

Australian National University
Department of Computer Science
COMP1100
Notes for Laboratory Session 01

1 Objectives

The main objective for this first laboratory session of your computing studies at ANU is to ensure that you have a working computer account and are able to use some of the basic utilities of the FEIT Student Computing Environment. Specifically, you will

- login and logout using your computer account in the FEIT Student Computing Environment,
- exercise some basic features of the CDE user interface,
- use the Mozilla utility to read WWW resources (including COMP1100 materials),
- use the Mozilla utility to read and send e-mail,
- access the two COMP1100 message boards.

You should bring along the *Student Computing Environment: User Guide*.

In general, the lab exercises give only brief indications of *how* you should carry out the various tasks. The main emphasis of a laboratory session is that *you* work out how to do the task, either by yourself using the online help system or in collaboration with your tutor/demonstrator or your fellow students. When you find out how to do something, annotate your copy of the *Student Computing Environment: User Guide* for future reference.

Students who have used a windows-based system before will probably be able to finish this week's exercises early. Students who are inexperienced are welcome to attend additional sessions later in the week.

2 Tasks

2.1 Your computer account

See Chapters 2 and 3 of the *Student Computing Environment: User Guide*.

A computer account is generated for you in the FEIT Student Computing Environment from enrolment information. The account has an associated *username* and *password*.

If, for example, your student number is 3123456 then your username is u3123456. Your password is initially set to your Personal Access Code (PAC) issued with your student card. If you wish to change your password, go to **InfoPlace** (located on the 3rd level of the Chifley Library) for help.

The X-terminal will present you with a log-in screen. Type your username, followed by the Enter key, then your password, again followed by the Enter key.

You are sharing the computer system with a number of other users. At busy times the login process might take several minutes.

When you are finished in the lab you must terminate your session by logging-out (see Section 2.6). This closes down your session so that the next user cannot access your account, and leaves the X-terminal in the appropriate state for the next user.

2.2 Computing Environment

If your login process succeeds you are presented with a user interface called Common Desktop Environment (CDE) that utilizes a mouse to point, via a cursor, to windows and icons. You may be familiar with the analogous interfaces for PC-compatible machines (Windows) and Macintosh machines.

This week's laboratory exercise is only concerned with two facilities offered by this computing environment.

- The EXIT button, in the middle of the Control Panel across the bottom of the screen. You click on this to terminate your computing session.
- The icon for the **Mozilla** utility, also in the Control Panel. This provides you access to a range of network-based services.

2.3 World-Wide Web

See Ch 5 of the *Student Computing Environment: User Guide*.

Click on the Mozilla icon; it may take a while for the web browser to open up. (Avoid starting multiple browser sessions.) You will be presented with a window that displays the browser interface (Navigator) to the Mozilla program. This laboratory will only be concerned with some of the basic facilities provided by the Mozilla program.

When started, Mozilla will display a home resource (or document). For the FEIT Student Computing Environment this has the Universal Resource Locator (URL):

```
http://cs.anu.edu.au/Student/
```

and is the home page for DCS teaching materials.

Explore this area. In particular find the COMP1100 home page and visit all the documents provided in the COMP1100 area. Work out the effect of the **Back** and **Forward** buttons. While you are at the COMP1100 home page, bookmark the page for easy future access by selecting (clicking on) **Bookmarks -> Bookmark This Page**.

Return to the COMP1100 home page by selecting it from the **Bookmarks** menu. Explore the other resources directly available from the COMP1100 home page.

The URL of the current document is displayed in the Location field. You may inspect an arbitrary WWW document by typing its URL into the Location field followed by the **Enter** key. Spend a few minutes inspecting the following resources.

- `http://students.anu.edu.au/` This provides an access point to a range of information that you should find useful. In particular, follow the Timetabling Information link. In turn, follow the Timetable Builder link and construct yourself a personal lecture timetable.

- <http://www.anu.edu.au/> It's all there, but you have to find it.
- <http://anulib.anu.edu.au/> You *are* planning to use the Library at some time, surely. Of general interest is the Online Resources link. Have a look at search engines.
- <http://www.pbs.org/cringely/> Want to know more about computing issues in general? This is a site maintained by Robert X. Cringely (a pseudonym). In particular, have a look at the Old Hat link for a collection of his past columns.

2.4 E-mail

Look in Ch 6 of the *Student Computing Environment: User Guide*.

Mozilla provides an interface to the world of electronic mail. Select the **Window** -> **Mail** menu item, to get a new window that displays an interface to the Local Mail system. (Alternatively click on the small mail icon in the lower left corner of the window.)

Read the e-mail messages that have arrived for you, by clicking on your Inbox mail folder. You will find that you have an e-mail address, of the form

`u3123654@student.anu.edu.au`

Anyone with Internet access can send e-mail to you at that address.

Send e-mail to yourself, using the **Compose** button. Use the arrow keys on the keyboard in conjunction with the **Backspace** key to make any corrections to the e-mail message before you send it. (Sending yourself e-mail is not as dumb as it sounds. Keeping e-mail in folders can be a sensible way of keeping track of information, and sending yourself e-mail is a way of getting information into this system.)

Send e-mail to your tutor, using the **Compose** button. You will need to find your tutor's e-mail address by using the Mozilla browser to look in the COMP1100 area for the appropriate information.

Find out the email address of a fellow student and send him/her an email message.

2.5 Message Boards

We have set up two message boards for news and messages about COMP1100. Both can be accessed from the COMP1100 home page. One is the **COMP1100 Announcements** message board for 'official' notices from course organisers; you should check that for messages every time you log in. The other is the **COMP1100 Discussion** board to which students can post messages relevant to COMP1100. Before posting to the Discussion board, read the message about 'netiquette'.

2.6 Terminating the session

Select the **File** -> **Quit** menu item in the Mozilla window to remove it from your session. You can always start Mozilla again.

Use the **EXIT** button in the Control Panel to terminate your computing session.