Office 2007 Hints & Tips

. Using New Features
. Customising Toolbars
. Using The Pin

contents

02

Volume 36:2 - [KEYNOTES ON THE WEB]
Back copies of Keynotes can be found at:
www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/keynotes

News in Brief

News

From the Editor

As ever, there's a lot going on within the Computing Service. On page 10, Kay Mills-Hicks gives a roundup of current developments, while pages 7 and 8 have updates on the Streaming Service and ProjectFS (the new rented filestore service) respectively. Page 9 introduces some developments within the Information Systems world, and improvements to our infrastructure are detailed in Robert Demaine's article on Heslington East (page 4) and Stefan Wielgosz's item on Data Centres (page 10).

As we move towards the withdrawal of Office XP (page 7), new users of Office 2007 will find the Hints & Tips on page 6 both helpful and timely.

Finally, Tom Smith provides an insight into the working day of a collaboration specialist (apparently, an exciting whirl of new technologies, email and doughnuts) on page 8.

JOANNE CASEY

keynotes

Disability Signs SARAH KENNEDY

The Computing Service provides 17 PC classrooms and study areas across Campus. Supernova and ZoomText are provided on at least one PC in all classrooms to aid visually impaired users. ZoomText is screen magnification software; Supernova is both a magnifier and a screen reader. We provide a sign next to the relevant machines to indicate which software is installed.

For the past two academic years a number of these signs have been defaced in various classrooms. The section of text defaced is "be prepared to give up the use of this PC if another machine is available".

This policy has been agreed with Disability Services and we ask anyone who wishes to discuss this policy to email **DisabilityServices@york.ac.uk**.

PC Room Management
BRIAN SOUTER

With an ever-increasing number of PC rooms managed by the Computing Service, we have set up an operational management group whereby we can meet with sections of the Directorate of Facilities Management to discuss management issues. The group has met twice this year and we are already seeing improvements in areas such as room preparation, cleaning and security. Regular checks of the facilities are also under review and we hope to make improvements in this area later in the year. Meanwhile, if anyone has any comments or suggestions then please email them to **itsupport@york.ac.uk**.

Easter & May Bank Holidays BRIAN SOUTER

The Computing Service building and IT Support Office will be closed on the four bank holidays during April and May: Good Friday (2 April), Easter Monday (5 April), May Bank Holiday (3 May) and Spring Bank Holiday (31 May). Services will be available as for a normal weekend with no staff in attendance to deal with computer-related issues and access to PC rooms subject to college opening hours.

Staff News LORRAINE MOOR

We're very pleased to welcome Michael Jones, who joined us in November as Identity Systems Administrator/Developer, a new post created to enable further development of the increasingly important area of identity management and provisioning systems. Michael has wide knowledge of identity management in higher education which he gained during his previous employment at the University of Hull. We wish him every success in his new role.

In January, Stefan Wielgosz took up the new post of Data Centre Manager, which involves running the new purpose-built data centres being established at York. Stefan brings a wealth of experience in this area from his previous role at Leeds University, and he shares some of his hopes and aims elsewhere in this publication. We hope he enjoys working with us.

Finally, at the start of the year we were delighted to welcome back Jenny Smailes, who has returned part-time for two days a week to her role in the Business Systems Group following her maternity leave.

MICHAEL JONES

STEFAN WIELGOSZ

Using the Knowledge Base SARAH KENNEDY

The Computing Service Knowledge Base is designed as a self service tool for all our users. It currently has over 250 solutions ranging from instructions on how to map a network drive to finding the MAC address of an XBox - an essential step for students wishing to use theirs on the Network Access Service.

The Knowledge Base is at: **https://footprints.york.ac.uk/footprints/cserv.html**. To quickly find a solution you can search by category or keyword to find the solution you require. Using the keyword function may help you find solutions that have similar useful content.

Once you enter the Knowledge Base you are also informed of any Global Issues affecting the campus network. You can subscribe to the Global Issue to receive up to date news and advice.

We are constantly adding new solutions and welcome any suggestions for frequent issues you may have. We also encourage you to use this as a first point of contact when the IT Support Office is closed or experiencing high volume of calls.

Instant Messaging Service JOANNE CASEY

An early output of the Collaborative Tools Project introduced in the November issue of Keynotes is to be the launch of a University instant messaging service, and provision of IM software via Add/Remove Programs. Look out for more information on York Extra and the Computing Service website soon.

03

Heslington East Infrastructure Plans

ROBERT DEMAINE

At the end of a cold February, the start of the next academic year may seem to be a distant prospect. However, work is already in hand to plan the installation and commissioning of the IT infrastructure which will support the four new academic buildings on the Heslington East campus due for completion between July and October this year.

Last year Computing Service staff had a very busy summer bringing into service over 2,700 outlets in the new Goodricke College and the Berrick Saul Building. This summer the challenge will be even greater when the network infrastructure will be extended to accommodate more than 6000 new outlets in 11 wiring centres across four buildings. To make it really interesting, the work will need to be completed within a period of approximately 16 weeks.

The use of the campus network by a range of critical services such as access control, CCTV, building management systems and telephony means that coordination with the contractor's programme will form an essential part of the planning process. It also has an impact on the timing, scope and complexity of the work undertaken by the Computing Service. Gone are the days when IT staff would not appear on site until the final stages of fitout. In 2010, making network connections live is very much on the critical path for any new build project due to the nature of the services which depend upon them. As a result, Computing Service technical staff will be donning hard hats, safety boots and high-visibility jackets to work in the wiring centres surrounded by electricians, painters and others as the building programme continues around them.

ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF HESLINGTON EAST SHOWING (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP-LEFT) COMPUTER SCIENCE, THEATRE, FILM & TELEVISION, LAW & MANAGEMENT, GOODRICKE COLLEGE, AND THE RON COOKE HUB

Much thought has gone into making the Heslington East network as flexible and robust as possible. Every building has dual points of entry and diversely routed cable runs, while the mesh topology model already being used on the Heslington West campus will give the network the capability of self-healing and reduce the number of single points of failure. The adoption of blown fibre technology for all fibre installations will offer the opportunity for the rapid and cost-effective deployment of additional capacity in the future or for reconfiguring network topology as required.

In addition to a comprehensive structured cabling system providing wired outlets in offices, classrooms, seminar rooms and labs, each building has been designed to accommodate extensive wireless coverage, especially in larger open spaces, drawing on the lessons of the highly successful deployment in the Berrick Saul Building.

PC Room News

BRIAN SOUTER

Once again we are planning an exciting and busy programme of works to maintain and improve the facilities in our PC rooms. Approximately 147 new PCs will be installed to replace old equipment in a number of rooms:

. Wentworth - W/N/218 and W/N/036

. Halifax - HSL/LRC/001

. Langwith - L/N/138 and L/N/117

. Alcuin - A/EW/107

. Library - HRL/112.

The works will also include the cleaning, checking and rebuilding of all remaining PCs; the detailed programme will be published on the web in due course.

Adding to the busy schedule, the Computing Service is also involved in setting up new PC rooms on Heslington East; a 20-seater teaching room will be provided in The Ron Cooke Hub along with a 40-seater room in the Law and Management building. PC study areas on the 1st and 2nd floors of The Ron Cooke Hub atrium are also planned.

As the refurbishment of the Library continues, the Computing Service and the Library are working towards providing several small clusters of PCs within the new development; this year, 16-seater and 14-seater study rooms will be provided on the second floor. Plans for developing space in the Computer Science building will also see the provision of a 48-seater PC classroom which will be added to the teaching pool later this year.

With the busy schedule and pressure on budgets, it is increasingly unlikely that plans to refurbish PC rooms L/N/050 and L/N/138 will go ahead this year. We do plan, however, to work with our colleagues in Estates to try and give these areas a refresh, following on from the successful programme of works last year when several rooms received new carpets and decoration.

Microsoft Outlook Housekeeping SARAH KENNEDY

Amongst the most frequent queries we receive to the IT Support Office are those related to mail and disk quota management, and in particular related to Outlook storage. In the Autumn Term alone we dealt with over 500 quota queries.

There are a number of steps you can take to make sure you don't exceed your quota:

Checking your quota

You should check your mail and disk quota usage from time to time and make sure you keep space free. You can check your quota on the web: visit **www.york.ac.uk/myitaccount** and follow the link to Disk Quota.

Understanding Outlook storage areas

We provide two separate storage areas; Mail and Disk (H: & M: drive) quota.

Folders stored under **York IMAP Server** take up space on the **Mail** quota.

Folders stored under the **Personal Folders** section are stored by default on your **Disk** quota (in a file named **Outlook.pst**).

Currently you have more space on your Mail quota (up to 1GB for Staff, 500Mb for Students) than your Disk quota (up to 400Mb for Staff, 200Mb for students). In view of this, we recommend that any additional folders you create for storage are held under the IMAP server.

In Office 2007 you can also store your **Sent** items in your IMAP folder - another advantage to this is that they can also be seen if you access your email account via Webmail.

How to remain within your quota

. Delete emails you don't need.

. Remember to check your Sent mail and other folders as well as your Inbox. Filter by **size** and delete large emails first.

. Save emails without the attachments: in Outlook you can do this by opening the email, right-clicking on the attachment icon and selecting **Remove** from the pop-up list which appears.

. Finally, when you've deleted email messages remember to **compact** the Personal Folders area. Without this step you will not reduce the size of the Outlook.pst file on your H: Drive. This is the main cause of users exceeding their **Disk** quota. Search the Computing Service Knowledge Base (**https://footprints.york.ac.uk/footprints/cserv.html**) for full instructions on how to compact your folders.

Webmail Service Upgrade Coming Soon MIKE BRUDENELL

The software which runs the Webmail Service is being upgraded to the latest version. The new version is very similar in use to the old version, although with a few nice new touches: for example clicking the checkbox at the top of a page listing messages in a folder will now select all of those messages.

The most obvious difference is that the visual appearance of the Webmail Service has been given a fresh look with a tabbed interface and a colour scheme based on the University's Visual Identity.

Desktop Application Summer Upgrade Programme

ADRIAN YOUNG

This year we have taken the difficult decision to scale back this summer's application upgrade programme so that we can concentrate on delivering important improvements to our desktop and application deployment service.

We will be spending the summer looking at upgrading our application deployment tools - for example, upgrading MS Systems Management Service (SMS) to MS System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM). We will also be looking at providing a virtual desktop service this year.

These are major pieces of work for us to undertake and we need to concentrate all our efforts in providing these improvements. Normally the summer upgrade programme is an intense period of activity for us and we simply can't do both.

Over the last three years we have worked hard to update the majority of our applications to the latest versions, as well as introduce a large number of new applications that are available on our supported PCs.

We believe that, for most of our applications, we can miss out on this year's upgrade and catch up with new version next year.

We will be upgrading some of the most popular applications, and also applying any upgrades that fix serious security issues, and we will also be providing more virtualised applications.

We will, however, NOT be asking for or deploying any new applications this year, as we do not have the resource available for this.

We appreciate that this will be a disappointment to some departments, but it is an unavoidable step.

A list of the applications that will be upgraded will be published later on in the year.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this further please contact Adrian Young (ary500).

05

Hints & Tips For Office 2007 SUSANNE HODGES

If you have upgraded to Office 2007 and are getting used to using the new fluid user interface, Office Button, Ribbon and Quick Access Toolbar (QAT), you may be interested in some useful features that have been incorporated into this version of the software.

Customising the Quick Access Toolbar

By default, the QAT contains commands for Save, Undo and Repeat. You can however customise this toolbar by selecting the drop down arrow at the right and choose More Commands. Here you will be able to add any command that you frequently use. To keep the toolbar tidy, group the commands using the Separator.

The Pin

Do you frequently need to have quick access to important documents?

In Office 2007, you can **pin** them to your list of recent documents.

Click on the Office button, then on the pin to the right of the file name to pin (or unpin). This means that the file will not be removed from the files list, regardless of how many files you open.

Keyboard Shortcuts

If you rely on the keyboard more than the mouse, you'll be pleased to learn that the Ribbon comes with shortcuts for every button. These are known as **Key Tips**. Press the **Alt** button to display the key tip for each command.

For example, to insert a table, you would press **Alt+N+T**. **N** takes you to the Insert Tab and **T** to the table command. The advantage of this method is that you don't have to remember keyboard shortcuts; as soon as you press **Alt** the key tips are displayed.

Existing keyboard shortcuts, such as **Ctrl + C** to copy a selection, or **Ctrl + V** to paste, are still applicable.

The Status Bar

In Office 2007 applications, status bar information that was previously shown as default can be displayed or hidden.

Choices vary for each application and include the option to display whether Caps Lock is switched on, or in Word, whether Track Changes is active.

To customise the status bar in any application, right click on it to bring up the Customise Status Bar menu. Choose from any of the options listed.

Compatibility Mode

Documents created in earlier version of Word, PowerPoint or Excel will open in compatibility mode (this is clearly indicated on the title bar) and unsupported features will be unavailable. To enable all Office 2007 functionality, the document can be converted to the new file format.

1. Select **Office button | Convert**.

2. Click **OK** in the warning dialogue.

3. Choose **Save** and save as .docx, .xlsx, etc.

Compatibility Checker

If you are sharing documents, you can use the compatibility checker to check the compatibility of your document with other versions of Office.

For example, if your document contains SmartArt (a feature not supported in earlier versions of Word), when a colleague using Word 2003 opens your document, the SmartArt graphics will be converted into a single object that cannot be edited.

To check the document for features not supported in earlier versions of Word, Excel or PowerPoint:

1. Click the **Office** button.

2. Point to **Prepare** in the left pane and click **Run Compatibility Checker**.

Office 2007 provides a report that lists any unsupported features and details what you can do, if anything, to make your document readable in earlier versions.

Document Inspector

There are times when personal information associated with your document should not be available to recipients when it is shared electronically. The document inspector enables you to check for hidden data and personal information that might be stored in the document itself or in the document properties.

To use the document inspector:

1. Save a copy of the final version of the document. It is recommended that you keep the original document as it is not always possible to restore data that the Document Inspector removes.

2. Choose **Office Button | Prepare | Inspect Document**.

3. Select or unselect the items you wish to inspect and click **Inspect**.

4. Review the results of the inspection in the Document Inspector dialogue box.

5. Click **Remove All** next to each inspection result to remove the content from the document.

To learn more about new features in Office 2007, visit: **www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/sw/ office2007/support.htm**.

Moving to Office 2007
AIMEE PHILLIPS

———

As you will be aware, the Computing Service is in the process of rolling out Microsoft Office 2007 to all supported office PCs (it is already installed on all Computing Service classroom PCs).

At the beginning of January we stopped providing support for Office XP, and now provide only basic maintenance and support for Office 2003. Primary support is for Office 2007, and users having problems with earlier versions may now be advised to upgrade to resolve their issue.

As part of a phased release, approximately 65% of supported office PCs have been updated so far by arrangement with DCOs/departmental representatives. Over the next couple of weeks we will be making Office 2007 available to all supported office PCs via **Run Advertised Programs** in the **Control Panel**.

Once Office 2007 is available to all PCs, those users of supported PCs who have not yet completed the install will start to receive a pop-up when they log in, letting them know that Office 2007 is available and giving details of how to install it.

The release of this pop-up will be staggered to enable us to manage the support workload efficiently.

During April, on dates to be announced, anyone who is still running previous versions of Office will have their machine updated automatically with a forced upgrade. We hope that most users will have installed Office 2007 before this stage, as a forced upgrade may not take place at a convenient time, and may cause unnecessary disruption to a user's work.

Please see the Office 2007 web pages at: **www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/sw/office2007/** for further information and support details. New users of Office 2007 may also find the Hints & Tips on the facing page useful.

Streaming Service Goes Live **ANTHONY LEONARD**

———

The Computing Service is pleased to announce that its streaming service is now ready for production use. Streaming is an alternative to downloading as a way of delivering media on the web. It lends itself well to serving high quality or long play content as seeking (fast-forwarding and rewinding) speeds are greatly increased, and less bandwidth is used on average. The new streaming capability underpins several new services brought to you by the E-Learning Team, AV Centre and the Web Office, making publishing online audio and video at York easier than ever.

If you wish to stream audio or video publicly on the University web site please contact your department web officer in the first instance, and hand them a copy of the media in whatever format you have - DVD hard copy, digital video, etc.
With assistance from the A.V. Centre to convert the media if necessary, they should be able to deposit the media on your behalf into your department's streaming 'dropbox', file space set aside for public streaming. From there the media may be published using a new online wizard to configure and preview a player before generating the HTML required to embed the player into your webpage. The Web Office also supports a similar publishing wizard for sites managed using the Web CMS.
For more information see the Web Office web site (**www.york.ac.uk/communications/websites/content/multimedia/**).

The E-Learning team is now providing tools, guidance and workshops to help course leaders use audio and video resources for teaching within the VLE. Any digital media file uploaded to the VLE CMS can now be marked as available for streaming. This setting permits any course leader to publish the media in their VLE course site, where access to streams can be faithfully restricted with as much fine-grained control as with any other VLE content, for example requiring that a student acquires a certain score in a test before access is granted. For more information visit the Yorkshare Headquarters web site online (**vlesupport.york.ac.uk**), or contact the E-Learning team directly by emailing: **vlesupport@york.ac.uk**.

Both services make use of the same new embeddable media player, which has been designed to be as widely accessible as possible. The player requires no more to run than YouTube's own player and includes keyboard accessible controls and support for subtitles. It can be configured to play media downloaded as well as streamed, and end users can be given easy access to the embed HTML (public streams only), allowing them to republish the same media around the web. The streaming service is now using a robust server infrastructure with the aim of being as reliable as the University web site itself. It supports streaming of Flash video (.flv), MP3 audio (.mp3), and 'iPod-friendly' formats, specifically H.264 video and AAC audio (.f4v, .mp4, .m4a, .mov, .m4v, .mp4v, .3gp, and .3g2).

The streaming service has been designed to work with the rich content management systems that the University already provides, rather than introduce its own. Accordingly 'dropbox' filestore has been kept simple intentionally, and may be replaced in preference to other repositories as they become available. For example it is hoped that it will soon be possible to stream content managed within the York Digital Library (YODL), the University's digital archive currently under development. Whilst there are no concrete plans for other improvements, there are several directions which could be of interest. These include support for live streaming, dynamic bandwidth detection, restricting access to dropbox streams and so on. If you are interested in any of these areas, please contact the Computing Service by email to: **itsupport@york.ac.uk**.

For more information please see: **www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/stream**

07

A Day In The Life... TOM SMITH

My morning usually begins with coffee and replying to a few emails from people with questions about tools such as SocialText, Jive, LifeRay and Elgg that we are currently evaluating for the Collaborative Tools Project (**collaborate.york.ac.uk**) which aims to provide blogs, wikis and social media functionalities for staff at the University.

To keep up to date with all the latest developments in the worlds of technology and social media, I use Google Reader (**www.google.com/reader**) to discover which company or product is evil today. Some days it might be Google Wave or Google Buzz. Today's devil incarnate could be Apple's iPhone, Facebook, Twitter or Amazon's Kindle. It's good to be up to date and informed. The whole experience of reading lots of newsfeeds is made easier on the eye, and brain, by using the Feedly Firefox plugin which presents a big list of dull news articles as if it were a lovely magazine (**feedly.com**) .

TOM'S FEEDLY DIGEST

I have the Delicious bookmarking Firefox plugin installed (**http://bit.ly/9n2GC6**), so if I come across anything interesting, it's a breeze to "save it for later" with a relevant tag. And I can share these bookmarks with others who may find them interesting too (**http://delicious.com/theOTHERblog/collaboration**).

Typically, and in fact this has just happened, even as I write this article, someone will call up and want to talk over their requirements for collaborative tools. So I head out to find offices with exotic names like ATB201, BS007 and the like.

Whilst out and about, keeping an eye on the various birds of the campus lake between meetings it's good to keep in touch with other developments in other departments, so I try to make time to attempt to enter any building that will let me in. Many departmental meetings have regular cake, biscuits or even doughnuts. I've put those meetings in my calendar using Thunderbird, (**http://bit.ly/bGa05o** - although I don't use Thunderbird for email, I do use it for calendaring) and the Lightning plugin (**http://bit.ly/9yAded**) which turns the Sun Calendar into a thing of dragging and dropping beauty and usability.

At some point in the day I usually have a blinding flash of absolute genius that manifests itself in fewer than 140 characters. I'll share that with my office mate, and if she only winces slightly, I'll then share it with the world (**twitter.com/everythingabili**) or just with the rest of the team in our department's instant messaging chat room (using Adium or Pigin). Once the applause has died down, I'll return to installing or trialling various collaborative software tools.

At the end of the day I might write up some of our discoveries about what is or isn't working on my blog, or upload the slides from a presentation (shared on **http://slideshare.net**) so that people can easily find them later and maybe leave a comment or even embed them in their very own web page somewhere.

New Rented Filestore Service: ProjectFS DARREN MILLER

In our last edition (November 2009) we announced that we were about to launch a new cheap and flexible rented filestore service. This new service is known as ProjectFS and is now ready to use.

ProjectFS is available for a one-off cost of £3 per Gigabyte (Gb).

There is no annual recurring cost for the filestore. This one-off fee will cover the service for a minimum of three years but we reserve the right to levy a further charge after three years to support continued investment in our storage services. As the costs are so low, the minimum filestore allocation unit is 5Gb.

Other features of ProjectFS were discussed in the last edition of Keynotes. They include:

. owner of filestore has full control over file and folder permissions

. 28 days worth of online snapshots for easy file recovery

. built in file compression

. filestores backed up to second server and tape daily

Our existing Rented Filestore Service (RentedFS) will continue as normal. Owners of RentedFS filestores may move their filestores to ProjectFS if they wish. Full details of ProjectFS and RentedFS can be accessed via: **www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/advice/filestore/**

Removal of IE6 ADRIAN YOUNG

We intend to remove Internet Explorer 6 from the supported office PC desktop. We've taken this decision in response to known security issues, and in view of the fact that a number of suppliers are now withdrawing support for their applications on IE6.

Problems with various information systems running on Internet Explorer 8 have now been resolved, so all users of supported office PCs are advised to upgrade (via Run Advertised Programs) to IE8 at the first opportunity. Mandatory upgrades for any PCs which still have IE6 installed will take place before June.

# Online Support For Information Systems GEOFF HOULTON

The Computing Service has recently re-launched the Online Support Centre for Information Systems. This provides a collection of FAQs, training manuals, procedure guides etc for the University's most commonly used Information Systems: SITS (Student Records), Agresso (Finance), Business Objects (Reporting), pFact (Research Costing) etc. The idea is to provide a single place where you can find detailed information and advice about using these systems, without having to search around Yorkweb for the help you need.

The major change has been to improve the layout and visual appearance of the Support Centre. This now conforms to the latest Web Office guidelines on web templates and the University's visual identity, providing easier navigation and consistency with other web pages.

Another important aspect of the Support Centre is to provide a method of reporting a fault with, or query about, an Information System. In many cases, support and advice is available from a specialist team based in the relevant support department, rather than the Computing Service, so the Support Centre provides a means of routing your enquiries through to the team most able to help, either using the 'Footprints' service desk software, or some other means.

Other developments in the pipeline include: enhancements to make it easier for system administrators to upload and update support information on the site, and a new overview diagram of the University's Information Systems to illustrate the range of services available. We are always interested to hear your thoughts about how the Support Centre could be further improved (email: **gph2@york.ac.uk**).

The Online Support Centre is at: **www.york.ac.uk/univ/mis/cfm/supportcentre/**.
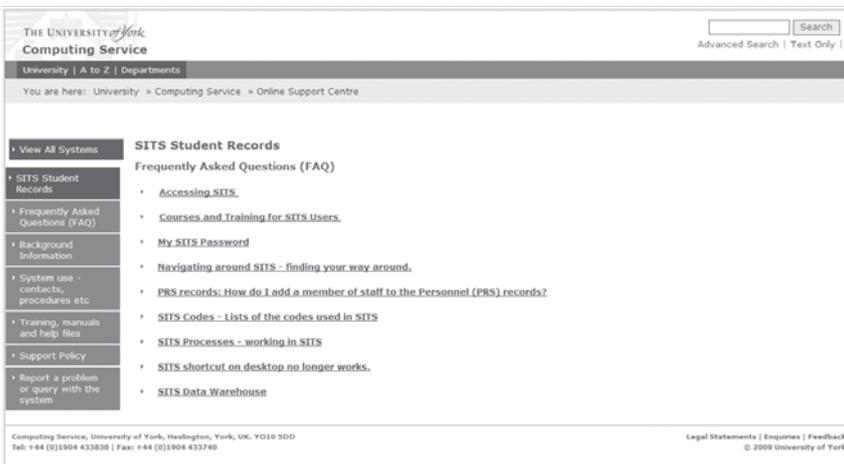
Timetabling Systems Upgrade MATT BURTON

A long awaited upgrade process of the Timetabling systems at York is being undertaken to improve the functionality the central Timetabling team can use, and to extend use of the software to users in academic departments. It will also enable the support of online individual timetables for students.

We currently use version 3.5 of Syllabus Plus from Scientia Ltd, which integrates with our other space management and event booking systems, Planon and Kinetics, in addition to pulling in data from the student records system (SITS). It then provides a view to both staff and students via the Timetabling website (called the SWS). The upgrade will take us to version 3.8, followed by a bolt-on installation of 'Enterprise', the next generation of the Timetabling software providing new features. The upgrade

process is not a simple one due to these links and the continuous use these systems have 24/7 and has numerous steps involved:

The first step is upgrading the software that Syllabus Plus uses to integrate with the space systems – called the SPDA. This involves testing the new SPDA against a test version of the current 3.5 system, testing against 3.8, then switching over to the current live 3.5 system.

The second step is upgrading to 3.8. Firstly, a new database is installed. The current 3.5 service and associated systems are shut down, a backup restored from v 3.5 to the new 3.8 database, users install their new software and connect, and finally the SPDA and associated systems are switched to 3.8.

The third step is installing the Enterprise add-on. This shouldn't require any downtime of the live system, but will require additional server space. It will provide a web interface for the Syllabus plus (renamed Classic) client.

The fourth step involved is creating a more frequent link between SITS and Syllabus Plus. This will take into account changes to students' optional module choices, so that the individual timetable online remains current. Links currently exist for 'one-off' loads from SITS on a termly basis, and the core principle of exporting the data will remain the same. Behind the scenes, the way data is loaded into Syllabus Plus will change slightly and work will be undertaken by the BSG team to develop a method to compare data in Syllabus Plus and SITS, in order to produce a change file to commit changes to the timetabling system.

Aside from the technical work involved, there is work ongoing within the institution to tweak deadlines currently in place in order to support the Timetabling process and allow these new systems to work effectively. It is hoped that once the new software is installed and training has taken place, the opportunities to improve direct access to departments and commit changes immediately should be of benefit to all and will support the University growing and moving forward.

09

Computing Service Developments

KAY MILLS-HICKS

This issue of Keynotes reveals once again the range of services that the Computing Service provides, and our continued efforts to improve and enhance services for the benefit of all University of York IT users. I'm very grateful to everyone in the department for their ongoing hard work and to all those who partner with us in making these improvements.

The severe weather on the return to work after the Christmas break meant that many of our staff found it difficult to come in to work, but many did and some worked from home. This turned our thoughts to what more we can do to enhance facilities for working from home and we hope to be able to formally release in the near future a new web based VPN service. From the user feedback on the trial service so far, we know that remote access to filestore will be considerably easier using the new service. I also hope to revive at some stage the University project that my predecessor formed in 2008 to develop a home working policy.

As well as a wide range of current projects, we're looking ahead and planning carefully for summer 2010. It is an exciting time in the development of the University campus with four new academic buildings scheduled for completion on the Heslington East part of campus between July and October: Computer Science, Theatre Film and Television, Law and Management, and the Ron Cooke Hub. We have a significant amount of network infrastructure to install: over 180 switches and 6000 network outlets (for more details, please turn to Robert Demaine's article on page 4). We are also providing PCs for two new teaching classrooms in the Law and Management building and the Hub, and for the open plan Atrium area in the Hub. We hope to offer dual boot Linux/Windows machines in one of the classrooms. The network is also the service infrastructure for IP Telephony Services, door locks, and other facilities management services. So our work is crucial to the success of the new buildings and it is a massive undertaking. We're preparing a detailed plan to identify and manage risks, and we know we will need to secure additional temporary help to achieve the work in time. We hope to be able to employ student helpers for some of the tasks, building on the success of the helpers that we had last summer.

As if the new buildings were not enough, we are also investing in a full schedule of PC classroom upgrades as we need to keep the facilities on the existing campus up to date to prevent a decline in student satisfaction.

One of the areas that I have not been able to take forward as I might have hoped, due to the volume of other important developments, is email and calendaring. However, we will be introducing 'real name' email addresses in summer 2010 and are aiming to provide a University email directory alongside this. I know that both of these developments are important to our staff users and will provide many benefits. We are also about to roll-out an upgrade to the existing Sun Calendar service which delivers the capability for improvements in the user interface.

Alongside all the project and operational work, we try to ensure that everyone in the department has the time for personal development and to network with colleagues from other institutions and organisations. For example, several of our staff have completed and are participating in the University's Leadership in Action programme which is fantastic and something I strongly support. We recently had two sessions facilitated by Caryn Swartz from YCSSA on the Six Thinking Hats® which were very informative and enjoyable. We hope to have more sessions on the Thinking Hats so that everyone in the department is aware of what it is and so that we can incorporate the method in to our team activities to help improve problem solving and decision making.

Data Centres STEFAN WIELGOSZ

I have recently joined the Computing Service as the Data Centres Manager. Before joining York I was at Leeds University where I coordinated the data centres and was involved in a strategic project to create a High Performance Computing (HPC) Facility.

Data centres are becoming an increasingly complex industry with new technologies, methodologies, legislative and security pressures placed upon them. The major emerging issue to hit data centre owners is the carbon reduction commitments to which large institutions are required to sign-up.

Like many other institutions, the University recognises the need for properly provisioned data centres and now uses a new purpose built data centre on Heslington West. A larger data centre is being built in Heslington East, to open later this year. Both facilities have been built to modern standards, with redundancy features, fire suppression, water detection and diesel generator etc, and will be fully monitored.

This lets us strengthen our business continuity model, and will allow the University to consolidate what could become an increasingly fragmented technology estate. It also enables us to host services within a properly provisioned data centre, allowing departments to provide a more stable and reliable service to their own users. We will assist departments that wish to host services in the university data centres to find an appropriate solution, including resiliency and scalability if required. The data centres will be fully monitored but we will also give customers the ability to monitor the status of their own equipment and services if they wish.

I want to create a working partnership with our data centres customers and provide them with a service which responds to their needs in an effective, efficient and timely manner. Clearly in a multi-occupancy facility, policy and procedures will be put in place to ensure the longevity of the facilities and so that our customers know what to expect. It's my aim, over the next year or so, to work with departments in the creation of these policies and procedures.

If you feel your department could benefit from utilising these new secure data centres, please get in touch.

Computing Service Staff

Director of Information.	**Stephen Town**	3864	jst504
Head of IT Services.	**Kay Mills-Hicks**	3801	kmh8
Departmental Administrator.	**Lorraine Moor**	3801	lsm1
Head of Infrastructure.	**John Grannan**	3798	jkg503
Head of Information Systems.	**Kay Mills-Hicks**	3801	kmh8
Head of Support Services.	**David Surtees**	3803	dps4
IT Infrastructure Consultant.	**Robert Demaine**	3808	rld1
Information Officer.	**Joanne Casey**	3805	jmc8

Kashif Amin	3817	ka14		**Anthony Leonard**	4350	apbl500
Gavin Atkinson	3738	ga9		**Michelle McCarthy**	2627	mm533
Amanda Bacon	3802	agb12		**Robert McCarthy**	3594	rm575
Sue Bolton	2102	sjb28		**Fergus McGlynn**	3822	fam6
Tom Borgia	4348	tb549		**Tricia McNamara**	3842	pm535
David Broom	3229	dlb10		**John Marsden**	3832	jpm1
Mike Brudenell	3811	pmb1		**John Mason**	3813	jrm13
John Byrne	3812	jcb1		**Darren Miller**	3815	dm26
John Campbell	4347	jac523		**Darren Munday**	8469	dam6
Arthur Clune	3129	ajc22		**Nicola Normandale**	4695	ncn1
John Cooper	3595	jmc508		**Aimee Phillips**	3897	amp11
Eleanor Coultish	8467	emm502		**Tamsyn Quormby**	4346	tq1
Steve Downes	3741	sd21		**Pritpal Rehal**	3597	psr500
Mike Dunn	3819	md24		**Jo Reid**	4346	jr562
Paul Elliott	3807	pre500		**Sam Scott**	3744	svs2
Ken Finch	4452	kf1		**Philip Smailes**	3833	pjrs1
Rob Fletcher	3816	rpf1		**Jenny Smailes**	4455	jj5
Iain Ford	3894	igf500		**Andrew Smith**	3809	abs4
Kevin Gardner	3739	pkg4		**Tom Smith**	3847	tas509
Chris Gowland	3823	cg1		**Brian Souter**	3814	bs1
Kelvin Hai	4689	kh525		**Max Spicer**	3745	mjs510
Sarah Hall	3827	seh11		**Richard Stoddart**	4349	rjs502
Peter Halls	3806	pjh1		**Carl Stovell**	4699	cjs505
John Hawes	3818	jeh11		**Ben Thompson**	8401	bt4
Susanne Hodges	3839	sh32		**Pete Turnbull**	3804	pnt1
Geoff Houlton	2100	gph2		**Heather Walker**	3743	hp501
John Hutchinson	3898	jh57		**Michael Walters**	2627	mjw513
John Isles	4454	jdi500		**Dave Wells**	4341	djw516
Michael Jones	3749	masj500		**Stefan Wielgosz**	3826	sw796
Sarah Kennedy	3825	srk500		**Adrian Young**	3820	ary500

IT Support Office

The IT Support Office is your first point of contact with the Computing Service

t.   01904 43 **3838**

e.   itsupport@york.ac.uk

Open from 09.00 to 17.00 Monday to Friday for problem solving, advice and information, fault reporting, network connections, file restoration, course bookings and user registration.

Contacting the Computing Service

Computing Service
University of York, Heslington
York. YO10 5DD

t.   01904 43 **3800**

dd. 01904 43 followed by ext nos beginning **2, 3 or 4.**
     01904 32 followed by ext nos beginning **8.**

f.   01904 43 **3740**

e.   username@york.ac.uk

w.   **www.york.ac.uk/computingservice/**

Follow us: **twitter.com/UoYCompServ**

11

keynotes

keynotes