Humanities Orientation 2011

Computer skills for university study

Studying these days will require the use of computers. As a Humanities student you will have to submit essays, which will need to be typed and formatted on a word processing programme. You will also need to read official university communications in your email, research essays and access course information on the web, and, depending on your courses, may have to use statistical packages such as Excel.

You may well be familiar with computers already, which is useful. If, however, you are not, don’t panic! The Faculty will train you in the basic computer skills you need in order to succeed in your studies. In order to decide who needs the computer training we run a computer skills assessment, which is a short series of exercises designed to evaluate your skill level; you may take this assessment on the web from your home computer, or during the orientation programme. However, depending on your computer skills, you may not need to take this test.

If you have never used a computer/ have very basic skills: sign up for training

There is no point in making you do the evaluation if you have no computer knowledge at all. If you are in this situation, all you need to do is to sign up for the training on the sign-up lists available during orientation. Please remember to do this, as we need your contact details in order to let you know when the training will happen. Computer skills will be essential to your studies, and you may wish to sign up for the training even if you have a little bit of basic knowledge.

If you are entirely competent and can prove it: opt out of assessment

You may already have computer skills that are good enough that we don’t need to assess you. If you have completed the International Computer Driving Licence test, or have a Matric pass in Computer Applications Technology or Computer Studies, you do not need to do the assessment. We will have an opt-out list at orientation; we can check your Matric results, but please bring a copy of your ICDL certificate if that’s what you’re using as evidence.

If you are competent but can’t prove it: do the assessment at home

We will make lab time available for students to do the assessment during Orientation, but it’s a fairly busy time and you may prefer to get the test out of the way from your home computer. However, please note that the assessment uses the Authorware Web Player Plugin which you will have to download, so this option is open to you ONLY if:

- You are a confident computer user
- You have a broadband connection
- You have a Windows computer with Internet Explorer

If you meet these requirements, you can go to the assessment at http://assess.uct.ac.za/start/; it will be active from Wednesday 12th January onwards. Your username will be your applicant/student number (format XXXYAY001); your password will be your date of birth in the format YYMMDD. There is a user guide on the back of this sheet.

Please note that we cannot offer you technical support in this process: if you cannot make it work, you will need to take the test on campus during Orientation.

If you are competent but can’t prove it: do the assessment during Orientation

If you do not fall into any of the categories above, you must take the skills assessment during Orientation. Time is reserved in the labs during the last two days of the programme, and you will need to sign up for a particular time slot on the sign-up sheets during the first three days. The last two days are fairly unstructured, and you will be able fit in the assessment in a spare hour.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Why do students take the online computer literacy skills assessment?
  (1) To evaluate the level of computer literacy among new students arriving at UCT
  (2) To help improve the computer skills of students who have poor computer literacy by offering them additional training.
- What does it cover? The assessment covers the basics of using a PC, Microsoft Windows XP, Word, Excel (2007) as well as the internet and email. It consists of 50 randomised simulated questions which you need to complete in 40 minutes.
- Is this an examination? No, this is not a test or an examination – it is an assessment. Your score does not affect your place at the university.
- How does the scoring work? If you score less than 60%, you must participate in the training provided by the Faculty.
- How can I brush up on my computer skills? Go to vula.uct.ac.za and navigate to My Workspace > LearnOnline where you’ll find a list of self-training courses and manuals. Your login is your Student No, and your password is your date of birth in the format YYMMDD.