

**ECDL  
Modules 1  
and 2****General  
Introduction**

Welcome to your Oxford Open Learning European Computer Driving Licence (**ECDL**) course, Modules 1 and 2.

**Module 1:** Basic Concepts of Information Technology (IT)

**Module 2:** Using the Computer and Managing Files

This course is designed to give you a general introduction to IT skills and then show you how to get the best out of Microsoft Windows®, the operating system that most of us use. It is suitable for those who are new to computing and those who wish to prepare for the first two ECDL exam modules or the ECDL as a whole.

## Contents of the Course

This part of the ECDL course is divided into two modules, each of eight lessons, as follows:

### **Module 1: Basic Concepts of Information Technology (IT)**

1. Getting Started
2. Hardware
3. Storage
4. Software **TMA A**
5. Information Networks
6. Computers in Everyday Life
7. IT and Society
8. Security, Copyright and the Law **TMA B**



## Module 2: Using the Computer and Managing Files

1. Getting Started
2. Working with Icons
3. Working with Windows
4. Directories/Folders
5. Copying, Moving and Deleting Files **TMA A**
6. Searching for Files
7. Using a Text Editing Application
8. Printing **TMA B**

Details of the contents of other modules that lead towards the ECDL examinations are given in the Introduction to the module concerned.

### How to Proceed

The lessons vary in length but most are designed to be covered in a single sitting. Depending on your experience of computers and the Windows operating environment, you may find that one or other module covers topics that are already second nature to you. If so, please go on to the next lesson.

The first page of each lesson states the aims of the lesson and places it within the context of the course as a whole. The Aims section looks like this:

#### Aims

The aims of this Introduction are to enable you to:

- understand how to proceed with the course

The Context links each lesson with the rest of the course:

#### Context

You should keep this Introduction close to hand as you work through the course.

Each lesson introduces you to the topic at hand very carefully and tries to explain why particular skills are needed, what benefits there are, etc. The aim is that you should *understand*, not simply be able to follow a series of numbered steps - although those are given as well!

Wherever possible, the description of each technique is enhanced by a **screen shot** or two. A screen shot is a picture of what you should actually see on the screen at an intermediate stage in your work. This



will enable you to work out exactly where you are going wrong (if you do) and look at the previous stage more carefully.

At the end of the lesson, there may be a **quick quiz** which is a series of simple questions covering the content of the lesson. You can answer them out loud or jot the answers down in your notebook for future reference. If there are any that you find hard, it is a sure sign that you should go back over the content of the lesson.

Finally, many lessons conclude with one or more **exercises** and/or a **Tutor-marked Assignment**. These are practical exercises which ask you to go through a series of instructions on screen, preparing or editing a document. This practice will certainly help you if you go on to take the ECDL examination.

## Procedures for Tutor-marked Assignments

These procedures only apply if you have enrolled directly with OOL. If you have enrolled through a different organisation, different procedures may apply. TMA B in module 2 of this course is a sample ECDL test and should be sent directly to Oxford Open Learning. Please read the instructions for this assignment very carefully.

Tutor-marked Assignments (TMAs) are useful for a number of reasons. They provide you with extra practice in relevant skills and they enable a tutor to check your progress and identify any specific problems. If you have studied effectively, you may well score 100% as the TMAs are no more difficult than the revision exercises.

TMAs are normally to be submitted to your tutor as an e-mail attachment (if you do not have an e-mail facility, you may post your answers to your tutor using the TMA Cover Sheets provided).

1. Your e-mail should be addressed to your tutor.
2. In the “subject” box (or equivalent), type: ‘TMA A’ or ‘TMA B’ or whatever
3. Please supply the following information as e-mail text:

Surname:  
First name(s)  
OOL Student No:  
Course (Module):  
TMA:



Did you have any problems with this assignment? If so, please specify here.

4. Send the e-mail.

Your e-mail will be checked as soon as possible by your OOL tutor. The tutor will award a percentage mark. You should receive an e-mail back telling you what the mark is (together with any other comments) and including an attachment of the correct file. If you have not scored 100%, you should compare your work with this attached file. For obvious reasons, there is no facility to re-submit the work.

If you complete all the assignments but do not wish to proceed to an ECDL exam, you may be eligible for an OOL certificate. You will need to score at least 80% in each TMA. This is an alternative to ECDL and you will need to make a written application to OOL if you want such a certificate to be awarded.

## The European Computer Driving Licence

The **European Computer Driving Licence** (ECDL) is a valuable way of having your skills recognised. To gain an ECDL, applicants must pass *one* theoretical and *six* practical tests, as follows:

1. Basic concepts of Information Technology (theory paper)
2. Using the computer and managing files
3. Word Processing
4. Spreadsheets
5. Database
6. Presentation
7. Information and Communication

Again, study of this OOL module will give you the skills to tackle Paper 1 (theoretical) and Paper 2 (practical). You can work your way through the list, registering each success on your European Computer Skills Card (ECSC), recognised around Europe and beyond.

For further information about the ECDL, contact ECDL Foundation, 107, The Windmill, Sir John Rogersons Quay, Dublin 2, Ireland (e-mail: [info@ecd.com](mailto:info@ecd.com)).

### Objectives of the ECDL

- To promote and encourage computer literacy for all



- To raise the level of knowledge about Information Technology (IT) and the level of competence in using personal computers and common computer applications for all citizens within Europe and internationally
- To ensure all computer users understand best practices and the advantages of using a personal computer
- To increase the productivity of all employees who need to use computers in their work
- To enable better returns from investments in Information Technology (IT)
- To provide a basic qualification which will allow all people, regardless of their background, to be part of the Information Society

### Benefits of the ECDL

Today, computer skills are increasingly important to people in all walks of life. The ECDL is an information technology certificate for everyone. It is intended for those who need to, or wish to, know how to use a personal computer. It is suitable for people from every work discipline, for people entering the job market, and for all ages. Some of the benefits of the ECDL are that it provides:

- An IT skills qualification for everyone
- An innovative and tangible method of skills measurement and validation
- A model for education and training in the Information Society
- A highly effective training delivery model
- Greater public awareness of the benefits of active participation in the Information Society
- A flexible and accessible qualification that offers increased mobility to holders.

**Module 1 *Basic Concepts of Information Technology*** (IT), requires the candidate to know about the basic physical make-up of a personal computer and understand some of the basic concepts of Information Technology (IT) such as data storage and memory, the context for computer-based software applications in society, and the uses of information networks within computing. The candidate shall also appreciate how IT systems are found in everyday situations; and how personal computers can affect health. The candidate shall be aware of some of the security and legal issues associated with computers.

**Module 2 *Using the Computer and Managing Files***, requires the candidate to demonstrate knowledge and competence in using the basic functions of a personal computer and its operating system. The candidate shall be able to operate effectively within the desktop environment. He or she shall be able to manage and organise files and



directories/folders and know how to copy, move and delete files and directories/folders. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to work with desktop icons and to manipulate windows. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to use search features, simple editing tools and print management facilities available within the operating system.

**Module 3 Word Processing**, requires the candidate to demonstrate the ability to use a word processing application on a personal computer. He or she shall understand and be able to accomplish basic operations associated with creating, formatting and finishing a word processing document ready for distribution. The candidate shall demonstrate competence in using some of the more advanced features associated with word processing applications such as creating standard tables, using pictures and images within a document, importing objects and using mail merge tools.

**Module 4 Spreadsheets**, requires the candidate to understand the basic concepts of spreadsheets and to demonstrate the ability to use a spreadsheet application on a personal computer. He or she shall understand and be able to accomplish basic operations associated with developing, formatting and using a spreadsheet. The candidate shall be able to accomplish standard mathematical and logical operations using basic formulas and functions. The candidate shall demonstrate competence in using some of the more advanced features of a spreadsheet application such as importing objects, and creating graphs and charts.

**Module 5 Database**, requires the candidate to understand the basic concepts of databases and demonstrate the ability to use a database on a personal computer. The module is divided in two sections; the first section tests the candidate's ability to design and plan a simple database using a standard database package; the second section requires the candidate to demonstrate that he or she can retrieve information from an existing database by using the query, select and sort tools available in the database. The candidate shall also be able to create and modify reports.

**Module 6 Presentation**, requires the candidate to demonstrate competence in using presentation tools on a personal computer. The candidate shall be able to accomplish basic tasks such as creating, formatting and preparing presentations for distribution and display. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to create a variety of presentations for different target audiences or situations. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to accomplish basic operations with graphics and charts and to use various slide show effects.



**Module 7 Information and Communication**, is divided in two sections. The first section, *Information*, requires the candidate to accomplish basic Web search tasks using a Web browser application and available search engine tools, to bookmark search results and to print Web pages and search reports. The second section, *Communication*, requires the candidate to demonstrate their ability to use electronic mail software to send and receive messages, to attach documents or files to a message and to organise and manage message folders or directories within electronic mail software.

The modules can be taken in any sequence and the tests can be taken in different Test Centres and indeed in different countries. An ECDL or an ECSC that is granted in one country is valid in another. Both the ECDL and the ECSC are internationally recognised certificates.

Below we give details of the skills to be covered, as specified in the syllabus:

## Module One: Basic Concepts of IT

### 1.1 Getting Started

#### 1.1.1 *Hardware/Software/ Information/ Technology*

1.1.1.1 Understand the basic concepts of hardware, software and Information Technology (IT)

#### 1.1.2 *Types of Computer*

1.1.2.1 Understand and distinguish between mainframe computer, minicomputer, network computer, personal computer, and laptop computer in terms of capacity, speed, cost, and typical users. Understand the terms intelligent and dumb terminal.

#### 1.1.3 *Main Parts of a Personal Computer*

1.1.3.1 Know the main parts of a personal computer: the central processing unit (CPU), the hard disk, common input/output devices, types of memory, removable storage devices, such as diskette, zip disc, CD-ROM etc. Understand the term peripheral device.

### 1.2 Hardware

#### 1.2.1 *Central Processing Unit*

1.2.1.1 Understand the term central processing unit (CPU) and know what the CPU does - calculations, logic control, immediate access memory, etc. Know that the speed of the CPU is measured in megahertz (MHz).



### 1.2.2 *Input Devices*

1.2.2.1 Know some of the main devices for inputting data into a computer such as mice, keyboards, trackballs, scanners, touchpads, light pens, joysticks etc.

### 1.2.3 *Output Devices*

1.2.3.1 Know the most common output devices for displaying the results of processing carried out by a computer, e.g. various visual display units (VDU's), screens or monitors, printers such as those commonly available, plotters, speakers, speech synthesisers, etc. Know where and how these devices are used.

## 1.3 Storage

### 1.3.1 *Memory Storage Devices*

1.3.1.1 Compare the main types of memory storage device in terms of speed, cost and capacity e.g. internal/external hard disk, zip disk, data cartridges, CD-ROM, diskette etc.

### 1.3.2 *Types of Memory*

1.3.2.1 Understand different types of computer memory: e.g. RAM (random-access memory), ROM (read-only memory). Understand when they are used.

### 1.3.3 *Measuring Memory*

1.3.3.1 Know how computer memory is measured; (bit, byte, KB, MB, GB). Relate computer memory measurements to characters, fields, records, files and directories/folders.

### 1.3.4 *Computer Performance*

1.3.4.1 Know some of the factors that impact on a computer's performance, e.g. CPU speed, RAM size, hard disk speed and capacity.

## 1.4 Software

### 1.4.1 *Types of Software*

1.4.1.1 Know the meaning of the terms; operating systems software and applications software. Understand the distinction between them.

### 1.4.2 *Operating System Software*

1.4.2.1 Understand the main functions of an operating system. Understand the term Graphical User Interface (GUI) and give examples, be aware of the main advantages of using a GUI interface.



### 1.4.3 *Applications Software*

- 1.4.3.1 List some common software applications together with their uses, e.g. word processing applications, spreadsheets, database, payroll, presentation tools, desktop publishing and multimedia applications

### 1.4.4 *Systems Development*

- 1.4.4.1 Understand how computer-based systems are developed. Know about the process of research, analysis, programming and testing often used in developing computer based systems.

## 1.5 Information Networks

### 1.5.1 *LAN and WAN*

- 1.5.1.1 Know the definitions of local area networks (LAN) and wide area networks (WAN). Know about the advantages of group working and sharing resources over a network.

### 1.5.2 *The Telephone Network in Computing*

- 1.5.2.1 Understand the use of the telephone network in computing. Understand the terms Public Switched Data network (PSDN), Integrated Service Digital Network (ISDN), satellite communications. Understand the terms fax telex, modem, digital, analogue, baud (measured in bps – bits per second).

### 1.5.3 *Electronic Mail*

- 1.5.3.1 Understand the term electronic mail and know the uses of e-mail. Understand what is needed to send and receive e-mail. Detail some of the information and communications technology (ICT) equipment needed to use e-mail.

### 1.5.4 *The Internet*

- 1.5.4.1 Know what the Internet is. Understand the concept of the Internet and some of its main uses. Understand the economics of Internet mail systems relative to other mail delivery methods. Know what a search engine is. Understand the distinction between the Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW).

## 1.6 Computers in Everyday Life

### 1.6.1 *Computers in the Home*

- 1.6.1.1 Know some of the uses of the PC at home e.g. hobbies, household accounts, working from home, projects and homework, using e-mail and the Internet.



### 1.6.2 *Computers at Work or in Education*

1.6.2.1 Know the uses of office applications; give examples of the types of computer-based systems used in business, industry, government and education. Be aware of where a computer might be more appropriate than a person for carrying out a task and where not.

### 1.6.3 *Computers in Daily Life*

1.6.3.1 Be aware of the uses of computers in everyday life, e.g. in supermarkets or libraries, at the doctor's surgery, the use of smart cards etc.

## 1.7 IT and Society

### 1.7.1 *A Changing World*

1.7.1.1 Understand the terms Information Society and Information Superhighway. Know some of the implications of the Year 2000 issue (Y2K). Understand the concept of Electronic Commerce.

### 1.7.2 *A Good Workspace*

1.7.2.1 Understand what elements and practices can help create a good working environment e.g. frequent breaks away from the computer, appropriate positioning of screens, chairs and keyboards, provision of adequate lighting and ventilation.

### 1.7.3 *Health and Safety*

1.7.3.1 Be aware of Health and Safety precautions when using a computer like ensuring that power cables are safely secured, and that power points are not overloaded. Know about injuries common in a bad working environment e.g. repetitive strain injury (RSI), eye strain caused by screen glare, problems associated with bad posture.

## 1.8 Security, Copyright and the Law

### 1.8.1 *Security*

1.8.1.1 Know about the purpose and value of backing store of computer files to removable storage devices. Know how to protect a personal computer against intrusion. Know about privacy issues associated with personal computers, e.g. protecting the computer, adopting good password policies. Know what happens to your data and files if there is a power cut.



### 1.8.2 Computer Viruses

1.8.2.1 Understand the term virus when used in computing. Be aware how viruses can enter a computer system. Understand the dangers of downloading files onto your computer. Know about some anti-virus measures.

### 1.8.3 Copyright

1.8.3.1 Understand software copyright and some of the main security and legal issues associated with copying, sharing and lending diskettes. Understand some of the implications of transferring files across a network. Understand the terms shareware, freeware and user licences.

### 1.8.4 Data Protection Act

1.8.4.1 Know the Data Protection Act in your country. Understand the implications of the Data Protection Act. Describe some of the uses of personal data.

## Module 2 - Using the Computer and Managing Files

### 2.1 Getting Started

#### 2.1.1 First Steps with the Computer

2.1.1.1 Start the Computer.

2.1.1.2 Shut down the computer properly.

2.1.1.3 Restart the computer.

2.1.1.4 View the computer's basic system information e.g. the operating system, processor type, installed RAM (random-access memory) etc.

2.1.1.5 View the computer's desktop configuration: date & time, volume settings, desktop display options (e.g. background options, screen settings, screen saver options etc.)

2.1.1.6 Be able to format a diskette.

2.1.1.7 Use available Help functions.

### 2.2 Desktop Environment

#### 2.2.1 Work with Icons

2.2.1.1 Select and move desktop icons. Recognise basic desktop icons such as hard disk, directory tree, directories/folders and files, recycle bin/wastebasket. Create a desktop shortcut icon or a desktop menu alias.

#### 2.2.2 Work with Windows

2.2.2.1 Recognise the different parts of a desktop window: title bar, toolbar, menu bar, status bar, scroll bar etc.



- 2.2.2.2 Understand how to reduce a desktop window, how to enlarge a desktop window, how to resize and scale a desktop window, how to close a desktop window.
- 2.2.2.3 Recognise the different parts of an applications window: title bar, toolbar, menu bar, status bar, scroll bar etc. Move windows on the desktop.
- 2.2.2.4 Understand how to reduce an applications window, how to enlarge an applications window, how to re-size and scale an applications window, how to close an applications window. Move between open windows.

## 2.3 Organising Files

### 2.3.1 *Directories /Folders*

- 2.3.1.1 Understand the basic directory and folder structure on the computer.
- 2.3.1.2 Create a directory/folder and a further subdirectory and sub-folder.
- 2.3.1.3 Examine a directory/folder. View some of the directory/folder attributes: name, size, date when last updated, etc.
- 2.3.1.4 Be able to recognise the most widely used types of files in a directory/folder, e.g. word processing files, spreadsheet files, database files, presentation files, rich text format (RTF) files, image files, etc.
- 2.3.1.5 View file attributes e.g. name, size, file type, date last modified, etc.
- 2.3.1.6 Re-name files and directories/folders.

### 2.3.2 *Copy, Move, Delete*

- 2.3.2.1 Select a file individually or as part of an adjacent or non-adjacent group.
- 2.3.2.2 Copy and Paste files within directories/folders to make a duplicate copy.
- 2.3.2.3 Make backup copies of data onto a diskette.
- 2.3.2.4 Use Cut and Paste functions to move files within directories/folders.
- 2.3.2.5 Delete files from one or more directories/folders.
- 2.3.2.6 Delete selected directories/folders.

### 2.3.3 *Searching*

- 2.3.3.1 Use the Find tool to locate a file or a directory/folder.
- 2.3.3.2 Search by name, date created, file or directory/folder type etc.



## 2.4 Simple Editing

### 2.4.1 *Use a Text Editing Application*

- 2.4.1.1 Launch an editing application or a word processing program and create a file.
- 2.4.1.2 Save the file to a directory/folder.
- 2.4.1.3 Save the file onto a diskette.
- 2.4.1.4 Close the editing application.

## 2.5 Print Management

### 2.5.1 *Printing*

- 2.5.1.1 Be able to print from an installed printer.
- 2.5.1.2 Change the default printer from an installed printer list.
- 2.5.1.3 View a print job's progress from a desktop print manager.

Good luck with your course!

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