

Membership

Membership reached an all time record of 601 by the end of the year with a second Vista Group now in progress and 10 prospective members on the waitlist.

Fundamentals Training

Apologies and No Shows

Following the introduction of the amended blue Sign-off card last month, copies of the Student Training Agreement are now available in Eleanor's tray in the Office. These can be stapled over the Comments section of the old blue Sign-off cards as a reminder for students (but they are not expected to sign them).

Vista Manuals

Vista students (both one-on-one and Group Course) only have one manual and do not need a Fun CD. This is not because they drew the short straw, but because they create their own Fun CD as part of the course and most of their Vista teaching is from the interactive Professor Teaches program rather than written in the manual.

The latest version of the Vista Manual (all pages dated June 2008) is not expected to change until at least the end of September. Everyone using Vista (both trainers and students) should now have a copy of the new manual. Spare copies will be available from the box on the left-hand side of table in the Office until the Christmas in July Party. Please help yourselves. Needless to say, if you find any errors, problems, etc., please email Eleanor with the details so errors can be corrected before the next reprint. Thank you!

Club PCs

Settings

Please remember that club PCs are provided for the benefit of Club members as a whole, and that Fundamentals manuals especially rely on the agreed standard settings for things like Desktops (including icons and shortcuts). We are currently permitted to teach students how to change some of the optional settings like Desktop backgrounds, Screensavers, mouse click speeds etc., and even screen resolution if really necessary for vision impaired students, but these must all be restored to their original values at the end of each lesson.

Please also remember that if the computer you use is not set up (or behaving) as it should be, then either you or your Senior Trainer should record the problem in the appropriate Log Book so that the Maintenance Team can fix it. Room 1 Log Book lives on the table near the Demo PC, and the Room 2 Log Book on the table near the printer. When you make an entry, please record the computer number (labelled on the top of the tower), your name, contact number, date, and a brief description of the problem.

Virus Checking

Some copies of the free AVG Anti-Virus programs we have been using at the club have expired and have (temporarily) been updated to the new AVG Anti-Virus Free program which has a slightly different interface. Copies of amended instructions for using the new version are available from Eleanor's tray in the Office if required. AVG has changed the rules for using the free version, and the club no longer qualifies, so will be changing to Kaspersky Internet Security v7 in the near future. Instructions for using this new software will be distributed to everyone when available.

Windows Updates

It has been decided that Windows Automatic Updates will be turned OFF on all club PCs, and that these updates will now be done manually by the Maintenance Team when appropriate. This will eliminate the increasing problem of PCs installing updates and delaying the closing of the club rooms at the end of the day. Any Updates Available notifications (in the System Tray) should now be ignored.

USB panels on the fronts of PC

The headphone sockets on these panels are now working, but the Maintenance Team is still working on a problem with the microphone sockets.

New, Updated and Deleted Courses

Files and Folders Refresher

The two recent Files & Folders Refresher workshops have been an eye opener to the poor understanding many members have regarding Files & Folder management. This led to a discussion on Trainer standards, particularly in relation to this area of Fundamentals Training, at both the Training Sub-Committee and Management Committee meetings. The end result of the discussion is that maybe all one-on-one Trainers

(Fundamentals, Excel and Internet & Email) should be required to be recertified each year, just like many professionals have to do. This would be done by sitting an annual test (around Sept/Oct) to check that their skills in relation to Files & Folder management are still adequate enough to correctly impart the knowledge to new students. This would only be a simple test along the lines of the Files & Folders exercise in the current Assessment Test that is used to see if new members need to attend Fundamentals Training before enrolling in Optional Courses. It is envisaged that this test will not be compulsory but Trainers will have to relinquish their Trainer's badge if they decide not to take the test or are unable to complete the test. Trainers can attend Files & Folders Refreshers before and/or after attempting the test to brush up their Files & Folders knowledge. It was decided that this idea would be discussed with all Trainers at the monthly Trainers Meeting and the details worked out. It was also agreed that all new Trainee Trainers should take the Assessment Test before completing their traineeship to make sure that they achieve an adequate score and, in particular, successfully complete the Files & Folders exercise.

Internet & Email

The draft manual for the new Internet and Email Course is currently being reviewed by 3 Senior Trainers. The proposed cost of the 4 x 3 hour course is \$20.

e-Bay Workshop

The Trading Post is now running online auctions (similar to eBay) and it has been agreed that the content of the proposed workshop should be widened to Selling on the Internet. Watch this space.

Specific Office 2007 Courses

It has been agreed that whilst the numbers of students using Office 2007 is small they can be handled in the normal Office 2003 Courses with conversion notes available for those that have Office 2007. Once the number of Office 2007 students gets too large we may need to run specific Office 2007 Courses, especially for Word, Graphics and PowerPoint. This situation will be reviewed monthly.

Linux

The Linux course is using the new sign-up format being trialled by the Word and Graphics courses, and the first course starts on Thursday morning 24th July 2008.

Genealogy Workshop

Ella Ross has decided that she is unable to develop a Genealogy Workshop at the moment, so Peter Fowler will investigate the possibility with other interested trainers. Again, watch this space!

Adobe PhotoShop Stage 2 / Adobe Premier Elements

Because many club members have purchased the Adobe PhotoShop / Adobe Premiere Elements package, we plan to add Adobe Premier Elements to the Video Editing course as a priority, with the next course some time around September 2008. (This means that Stage 2 of the new Adobe PhotoShop course will now be deferred until early 2009.)

Assistant Trainers – Optional Courses

As Files and Folders is a core component in most Optional Courses it was decided that the same standards as for one-on-one Trainers should apply to all "helpers" holding Trainer badges. This means that these "helpers" should be given the option to recertify each year, just like the one-on-one Trainers. This is optional, not mandatory. Trainers can attend Files & Folders Refreshers before and/or after attempting the test to brush up their Files & Folders knowledge.

Trainers who decided not to take the test or could not complete the test would be given "Asst Trainer" badges, assuming that they still wanted to help in Optional Courses and the Optional Course Presenter wanted them to assist. Equally, Optional Course Presenters could give new "helpers" Asst Trainer badges.

New Sign-up Rules for Selected Courses

Word, Graphics and now Ubuntu (Linux) have scheduled courses using the new system. It's still early days, but so far it seems to be working well.

Monthly Meeting

Our next Monthly Meeting on 9th July 2008 is our Christmas in July luncheon. The next Trainers' Meeting will follow the August 2008 Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 13th August 2008.

Peter & Eleanor