lecture Theatre A. Eva Dimmock, from the Institution of Electrical Engineering, will demonstrate how to search this premier research database effectively. The talk is open to all.

INSPEC provides access to international scientific and technical literature from 1969 to the present, and is available to University staff and students via Library Online (<http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/>). For further information on INSPEC please contact Jenny Flemington ([J.Flemington@ed.ac.uk](mailto:J.Flemington@ed.ac.uk)) or Nancy Sprague ([Nancy.Sprague@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Nancy.Sprague@ed.ac.uk)).

*Nancy Sprague (Library)*

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## January BITS

Apologies to Paul Norris, whose item within the article 'Perspectives from Data Library users' in last month's *BITS* was misprinted. It should have been as follows:

### Crime and economic growth

I used the Data Library to investigate the relationship between the level of crime and the level of economic growth as part of my undergraduate degree in Politics & Economics. The Data Library was able to provide me with access to several of the large-scale cross-national data sources commonly used in published social science research, for example the International Crime Victim Survey and the World Bank Development Indicators. Once I had access to the datasets the help and advice of the Data Library staff quickly enabled me to match the available data to the questions I was attempting to answer.

*Paul Norris (Social Policy)*

## EUCS courses in computing

Booking on-line for the computing courses organised by EUCS has been available for some time for University staff. I am pleased to report that Postgraduates are now able to book on-line also, and are encouraged to do so. Please see <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/iss/courses/> and follow the **book on-line** link (under 'Making a booking').

The training schedule suffered some disruption in January, as we moved from Appleton Tower to 19 Buccleuch Place, with some courses being moved to our training room at The King's Buildings (Room 2009a, EUCS) and some regrettably having to be cancelled. However, as reported in this issue of *BITs*, we are again up and running and are looking forward to offering a full schedule of courses.

As always, any suggestions and comments you might have, particularly for new course topics, are welcome.

*John Murison (EUCS)*

## Using video in Education

**21 March, Paterson's Land, Holyrood Road, 9:30am–3:15pm**

This is the last in a series of six workshops offered at various venues in the UK and organised by the DIVERSE video project, with central funding. The aim of each workshop is to explore the effective use of video in learning and teaching, as well as future applications. Simple production methods, the use of off-air and other ready sources, pedagogy in videoconferencing, and lessons from past research will all be covered.

The workshop will also disseminate outcomes of the DIVERSE TLTP project in some of the case studies. The workshops are supported by the LTSN Generic Centre and the Learning Technology Support Service. There is no charge, and coffee, tea and lunch will be provided.

Who should attend? Those involved with learning and teaching and/or C&IT, including academics, library staff, learning technologists, teaching and learning services, student learning support and technicians.

To register please email [ltss@glos.ac.uk](mailto:ltss@glos.ac.uk). Places are limited and thus early application is advised. All other workshops have been oversubscribed, with waiting lists in case of withdrawals. Consequently, if after registering you find that you cannot attend, please inform the organisers *immediately*.

*Nora Mogey (MALTS)*

## Statistics Helpdesk for Undergraduates

Computing Services is running a Statistics Helpdesk this term for students with problems using a computer for statistics or data analysis. Visits are by appointment: please see <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/ungrad/> for details.

*Noel Millar (EUCS)*

## E-Learning support at KB

*What is this VLE business anyway?*

*How can you help me do automated marking?*

*Where would I go to get help making videos of lab processes to put on my Web site?*

MALTS staff are here to help deal with questions like these as well as more specific questions about teaching applications of particular pieces of software. To help Science and Engineering staff, MALTS is running a consultancy service pilot this term, based on the KB campus. MALTS staff will be available in the Graphics and Multimedia Lab in JCMB, once a week for six weeks from 26th February.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of e-Learning with someone from MALTS, check the schedule below and contact Wilma Alexander at [W.Alexander@ed.ac.uk](mailto:W.Alexander@ed.ac.uk) or telephone 516543 to select a suitable time.

Wednesday 26th February	2:00pm–4:30pm
Tuesday 4th March	9:30am–12 Noon
Wednesday 12th March	2:00pm–4:30pm
Tuesday 18th March	9:30 am–12 Noon
Wednesday 26th March	2:00pm–4:30pm
Tuesday 1st April	9:30 am–12 Noon

*Wilma Alexander (MALTS)*

## Graphics & Multimedia Resource Centre

New Year's resolution flagging? Keep the momentum up!

You can get support for, and access to, an ever-growing range of digital technologies in the Graphics & Multimedia Resource Centre. If you have been contemplating an interesting project, do get in touch with us to find out what we can do to help.

In particular, we are developing support for e-Teaching and e-Learning, in co-operation with MALTS—see the article above.

As a reminder, here are some of our newer facilities:

- Bulk data storage; full-quality video on disk: DVD-R and DVD-RW recording are now available.
- Data transfers to and from digital cameras and laptops (Windows and Macintosh): via memory card/stick and 1Gbyte IBM Microdrive.
- New software: Bryce (3D landscapes), Painter (artwork), InDesign (desktop publishing), Flash (Web animation), and more.
- Equipment for DIY use: digital camera, DV camcorder, colour calibrator for scanners/printers/monitors.

The Resource Centre is Room 3901 in the James Clerk Maxwell Building at The King's Buildings, open 9.30am to 5.30pm on weekdays. Please telephone 504965 or e-mail [graphics\\_support@ed.ac.uk](mailto:graphics_support@ed.ac.uk). Our Web page at <http://graphics.ed.ac.uk/gmrc/> has details, maps, and a how-to-do-it page of technical advice for various media technologies.

*John Wexler (EUCS)*

## eProcurement update

- The University pilot of eProcurement for laboratory supplies is underway. Specifications have been agreed with SciQuest for a Web hosted SelectSite catalogue and we hope that many of our top 20 lab suppliers will participate. It is beginning in a small way in the following Schools: Biomedical and Clinical Laboratory Sciences, Chemistry and Biological Sciences, and can be tested by up to 1,000 users. Some other Schools have already expressed interest. Training is planned for the end of January for our three project administrators in these Schools and for key Finance and Procurement staff.
- A pilot of online ordering of stationery and computer consumables has been evaluated in the Procurement Office and is now being tested in Chemistry and Biological Sciences. It is in its first month and is going well so far.

- The eTendering pilot is testing incoming tender documents in a parallel run process. There are some audit questions to answer and a review will take place shortly before moving onto the next stage.

### Inviting tenders just got faster!

*We issued two advertisements inviting tenders and got two responses within three hours!*

One of the standard complaints about the procurement process is that doing it right takes time. The University Procurement Office uses PROJECT, a Web-based tool for issuing advertisements: for major tenders into the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC alerts suppliers across the EU to opportunities over £150k); and for local tenders (over £25k) into various publications via BiP Ltd.

Since 23rd December 2002, BiP Ltd

have automated the process using a new gateway, which speeds up the time to get an advertisement published in OJEC; this has now been reduced to 2–3 days, instead of 5–7 days previously. (The fax system in use up to last year took up to 12 days!) The new system also speeds up the ability of notices to be published in other journals and other media.

With this in mind, your Procurement Officer will be asking you ensure that Specifications/Invitations to Tender are ready to issue before sending out a notice, as the process is now so fast! We are also testing a related tool to receive electronic responses from tenderers; an article reporting on this is planned for March or April.

For more information please contact George Sked, telephone 650 8063 or email [George.Sked@ed.ac.uk](mailto:George.Sked@ed.ac.uk).

*Karen Bowman (Procurement)*

## Spam

A member of staff has passed on an email sent to her which begins as follows:

“Dear Sir/Madam,

We are currently updating our database, and *name@ed.ac.uk* appears to be opted in. We will be selling the opt-in database from the end of January. If you wish have your email address removed simply call *telephone number* and we will remove it before it gets sold.”

There are a number of things to say about this:

- The recipient took this to mean that someone in the University had allowed her email address to be copied from an EUCS database to a database which was to go on sale. This is *not* the case: the University does not and would not pass on staff email addresses in this way.
- ‘Spammers’ (producers of junk mail) harvest addresses from all over the

place: newsgroups, mailing lists, Web pages, conference proceedings... the list is endless.

- The message itself is just another way of collecting addresses for spamming purposes, and should be ignored. *Never reply to spammers*—it only tells them that your email address is genuine and in use. Computing Services puts significant effort into reducing spam. We are aware that spam levels recently have been increasing dramatically; however, new tools to manage spam are currently being readied for service and will be announced in next month’s *BITs*.

*Graeme Wood (EUCS)*

## Athens security scam

Athens is a national authentication service which controls access to online subscription services. It is used to provide staff and students with access to a wide range of external databases

and electronic journals. (See <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/resources/databases/athensres.shtml> for details.)

The following message has been received from the Athens team at EduServ:

“We have received reports of users who have been asked to supply their Athens usernames and passwords to a group purporting to be from Athens.

“This is not genuine. It is a systematic attempt to breach the security of Athens by collecting genuine Athens usernames and passwords from unsuspecting users. Please advise your users not to supply these details to this query and indeed never supply their password to anyone. The Athens team will never ask for your password, and never contacts users directly.” Please inform the Athens helpdesk ([athenshelp@ed.ac.uk](mailto:athenshelp@ed.ac.uk)) if you receive such a message. Include the message in your email if possible.

*Simon Bains (Library)*

## National e-Science Centre Open Day

The National e-Science Centre held its first Open Day on **17th January**. The event was well attended by other University departments and postgraduate students. The day began with short talks from the Centre Director and Manager. These described e-Science, the UK and international e-Science programmes and the work of NeSC. They also explained the role of the e-Science Institute in providing a flexible meeting space for the UK e-Science community.

Throughout the afternoon, online demonstrations and posters showed examples of projects such as MouseAtlas, Space Junk Objects, Astrophysical Virtual Observatory, and the eDIKT project. There was also an opportunity to see the Access Grid in action, an Internet multi-site meeting system, which is used for face-to-face discussions and meetings with other scientists around the world.

Forthcoming events in February at the National e-Science Centre:

3rd Feb	Registration Authority Training Course
11th–12th Feb	OGSAI-DAI Training Course
13th Feb	Resource Management and Scheduling for the GRID
18th Feb	The GRID—from Metacomputing to Collaboratories
19th–20th Feb	Advanced Grid Engine Training Course
24th–27th Feb	Creating Grid Services using the Globus Toolkit 3 and Java
28th Feb	Scottish Hoppers Meeting
28th Feb	Mary Cartwright Lecture & Meeting of the London Mathematical Society

For further information on our activities and to register for events please visit our Web site: <http://www.nesc.ac.uk/>

*Gill Maddy (National e-Science Centre)*

## Plagiarism: a new JISC Service

As a result of the Plagiarism pilot project which took place in 2000–2001, the JISC has established a Plagiarism Advisory Service based at the University of Northumbria. This service gathers together information and advice on good practice in plagiarism prevention and associated issues such as copyright, data protection and assessment and disciplinary procedures. Because of the ease of copying from Web-based documents, and a growing market for essays and “cheat” sites, many academic staff feel that plagiarism may be on the increase, and increasingly difficult to detect. The advisory service provides links to research and discussion on this topic, and to good practice guidelines for all aspects of the institution’s management of assessed work and plagiarism.

After considering a number of services, the JISC is also providing institutions with the option of using an automated plagiarism detection service. This uses complex algorithms to match written work submitted to the service against a constantly-growing data bank of items. A report highlighting parts of the work which are likely to have been copied is generated along with references to the copied works. The University of Edinburgh has not yet decided whether to sign up for this service, which must be taken in the context of appropriate preventative measures. For more information visit the Web site at [http://online.northumbria.ac.uk/faculties/art/information\\_studies/lmri/JISCPAS/site/jiscpas.asp](http://online.northumbria.ac.uk/faculties/art/information_studies/lmri/JISCPAS/site/jiscpas.asp)

We are interested in hearing your comments on the advisory service and the detection service. If you would like to discuss this please contact Wilma Alexander (email [W.Alexander@ed.ac.uk](mailto:W.Alexander@ed.ac.uk), telephone 516543).

*Wilma Alexander (MALTS)*



*Professor Malcolm Atkinson, Director of the e-Science Centre*

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