

3 Getting Started

Work through this section at the start of your first computing laboratory day.

3.1 Introduction

This section contains the *very basic* information to allow you to get started and in particular how to log-in to the systems and obtain the on-line course and system documentation.

3.2 Preliminaries

Along with this booklet you will have been issued with a *Username* and *Password* for the Physics computer system. Note actual *Username* is same as your Microlab / SMS one, but the account and associated *Password* are different. You will keep the same *Username* throughout your undergraduate period. The *Password* is the equivalent to your security PIN number for your BANK CARD and must be considered as “strictly private” to you.

The Computational Physics Laboratory is located in

JCMB Room 3203

It consists of 30 LINUX systems, you can login at any LINUX system with your supplied username and password.

There is also a booked EUCS Microlab¹ located in:

JCMB Room 3212 or 3210

To use these system you need to:

1. login to the Windows-XP system using your *Microlab/SMS username*, as you would to read your e-mail.
2. close any windows applications such as *Internet Explorer* or other *pop-ups* from the desktop.
3. from *All Programs* menus, select *School Applications* → *Science and Engineering* → *School of Physics* → *ph-cplab*.

There will be a short delay while the realvent software in installed into your account; this will only happen once.

4. you will be prompted for your *username*, and then in a second, black, window for your *physics* password, which you must enter followed by . Note this will *not* be echoed.

The *Unix* desktop will now appear, and you can now *minimise* the black window in which you entered your password and make the full *Unix* tool-bar visible by clicking on it. You now have the same environment as seen on the main *cp-lab* machines.

¹The same procedure works in any EUCS Microlabs, for example Main Library, but performance may be poor due to network speed limitations.

3.3 Basic Control (Linux Systems)

The system is used via a combination of “tool-bar”, pop-up menus connected to the mouse buttons *and* commands typed into an *active* terminal window.

1. The pop-up menus are obtained by clicking on the “RedHat” button on left of the lower tool-bar.
2. To create a “Terminal” select “System Tools”, then “Terminal”.
3. You can place a start “Terminal” icon on the lower tool-bar by “Right Click” and hold on “Terminal”, and “drag” to lower tool-bar. Then clicking on this icon will create a terminal.
4. Any window is made *active* by moving the cursor with the mouse into the window. The frame and top-bar will “highlight”. This window remains *active* as long as the cursor is in the window.

Pop-up menu operations occur immediately, but typed commands are *not* executed by the system until you press the RETURN or  key.

Create a “Terminal Window” now.

3.4 Changing your password

The first thing you **must** do is to change your password. The password that you were issued with is not secure and also is usually very difficult to remember. When selecting a password you should:

1. select one that *you* find easy to remember, but other people will find difficult to *guess*.
2. they *must* be at least 6 characters, and *must* contain at least one of, a) CAPITAL letter, b) digit, c) punctuation character.
3. avoid common words or names. (name of boy/girl friend are the easiest to guess and should be avoided). Remember there are also a finite number of swear words!
4. not so complicated that you cannot type it correctly, forget it, or you have to write it down!

Good passwords are typically based on “words” with mis-placed letters, added digits, punctuation and capitals in odd places.

Once you have selected a new password you can set it from an *active* terminal window with the command:

```
yppasswd
```

You will then be prompted for:

1. your CURRENT password,
2. your NEW password,

3. repeat of your NEW password.

each time there will be no echo and you must type RETURN after each response.

If you either a) get the current password wrong, b) do not type the new password identically twice, c) your new password does not obey the system rules, you will get an error message and the password will not be changed. If so repeat the operation correctly.

3.5 Getting Course Documentation

In addition to this booklet, all the course information is obtained via the WEB, which is accessed via the Mozilla browser. To start Mozilla click *once* on the MOZILLA button on the tool-bar, or type

```
mozilla &
```

in the terminal command window.

Note: MOZILLA is a very large application and will take several 10s of second to start. Be patient, and do *not* “try again”, it *will* appear!

When the MOZILLA window appears, LEFT mouse click once in the window and the *Departmental Internal Page* will load.

To get to the *Scientific Programming Home Page*, follow the links to:

1. ON-LINE COURSE WORK
2. SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMMING

All the course instructions are available from this page. Most documents are in ADOBE ACROBAT format which is automatically viewed by a *plug-in*, and can also be printed. See on-line instructions regarding printing of documents.

3.6 Logging-off

When you are finished for the day you **must** log-off the system. To do this select LOGOUT from the CONTROL MENU, and then confirm your selection. You will be logged off the system.

3.7 Rules on use of Computers

When you signed for your physics username, you were issued with a summary of the *University Computer Regulations* which you **must** read and obey. Breaches of these regulations constitutes a breach of the STUDENT CODE OF DISCIPLINE.

Remember the use of the School Computer Facilities are a *privilege* made available to you for specified course work and to assist your academic studies at The University of Edinburgh.

What Next?

You now need to read the next **two** sections on **Basics of Unix** and **The emacs editor**.