



Knowledge Management

The University-wide ranking of the Knowledge Management “must do” milestones was completed in mid-April, and the resulting top 23 milestones presented to CMG.

Not surprisingly, the priorities differed slightly between Colleges and between Support Groups, but the number one priority is clear: “Improvements are in place to the admissions, curriculum and student record services. There are improved joined up services for students, academic staff and central admin.”

A full list of the ranked milestones and an update on progress will be posted at <http://www.isg.ed.ac.uk/>
Helen Hayes (ISG)

e-learning@Edinburgh

The second annual conference on e-learning, hosted by the Principal, will take place on **27th May 2004**. The event this year will be held at The King’s Buildings campus in JCMB Lecture Theatres A, B and C. The Principal will open the conference at 9:30AM, after which there will be three parallel sessions:

- Policy and Strategy
- Learning and Teaching
- Technology

The full programme and details on registering are on the website at <http://www.e-learning.ed.ac.uk/>
Jo Hamill (ISG)

Learning at Work 2004

EUCS will be at the University’s ‘Learning at Work’ day in the Hugh Robson Building on 20th May, 12–2PM. Details are at http://www.humanresources.ed.ac.uk/development/Learning_at_Work_Day.htm
Jenny Arnott (EUCS)

MyEd pilot phase

MIS is piloting the MyEd portal throughout May, on the production infrastructure, and with a selection of functional channels.

New areas of content include channels for WISARD, WebCT and staff announcements. These will be accessible through ‘single sign on’ to MyEd via the Edinburgh Authentication Service (EASE).

Further content will include access to Human Resources’ ‘Self Service’ functions, a host of news services, and select web-based search, bookmark and weather resources.

Users customise MyEd content by choosing and arranging the specific items they want.

Over a hundred users from every College and Support Group will provide broad feedback through a simple online questionnaire. The resulting report to the Portal Steering Group will inform the service objectives of continual improvement and customer satisfaction. Our thanks to all those involved in the pilot.

Further Information is available at <http://www.eportal.mis.ed.ac.uk/>
Mark Wetton (MIS)

Last orders please!

Each Summer the EUCS Desktop Services Team builds the software environment for the open-access computing labs for the following session. As well as the Operating System, and standard applications for word-processing, email, the Web etc, this includes specialist software which Schools would like their students to be able to use in the labs.

If you need software to be provided in the open-access labs, please email desktop.team@ed.ac.uk with the details before 18th June.
Graham Newton (EUCS)

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ColdFusion User Group meeting

There will be a meeting for users of the ColdFusion service, and anyone else interested, from 12:30 to 2PM on 1st June, in the Wolfson Suite, Main Library. Topics to be covered will include the new ColdFusion development server, Fusebox 4, and writing Cold Fusion Components (CFCs).

If you would like to attend, please email cold.fusion@ed.ac.uk. For details of the service, please see <http://webhelp.ucs.ed.ac.uk/services/cfservice/>

John Smith (EUCS)



Buying PCs — and saving money

PCs are now commodity items—and significant savings would be made in buying them if the University were to standardise on a single PC vendor (and ideally product range). Some parts of the University, especially where external funds are involved, are tempted to buy whatever PC is ‘on offer’ that week, and then expect it to be made to work in the University environment. Usually the cost of getting it to work is significantly higher than the saving in the actual purchase, but of course that cost does not explicitly show up in the purchaser’s budget. Furthermore, ongoing support costs are increased if computing staff have to deal with a wide range of manufacturers and models.

Every Summer, EUCS replaces about 25% of all open-access lab PCs—those that have been in service for four years or more. The contract for this is sent for tender to the PC suppliers in the ‘Inter-regional Desktop Agreement’, and in a typical year over 300 PCs will be purchased from the successful bidder. In the tendering negotiations, EUCS stipulates that the favourable price obtained for the replacement PCs is also offered to Schools, and last year many Schools were able to take advantage of it.

In a joint initiative between EUCS and the University Procurement Office, this year’s tendering process will allow the successful bidder to become the preferred PC supplier to the University for the next 12 months, and suppliers’ quotes will be expected to reflect this preferential status.

Naturally, Schools will want to influence the choice of preferred system. School Computing Officers who wish to participate in the technical evaluation of the candidate PC systems are therefore invited to contact the undersigned. The evaluation is scheduled for early June 2004. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences is participating fully in this procurement exercise, which is in some ways an extension of and replacement for the existing ‘SelectPC’ scheme in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

Further details about the deal will be published in July *BITs*.

Laptop computers are not included at present, but depending on possible changes to the National Laptop Agreement, it is hoped to conduct a similar tendering and evaluation exercise for laptops in late 2004.

Graham Newton (EUCS), George Reid (Procurement)

Apple Maintenance Programme: bargain price achieved

Last month I asked Schools to register an interest in the three-year Apple Maintenance Programme to get updates of Mac OS X for just £16.22 inc VAT per computer per year. Commitment has passed the target of 1,000, and EUCS will organise the bulk order on behalf of the University. A welcome bonus is that if we order before the end of May, we get a free upgrade to MacOS 10.3 (Panther) for all computers in the programme.

I now need Schools and Units to consolidate their requirements into *one order per School* and send the order to me before **Wednesday 26th May**.

If you miss the deadline, you miss the deal, as we cannot add computers after the order is placed. Please note that I need orders from Schools, so please talk to your colleagues and get your School to send me a GL220.

Gillian Kirkwood (EUCS)

Lecture Theatre PC enhancements

MALTS and EUCS are enhancing the service provided by dedicated PCs in lecture theatres. Key points for next session are:

- No changes to usernames/passwords.
- Upgrading of 16 Lecture Theatre PCs installed in 1999.
- Disabling of user profile download to speed up network logon (see ‘What Is A Profile?’, below).
- New ‘Presentation Kiosk’ mode.

‘Presentation Kiosk’ mode provides a lean Windows XP desktop which does not require a username and password. Users have access to Powerpoint Viewer, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, and Apple QuickTime Player, but *not* access to the network. The key advantages are speed, simplicity, and avoidance of network problems. Users must bring their presentation material on a removable media device accepted by the particular PC: floppy disk, Zip disk, CD or USB memory stick.

The ‘Kiosk’ mode is an addition to, not a replacement for, the current Windows XP managed desktop service: the user chooses one or other service at boot time.

What is a profile?

Profiles are used on Microsoft Windows. A profile is a collection of data and metadata that is particular to a user, holding the user’s favourite web settings, program preferences and preferred desktop icons and wallpaper. If files are stored on the desktop, these too are saved into the profile. When a user logs on to a PC using this system, the profile is copied over to set up the familiar environment.

Problems arise when the profile is large, the network is slow, or a user’s patience is limited. In the University, staff rarely experience profile problems unless they go to a new PC. Students cannot be guaranteed the use of the same computer, so profiles are essential for personalised configuration.

In the case of Lecture Theatre PCs, speed of logon is paramount, so user profiles are not downloaded.

James Jarvis (EUCS)

Windows PCs need to be patched—urgently

Microsoft has released an advisory note detailing several vulnerabilities in the majority of its operating systems, together with patches which should be applied to remedy the faults.

EUCS strongly advises that all Windows systems are patched as soon as possible. A serious infection, such as the one which hit us last August and could have damaged the University's network, is probable in the immediate future—and if you have a networked PC with a vulnerable system, you will be undermining the University's defences.

PCs that use the Managed Desktop service are updated automatically. Otherwise, recent systems (2000, XP) can be updated by selecting 'Windows Update' from the 'Start' menu. For older systems, use Internet Explorer to go to the Windows Update site at <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com/>

EUCS strongly advises that you set your PC to look for these updates itself, by going into the control panel and clicking on 'Automatic Updates'. You also need to keep your anti-virus measures up to date (see next article).

If you require any further help with updating your Windows PC, please consult your EUCS Support Team.

Brian Gilmore (EUCS)

Automatic update for anti-virus software

A new automatic update service for the McAfee AntiVirus software is available, based on the McAfee AntiVirus Update Architecture. This service automatically checks the McAfee site every hour for new 'dat' files and engines, and updates suitably-configured clients.

A new version of the anti-virus software, VirusScan Enterprise 7.1, can be obtained from <ftp://mavua.ucs.ed.ac.uk/AV/Software/VScan/VSE71/>

This software is only available for:

- Windows NT Workstation 4.0, with Service Pack 6 or 6a.
- Windows 2000 Professional, with Service Pack 1, 2 or 3.
- Windows XP Home, Professional and Tablet PC Edition with Service Pack 1.

Details of how to configure VirusScan 7.1 for the new update service can be downloaded from <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/isd/archpub/>

Full installation instructions are available from <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/isd/iss/ol/issues/viruses/>

If you use one of the Windows versions listed above, EUCS recommends that you set your PC to check the EUCS site for updates daily between 1AM and 8AM. For a home PC we recommend that you accept the default server path provided by McAfee for updates, as the automated update service is only provided for computers located within the University.

If you run VirusScan 4.5.1, it is recommended that you change your settings to point to the new service, as described at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/isd/archpub/>

VirusScan 4.5.1 (with service pack 1) will reach its end of life for support in June 2005, for all platforms—Windows 95, 98 and ME—and EUCS will provide only minimal support after 30th June *this* year. All future releases of VirusScan will be for Windows NT4, 2000 and XP.

With the release of VirusScan 7.5 in June 2004, the supported versions of VirusScan Enterprise will be 7.0, 7.1 and 7.5.

Garry Scobie (EUCS)

Redirecting email to ex-staff

EUCS is implementing the policy on redirecting email for ex-staff which was agreed by the C&IT Committee: see <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucinfo/cttees/citc/policies/emailfor.html>

When a School agrees that an individual should have this facility, the School Computing Officer (not the individual) emails ext6033@ed.ac.uk with the mail address of the ex-staff member and the new address to which this is to be redirected.

Thereafter, if the ex-member of staff changes mail address, s/he should email postmaster@ed.ac.uk quoting the old email address and requesting a change to the new one.

Keith Farvis (EUCS)

Do you use SAS on holyrood?

The CHEST agreement under which the University licenses the SAS statistical software package is changing. From 1st August 2004, the agreement will be structured in 'Department', 'Faculty' and 'Campus' levels; the nett effect will be a significant price increase.

At present, SAS runs on **holyrood**, and the supplier has confirmed that this would in future require a very expensive 'Campus' licence. Usage of SAS on **holyrood** is now so slight that this is clearly not justifiable. Therefore, EUCS intends to withdraw SAS from **holyrood** on 31st July. If you have any concerns about this, please contact me (email C.J.Adie@ed.ac.uk) as soon as possible.

Chris Adie (EUCS)

Journal of Maps

A new multi-disciplinary international journal website has been set up to counteract a perceived decline in academic map publication. The *Journal of Maps* will be launched on 4th May, and is calling for papers; see <http://www.journalofmaps.com/>

Mike J. Smith (JoM Editor-in-Chief)

Informatics Jamboree 2004

19 – 21 May, Psychology, 7 George Square

The 2004 Informatics Jamboree kicks off at 5.15pm on 19th May with the prestigious Milner Lecture, given by Prof. Mihalis Yannakakis. This is a public lecture, open to all, and tackles the growing need to develop effective automated methods to test today's increasingly complex systems, to ensure their correct functioning.

Over the following two days, the Jamboree programme will contain talks from new Informatics professors, readers and lecturers Phillip Wadler, Mary Cryan, Stratis Viglas, Sethu Vijayakumar, Barbara Webb and Wenfei Fan. There will be workshops on entrepreneurship by Richard Wheeler and Kevin Johnston (Scottish Enterprise), and a poster competition for postgraduate students. The talks are suitable for a general computing audience, with topics spanning the field of Informatics.

Further details are at <http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/events/jamboree/2004/>

David Aspinall (Informatics)

Small Area Statistics: Data Library news

EDINA and Edinburgh University Data Library are hosting a 2001 Census of Population Programme workshop on 21st May. The workshop will be presented by the Programme Coordinator, Prof. David Martin, and staff from the Data Support Units. In addition to the plenary introduction and discussion sessions, delegates will be able to take part in two hands-on parallel sessions:

- Parallel session 1: (a) Digital Boundary Data; (b) Samples of Anonymised Records;
- Parallel session 2: (a) Census Aggregate Statistics; (b) Census Interaction Data; (c) The Longitudinal Study.

For information and registration visit <http://www.geog.soton.ac.uk/users/martindj/cenprog/workshop.htm>

Study Group

The Data Library is setting up a study group of University of Edinburgh data users interested in Deprivation Scores for Small Area Statistics. If you would like to participate, please contact the Data Library (datalib@ed.ac.uk).

Stuart Macdonald (EDINA)

Graphics and Multimedia

Although our Resource Centre is at The King's Buildings (in JCMB room 3901), the Graphics & Multimedia Group provides support throughout the University. You can contact us (email graphics_support@ed.ac.uk, tel 504965) for

- questions;
- problem-solving assistance;
- consultancy for projects.

We offer support and expertise for preparing high-quality materials for the Research Assessment Exercise, and support the uses of multimedia in WebCT and e-learning.

Our resources can be used to gain transferable skills in media technology, and we can provide introductory training for groups and classes geared to particular courses.

Equipment such as digital cameras, camcorders and audio recorders is available for loan (we ask for a guarantee that loss or damage will be paid for).

Full details are provided at <http://www.graphics.ed.ac.uk/gmrc/>

John Wexler (EUCS)

A vital new profession: Deskologists

The BBC reports an NEC-Mitsubishi survey which suggests that millions of office workers are being hit by "Irritable Desk Syndrome," in which long working hours, insufficient breaks, cluttered desks and poor posture are making people ill. The full story is at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/3571735.stm>

(Editor)

Public holidays this month

Computing Services will be observing the Victoria Day and May Day public holidays in May, on the 17th and 18th. Systems will be left to run unattended, and staffed services such as reception, support and resource centres will be closed.

All major and some other Library sites will be open, though possibly with reduced services and opening hours; for specific details please check in *Library Online*, at <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/>

Open-access computing labs in Libraries will be open, though with reduced cover and supervision. The 24-hour labs in the KB Centre and the Greenfield Suite will be accessible to students who have their matriculation card and a PIN.

Tricia Cairney (EUCS)

EDINBURGH BITS

Editor:

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Published by:

Computing Services
The University of Edinburgh
for the Edinburgh IT community.

Contributions:

Email: BITS@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 3345

Distribution queries:

BITS is distributed through School offices; secretaries please notify changes in requirements to Tricia Cairney:
Email: T.Cairney@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 4931

Printed by:

University of Edinburgh Printing Services
<http://www.printing.ed.ac.uk/>

BITS on the Web:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/bits/>

Some acronyms explained:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/acronyms.html>

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Contributions to *BITS* are welcomed.

Copy deadline for June *BITS*:

Friday 14th May