

## Power Management rolls out to the labs

As indicated in the February issue of *BITS*, Desktop Services has successfully rolled out a campus-wide power management scheme to all the PCs in the open-access labs. The College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine will be able to use the same scheme in its Student Labs by the start of the next academic session.

Power management on individual PCs is quite easy to set up, but deploying it to large numbers of PCs in a controlled manner has taken time to develop.

Through a combination of logon scripts, scheduled tasks and utilities, lab computers that have been idle for a set time period (currently configured to be 45 minutes) will automatically enter 'Standby' mode. Users only need to press a key or move the mouse to reactive the login screen. Standby mode uses considerably less power than normal operation, but still allows EUCS to maintain and update PCs with antivirus definitions and security updates at set times during the night using configurable scheduled tasks.

It is anticipated that, following successful trials in the open-access labs, this technology can be extended to Computing Officers in Information Services and Schools as part of a range of utilities developed by Desktop Services to assist in the management of the Supported Desktop. This would allow them to apply this power-saving technology based on agreed policies within their School or College.

*Vladimir Zirojevic (EUCS)*

## SuperJANET5 imminent

SuperJANET is the UK academic communications network, through which the University network EdLAN achieves its external connections, and it is about to evolve to provide new services and even higher bandwidth. This will be the fifth generation of SuperJANET: **SuperJANET5**. EdLAN and EaStMAN hardware and software have been upgraded over the past few months in anticipation of SuperJANET5 features and services.

The switchover to SuperJANET5 is scheduled for 3rd October (though this might change). After the switchover, the metropolitan area network EaStMAN (through which EdLAN is connected to SuperJANET) will have its single SuperJANET4 1Gbps connection replaced by two 2.5Gbps connections. One of these will connect The King's Buildings to Leeds, the other will link

Appleton Tower to Glasgow. The proposed configuration is shown at <http://www.eastman.net.uk/eastmano310.htm>

One of the key aspirations of these developments is to have alternative routes to the Internet, to ensure service continuity and availability in the event of serious failure of EaStMAN or SuperJANET circuits at any one core site.

As well as being more resilient, SuperJANET5 enables reserved-bandwidth channels to be set up between research groups. Several projects in the University are already using or preparing to use this, through the UKlight network – which is being incorporated into SuperJANET5; see

<http://www.uklight.ac.uk/>

For more information please see <http://www.ja.net/sj5/>

*George Howat (EUCS)*



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## LapLAN

The original LapLAN service was introduced to allow users to connect their laptops to EdLAN. At the time very few laptops had built-in ethernet interfaces, let alone wireless interfaces – but these are now common, and it has become important to make LapLAN easier to use and more easily scaled up to accommodate increasing demand.

Laptop users can now access EdLAN through one of the University's many Wireless Access Points. People who need the higher bandwidth and reliability of a wired connection can use **LapLAN2**. A pilot LapLAN2 service has been running since September 2005, with various ethernet ports marked as LapLAN2 and offering two modes of authentication.

The old LapLAN service will close on 15th August, and its 11 ports converted to LapLAN2. The procedures for using the new service are straightforward.

Instructions on how to use LapLAN2 are provided at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/nsd/access/laplan2.html>

All users who have registered for LapLAN using IDMS will be informed by email of the change, and posters will be displayed next to existing LapLAN ports.

The locations of LapLAN ports are shown at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/student/laplan.html>

### Differences in LapLAN2

With LapLAN2 – in contrast to LapLAN – it is the user rather than the computer that is registered and authenticated. Anyone who has already registered to use the VPN/Wireless service is already registered to use the LapLAN2 service, and should use the same UUN and password as they do for VPN or Wireless. Anyone who is not already registered but is registered with EASE can register for all three EdLAN access services using the VPN / Wireless / LapLAN2 registration page at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/nsd/access/wselfreg.html>

There is no requirement to use the web cache with LapLAN2.

*Bill Byers (EUCS)*

## New UK demographic and income data

The Census Dissemination Unit (CDU) at MIMAS, based at the University of Manchester, has released a 2005 update of an Experian geodemographic dataset for academic use. The dataset includes the Median Household Income, and is supplied for super output areas (SOAs) in raw ASCII format for the entire UK.

The dataset has three main components:

- **Mosaic UK household classification**  
Classification of all 24 million UK households into 11 socio-demographic groups, 61 types and 243 segments.
- **Median Household Income**  
Using data from a number of surveys, including MORI's Financial Tracking Survey, models have been developed to predict personal income for a number of standard employment types. These are accumulated to create household income based on the composition of the household.
- **Population Projections**  
Experian has produced contemporary estimates, as well as five-year and ten-year projections, of resident populations split by gender and age.

For further information please visit <http://census.ac.uk/cdu/experian/> Alternatively contact the Data Library (email [datalib@ed.ac.uk](mailto:datalib@ed.ac.uk), tel 511431 or 503304).

*Stuart Macdonald (Data Library)*

## WebCT Vista update

The MALTS e-learning team is continuing work on the upgrade to WebCT Vista to ensure all the necessary systems are in place before the start of term. The timetable for roll-out of Vista functionality is available (and regularly updated) at <http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/webct/upgrade/timetable.phtml>

Student access to WebCT Vista will start on 28th August, on which date the MyEd WebCT channel will switch from its current default of CE4 to Vista, and all users – students and staff – will access Vista through that route. An option to log into Campus Edition will be provided on the myWebCT page in Vista.

We are continuing to provide 'Vista Fundamentals' workshops for staff planning to build and maintain courses in WebCT Vista. There are workshops on 21st, 23rd and 30th August and 8th September. Details of these and how to book a place on them are at <http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/webct/vista/support.phtml>

We are happy to discuss departmental workshops for groups of staff. Contact [elearnhelp@ed.ac.uk](mailto:elearnhelp@ed.ac.uk) if you wish to discuss this option.

We are also making a range of resource materials available for staff: training documentation, factsheets and FAQs. These are being edited and added to as we develop our understanding of this new system and staff requirements for using it. Please check these web pages regularly for the latest information and updates:

<http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/webct/vista/resources.phtml>

*Wilma Alexander (MALTS)*

## The Lecture 2.0

The central theme of the recent DIVERSE international conference (Developing Innovative Video Resources for Students Everywhere) was not an all-out attack on the tradition that is the university lecture (well, maybe it was from some delegates) – but the majority were there to discuss the ‘hows and whys’ of using technologies, streaming media for example, to enhance and capture the lecture event.

The ‘hows’ of course could easily have dominated discussions, but the bigger question of ‘why’ almost always took over proceedings – leaving delegates with more questions than answers.

‘iLectures’ – the electronic capture and delivery of lectures over the web – means many different things to many people, from a simple audio recording of the live lecture and perhaps delivery of the audio file to the ubiquitous iPod or similar personal MP3 player, all the way through to attempting to capture the ‘look, feel and smell’ of the lecture theatre environment and all the presentation systems used within – that is, recording the audio and video of the lecturer and the audience, and synchronising this to the output from the data projector, chalkboards and visualiser *etc.*, with the aim to provide a near replica.

Oh, and of course this has to be done with zero-extra-effort for the lecturer.

Further information about DIVERSE is at <http://csalt.lanacs.ac.uk/diverse/>

MALTS and EUCS are currently investigating these areas and if you have any questions – or indeed answers – please get in touch (email [ellearnhelp@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ellearnhelp@ed.ac.uk)).

*Andy Pryde (MALTS & EUCS)*

## Film & Sound Online

From the start of the new academic session, the Education Media OnLine service (EMOL) will become **Film & Sound Online**. EDINA is updating the look-and-feel of its user interface, and adding important functionality – such as classifying all content through the UNESCO thesaurus for ease of browsing. For further information, contact the EDINA Helpdesk (email [edina@ed.ac.uk](mailto:edina@ed.ac.uk)).

EDINA is currently commissioning authors to create thematic film trails using Film & Sound Online materials. A fee of £500 is offered for each completed film trail. For details see <http://www.emol.ac.uk/makefilmtrails.html>

The Culverhouse Classical Music Collection has been added to Film & Sound Online. This comprises over 50 hours of downloadable, copyright-free classical music, and some associated scores, from the 17th to the 20th centuries, including works by Bach, Beethoven, Dvorak, Handel, Haydn, Liszt and Mozart, and less-celebrated pieces by composers such as Granados, Litolff and Warlock.

As with existing EMOL collections, users are permitted to use Culverhouse material in VLEs or on disc, relieving pressure on hard-pressed libraries and allowing staff and students to produce customised CDs.

A unique feature within EMOL of this collection is that manipulation of downloaded music and scores is allowed. Users are permitted to repurpose the files, including stretching or compressing the music, looping user-defined sections and altering the pitch, as well as using any future software developments.

The files can also be used to accompany film clips, although permission should be obtained from the film-owners beforehand.

*Rick Loup (EDINA)*

## PDP and e-Portfolios

The University has decided to license the WebCT Portfolio tool – now known as *Blackboard Portfolio* – to support work being done on PDP and e-Portfolio development throughout the University. This tool can be used independently of WebCT Vista, but can also be closely integrated with it.

A number of pilot projects using the tool will be running throughout 2006–2007, across different subject areas and levels of study. For more information about e-portfolio developments at the University see <http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/eportfolio/>

*Wilma Alexander (MALTS)*

## Learner Driver recalled

The ‘Learner Driver’ conference was held at Heriot-Watt on 31st May, and included keynote presentations by Bill Harvey of the Scottish Funding Council on ‘transforming learning in Scotland,’ Carol Twigg of New York’s National Council for Academic Transformation with ‘a transatlantic perspective,’ and John Stone, Chief Executive of the Learning and Skills Network, on ‘putting into practice a learner-centred vision’.

These three presentations are now available on the Web, at <http://www.thelearnerdriver.org.uk/media.htm>

Dr Twigg’s presentation was about the American experience of enhancing courses with C&IT, and included such comments from academics as “It’s the best experience I’ve ever had in a classroom,” “It’s a lot of work during the transition – but it’s worth it,” and “The quality of my worklife has changed immeasurably for the better.” There is more on the theme of improving learning and lowering cost at <http://www.thencat.org/>

*Caroline Porteous  
(JISC Regional Support Centres)*

## Some meetings

### The HEA Centre for Information and Computer Sciences 7th Annual Conference, 29–31 August 2006, Trinity College, Dublin

Key topics for this year's conference include Emerging Technologies, Virtual Learning and Teaching, Evaluating teaching methods, Impact of technology on the curriculum, Collaborative Learning, Multimedia/Interactive Learning, Managing Change, and several others. Further information is available at [http://www.ics.heacademy.ac.uk/Events/HEADublin2006\\_V2/home.htm](http://www.ics.heacademy.ac.uk/Events/HEADublin2006_V2/home.htm)

### Social dimensions of e-learning

The Higher Education Academy is organising three meetings in its 'Supporting Sustainable e-Learning Forum' programme for 2006. The first is at Edinburgh University on 4th September. 'Formal and informal learning: Bridging the gap' is an ALT-C pre-conference meeting, led by two internationally-renowned experts on technology-supported learning. (The other meetings in the programme are at Leicester on 20th October, and Manchester on 8th December.) There are full details at <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/SSeLF.htm>

### Pedagogic Research and Academic Identities

The 1st International iPED Conference, iPED 2006, will be held on 11–12 September at Coventry University TechnoCentre, to bring together researchers, practitioners and policy makers to explore the themes of Pedagogic Research and Academic Identities. There will be keynote talks, a programme of workshops, posters and presentations. The details are provided at <http://www.coventry.ac.uk/iped/events/conference06.htm>

### Supporting Online Learning: an interactive day

The details for this event in Westminster, London on 12th September are at <http://www.niace.org.uk/Conferences/SupportingOL.htm>

### The Present and Future Semantic Web

Web Futures and the Labgroup day is a one-day Round Table event at which participants from commercial and research backgrounds will examine how far along the visionary path of the Semantic Web we have travelled. It takes place on 13th September at the Hewlett Packard Labs, Bristol. The details are at [http://www.ilrt.bris.ac.uk/projects/web\\_futures](http://www.ilrt.bris.ac.uk/projects/web_futures)

### Learning on Screen

The British Universities Film & Video Council's annual 'Learning on Screen' conference is on 19–20 September at the Old Library in the Custard Factory in Birmingham's revolutionary new arts and media quarter in its regeneration zone. The details are at <http://www.bufvc.ac.uk/learningonscreen/>

*Wilma Alexander (MALTS)*

## e-Science MSc

Places and funding are currently available for the e-Science MSc/Diploma programme at the University of Edinburgh for 2006–2007.

The e-Science MSc programme is a collaboration between the Schools of Physics and Informatics, in conjunction with the National e-Science Centre, and aims to provide students with a grounding in e-Science and experience of working with e-Science and Grid Computing technologies. Students can design a curriculum tailored to their individual interests.

Applicants need proven expertise in a programming language, otherwise entrance requirements are very broad. Further details are available at [http://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/postgraduate/degrees/msc\\_escience.html](http://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/postgraduate/degrees/msc_escience.html)

*Robert Mann (Physics)*

## Fortran is 49½

In 1954 a team at IBM led by John Backus began working on the first high level programming language, FORTRAN, which was announced to the computing world at the Western Joint Computer Conference held in Los Angeles, California, in February 1957. In mid-April 1957 the first documented delivery of the FORTRAN compiler, for the IBM 704, took place to Westinghouse-Bettis.

2007 marks the 50th anniversary of these landmark events as well as the BCS's own 50th anniversary. The BCS Fortran Specialist Group and the Computer Conservation Society have organised a meeting to commemorate this major milestone in the history of computing and information technology. Details can be found at <http://www.fortran.bcs.org/2007/jubileeprog.php>

(EUCS still runs a Fortran course!)

*John Blair-Fish (EUCS)*

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