Computer Literacy 1
School of Informatics
2007-2008

Introduction

Read the Guide !!!

OK, at least read the "10 things" page …

What is computer literacy?

A computer literate person …

- Is comfortable using a computer system in a variety of normal work situations and can adapt to new and unfamiliar situations
- Can participate in computer-related conversations and understand the significance of news and events
- Understands the strengths and weaknesses of computer solutions to problems

In practice this means …

- Some basic technology
- A few things about stand-alone applications (Word, Excel ..) you may not have considered
- Hands-on experience of one of them (Excel)
- Communications, Networks, Web etc.
- Trends in computing
- A look at topical / news stories
- Social, ethical, business and legal issues
- A bit about computer algorithms and programs
    - .. All taught on the basis that you want to drive the car, not maintain it

Because we're Informatics we'll tell you a bit about the subject too – research, what interests us etc. and we'll throw in a few things you might not have considered

Who we are

- John Butler (Course Organiser)
    - cl1hco @ inf.ed.ac.uk; jhb@inf.ed.ac.uk; Appleton Tower room 4.07; 650-5181
- Admin: Informatics Teaching Office (I.T.O.)
    - ito @ inf.ed.ac.uk

- Appleton Tower 4.02 – Zoe

Lectures etc.

- DHT Faculty Room South, Mon, Tue, Thu 5:10 – 6:00
- Spare course notes, notices can be found at the ITO in AT Level 4 then on the Web
- (http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/courses/cl1 a day or so after lecture)
- Lectures are a guide to study, a summary of the lectures and a selection of things we thought you might find interesting. Presenting loads of Powerpoint bullet points is dull

How we reach you

We use Student Mail System (SMS) - if you redirect mail, it is your responsibility.
Course Web page is at http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/courses/cl1

Course guide

Course guide is the reference guide to course and is your FAQ .

When and where things are

- See the Guide!
- Might have a class test
- Demos where possible
- Tutorials are optional and we'll need to fix times – ask!
- There are EUCS training courses

Practical Work

There are 4 assessed practical assignments spaced through the course. Do them in your own time wherever suits - Library, Pollock, home … Practical work is PC/Microsoft based but use Macs if you prefer; your choice but do observe the guidelines for handing them in

Assessment

- 25% practicals (total 100) * 0.25
- 75% exam
  - Part A : short questions, about 2/3 of the exam - do all
  - Part B: essay, about 1/3 of the exam - do one
- Need to get 40% overall AND a minimum of 25% on practicals, 35% on exam
- No resit on practicals
- Late work not accepted - don't leave it to the last minute

Class Representatives

We need some

Duties are to be the eyes and ears of the class – a focus for anything that needs attention.You'll have training through EUSA and attend 2,3 staff-student liaison meetings. Rewards are a warm fuzzy feeling, you develop relevant skills and see some of the University from the inside. Feedback is important !!!

Administrative notes

- Please read them
- Computing Regulations - www.cpa.ed.ac.uk/calendar/prefh/023.html
- Read them for information but also as a CL1 exercise:
    - What threats do they address? Do they miss any?
    - Would it be possible to run foul of them accidentally?
    - Which do you think are enforced to the letter?
    - Which are catch-alls to handle cases we can't anticipate?
    - Will return to under social / ethical / legal issues

Problems

If there's something you're not happy about be it related to the course, your ability to handle the work, someone being a pain, university life etc. Don't bottle it up - tell us (DoS, course lecturers, organisers, class reps…) sooner rather than later

About you

If most of these apply, CL1 is for you

- You have some experience with computers (if not we'll suggest courses)
- You know there's more
- You are interested to systematize what you know and learn more
- (Class experience ranges from 0 to expert)
- "I'm OK with computers but want to know more"
- "I've avoided computers where I can but think I'll cope"
- "They scare me"

- I've …
- Almost certainly used a Windows PC or a Mac
- Almost certainly browsed the Web and sent e-mail
- Probably written something in Word; Probably not made a Web page
- Possibly used a spreadsheet?; Almost certainly not written a program

Course Outline

The Deal

- If you're prepared to read about CL away from lectures then we're free to concentrate on some interesting bits in class. More interesting for all of us!

Introduction & basics

- Overview – trends, history, where it's all going etc.
- Glossary of basic terms
- Look at the basic hardware and software of a modern computer
- Demystify the jargon a bit
- This may be revision but I'll throw in a few extras :)
- Some material aimed at anyone buying a machine
- Happy to treat this as a practical/discussion exercise!

Applications

- Look at computer applications in context
- Spreadsheets and business systems
- Word and Text processors
- Graphics and visualisation
- Databases and GIS
- Look for common factors and underlying themes
- Not a course on how to use Word etc.

Network applications

- Assemblies of computers and networks
- System Management
- Collaborative computing
    - Email, videoconferencing, chat, bulletin boards, text
- Networking applications
- Phones, PDAs, iPods, game stations

The World-Wide Web

- What makes good or bad Web sites?
- How do you get reliable information from the Web ?
    - You'll do a critique as an assignment
- Basic principles
    - You'll create a web page yourself along with the critique
- How does the Web fit into the world?

Communications

- Communications fundamentals - basic principles
- History
- Network components, the Internet

The Computer in Business & Society

- E-business
- Technology convergence
- Social, legal and ethical issues
- Risks; privacy and security

Algorithms and fundamentals

- Thinking a bit about how a problem is turned into a programme; maybe something about programming projects
- Thinking about what we actually mean by the terms ‘computer’ and ‘computation’

Reading material

- These slides (available at start of lectures)
- Additional notes for some lectures
- Newspapers, Web, TV etc. - Short discussions in class
- Topical items will be used in class where possible and may be examined

Books

- “Computer Confluence”, George Beekman, 5th edn. Prentice-Hall, ISBN 0-13-066188-0
- Acceptable alternatives
    - “Computers”, Long & Long, 8th edn.
    - “Computers”, H.L. Capron, 6th edn.
- All paperback, £ 35, +/-; very American

- Excel/Access/… for Dummies £18.99
- Excel 2000: An introductory course for Students (Muir) £9.99 (cheap, more of a tutorial)
- Yale/CAIM Style guide (Web page design)
- Whatever works for you

Other Computing Service Documents

- Writing an Essay with Word
- Using the Student Mail System

- Windows from Scratch
- Getting Started with Excel
- How Libraries and Computers can help your Studies
- Windows [special] Characters
- Loads of others
- Free from libraries, labs, EUCS reception etc.

ECDL

- European Computer Driving License. This is similar in scope to CL1 and if you want a recognized qualification CL1 should give you a lot of help in passing it.

Laboratories

- No fixed labs for this course
- Find location, opening times, type of computer at:
    - http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/fmd/central_labs.html
- Locations
    - Main library, Windows PCs on 2nd & 3rd floors,
    - Macs on 4th floor?
    - Holland House, Pollock Halls
    - Greenfield suite, George Square (24 hrs)

- Lab machines should be novice-proof !
- Logging on
    - Lab machines should be on all the time but screensaver may be on and screen blank
- Turning it off / rebooting
    - As a rule, in the labs, don't. But do log off
    - Unless you want someone else to use your print quota, read your mail, send mail as you …
- Your desktop environment roams with you
- Don't leave files on the desktop – it slows you down and very easily lost

SMS email

- See webpage and your notes for instructions
    - https://sms.ed.ac.uk/
- Don't be afraid to ask lab supervisors for help
- Some of the computers aren't working
- Computer labs are very busy this week - be strong!

John Butler
19/9/2007