

Registration

Your Computing Service username should remain active as long as you are a member of the University. We validate your username using central records maintained by the Registrar's Department. If you extend your stay at the University or change any of your personal details then this should be reflected in central records, providing you have notified the appropriate section of the Registrar's Department, usually through your own department. The Computing Service runs a program each night to check if you have left the University, and will soon also update your account automatically if you change your course, department or status.

If your central record does indicate that you have left or are leaving the University, we provide 30 days' warning by displaying a message when you login. You can be assured that your account

will not be expired unless you have received such a warning. The expiry period is designed to provide adequate time to sort out any problems without causing any disruption.

Providing your details are always agreed with the Registrar's Department there should be no need to contact the Computing Service unless there has been some mistake.

The system works well if you are a student but not all employees of the University currently appear on the personnel database. If you fall into this category, we will still require you to complete a registration form and to re-register each year. The new personnel system being considered by the University should overcome these problems.

Brian Souter

Computing Service Review

Planning Committee has accepted some specific proposals for implementing the recommendations of the Review Group in the light of comments from departments and the appropriate committees, and has confirmed that the major thrust of the Review forms a sound basis for future developments. The major remaining issue is the level of core services. Planning Committee has agreed that these be subject to wider discussion within the user community and the Computing and Information Committees will be considering this in detail during this term; the Computing Forum will also meet to consider the views of the wider user community. It is thus expected that a clear decision on the basis for the future operation of the Computing Service will be made at the meeting of Planning Committee in mid March.

In parallel, the Computing Service is investigating possible commercial activities and is drafting a questionnaire (see below) which will be used by the Computing Committee to advise on future provision and support of hardware and software.

We thus hope that our future role will be defined by the start of next term and that the implementation process will have commenced.

Mike Jinks

PC Suppliers to the University

As most readers of Keynotes will be aware, the University currently has supply arrangements with three companies for the supply of PCs. These arrangements are awarded by tender under EU procurement rules every two years, with the current arrangements expiring on 1 December 1997.

The Computing Service, on behalf of the University, will shortly be advertising the tender for the supply of PCs to the University after December 1997. More information will follow in the next issue of Keynotes.

Doug Moncur

Bank Holidays

The Computing Service building, including the Information Desk and entrance lobby, will be closed on Good Friday (28 March) and Easter Monday (31 March). All computer systems will be left running with classroom facilities available as for a normal weekend.

Similarly, the Computing Service will close on the Early May Bank Holiday (5 May) and the Late May Bank Holiday (26 May).

Brian Souter

Yet Another Questionnaire!



As part of the implementation of the Computing Service Review, Planning Committee have asked that the Computing Service prepare a questionnaire to help the Information and Computing Committees decide annually on a set of software and hardware standards. The questionnaire will be considered by Computing Committee who will agree the final version. We believe that it will be distributed to Heads of Academic and Administrative Departments and to student bodies in order to obtain representative departmental views.

To make sure your views are taken into account you must become involved in whatever mechanism your department sets up to provide the relevant information, or consult your head of department or student officers. Allowing for revisions and bureaucratic drift, the questionnaires will probably not be distributed until March.

John Illingworth

Security

Several hacking incidents both at York and at other universities have caused us to review the security of the central UNIX systems, and a number of measures are being taken to improve the security of user accounts and associated data. Inevitably, some of these measures may cause occasional inconvenience to legitimate users; please bear in mind that they are intended to safeguard your data. We will advertise the changes which will be phased in during the year.

Although most of the incidents at York originated from external sources, there is evidence of hacking activities by some members of the University.

All activities involving use of University computing facilities are governed by the University Regulations. **In particular, misuse of computing facilities is liable to result in disciplinary action and may also be a criminal offence.**

Dave Atkin

The Future of Indigo Workstations

The future of the Indigo workstations in D/104 (and in the scanner room) is as yet unclear. The Computing Service intends to bid for funding to replace them in time for the next academic year, but if funding is not forthcoming, they pose a problem in that they are not capable of running version 6 of the IRIX operating system (which has now been available for some time).

Over the summer vacation we intend to upgrade the central systems (castle and tower) and various Indy workstations to version 6. We have in the past tried to keep the Indigos and the central systems in step, but this will no longer be possible if the Indigos are not replaced.

There are also a small number of centrally-managed Indigo workstations owned by departments. We suggest that funding be set aside next year to replace these, since the software on them will effectively be frozen from this summer.

Dave Atkin

Scanners To Move

The scanners for colour, black and white and slide images are to be relocated from Computing Service X/C001 to the new study area in Alcuin College A/140. The move will take place towards the end of the Spring Term. Although the workstation and PCs linked to the scanners may be used for other work, priority must be given to anyone wishing to use the scanners.

The move will make the equipment more accessible to users and provide a better working environment. It will also enable us to release space in the Computing Service to provide a home for the ILIAD Programme. We are keen to develop the new study room in Alcuin College and to replace the terminals with PCs.

Brian Souter

YHMAN

- A high speed network for the Yorkshire and Humberside Universities

The Yorkshire and Humberside Universities have been collaborating under the auspices of the Yorkshire and Humberside Universities Association (the group of Vice-Chancellors) to implement a high speed network connecting the universities of Bradford, Hull, Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan, Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam, and York. The aim is to take advantage of regional infrastructure to provide a cost-effective network which will interface to the replacement for the current SuperJANET network. This network will itself form part of the regional infrastructure, particularly for education and other public bodies, and is being designed to enable such establishments to connect easily for mutual advantage.

An invitation to tender has been published in the European Journal and initial presentations from a 'long' shortlist of suppliers have been given. The project is due to unfold throughout the year and should provide us with higher bandwidth to SuperJANET together with the infrastructure to support and promote collaboration between institutions, particularly in the Yorkshire and Humberside region.

Mike Jinks

ATM Project Progress

After a rigorous process of selection over the past few months Newbridge Networks Limited have been chosen to supply equipment for the pilot high-speed network partially funded by an award from the HEFCE.

Newbridge's VIVID product range offers high-performance and scalability together with near seamless integration with the existing local area network.

After a period of internal Computing Service trials a pilot service will be made available initially to research groups in Music Technology and Chemistry.

Robert Demaine

SPSS Consultancy Licence

If you have a copy of SPSS acquired through the CHEST Site Licence, or use SPSS on the campus network, then you are bound by the CHEST code of conduct, adherence to which is mandated by University Regulations.

This means that you may use SPSS only for purposes laid out in that code.

You can see the code on YorkWeb at

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

which is in the Software Policy section of the Computing Service software page.

If you are using SPSS for monetary gain, that is using it to produce information which you sell, then you must have an SPSS consultancy licence. To date only one department in the University has claimed to be doing such consultancy, and it may well be that there are people who missed our earlier publicity on this subject. If you require an SPSS consultancy licence please contact John Byrne (jcb1, extn 3812).

John Illingworth

Limdep and Shazam

These are two packages for econometric and general statistical analysis. Limdep 6.0 is available on Supported Connection PCs, and also on UNIX, while Shazam 7.0 is available on UNIX. Both programs offer some powerful, specialised analysis techniques, but they both suffer from a dated and cumbersome user interface. For instance, neither exists in a Windows or X-Windows version, and only the PC version of Limdep has a screen-based editor. By contrast Minitab and SPSS have full Windows interfaces, and SAS on UNIX uses X-Windows.

We would like to review the use of these two packages, to decide which, if either, should be upgraded (later versions of both are now available), and if so, on which platforms.

Comments to John Robinson (jsr1, extn 3833) please.

John Robinson

ABC LAN Licenser

We are joining the CHEST deal for this item of software at a particularly advantageous price – free for the first year! The suppliers believe that it will be so useful that come September we will not be able to do without it and will sign up for the rest of the deal. If it performs as claimed, then they are probably right!

The LAN licenser will run on the Windows 95 system, and will allow us to do a number of things we couldn't do easily before. We will be able to strictly limit access to a software item to the number of licences we actually have.

This is a prerequisite for running Microsoft applications software on the Windows 95 network. As a corollary we will be able to track application usage and find out what is being used, and perhaps more importantly what is not being used.

We hope that the introduction of the ABC LAN Licenser will save the University money by allowing us to license more accurately and probably at lower levels than currently. This has certainly been the experience at other sites.

John Illingworth

Maple V Release 4

This version of the powerful computer algebra package, with a combined mathematics and text document interface, has been available on the PC network since the start of the academic year. It is now available on the UNIX systems (ebor, tower and the D/104 workstations), using either a character based interface or an X-Windows based one.

To start this version with a character interface, type `mapleVr4` at the shell prompt (note the capital V).

To start this version with an X-Windows interface (on a workstation, or using eXceed on a PC), type `xmapleVr4` at the shell prompt.

When this version has been more thoroughly tested we will make it the default, so it can be started by the `maple` command or Toolchest Application menu.

Be aware that this version is more strict about possibly ambiguous or ill-formed mathematical constructs (assuming positive sign for square roots, etc), so that some existing Maple V Release 3 may not produce the same (if any!) answers.

Any comments or questions to John Robinson (jsr1, extn 3833).

John Robinson

Training in Word or Excel

The University's recommended word processing and spreadsheet packages are WordPerfect and Quattro Pro. Most departments use these programs, and the Computing Service provides courses in their use.

The Computing Service does not provide courses in Word or Excel, but does receive some requests on how to obtain training for their users. The following table lists some of the training options. This is not an extensive list but is designed to provide initial guidance.

Method of tuition	Medium	Example vendors (telephone no)	Availability	Cost	Evaluation comments
Self taught	Book	Data Power (01256 842100)	Purchase under CHEST. Inspection copy held at Information Desk.	£20 per copy	Easy to read, similar to a Computing Service course work book.
	Video	BVG (01874 611 633)	Copy held in J.B. Morrell Library, Audio Visual Room. Available for loan subject to Library conditions.	£15	Entertaining. Though designed to be stopped periodically for practice on the PC, these videos can be used effectively without needing these breaks. Can also be useful for group training.
	Computer Based Training	Infosource (01865 244068)	Purchase from Infosource.	£150 single licence	Seminar on a disk series is supplied on 3½ inch disks. Questions at the end of each section of a lesson can be useful.
	Internet	City University http://www.city.ac.uk/CSD/software/Training/document.htm	Using York Web.	Nil	Introduces the main ideas in Word or Excel.
Group training	Lecturer and course book	Phoenix Training (01904 700707)	As scheduled or arranged.	£127 per day (inc VAT) per person	A visit is planned. These are two day courses, but a one day course could be arranged. The training is in York.
		CTEC (0113 245 4306)	As scheduled or arranged.	£420 per day (inc VAT) for up to 9 people	Not known. These are two day courses, but a one day course could be arranged. The training is in Leeds.

An additional information pack, containing examples of course programmes and additional contact addresses, is available from Richard Jardine, Computing Service (rj1, extn 3739).

Richard Jardine

Computer Training Videos Now Available

The Computing Service has purchased some training videos which have been donated to the Audio Visual Collection of the J B Morrell Library. These may be borrowed for departmental training or individual use subject to the borrowing conditions of the Library. These items are in the special loan collection of the Library and borrowing would normally be arranged through the Enquiry Desk. The Audio Visual Collection in the Library has a video player available to allow viewing and is located on the first floor of the Library.

Titles available

- Excel for Windows 95 — Introduction
- Pagemaker 5.0 — Learning
- Paradox 5.0 for Windows — Introduction
- Windows 95 — Updating to
- Word 6.0 — Introduction
- WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows — Advanced

Richard Jardine

The Price of Training – What Would You Pay?

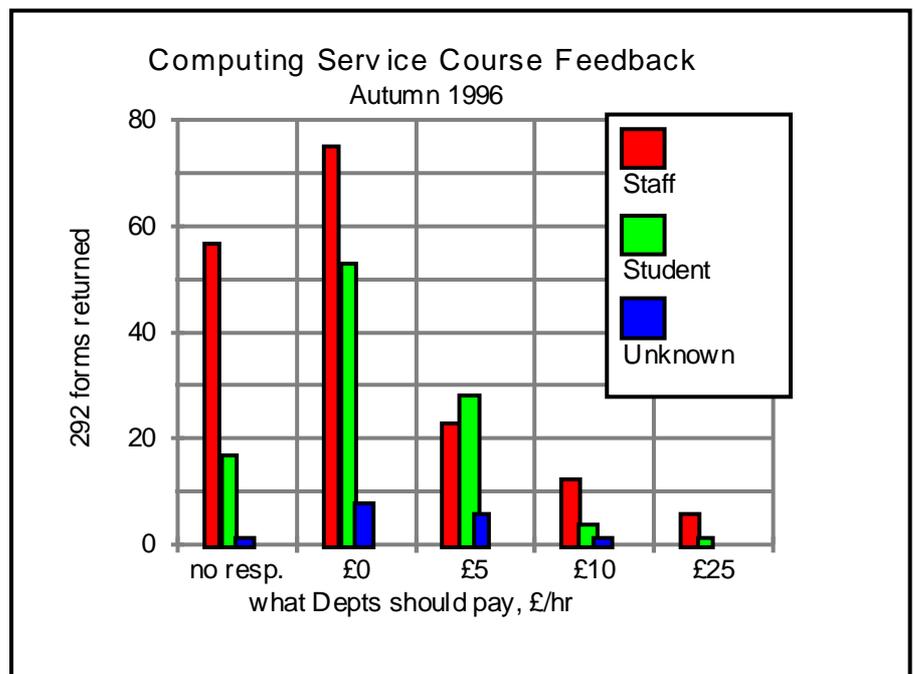
Last term we asked the following question in our course feedback forms:

“The Computing Service Review recommends that in future all Computing Service courses should be charged for. What hourly rate do you think departments should be asked to pay on your behalf?”

Possible answers were: Nothing, £5, £10 or £25 (the approximate commercial rate).

292 forms were returned. The results are shown below.

John Illingworth



The Millennium Bug

You will undoubtedly have heard, read or seen articles about the imminent collapse of the world's computer systems just after the stroke of midnight on 31 December 1999.

You may also have received unsolicited mail from consulting firms eager to charge you lots of money for eliminating millennium problems from your systems.

The Computing Service intends to run a seminar during the summer term which will attempt to put this issue into perspective. We hope to have a number of brief presentations concerning both the implications for the University's administrative software (will you get paid at the end of January 2000?), and how to avoid millennium problems in your own use of software packages (will your spreadsheet sort your research data for 2000 after that for 1999 or before 1900?).

The exact details have yet to be worked out, but the event will be widely publicised.

John Illingworth

Keynotes now on the Web!

Anyone with access to an Adobe Acrobat Reader – and that includes anyone with a Supported (Level 2) Connection office PC and everyone using classroom PCs here at York – can now view our back issues on the Web:

<http://www.york.ac.uk/services/cserv/offdocs/keynotes.htm>

Anne Worden

MAC Log Files

When a user submits a job to be run in the background on a batch queue this creates a log file in your account. The name of the log file is the same as that displayed at the bottom of the screen when you submitted the job, and has the filename extension of .log. These logfiles are accumulating in users' accounts, so if you no longer require a log file please delete it via the Common Facilities option in 99;YORK on any MAC menu screen.

Trevor Bolton

Data Warehouse Phase 2

The Data Warehouse Phase 2 is now nearing its final development. Data is being extracted from the MAC database for Students, Finance, Research and Consultancy, and Estates. This data is being transferred onto a UNIX Sparc system and being built into an Interbase relational database.

Security mechanisms have been built into the structure of the relational database but the 'who has access to what' information still needs to be added. The MAC Steering Group are currently considering the preferred method to include the security information and the resource required.

Trevor Bolton

ADVAX System Re-registration

On 7 April you will receive details about your current registration on the Admin computer. Please return the information promptly, and also please return details if your office receives information for a member of staff who may have left. The reason for this is to improve security and to match Admin usernames to the University standard usernames now that WPS has been removed.

Trevor Bolton

MAC Open Day

A MAC Open Day will be held in the Conference and Exhibition Area in Physics and Electronics on 21 March 1997. All are welcome to come along and view the current applications.

Trevor Bolton

MAC Spooler Files

Would all users please check and remove any unwanted report files from their spooler facility. The spooler system on average contains 3250 reports. Performance would be improved if this number was reduced. To delete a report from the VIEW/PRINT screen type D-*nn* (*nn* is the number of the report) followed by U to update the screen.

Trevor Bolton

Don't Forget ...

All Lotus 1-2-3 files will be removed from users' accounts and archived onto magnetic tape on 3 March 1997.

All WPS files will be removed from users' accounts and archived onto magnetic tape on 7 April 1997.

Trevor Bolton

VAX/VMS Mail Users

If you have a UNIX mailbox, please use it in preference to your VAX/VMS mailbox. A number of users have old messages within their VAX/VMS mailboxes – please delete them if they are no longer required.

Quick Reference Guides on using ECSMail and Pine are available from the Computing Service and can also be found on the Computing Service web pages (in the Help and Advice section).

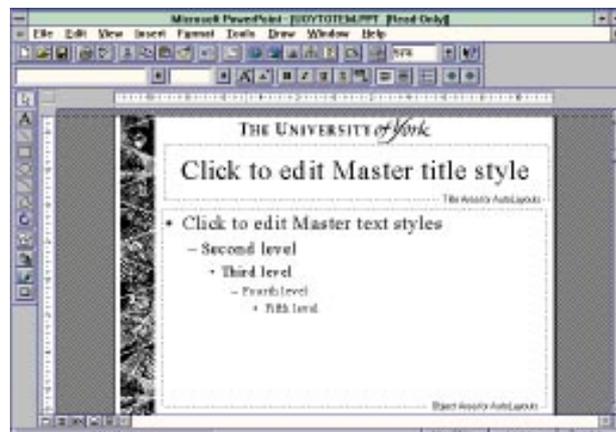
Trevor Bolton

The University's Visual Identity

The files for elements of the University's visual identity have been copied to n:\misc\visid on the Supported Connection PC network. This has allowed space for some PowerPoint presentation templates – uoylogo.ppt, uoyhall.ppt and uoytotem.ppt – which create presentations with the logo at the top, the logo and a woodcut of Central Hall, and the logo with a totem pole (*illustrated right*), respectively.

Shortly we will remove the existing files from q:\course\compserv\visid, so you should update the filenames in any documents which use these files as 'graphic on disk'.

John Robinson



Finding information on the Internet: Politics

As we approach the General Election it might be interesting to enumerate some of the great wealth of Politics sources available through the Internet. A very useful starting point is York Information Connections at <http://www.york.ac.uk/services/library/subjects/politint.htm>. Links to many of the resources mentioned below are available from this page.

Directories

WWW Virtual Library political science at <http://spirit.lib.uconn.edu/PoliSci/polisci.htm> covers departments of political science and government, libraries, journals and collections of papers, non-profit organisations and government agencies, news groups and some ftp servers. Journals and collections of papers include information on, for example, World Politics (including contents of last few issues) and Electoral Studies. The politics sections of Yahoo are also productive. A search on <http://www.yahoo.com/Government/Politics> gives useful information on politics, political issues, political science, elections, interest groups. The parties section contains information on many fringe US parties of extreme left and right; the countries section gives similar information for other countries.

Government and Parliamentary information

The UK Government Information Service on <http://www.open.gov.uk> has extensive information on the UK government and includes What's New, Service News, Information Locatory, Government On-line and an organisational index from Aberdeenshire Council to Wrekin District Council including not only local councils but also national bodies like the National Audit Office on <http://www.open.gov.uk/nao/hope.htm>. HM Treasury has a particularly extensive service with information on the economy, the budget, the budget speech, FSBR (budget reports), index to all Budget News releases, Economic Briefings etc. This is on <http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk>. For

Parliament there is the Parliamentary Monitoring and Information Service on <http://www.pamis.gov.uk>. A keyword search gives instant access to what is happening currently in Parliament.

Political parties and campaign groups

Major UK parties all have home pages. The Conservative Party is on <http://www.Conservative-party.org.uk> and the Labour Party on <http://www.Labour.org.uk>. The Liberal Democrats are on <http://www.libdems.org.uk>. Plaid Cymru is on <http://www.wales.com/political-party/plaid-cymru/englishindex.html> and the SNP on <http://www.snp.org.uk/>. <http://www.psci.unt.edu/es> (Electoral Studies) gives access to resources for research on elections and electoral behaviour and a guide to political parties including in the UK, USA, Canada, France, Netherlands and other countries.

News services

The Europa web server offering information on the European Union's goals and policies, run by the European Commission is on <http://europa.eu.int/welcome.html>.

Data collections and research information

The British elections and politics home page on <http://www.qmw.ac.uk/~laws/election/home.html> contains hypertext links to British Parliamentary election results from 1983. The service has a current list of prospective parliamentary candidates for the coming



election, data on all current British MPs, an index to all constituencies, and information on voting swings from 1983 to 1992 amongst others.

One of the most productive approaches is to look for general social science on York Information Connections. On <http://dawww.essex.ac.uk> can be found the extensive ESRC data archives of the University of Essex, the largest collection of accessible computer-readable data in the social sciences and humanities in the UK with over 7000 datasets available. The Gallup political polls can be found on BIRON at <http://www.biron.essex.ac.uk> (Login as biron, password=norib). SOSIG (Social Science Information Gateway) also is a useful gateway at <http://sosig.esrc.bris.ac.uk/cgi-bin/search.pl>. Through this can be found Political Science Resources at <http://www.Keele.ac.uk/depts/po/psr.htm>. This gives access to political science resources on the Internet and includes political science generally, international relations, elections, political parties, local government and many other areas of politics. A particularly useful feature is the election result data covering countries currently from Albania to Uganda.

For more information please contact Phil Rees (Politics Librarian; email plr2).

*Phil Rees
J B Morrell Library*

A day in the life of...

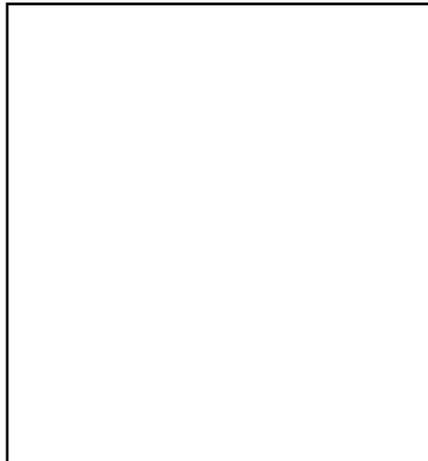
... Ken Finch, Operations Group

I finished with school and the education system in the 1960s. This was a time when jobs were plentiful and if you did not like the one you had, you just went out and got another one. After trying an apprenticeship in gents' hairdressing and realising this was not what I wanted, I then did several jobs before joining Shepherd Building Group as an assistant in their Stationery and Printing Department. From this position I moved into their Computer Room as a trainee Computer Operator.

I joined the University in 1971 taking up the post of Computer Operator, and I can honestly say that I remember 'bootstrapping the mainframe', which involved tripping switches in sequence to boot up the mainframe. I have experienced the changes from paper tape input and one-job-at-a-time mainframes right through to today's modern technology. Like most things in life change is inevitable and computer operating is no longer required. Therefore my role in the Computing Service has also changed: what follows is a typical day in my working life.

It's 8am and I call into the department, pick up the classroom keys and room booking sheets and set off around campus. Those of you who are early risers will often see me. First call Wentworth: I check the printer for faults and top up the paper, then I post the classroom booking sheets and check the PC classroom for any faults. A quick chat with the cleaners or porters to see if there are any problems of abuse of the room and then I move on. The same routine is followed at Goodricke, Derwent and then Langwith before I return to the department. I have to be careful not to spend too much time at one place because the check must be completed for any 9.15am classroom bookings.

Back in the department and I check the UHL database for any new faults that the Information Desk staff may have entered,



and phone around the users who had faults yesterday to see if the engineer has been to fix them. I enter diary entries to update the faults or return them to the Infodesk to be closed.

Next job is to update my printing statistics. I am responsible for keeping the records of the faults and printing usage of our classroom printers. This includes paper usage, toner changes and input jams. This is only just updated when I get a call from the Infodesk to say that the King's Manor printer is offline. I collect the appropriate keys and jump in the car for a fifteen minute drive across York. The fault turned out to be 'toner low' and I change the cartridge. Another fifteen minute drive and my taste buds are crying out for some caffeine, after all it is 10.45am and I have been up since 7am.

My colleague Chris Gowland has been busy reporting a fault on a Viglen PC; this involves finding out the base unit serial number and reporting the fault to Viglen Technical Support, recording the call reference number in our UHL database and informing the Administration user when they can expect an engineer. Chris and I work as a team and pick up the faults as they come in. We split our hours to cover the working day – I work 8am to 4.15pm and

Chris works 9am to 5.15pm. This enables one of us to be available to respond at any time during the working day.

My stomach is groaning because it's 12 o'clock and time for my lunch break! A quick bite to eat and it's back to my PC. This time it's personal work – I manage one of my local Junior Football teams and I have to write a match report and select a team for the match next Sunday.

Lunch break over and a phone call from Viglen with details of a PC on-site maintenance registration number and expiry date. Onto another task – the Operations Manager, Brian Souter, has noticed that some of the stacking chairs in our classrooms are in a poor condition. I have to contact Janet Alderson in Supplies and request a brochure to select some replacements. I am trying to catch up on my outstanding jobs because tomorrow we are to have training on the installation of Windows 95 software. This involves five or six Computing Service staff updating PCs to run under the new software (this gives you some idea of the task ahead of us!).

Another fault has come in. This time someone has reported that the printer in Goodricke G/022 has run out of paper. When I get there I find that it's just the 500-page stacker – that's the frustrating thing with the Laserjet 4mv printers, they empty the small paper stacker before using the 1500-page stacker. We do occasionally get faults like this – we call them bogus faults – someone will report a PC has hung but when you arrive there is another user on the machine, who claims nothing is wrong!

As I said earlier, the job requires change and it would be very shortsighted to say that's my job description because we tend to help the other groups with major tasks. Some days I walk for miles and others I sit at the desk all day and yet it is very rarely tedious.

Ken Finch

Staff and Graduate Courses for the Summer Term

It is intended to provide the following courses next term. Details of time and place will be published on the Web and on posters. Most courses are held on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons between 2.15 and 4.15, although the "Information from the Internet" course is normally held in the morning, before the USA has got out of bed!

Basic Courses

Introduction to Windows 3.1

Electronic Mail

Information from the Internet

Quattro Pro

Paradox

Advanced Courses

WordPerfect for Thesis Writers

WordPerfect Advanced

Quattro Pro for Researchers

Delphi

Interbase

Specially for Administrators

Powerhouse

Paradox and the Data Warehouse