



THE UNIVERSITY *of York*  
Computing Service

# Keynotes

Volume 28 Number 5 May 2002

## Review of the Computing Service

*Also in this Issue:*

Windows 2000 email clients

Information Skills Training

Electronic diaries

Email etiquette

**From the Editor**

The recent review of the Computing Service has proposed a number of changes to the work of the Service. Turn to page 4 for Mike Jinks' summary.



Many of you will already have been contacted to find out what you would require from an electronic diary system. Lisa Burkinshaw gives an update on the progress of this project on page 3.



Information literacy continues to be a prime topic in Higher Education circles. On page 2, Susanne Hodges outlines Iliad's involvement in the recent IT and ILit2002 conference and in the ongoing Big Blue project.



Finally, I seem to be becoming the Miss Manners of the Computing Service following up my December article on classroom etiquette with a few hints on email etiquette (page 1). If there are any other social aspects of computing you'd like advice on, don't hesitate to get in touch!

*Joanne Casey*

**Contents**

**News in Brief**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| YorkWeb accounts: new security arrangements | 1 |
| Email etiquette                             | 1 |
| Bank Holiday closure                        | 1 |
| Wentworth PC classroom                      | 1 |
| The Windows 95 service                      | 1 |

**Information Skills**

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| The IT and ILit2002 Conference | 2 |
| The Big Blue                   | 2 |

**Software News**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Electronic diary management system project | 3 |
| Windows 2000 email clients                 | 3 |

**Feature article**

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Review of the Computing Service | 4 |
|---------------------------------|---|

**Keynotes on the web**

Back copies of Keynotes can be found at:  
[www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/keynotes/](http://www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/keynotes/)

## YorkWeb accounts: new security arrangements

*John Byrne*

From Monday 25th March important changes in security arrangements have been made to provide additional protection for resources held on the YorkWeb filestore. This does not affect existing documents and directories, however any new documents or directories created in top level directories must have their access control settings changed manually (see: [www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/help/web/ProvidingInfo/winexp.htm](http://www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/help/web/ProvidingInfo/winexp.htm)). Full details have been emailed to your YorkWeb accounts - please check your email. Note: this does not apply to personal web sites held on [www-users.york.ac.uk](http://www-users.york.ac.uk). Please contact John Byrne ([jcb1@york.ac.uk](mailto:jcb1@york.ac.uk)) if you have any queries.

## Email etiquette

*Joanne Casey*

Use the appropriate method of communication - email isn't suitable for confidential information, or for raising sensitive issues with colleagues. Remember that your intended tone may not always be clear in email, so ensure that your wording is unambiguous.

Keep signature files to a maximum of five lines, and include two dashes at the start of the signature file to separate it from the body of the email.

Don't send large attachments without warning the recipient - they may not have sufficient space in their inbox to receive them. If you're sending several attachments, send them as a zip file.

Never send your password via email.

Don't propagate spam in the form of chain emails, petition requests etc - check the veracity of the source before deciding whether to pass them on.

Protect yourself and the people in your address book by using virus scanning software to check attachments: the Computing Service provides Sophos on the network, and it is licensed for home use by members of the University:

[www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/sw/sophos/sophos\\_antivirus.htm](http://www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/sw/sophos/sophos_antivirus.htm)

## Bank Holiday closure

*Brian Souter*

The Computing Service will be closed on the Early May Bank Holiday (Monday 6 May), the Golden Jubilee Bank Holiday (Monday 3 June) and the Spring Bank Holiday (Tuesday 4 June). All systems will be left running as for a normal weekend with no staff on duty. Availability of Computing Service PCs and printers is subject to the opening hours of the colleges and the Kings Manor over the holiday weekend.

## Wentworth PC classroom

*Brian Souter*

The new Windows 2000 PC classroom, W/036, opened on Monday 15 April. The new room replaces room W/218 which is to be refurbished and turned into a PC classroom for staff training. The new ground floor facility is equipped with 22 PCs plus one PC for the lecturer, video projection equipment and a printer. The new PCs are supplied by Viglen with Pentium 4 1.6GHz processors, 256Mb of memory, 20Gb hard drives and internal 100Mb Zip drives.

Classes booked into W/218 have been transferred to W/036 or to a Windows 95 classroom where necessary. Students requiring access to 24 hour Windows 95 facilities on campus should note that these remain in Goodricke (G/169 and G/022), Langwith (L/117 and L/050), Derwent (D/114), Vanbrugh (V/058) and Alcuin (A/D270). It is planned that these remaining classrooms will be converted to Windows 2000 over the summer vacation.

## The Windows 95 service

*Joanne Casey*

Many of you are keen to know when the Computing Service will switch off the supported Windows 95 service. As yet, there is no definite date set: the final decision will be made by Information Committee and will take into account the level of transferral to the Windows 2000 service. We do not expect that the switch off will take place before September 2003 - users will of course be kept fully informed as decisions are made.

## The IT and ILit2002 Conference

### Susanne Hodges

The first International Conference on IT and Information Literacy took place on 20 to 22 March, at the Kelvin Conference Centre, University of Glasgow. The conference was organised to consider the two perspectives of information skills training - that of computer/IT literacy and that of information skills literacy - and to discuss the convergence of these two strands in educational environments, the implications of their convergence and how those involved can take this development forward.

147 delegates from 13 nations attended the conference, many of whom were librarians but key/core skills programme developers, student support personnel, training and education researchers and developers also attended. The key speakers were Bill Nisen, Director of the e-Institute, Universities of Strathclyde and Glasgow and Professor Hannelore Rader, Director of Libraries, University of Louisville.

The main themes of the conference were Contexts, Strategies and Visions, Implementation of Programmes, Curriculum and Pedagogy, and Facilitation and Research. The Sciences Librarian, Gareth Johnson, and I gave a paper entitled *Convergence and Diversity in the Iliad Programme* as part of the Contexts, Strategies and Visions strand. The paper discussed the setting up of Iliad by Computing Service and the Library and the evolution and challenges that the Iliad for University programme has faced. We discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a generic versus subject based skills programme, how to best cater for each student's information literacy needs, how to incorporate information literacy into an IT training course and how we hope to take the programme forward. The paper was well received and many people thought that a collaborative approach and a partly generic and partly subject based programme, such as we have at York, was impressive. Papers about information literacy programmes at other Universities were given and it was very useful and thought provoking to hear of other modes of provision.

The conference dinner took place at the Piping Centre in Glasgow. Delegates were piped into the building but were immediately given champagne, which made up for any distress suffered!

If anyone is interested in finding out more about the current issues in information skills training, please contact me at [sh32@york.ac.uk](mailto:sh32@york.ac.uk). I will also be involved in organising delegates for next year's conference, so am keen to hear from interested parties.

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## The Big Blue

### Susanne Hodges

The Big Blue is a one year project funded by JCALT (JISC Joint Committee for Awareness, Liaison and Training). It is based jointly at Manchester Metropolitan and Leeds Universities. Its aims are:

- to survey present practice in information skills training for students in Post 16 and Higher Education in the UK
- to establish a blue print for the future by developing models of information skills training for institutions to use when planning a service
- to ensure a coherent approach to the development of an information literate student population in the UK
- to provide comprehensive information on information skills training in the UK and the rest of the world

The project staff distributed an electronic and postal audit to all FE and HE institutions in the UK. In total, 278 responses were received. Unlike York, where basic information skills training is delivered in joint collaboration between the Library and Computing Service, in most other institutions the responsibility for training rests solely with Library staff. The Iliad programme at York was a case study in the Big Blue project.

The rise of VLEs and MLEs have been a major catalyst for the delivery of information skills training online and, to date, 25% of respondents provide such training - although many more are in the process of working

## Electronic diary management system project

*Lisa Burkinshaw*

The Computing Service are currently undertaking an electronic diary management system project. The aim of this project is to evaluate and implement an electronic diary system with a web browser interface which would make the system available to all University staff on or off campus and on supported or unsupported PCs.

All departmental computing officers and departmental secretaries were contacted by email in February asking for their input on user requirements of a potential diary system. Replies were received from a total of 20 departments and this information has been collated and will be used when evaluating each software package.

Some of the most important user features identified were the ability to make public or private appointments; to schedule, move and delete recurring meetings; the ability to access the diary off campus; notification of meetings via an alarm, pop-up window or email; to view schedules by day, week and month; to identify groups of users and view their diaries (with different levels of access and security rights); to schedule meetings between groups of users; to accept or decline a meeting invitation by email and integration with PDAs (personal digital assistants).

Up to three products will be evaluated in detail: however these are yet to be confirmed. Trial versions of the packages will be installed in the summer term when we will be asking for volunteers (a few users from a couple of departments) to evaluate a particular package for two to four weeks and provide feedback from a user point of view.

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## Windows 2000 email clients

*Dan Shelton*

The Computing Service will shortly be making available an additional email application for the Windows 2000 service. Email is an important and integral part of staff and student communication and the Computing Service aims to provide excellent provision in this area.

The new email reader will be Mulberry which has a long history as a reliable and usable email program and is popular amongst a wide range of users. Mulberry is also cross-platform, so you may have used it on Apple Macs or the Linux Operating System.

Due to some user difficulties with Microsoft Outlook, it was felt that an alternative email client was required. Initially Mulberry will be for trial while we assess the long-term viability of providing it. User feedback is always useful, and any comments about Mulberry are welcome.

Mulberry is not a replacement for Microsoft Outlook on Windows 2000. Outlook will continue to be available as an email client and there are no plans to remove it.

Once Mulberry is live, help and documentation will be made available to users to help them use and configure it. Mulberry has many features for handling mail and folders, which users will find useful.

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*continued from page 2*

toward online provision. The use of online information skills training for students at York is currently under investigation but it is expected to show that, although it could prove useful for more advanced courses, for basic training only taught courses will do.

The Big Blue project will create models of training to aid institutions in planning information skills programmes. The website at [www.leeds.ac.uk/bigblue](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/bigblue) is being developed into a national resource for information skills information.

## Review of the Computing Service

*Mike Jinks*

The 1998 Implementation Review of the Computing Service recommended that the experiences of the *core / non-core services* approach be reviewed after three years of operation. This review has now taken place and has been accepted by Planning Committee. In addition to the issue of *core v non-core services*, the review considered a range of other issues which have arisen in the intervening years, notably recruitment and retention of skilled technical staff in an increasingly competitive external market, the increasing dependence of the University on IT, and the impact of the major investments in administrative computing. The Review Group also wished to develop a sustainable approach for overseeing the work of the Computing Service in times of rapid technological development, without the need for formal reviews, and for engaging the Service in developing proposals for its own future and for providing leadership to the University.

The Service will be overseen by a Management Board, chaired by the Chair of Information Committee and including an member external to the University, and will report to Information Committee. This Board will oversee the implementation of the Review Group's recommendations and will provide general oversight thereafter, including regular review of the range of services offered by the Service to ensure that they continue to address the University's needs. The Management Board will start its work in the summer term and will consult widely on the detailed changes - the Review Group rightly addressed principles rather than details. The Management Board reflects an approach taken at the University of Leeds and, indeed, is similar to an unimplemented recommendation of the original (1996) Computing Service Review Group.

The main user-visible change is the discontinuation of the much-misunderstood distinction between *core and non-core* services. Instead, the Service will provide a fixed range of services, some of which will be funded from a top-slice and some will be charged to departments. The main changes to the services to be offered include: introducing support for students on basic software, investigation of mechanisms to provide enhanced staffing cover, particularly for students, the discontinuation of delivery of teaching in academic areas, and discontinuation of Service staff undertaking research. The implementation details of these proposals will be formulated by the Management Board and departments will be consulted before decisions are taken. The intention is that an increased range of services will be free at the point of delivery by increasing the top-slice to the Service to offset the income received from charging departments.

The review also recommended: consideration of the long-term support of MIS activities (including development activities), changes to University planning procedures to ensure that the Computing Service is involved in major project at an early stage, space planning, provision of a service for the disposal or recycling of unwanted computers, better liaison with departments via nominated members of the Service, and addressing a range of personnel issues, including staff recruitment and retention.

It is important that the new, more flexible approach is implemented in a coherent manner to provide a secure foundation on which the University can develop. The changes to the financial arrangements are likely to commence for the 2003/4 University financial year. These changes will need to be agreed by the University in February/March 2003, leaving the remainder of the current calendar year to agree the details of the changes outlined above so that costs can be identified. The Service and the Management Board are committed to consulting widely on these details, and the framework for the changes is likely to be formulated by the start of the autumn term, so that implementation of the changes can be as smooth as possible.

The full text of the Report of the Review Group can be found at:  
[www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/policy.yrk/csreport2001.pdf](http://www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/policy.yrk/csreport2001.pdf).

## Contacting the Computing Service

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Direct dial: (01904) 43 followed by ext no.  
Fax: (01904) 433740  
Email: [username@york.ac.uk](mailto:username@york.ac.uk)

[www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/](http://www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/)

## Information Desk

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The Information Desk is your first point of contact with the Computing Service

Telephone: ext 3838

Email: [infodesk](mailto:infodesk)

Open from 9am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 4.15pm Friday (*may be closed for training Wednesdays 2pm-3pm*), for problem solving, advice and information, fault reporting, network connections, file restoration, sales, course bookings and user registration. Printed output can be collected from the lobby entrance which is open from 8am to midnight.

## Computing Service Staff

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|                             |                  |      |              |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------|--------------|
| Director:                   | Mike Jinks       | 3801 | <i>kmj1</i>  |
| Departmental Secretary:     | Lorraine Moor    | 3801 | <i>lsm1</i>  |
| Head of Infrastructure:     | Robert Demaine   | 3808 | <i>rld1</i>  |
| Head of User Services:      | John Illingworth | 3803 | <i>iji1</i>  |
| Head of MIS:                | Kay Mills-Hicks  | 2101 | <i>kmh8</i>  |
| Head of Technical Services: | Doug Moncur      | 3815 | <i>dgm1</i>  |
| Head of Systems:            | Andrew Smith     | 3809 | <i>abs4</i>  |
| Operations Manager:         | Brian Souter     | 3814 | <i>bs1</i>   |
| Head of Networking:         | John Mason       | 3813 | <i>jrm13</i> |
| Information Officer:        | Joanne Casey     | 3805 | <i>jmc8</i>  |

|                 |      |              |                   |      |              |
|-----------------|------|--------------|-------------------|------|--------------|
| Linda Bailey    | 3800 | <i>lcb6</i>  | Chris Kilgour     | 4454 | <i>crhk1</i> |
| Sue Bolton      | 2102 | <i>sjb28</i> | Fergus McGlynn    | 3822 | <i>fam6</i>  |
| Mike Brudenell  | 3811 | <i>pmb1</i>  | John Marsden      | 3832 | <i>jpm1</i>  |
| Lisa Burkinshaw | 3818 | <i>ljb4</i>  | Darren Munday     | 3821 | <i>dam6</i>  |
| John Byrne      | 3812 | <i>jcb1</i>  | Nicola Normandale | 4695 | <i>ncn1</i>  |
| David Chambers  | 3742 | <i>dac6</i>  | Phil O'Connell    | 3825 | <i>paoc1</i> |
| Michael Clark   | 3745 | <i>mpc3</i>  | Aimee Phillips    | 3897 | <i>amp11</i> |
| Arthur Clune    | 3129 | <i>ajc22</i> | Tamsyn Quormby    | 4347 | <i>tq1</i>   |
| Steve Downes    | 3741 | <i>sd21</i>  | Colin Rea         | 3817 | <i>cr9</i>   |
| Ken Finch       | 4452 | <i>kf1</i>   | Chris Reece       | 3807 | <i>car7</i>  |
| Rob Fletcher    | 3816 | <i>rpf1</i>  | Peter Roberts     | 3802 | <i>ptr1</i>  |
| Kevin Gardner   | 3739 | <i>pkg4</i>  | Sam Scott         | 3817 | <i>svs2</i>  |
| Chris Gowland   | 3823 | <i>cg1</i>   | Daniel Shelton    | 4349 | <i>ds23</i>  |
| Sarah Hall      | 3827 | <i>seh11</i> | Philip Smailes    | 3833 | <i>pjrs1</i> |
| Peter Halls     | 3806 | <i>pjh1</i>  | Simon Thompson    | 3894 | <i>sjt8</i>  |
| Sue Hodges      | 3839 | <i>sh32</i>  | Pete Turnbull     | 3804 | <i>pnt1</i>  |
| Geoff Houlton   | 2100 | <i>gph2</i>  | Sam Vines         | 3749 | <i>sccv1</i> |
| Jenny Jackson   | 4455 | <i>jj5</i>   | Timothy Willson   | 2123 | <i>ftmw1</i> |