

Key IT Skills – How to Assess them

With the voluntary sector many people need to be able to use a computer. How and when do you assess this skill? The briefing paper on IT core competencies looks at self assessment techniques and how these might be used in an organisation as part of a training needs analysis. However, at some stage you might want to be able to define people's skills levels in a measurable but non threatening way. The only way to standardise this process is to use a form of competency testing such as that which has been designed by [eDCC](#) (the e-Digital Competence Certificate scheme) which is accredited through the OCR. It is easy and cheap to register with them and actually become an accredited centre, but just looking at their criteria will enable you to judge people's skills in a consistent and structure manner.

Appendix 1 provides a couple of example assessments in word processing and appendix two provides a walk through of how to achieve beginners level word processing. Try them out on yourself and see if you have any skills gaps.

PROJECT – WORD PROCESSING – BEGINNER LEVEL 2008

1. Enter Text

- Open a new word processing document.
- Type a paragraph of text.

2. Insert and Delete Text

- Insert several words into one of the sentences.
- Delete the last sentence of the paragraph.

4. Save, Name and Close File

- Save and name the document.
- Close the document.

3. Save, Name and Close File

- Save and name the document.
- Close the document.

5. Align and Justify Text

- Type a second paragraph of text
- Right align the first paragraph.
- Justify the second paragraph.

6. Alter Font and Size of Text

- Select a sentence
- Change the font.
- Change the size of the text.

7. Change Style of Text

- Select a sentence.
- Embolden the sentence.
- Italicise the sentence.
- Underline the sentence.

10. Use Spell Check and Word Count Feature

- Check the spelling.
- Perform a word count.

9. Use Spell Check and Word Count Feature

- Check the spelling.
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- Check the spelling.
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PROJECT – WORD PROCESSING – ADVANCED LEVEL 2008

1 Create a Long Document

- Create a suitable three page document.

2 Format Text into Columns

- Format some of your page into two columns.
- Change the spacing between the two columns to -

3 Use Headings

- Create headings throughout the document where appropriate. You can apply headings to individual pages, columns and paragraphs.

4. Use Bullets and Numbering

- Use three bullet points in the document.
- Change the style of the bullet points.
- Change the bullet points to numbers.

5 Insert Headers, Footers and Page Numbering

- Insert your name in a header to appear on every page.
- Insert automatic page numbering in a footer to appear on every page.

6 Use Footnotes

- Create a footnote.

7 Insert a Picture with Caption

- Insert a picture in an appropriate place in your document.
- Insert a Caption to label the picture.

8 Insert Table of Contents

- Insert a blank page at the beginning of the document.
- Create a Table of Contents to include all headings and captions.

9. Use Page Setup Functions

- Adjust the left and right page margins to 3cm.
- Adjust the Footer margin to 2.5cm.

10. Use Various Printing Commands

- Edit the document where necessary.
- Print one paragraph.
- Print one page only.
- Print the entire document.
- Make sure all your print outs are clearly labelled with your name.

Appendix 2

Microsoft Word Processing (XP/2003) – beginner

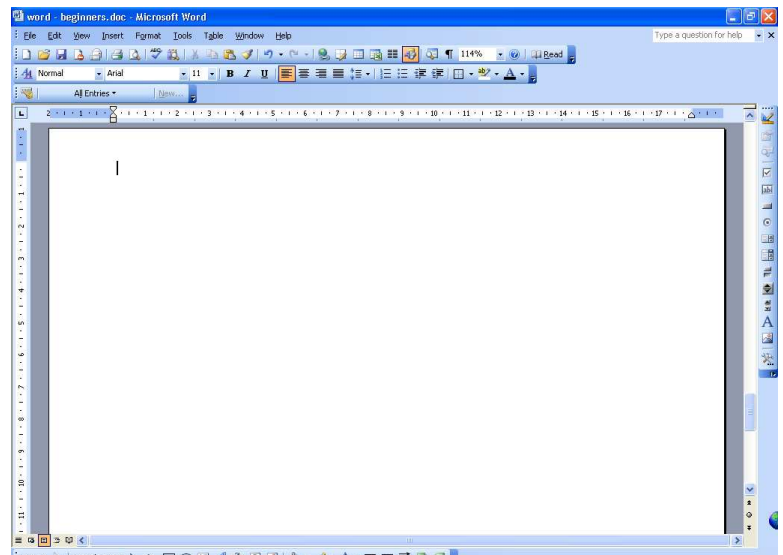


How to:

- 1 Start the program
- 2 Enter text
- 3 Insert and delete text
- 4 Align and justify text
- 5 Change Text and Style Effects
- 6 Save, name and close a file
- 7 Retrieve/open a file
- 8 Alter the size of type and the typeface (font)
- 9 Use the print preview button
- 10 Use spell check and word count
- 11 Print, save and close a file

Microsoft have a few different typing programs called word processors, the most common of which is part of Microsoft Office and is called Microsoft Word.

Start the program: To start the word processor, you have to have your computer switched on and have to be logged on (if required). The word processor, called MS (or Microsoft) Word, is an *application* which means that it is a program which does a particular thing, i.e. allows you to produce a document. Choose the *Start* button from the bottom of your screen (for Windows XP users) and then move your mouse over the words *All programs*. A list of different programs will pop up to the right of your mouse. You must now run your mouse over this list. You want to find the title *Microsoft Office Word 2003*. This may be in a submenu from *Microsoft Office* which will open up further when your mouse is over it. When you have found *Microsoft Office Word 2003* rest your mouse on it and it will turn blue. Now press the left hand button. You will have launched the word processor. Wait until you have a new screen displayed which will look something like the above.



Enter text: As well as having a text cursor (I) which moves with the mouse there is now a blinking *caret* (which is a flashing straight line) on the document area of the screen which indicates where the next letter to be pressed on the keyboard will appear. You can now start typing!

Insert text and delete text: To insert text in between words or characters you have typed simply move the *caret* to the insertion point (using the cursor keys or the mouse) and start typing. To delete characters to the left of the *caret* press the backspace delete key and to the right press the delete key.

Align and Justify Text: This means how the text is lined up on the left and right hand sides of the page. Left align (what you always get at standard) is where the text lines up at the left hand side of the page. Right means the text lines up at the right hand side and justified means where both sides are lined up. This may result in large white spaces between words in order to make them fit the line. The other option is to centre the text. To change the alignment, simply click the appropriate button on the bar at the top of the screen.



Left alignment



Right alignment



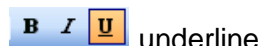
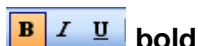
Centred



Justified

Remember that the alignment will only occur from where the cursor is onwards. If you want it to apply to something you have already typed, you must *highlight* it before you choose the alignment button.

Change Text Style and Effects: In a similar manner to alignment, there are buttons which when pressed will make your text **bold**, *italic* and underlined, **or any combination of these**. The buttons work in exactly the same way. That is they will affect everything from that point onwards. To make the change to something that is already typed, highlight it and then press required the button. Click once to enable the effect and then click again to turn the effect off.



To highlight something, place your mouse either at its beginning or end and then holding the left hand mouse button down, drag it over the item/words to be selected. The items/words will become **reversed out** and will stay that way when you release the mouse button until the keyboard is pressed or mouse is clicked in the text area. Whilst highlighted you can apply any function to it.

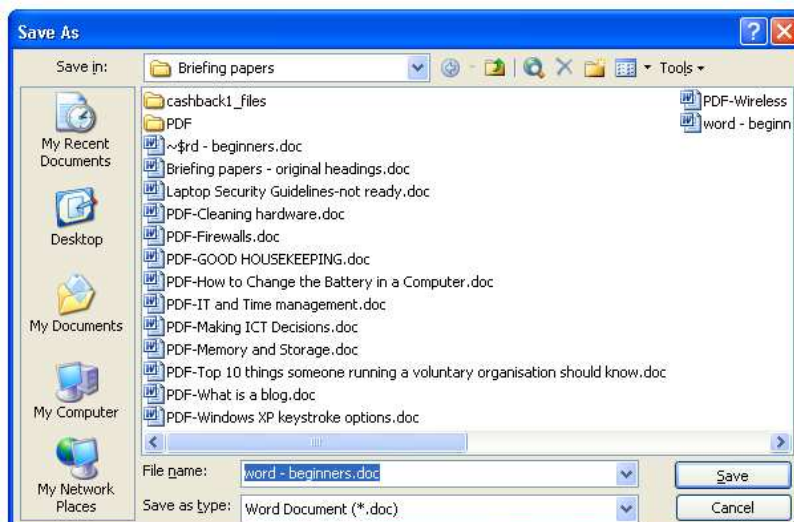
Save, Name and Close a File: Whenever you type something, you may need to come back to it or keep it as a record. Rather than putting a piece of paper in a drawer, on a computer you save a *file*. When this happens, the file is saved onto the computer and in order to distinguish it from other documents you are asked to give it a name. The computer will automatically create a reference to the fact that it is a Word file and also put the date and time on the file. When creating file names, use something that will make you remember what the file was about.

When you save a file for the first time it does not have a name and so the computer asks you to save (the file) *as...* After you have saved the file for the first time (you will have given it a name) the next time you just save the file and it uses the same file name, which means the saving happens without you being prompted.

To save a file, choose File and Save As... from the top menu bar and a new dialogue box will open on screen.

The file name is to be typed in the second box from the bottom; in this case it is highlighted and called *word-beginners.doc*. Having chosen your own name, press the **Save** button and you will have saved your document. The dialogue box disappears and you are returned to your document.

You can now carry on working on your document. It is wise to save your work routinely, such as every 10 minutes as a precaution (in case of a power cut or something going wrong!).



If you have finished working on your document, you can save your work and then close or *Exit* the word processor. To so this choose File and Exit. Word will now close down. If you have not saved the last piece of work, you will be prompted to do so.

Throughout this document you will see some of the instructions underlined and in italic. These indicate the alternate keystrokes you can press; simply hold down the Alt key (next to the spacebar on the left) and the corresponding letter. You may find this quicker than pressing the appropriate button.

Retrieve a file: This is very similar to what has been described above, but in effect in reverse. Having saved the file and closed the word processor, you now need to carry on working on that same file. To do so, you must first start Word and then choose File, Open. A similar dialogue box to that for saving opens up. Either type in the file name or click it from the list displayed and then press the **Open** button.

*Note that when you are accessing the different menu options that some of them have a keyboard option. So to open a file you can choose **Ctrl + O** (the **Ctrl** key is on the very left of the keyboard at the bottom).*

