Key notes

Preventing bias and plagiarism on the VLE

Internet Plagiarism: Developing Strategies to Curb Student Academic Dishonesty

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Abstract:

The use of computers has made academic dishonesty easier. Powerful word processing programs allow students to easily "cut and paste" ideas from information they find on the Internet or other electronic media. It is difficult for faculty to document these sources or know whether the information is legitimate. Faculty can learn several techniques for identifying student papers that were plagiarized from the Internet or other ... addition, faculty can develop approaches to class assignments that minim ... se Internet sources inappropriately. The purpose of this paper is to ... ture of plagiarism and to provide information that faculty can use to min ... dishonesty.

Cut
Copy
Paste
Select All
Print

Google Search
Translate English Word

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Also in this Issue:

Using mail merge in Word 2002
Spatial Informatics Laboratory
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From the Editor

Firstly, I'd like to welcome two guest contributors to this issue. Professor Roger Burrows of Sociology writes with Peter Halls on the newly created Spatial Informatics Laboratory (page 5), while Mark Barber of DFM gives details of a new web-based facility, the Arrivals enquiry screen, on page 7.

✦

A useful feature of Blackboard is the facility to develop in-house plugins, Blackboard Building Blocks™ for the system. One such plugin has been developed to ensure anonymity of submissions at the stage of marking, and to allow use of anti-plagiarism tools. Turn to page 2 for full details.

✦

The Lists Service has recently been migrated to the GNU Mailman software package. This popular tool offers a number of new features and improvements, which Mike Brudenell outlines on page 4.

Joanne Casey

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Keynotes on the web

Back copies of Keynotes can be found at: www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/keynotes/

Keynotes

Summer upgrades
Aimee Phillips

A programme of PC replacement, safety testing, maintenance and cleaning has been scheduled for the Summer Vacation. For details, please see: **www.york.ac.uk/ services/cserv/class/upgrades.html**

A total of 84 PCs will be replaced in:

- classroom W/036
- classroom L/117
- study room A/EW/107
- staff training room W/218
- the Reading Room in the RBL

The new PCs will have Pentium 4 3.00GHz processors, 512Mb memory, LCD TFT display screens, CD writers and accessible USB ports.

Staff training 2006
Susanne Hodges

This year 703 bookings were made on Computing Service staff and postgraduate training courses.

From the main training schedule, Introduction to Dreamweaver has proved once again to be the most popular course, followed by Access, Further Access and Further Excel. Evaluations show that over 90% of participants found the training either good or excellent.

Over the past year or so, we have been experimenting with new teaching formats: short lunchtime 'bite sized' courses and lunchtime lectures, followed by a drop in workshop. The 'Why use styles in Word' lecture proved extremely popular and we will be developing more courses in this format.

We are always interested in suggestions for new topics; please contact me (**sh32@york.ac.uk**) with your ideas.

Staff news
Mike Jinks

We are sorry to be saying goodbye to four of our colleagues this summer.

Jonathan Wheeler has been the Database Advisor within the Support Services Group for just over three years. He is joining the Database Team at Perceptive, a software development company based in Birmingham, and left us on 23 June.

Mike Clark, who leaves us on 30 June, has worked in the Computing Service for almost seven years, as a Web/ Database Programmer in the Web Services Group. He and his wife are shortly to emigrate to Canada.

Gavin Jones is leaving on 31 July, after a year and a half in the Systems Group as a Windows Systems Administrator, to start his own IT contracting business.

Finally, Chris Reece, who has been with us for six years as a Systems Administrator/Programmer within the Systems Group, is to leave on 4 August, prior to emigrating to New Zealand with his family.

We wish each of them the very best in their new careers.

Jonathan Wheeler

Mike Clark

Gavin Jones

Chris Reece

Keynotes

Bias and plagiarism on the VLE... and how to stop it

Anthony Leonard

Students in the UK are used to the idea that work handed in for formal examination should be 'marked blind', that is their identity should be hidden from the marker. Unfortunately this concept appears alien to our friends across the pond, not least the suppliers of our Virtual Learning Environment, Blackboard®, whose system allows electronic submission of essays and other assignments, but does not provide any way of anonymising them prior to reaching the marker.

This became an issue for Dr Rob Aitken, leader of a VLE first-round pilot teaching 'World Politics' for 176 first-year students. He had hoped to persuade his students to submit their essays electronically in hope of catching out would-be plagiarisers. Last year the Computing Service installed a trial version of SafeAssignment™ software into the VLE, allowing instructors to upload essays *en masse* and retrieve reports stating how much each essay was plagiarised, and providing links to the online sources. Without a method of anonymising electronic essay submission however, Dr Aitken was unsure how he could make use of this facility.


The Computing Service solution was to develop an in-house plugin known as a Blackboard Building Block™, in essence a standard Java web application configured to use Blackboard as its container and mode of entry, with access to courses and other entities via a published interface. The plugin adds 'anonymised assignments' to the list of possible content items that instructors can use in their course areas. Once opened by a student, an upload form requires confirmation that their exam number (automatically drawn from SITS) is correct, and a declaration of originality before their file is uploaded to a central database and a receipt is returned. Markers use a course control panel tool to retrieve submitted files either individually, or packaged conveniently for use with SafeAssignment. Each file is denoted by the exam number only, which is traceable to the author, but which masks their identity from the marker.

The plugin and associated use of SafeAssignment was successfully trialled by Dr Aitken at the end of Spring term with 179 submissions processed. A second smaller trial for a distance learning VLE pilot run by Dr Martin Forster of Economics was also successful. Further development is planned, with use expected to grow amongst second round VLE pilot courses.

Keynotes

Portering bookings system
Geoff Houlton

Did you know there is an online booking system for portering?
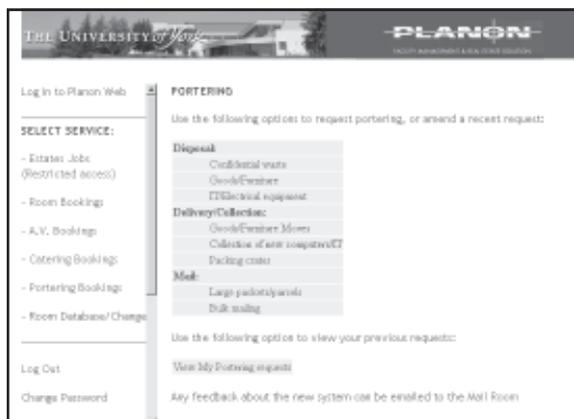
The Facilities Management system "Planon-Web" has now been extended to provide a quick and easy way to request a range of portering jobs. The following options are available;

Disposal
Confidential waste
Goods/Furniture
IT/Electrical equipment

Delivery/Collection
Goods/Furniture Moves
Collection of new computers/IT
Packing crates

Mail
Large packets/parcels
Bulk mailing

It is possible, for example, to book a porter to deliver new IT equipment to your office once it has been purchased and configured by the Computing Service.

The system generates a unique Job Number for each request, and provides you with a means of tracking requests to see how they are progressing.

Planon-Web is available to all University staff, using their Computing Service user ID, via any web browser. On a first visit, select the option to set a password in the Planon system. Then go to the Portering Bookings menu. The system can be accessed via the **Interactive Yorkweb** page:
www.york.ac.uk/np/staffonly/interactive.htm

Vital statistics

A small cross-section of Computing Service activities...

• 213 software licences have been sold via the Information Desk so far this year

• Central fileservers handle 7000 requests, serving 24MB of data, per second

• The new Google box will allow Yorkweb pages to be indexed daily leading to more effective searches

• Classroom printers have printed 1,368,388 pages in the last 12 months.

• In this academic year, there have been 14136 entries into ETS

• In the past twelve months, the Computing Service secretaries have processed 515 purchase orders, including orders for other departments

• In the last year 24 departments have used the Online Feedback System; 1051 surveys have been conducted, leading to 25852 survey responses

• At present, there are 19221 user accounts

• In one week, the University mail servers received 695,854 emails, including 427,160 from external sites. Of these, 12,822 were classified as viruses by Messagelabs, and 163,748 as spam.

• Since October 2005, there have been 528 download sessions of Ordnance Survey map data - an average of 75 per month

• On average, campus DNS servers handle 150 queries a second.

• Licence usage of specialist software for 2006 stands, to date, at: Matlab - 72,550, Maple – 288, ARCGIS - 435,734 and compilers - 5,218

• 3506 students have signed up to the Student Network System - 93% of the possible total. James College has the highest take-up at 97%. 3092 of the machines connected to SNS are running Windows XP

• Excluding SNS users, we have 11159 devices registered on the campus network, including about 550 switches, routers and access points.

The upgraded Lists Service
Mike Brudenell

The Lists Service is a centrally run facility providing mailing list services to departments and other groups at the University.

Mailing lists can be set up to operate as "one-way" announcement-style lists, ideal for a small number of authorised individuals to disseminate information to the much larger set of members of the list. Many departments use such lists to give out information to Undergraduate and Graduate groups.

Alternatively lists can operate as "two-way" discussion-style lists; as well as information dissemination these can be used for subsequent discussion, with each member able to post to the list's entire membership. These are commonly used by groups of staff in departments, within research groups, by societies, etc.

The Upgrade

The Lists Service has operated for a number of years using a software package called Lyris ListManager. However the version being used was getting to be very old and newer versions were not only far more expensive, but also lacking a number of features which people using the service had come to expect.

As a result, after many weeks of preparation, the Lists Service was changed to instead use the very popular GNU Mailman software package. Over Easter all the existing mailing lists on the old service were migrated to the new software. This is now running smoothly and offers a number of improvements over the old:

- Faster distribution of messages to list members

- Optional archiving of email sent through a list, with an easy to browse or search interface to locate past messages

- Excellent web interface for owners to administer their lists, with flexible configuration options and good built-in help pages

- Easy to use web pages for list members to alter their personal settings, either on a list-by-list basis or for all lists to which they belong

Interested in Requesting a List?

In order to request an email list on the University of York's Lists Service you must be a member of the University. We usually expect applications for lists to come from members of the University's staff. However we also recognise that local mailing lists will likely be of benefit to student groups etc, and are willing to consider applications from them.

The primary focus of the Lists Service is to support the University's internal activities and operations. We anticipate that some collaborative ventures may require the inclusion of non-University of York people within York lists.

For further information please visit the Lists Service web site:

https://lists.york.ac.uk/

There you can also find the online web form used to apply for a mailing list. The service is free; all we ask is that you use and manage your list responsibly, and that at least one of the owners registered for a list uses a University email address.

Spatial Informatics Laboratory (SIL)
Peter Halls and Professor Roger Burrows

The Computing Service has been assisting with the technical project management for the new Spatial Informatics Laboratory, located in Wentworth. Designed for research grade compute and graphics intensive applications, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Remote Sensing and Image Processing or Scientific Visualisation, the facility is equipped with ten Sun W1100 AMD Opteron dual processor workstations, a wide format plotter and an Access Grid Node.

The workstations are configured to run Windows XP and Scientific Linux simultaneously, thus offering a platform for the majority of the research grade packages, and are each equipped with twin 19inch LCD colour displays supported by a nVidia FX1100 graphics card, which offers very powerful graphics capabilities including support for stereographic display.

The wide format plotter is a Canon W8200 bubble jet printer, with an associated external controller. This machine uses pigment-based inks, rather than the dye-based inks of the vast majority of ink/bubble jet printers, which means that the output is photo-stable and will not fade on exposure to light: the manufacturers guarantee non-fade for output mounted under glass for a minimum of seventy years! The controller pc, connected to the University network, formats PostScript output files and delivers these to the printer. The controller has the facility to group PostScript files together, for example enabling eight A4 sized plots to be grouped onto A1 sized paper; the maximum width is a B0 roll. The printer operates using six pigment shades, the usual cyan, magenta, yellow and black, with additional light cyan and light magenta that better facilitate the generation of pastel colours. It can produce a 'full bleed' A1 plot in about one minute.

The Access Grid Node facility has capacity for around six to eight people to take part in online meetings, seminars, etc. One likely use may be to enable a group of York people to take part in WUN GeoScience Seminars, the next series of which starts in September.
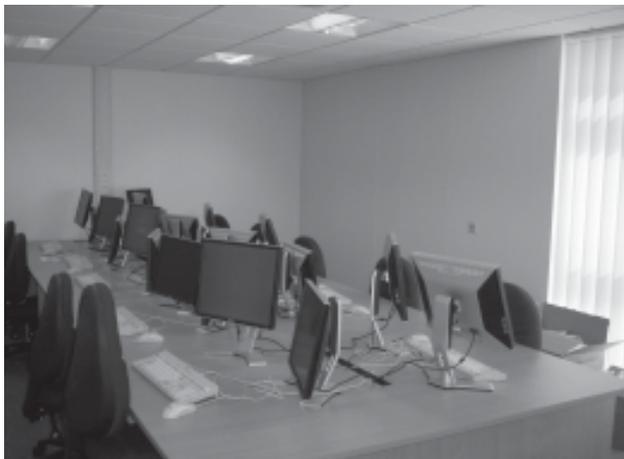
The Spatial Informatics Laboratory is intended to be a cross-disciplinary facility available to, especially, graduate and research students and staff of all departments and has been equipped using SRIF funding. A management board, comprising representatives from interested departments, will be set up shortly. The concept is partly to provide a high performance facility, at least equivalent to that of Derwent D/016, at the Biology / James College / Wentworth Graduate College end of campus. In addition to the equipment, the project has also funded an initial two years license for the Royal Mail Postcode Address File and PostZon database, which provides National Grid coordinates for the location of each Postcode and which together will greatly facilitate the examination of spatial components in survey work. It will also fund an extension to the SAS license, to provide the Oracle database connector, and the purchase of a license for Mosaic micromarketer - a commercial geodemographics system.

Although physically located in SIRU/Sociology the aspiration is for SIL to be catalytic in bringing together researchers from Departments from across the University with an interest in spatial analysis.

Keynotes

How is mail merge in Word 2002 (XP) different from Word 2000?
Susanne Hodges

Performing a mail merge in Word 2002 is substantially different from previous versions. The information and tips below may be of use to those readers experiencing problems.

The Mail Merge Wizard

By default in Word 2002 a mail merge is perfomed by clicking on **Tools | Letters and Mailings | Mail Merge Wizard...**. The wizard opens in a task pane on the right of the screen and leads you through the six main steps of the merge. At each step a decision needs to be made that will affect such things as the type of document you wish to create.
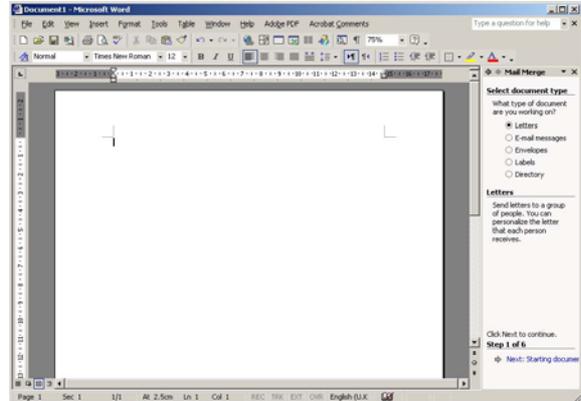
Spaces in Field Names

You will experience problems with filtering if you insert any spaces in your field names. To get round this, either use an underscore (eg First_Name) or remove the space (eg FirstName).

Creating a new data source

When you create a data source, it is automatically stored in **My Documents\My Data Sources** as a .mdb file, rather than a Word file.

Filtering

The filtering feature is easier and more advanced than in 2000. You can, for example, in a small database, simply remove the tick next to a record to exclude individual records from your current merge. You can also filter for specific fields, for example, based on a particular town or post code.

The Address Block and Greeting Line

Step 4 of the mail merge wizard invites you to insert an address block and greeting line. These are links to formatted address and salutation fields. Ensure that the fields are set to match your fields by clicking on the relevant link and choosing the **Match Fields...** button.

Simple insertion of individual merge fields

You may wish to insert each merge field separately, as you would in Word 2000. This is done by using the **Insert Merge Field** (Insert Merge Field ▾) button (not to be confused with the **Insert Merge Fields** button (▤) already displaying on the toolbar, which simply opens the Insert Merge Fields dialog). If so, you will need to add this button to your Mail Merge toolbar. If the toolbar is not currently displayed, choose **View | Toolbars | MailMerge**.

To access the Insert Merge Field button, choose **Tools | Customize...**. Click on the **Commands** tab, then choose **Mail Merge** from the Categories list. Under **Commands**, scroll through the list to find **Insert Merge Field.** Click on this and drag it onto the Mail Merge toolbar.

Frequently asked questions about mail merging can be found at:
**www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/help/wp/MSWord/mail/**

Keynotes

Saving paper
## *Joanne Casey and Aimee Phillips*

As an institution, we get through a huge amount of paper - Computing Service classroom printers alone use over a million sheets of A4 paper a year. At a time of budgetary constraints, and with the good of the environment in mind, it is pertinent to consider ways of reducing paper usage.

One of the simplest ways to save resources is to adjust your printing habits - there is often no need to print all work single-sided, or even full-size. Note some printers do not have the capacity to print in duplex or mutiple page per sheet formats - contact your Departmental Computing Officer if you need to find out more about your printer's capabilities. These instructions are a general guide - different print drivers may mean you see some variations in dialog boxes etc.

Duplex, or double-sided, printing can be set as the default option for all of your printing. Select **Start | Settings | Printers**. In the printer list displayed, right-click on the icon for the printer you use, and select **Properties** from the pop-up menu. In the General window, click on the **Printing Preferences** button. Under **Print on both sides (duplex)** select **Flip on long edge** or **Flip on short edge** as appropriate - for standard portrait aligned documents, **Flip on long edge** is the correct option.
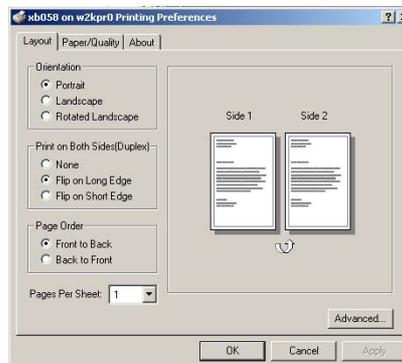
If you prefer not to select duplex as your default option, you can select it when you print an individual document - for example if you are using Microsoft Word, in the Print dialog box click on the **Properties** button, and make the appropriate selections in the **Layout** window.
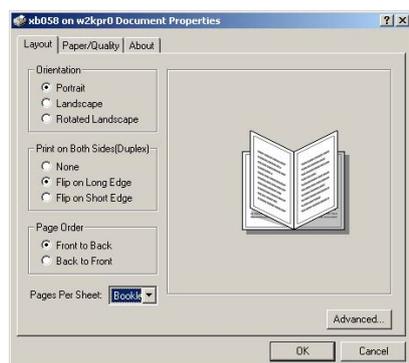
If you are printing longer documents, you may find it useful to print more than one page to a sheet, or to print the document in booklet format. This functionality is available in a number of commonly used packages, including Microsoft Office, Internet Explorer and Adobe Reader.

Open the Print dialog box and click on the **Properties** button. In the **Layout** window, a drop-down list beside **Pages per sheet** offers a number of options, allowing you to print up to 16 pages to one sheet (ideal if you have incredibly sharp eyesight...) or to print the document in A5 booklet format.

Finally, you can make your documents take up fewer pages by the simple expedient of adjusting your margins. In Microsoft Office documents, select **File | Page Setup**. In the **Margins** window, adjust the margin size as required, select whether this will apply to **Whole document** or **This point forward**, and click on **OK**.

Arrivals enquiry screen on the web
Mark Barber

This is a new web facility for porters, reception staff and college secretaries. It can be found on the **Interactive Yorkweb** page (**www.york.ac.uk/np/staffonly/interactive.htm**) under **Accommodation**. We currently have two main systems containing information on residents:

•   PAMS for students in term time;
•   KINETICS for conference, B&B and all vacation-time residencies including student vacation lets.

The new facility allows predicted arrivals created on both of these systems to be viewed altogether on one web screen. Target staff should already have access to the screen but additional requests for access can be made by anyone using the **Request access to Arrivals or Residents Enquiry** link under the Accommodation section of Interactive Yorkweb.

contact information

Contacting the Computing Service

Computing Service
University of York
Heslington
YORK YO10 5DD

Telephone: (01904) 433800
Direct dial: (01904) 43 followed by ext no.
Fax: (01904) 433740
Email: *username*@york.ac.uk

www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/

Information Desk

The Information Desk is your first point of contact with the Computing Service
Telephone: ext 3838
Email: *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.

Computing Service Staff

Director:	Mike Jinks	3801	*kmj1*
Departmental Secretary:	Lorraine Moor	3801	*lsm1*
Head of Infrastructure:	Robert Demaine	3808	*rld1*
Head of Information Systems:	Kay Mills-Hicks	2101	*kmh8*
Head of Support Services:	David Surtees	3803	*dps4*
Operations Manager:	Brian Souter	3814	*bs1*
Information Officer:	Joanne Casey	3805	*jmc8*

Kashif Amin	3817	*ka14*	John Hutchinson	3898	*jh57*
Gavin Atkinson	3738	*ga9*	Gavin Jones	3597	*gtj500*
Amanda Bacon	3802	*agb12*	Fergus McGlynn	3822	*fam6*
Linda Bailey	3800	*lcb6*	John Marsden	3832	*jpm1*
Sue Bolton	2102	*sjb28*	John Mason	3813	*jrm13*
David Broom	3229	*dlb10*	Darren Miller	3815	*dm26*
Mike Brudenell	3811	*pmb1*	Eleanor Morrison	3742	*emm502*
John Byrne	3812	*jcb1*	Darren Munday	3821	*dam6*
Michael Clark	3745	*mpc3*	Michelle McCarthy	2627	*mm533*
Arthur Clune	3129	*ajc22*	Colin Noble	1747	*cdn1*
Steve Downes	3741	*sd21*	Nicola Normandale	4695	*ncn1*
Al Edgar	4348	*aee500*	Heather Payne	3800	*hp501*
Ken Finch	4452	*kf1*	Aimee Phillips	3897	*amp11*
Rob Fletcher	3816	*rpf1*	Tamsyn Quormby	4346	*tq1*
Iain Ford	3894	*igf500*	Chris Reece	3807	*car7*
Kevin Gardner	3739	*pkg4*	Sam Scott	3817	*svs2*
Chris Gowland	3823	*cg1*	Daniel Shelton	4349	*ds23*
Dan Granville	3819	*dsg2*	Jenny Smailes	4455	*jj5*
Kelvin Hai	4689	*kh525*	Philip Smailes	3833	*pjrs1*
Sarah Hall	3827	*seh11*	Andrew Smith	3809	*abs4*
Peter Halls	3806	*pjh1*	Richard Stoddart	3825	*rjs502*
Verity Hartley	3595	*vh505*	Carl Stovell	4699	*cjs505*
John Hawes	4347	*jeh11*	Ben Thompson	3230	*bt4*
Susanne Hodges	3839	*sh32*	Pete Turnbull	3804	*pnt1*
Geoff Houlton	2100	*gph2*	Sam Vines	3749	*sccv1*

Keynotes

Key*notes*