

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*  
Computing Service

# Keynotes

Volume 32 Number 3 March 2006



## Using the wireless network

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**Staff news**

**From the Editor**

Some of you will already have had the opportunity to use the wireless network which is being rolled out across campus. For details of the hotspots already in place, and to learn more about connecting to the network, turn to Ben Thompson's article on page 4.



The Iliad staff have been working hard on VLE training materials in recent months to ensure that students using the VLE for the first time have the necessary skills. On page 3, Susanne Hodges gives details of how the training materials may be used.



*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/](http://www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/keynotes/)

## Computer consumables

**Brian Souter**

The Computing Service vending machine in the Morrell Library has been somewhat unreliable since it was installed last November. We apologise for any inconvenience, and offer assurance that we are committed to sorting out any start up problems with Commercial Services and the vendor, Discount Computer Supplies Ltd.

Plans to withdraw sales of computer consumables at the Information Desk in the Computing Service will still go ahead; sales will be phased out gradually over the Spring Term as users begin to source products from other outlets on campus. A full list of outlets can be found at: [www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/advice/desk/consumables.htm](http://www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/advice/desk/consumables.htm).

## Easter and May Bank Holidays

**Brian Souter**

The Computing Service building and Information Desk will be closed on each of the four bank holidays in April and May: Good Friday (14 April), Easter Monday (17 April), May Day (1 May), and the Spring Bank Holiday (29 May). All services will be available as usual outside normal hours; no staff will be on duty to attend to faults, and access to the PC rooms will be subject to college opening hours.

## PC upgrades

**Brian Souter**

The rolling programme to replace ageing PCs will this year focus on classrooms and study areas in Wentworth, Alcuin, Langwith and the Raymond Burton Library.

A total of 84 PCs will be replaced in classrooms W/036 and L/117, study room A/EW/107, staff training room W/218 and the Reading Room in the RBL. The new PCs will have Pentium 4 3.00GHz processors, 512MB memory, LCD TFT display screens (flat screens), CD writers and accessible USB ports.

A detailed programme will be published on the web shortly.

## Changes to the WINS service

**Andrew Smith**

On Tuesday 18th April 2006 the old Windows 2002 server supporting the WINS service will be switched off. A new Windows 2003 WINS Server has been in operation for some time and this is currently providing WINS services to all supported PCs and unsupported PCs that use DHCP for configuration. Any unsupported PC that currently uses the old servers will fail to resolve WINS addresses after this date.

Users of unsupported Windows PCs should ensure that they either configure their network interfaces via DHCP (the preferred option), or use the addresses 144.32.128.4 and 144.32.190.4 as the WINS servers.

### The end of the MAC era



*Tim Taylor Willson does the honours with the "off" switch as the hardware which ran the MAC system is finally decommissioned in January 2006.*

## Staff News

*Mike Jinks*

Several new members of staff have joined us since the last issues of Keynotes. Kelvin Hai and Carl Stovell have joined the Web Services Group. Kelvin has taken up the post of Web Systems Administrator/Developer, focussing on the system administration of the VLE, completing the University's VLE team. Kelvin has worked in a similar role at the University of East Anglia where he was the Systems Administrator for their Blackboard system. As well as having specific experience of our VLE platform integrating with our student system, SITS, Kelvin also has experience of other areas of Web systems development, including portals.

Carl has also joined us as a Web Systems Administrator/Developer, but focusing on the University's Web systems; he takes up the post vacated by Chris Kilgour. Carl joins us from Bishop Burton College where he was involved with web development as well as a variety of system administration and support activities.

Alistair Edgar has joined the Technician's group, filling the post arising from Eleanor Morrison's move into the Networking Group. Alistair is a New Zealander who moved to York in 2004 and has worked in a variety of roles both in New Zealand and in the UK.

Verity Hartley has joined us as a Relationship Manager. Verity's role will be to develop Strategic Liaison between the Computing Service and the Arts and Humanities Departments. Verity has undertaken a similar role with departments at the London Business School as well as having wide experience in IT as a consultant and trainer.

We hope all our new colleagues will enjoy their time with us.

Heather Payne is now a permanent colleague. Heather covered for Linda Bailey during Linda's maternity leave, but with Linda now working part-time, Heather has been able to move to a permanent post. We also welcome back Joanne Casey as Information Officer after her maternity leave. Joanne will be working part time until the end of March when she will return full-time.



*Carl Stovell, Verity Hartley, Alistair Edgar and Kelvin Hai*

# Iliad student VLE training course

*Susanne Hodges*

Iliad staff have developed a two hour pilot VLE student training course that will eventually become part of the Iliad for University programme. The course is designed to introduce students to the most commonly used features of the VLE. Its theme is based on York's culture, cuisine, sport, art and theatre.

The training materials, alongside a tutor presentation and session plan, are available within the Content Management System of Blackboard for pilot leaders to use as a basis for developing their own student VLE training. Pilot leaders using the materials are responsible for updating them, should any changes to the VLE interface occur. Iliad staff would be interested to see student evaluations, should you use this course; these may be sent to [iliad@york.ac.uk](mailto:iliad@york.ac.uk).

## Student VLE training for World Politics

*Susanne Hodges*

Rob Aitken of the Politics Department asked Iliad staff to deliver to 240 World Politics students the recently developed student VLE training unit. It was decided to run four sessions during the first week of the Spring Term, each catering for 60 students, in Alcuin A/E/W004 with a tutor and a minimum of five demonstrators.

Before this mammoth training began, the course was delivered to Rob and his seminar leaders in the staff training room in Wentworth, so that they could experience the VLE from a student viewpoint and would also be able to help with demonstrating at the World Politics sessions.

The training went well, with most students finding the VLE easy to use. Evaluations showed that the students enjoyed the course and found it very useful, with 93% agreeing to the statement that "this course has made me feel confident that I will be able to use Blackboard effectively in my studies". 46% of students commented that they found the VLE easy to use and 32% found the collaboration tools to be one of the its strengths. Typical comments were "...very simple and easy to use, easy to navigate around the site and in general a very useful resource. Virtual classroom very useful" and "...very easy to use, well set out for first time users. Enjoyed using the Virtual Classroom (especially the Whiteboard)".

The VLE itself stood up to large numbers of students logging in all at once and, after some initial glitches, the rest of the sessions ran without any problems.

## Netskills training materials

*Susanne Hodges*

Computing Service has renewed its Netskills' Gold Scheme Licence on behalf of the University. The licence allows unlimited access to Netskills' full range of training materials for the next twelve months, with new material available for use immediately it is released.

The materials fall into six broad categories:

- Introducing the Internet
- Searching and Information Skills
- Communication and Collaboration
- Learning and Teaching
- Developing a Web Site
- Web Technologies

Currently there are over 50 training modules; each module consists of approximately 2.5 hours of material, including a PowerPoint presentation with Speaker's notes and a set of hands-on exercises in Word.

Netskills' materials may be used in a variety of ways, from self study to formal training for students and staff. They may not however be used for commercial purposes.

To access the training materials and further information, visit: [www.netskills.ac.uk/](http://www.netskills.ac.uk/) and select **Materials**. You will need to register your name to receive a User ID and password; you may then download, use and adapt materials as you wish.

## Campus Agreement

*David Surtees*

The Computing Service is pleased to announce that it has signed Microsoft Campus Agreement for a further three years. This is a subscription licensing programme which provides the whole University with cost effective access to many Microsoft Products, including Microsoft Office and the desktop operating systems.

In order to ensure value for money, and after consultation with the University Web Office, we have decided not to include Microsoft FrontPage as part of our new Campus Agreement. This decision is based on the fact that the University has standardised on Dreamweaver as its supported web authoring solution. This means that, if you have installed Microsoft FrontPage on your machine as part of Campus Agreement, you must either remove the copy, or purchase a Microsoft Select licence instead. Please contact the Computing Service Information Desk ([infodesk@york.ac.uk](mailto:infodesk@york.ac.uk)) if you wish to purchase a Microsoft Select licence.

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## Wireless network

*Ben Thompson*

We have a new home on the web for set up guides and information about the wireless network at:  
[www.york.ac.uk/go/wireless/](http://www.york.ac.uk/go/wireless/)

The wireless network continues to expand, covering more and more areas of the university. Current open areas with wireless coverage include:

- The JBM Library (ground and first floors)
- The Borthwick Institute
- Cafe Barista
- Derwent Bar and Dining Area
- Biology Atrium
- The Roger Kirk Centre
- Langwith (PC Classroom/Study Area)
- Goodricke Bar
- Physics Concourse
- Halifax Bar (JJ's)
- Alcuin Bar (B Henry's)
- Vanbrugh Bar
- Vanbrugh Dining Hall
- Wentworth Bar and Dining Area
- King's Manor (Quadrangle)
- Information Centre (Reception Area)

Many Departments also provide coverage in certain areas and we are working with DCOs to extend this further.

To log on to the wireless network you must use your York email address as the username along with your normal password. Anyone who has been using the same password since before March 2005 will need to update it in order to connect. To do this, please visit the Computing Service password management page on the Electronic InfoDesk at: [www.york.ac.uk/go/infodesk/](http://www.york.ac.uk/go/infodesk/)

## Contacting the Computing Service

Computing Service  
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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/](http://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	<i>knj1</i>
Departmental Secretary:	Lorraine Moor	3801	<i>lsm1</i>
Head of Infrastructure:	Robert Demaine	3808	<i>rld1</i>
Head of Information Systems:	Kay Mills-Hicks	2101	<i>kmh8</i>
Head of Support Services:	David Surtees	3803	<i>dps4</i>
Operations Manager:	Brian Souter	3814	<i>bs1</i>
Information Officer:	Joanne Casey	3805	<i>jmc8</i>

Kashif Amin	3817	<i>ka14</i>	John Hutchinson	3898	<i>jh57</i>
Gavin Atkinson	3738	<i>ga9</i>	Gavin Jones	3597	<i>gtj500</i>
Amanda Bacon	3802	<i>agb12</i>	Fergus McGlynn	3822	<i>fam6</i>
Linda Bailey	3800	<i>lcb6</i>	John Marsden	3832	<i>jpm1</i>
Sue Bolton	2102	<i>sjb28</i>	John Mason	3813	<i>jrm13</i>
David Broom	3229	<i>dlb10</i>	Darren Miller	3815	<i>dm26</i>
Mike Brudenell	3811	<i>pmb1</i>	Eleanor Morrison	3742	<i>emm502</i>
John Byrne	3812	<i>jcb1</i>	Darren Munday	3821	<i>dam6</i>
Michael Clark	3745	<i>mpe3</i>	Michelle Murphy	2627	<i>mm533</i>
Arthur Clune	3129	<i>ajc22</i>	Colin Noble	1747	<i>cdn1</i>
Steve Downes	3741	<i>sd21</i>	Nicola Normandale	4695	<i>ncn1</i>
Al Edgar	4348	<i>aee500</i>	Heather Payne	3800	<i>hp501</i>
Ken Finch	4452	<i>kfl</i>	Aimee Phillips	3897	<i>amp11</i>
Rob Fletcher	3816	<i>rpf1</i>	Tamsyn Quormby	4346	<i>tq1</i>
Iain Ford	3894	<i>igf500</i>	Chris Reece	3807	<i>car7</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>
Dan Granville	3819	<i>dsg2</i>	Jenny Smailes	4455	<i>jj5</i>
Kelvin Hai	4689	<i>kh525</i>	Philip Smailes	3833	<i>pjrs1</i>
Sarah Hall	3827	<i>seh11</i>	Andrew Smith	3809	<i>abs4</i>
Peter Halls	3806	<i>pjh1</i>	Richard Stoddart	3825	<i>rjs502</i>
Verity Hartley	3595	<i>vh505</i>	Carl Stovell	4699	<i>cjs505</i>
John Hawes	4347	<i>jeh11</i>	Ben Thompson	3230	<i>bt4</i>
Susanne Hodges	3839	<i>sh32</i>	Pete Turnbull	3804	<i>pnt1</i>
Matt Holmes	3820	<i>mjh25</i>	Sam Vines	3749	<i>sccv1</i>
Geoff Houlton	2100	<i>gph2</i>	Jonathan Wheeler	3818	<i>jdw5</i>

# Keynotes

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