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Using the contents and index

This page focuses on familiarising the learner with the contents and index pages in their ICT course book. Course books and manuals are best used by reading or revising particular sections, so learners need to develop the skills required to locate the one(s) relevant to them at any given time. An essential part of navigating the course book effectively is use of the contents and index, through the development of scanning skills.

Materials

Pens, flipchart/OHT, highlighter pens, Source page 0:05

Learning outcomes (objectives)

- 1 To use a contents and index page in an ICT course book or training manual to find information.
- 2 To practise alphabetical order (1st and 2nd placed letters in a word).

Suggestions for how to use this page

- Begin by asking the group how they locate information in their ICT course book. Note a range of strategies from the learners, including those who 'guess' where things might be.
- Discuss the importance of breaking information down (such as in the workbook) into manageable and relevant chunks (chapters or sections, subsections, etc.) and finding the part you need at any given moment on the course.
- Hand out copies of the learner page. Ask learners where in a course book they would expect to find the contents page and index, and their benefit for readers.
- Work out a group definition of contents and index. Write this on the flipchart.
- Direct learners to the example contents page on the learner page. Ask learners how many chapters the workbook is split into. How did they find the answer?
- Discuss the concept of scanning, and its value. Practise with other examples from either the contents or the index examples on the learner page.
- What is scanning? When do we use it? Gather ideas and examples on the flipchart (phone

directory, bus timetables, Yellow Pages, football results). Explain that scanning is like looking for your name on a list or looking for a familiar face in a crowd.

- Move on to the example of an index – ask learners what they notice about it (alphabetical order, bold type, page numbers).
- Ensure that learners are aware that sometimes it is necessary to go beyond first and second place alphabetical ordering when locating information.
- If not previously mentioned, draw learners' attention to the way the index has subsections. Why? How does this make finding the correct page(s) easier?
- Explain why *Primary Key*, *Print* and *Print Preview* (from the index) appear in that order.
- Make sure that learners understand that sometimes an index gives a page range for a particular entry. This means that information about a topic can be found on all the pages in the range. Ask learners to find three examples of page ranges on the example index (Create 100–102, Fields 113–114 and Queries 113–116).

Source page 0:05

- Use this fuller example of an ICT index for paired work. Ask learners to quiz each other. For example:
 - 1) On what page would you find information on how to **print in access**? (Answer: pages 105, 119)
 - 2) How could you find out how to **save a file in Word**? (Answer: pages 39–40, 48, 50, 51.)
- Extend by using examples that require learners to use the index to move on to a related entry. For example:
 - 1) How would you find out how to delete an e-mail? (Answer: go to **E-mail** in the index. This entry directs you to **Outlook Express**, in entry for **Outlook Express** see sub topic **E-mail**, in E-mail see subsection **Delete** page 71.)

Suggestions for learners who are having difficulties

- Learners who are having difficulty scanning may benefit from using their finger to track down the list. On the PC, learners can track using the mouse pointer.

- Learners who are having difficulty remembering the alphabet (e.g. dyslexic learners) may benefit from using a crib card, letter cards or an alphabet reminder. Showing learners how to chunk the alphabet into quartiles (A–G, H–M [for middle], N–T, U–Z) may also be helpful.
- Learners who forget what they are scanning for may want to jot the key word down on a sticky note and say it aloud to themselves as they scan.
- ESOL learners may not know the order of the English alphabet. Practise these skills using Yellow Pages. (Thomson Directories are also useful as they have a colour coded alphabet strip on every page and are not as overwhelming as Yellow Pages.)

Suggestions for advanced learners

- Give additional alphabetical order tasks based on ICT words.
- Give further location tasks from the course book against the clock.

Curr ref	Standards	Key Skills
Rw/E3.4	E3/3.1; L1/3.1	C1.2; ICT1.1
Rt/L1.4		
Rt/L1.5		

Using the contents and index

You will probably be using a course book on your ICT course. This will have a contents page and an index. These pages can help you find the part of the book you want quickly.

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The **contents page** is at the beginning of the course book. It tells you what information is covered in the book.

Course books are often arranged in **chapters or sections**. This book has **eleven chapters**. Each chapter has a title. **Chapter Four** is about spreadsheets.

The **numbers** refer to the page numbers of the book. If you turn to page 124, you will find information about desktop publishing.

You do not need to read every word on the contents page. You can **scan** the page to find the information you need.

Scanning is reading to find out one piece of information only.

The **index** is normally found at the end of a book. It lists all the topics that are covered in the book. The topics are listed in **alphabetical order**.

Some topics are broken down into subsections so you can go straight to the page you want.

To look for information about how to **enter data** first look for **data**, then move your eyes down and find **Enter**.

Main subjects are given in bold text.

Some page numbers have a hyphen between them. This shows a **page range**.

So you can find information about **Accessories** on page 23, 35 **and** 36.

Look for the first letter of the word you want, or sometimes the first couple of letters. Make a mental note of the page number and turn to that page.

INDEX

A

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Using the layout

Learners may need help finding specific information on course book pages. Having used an index or contents page to locate specific pages (learner page 2:1) learners must then use headings, subheadings, lists and other textual features, such as the use of bold print, to locate key information. Learners should be aware of the purpose of these features.

Materials

Flipchart or whiteboard, selection of coloured pens, examples of formatted text (e.g. forms, health and safety notices, leaflets etc.), sticky notes

Learning outcomes (objectives)

- 1 To understand that the layout and format of text often varies according to purpose.
- 2 To practise using the format or organisational features of text to find information.

Suggestions for how to use this page

- Discuss with the group the importance of breaking information (such as that in a course book) down into manageable and relevant chunks (chapters or sections, subsections, etc.) and finding the part you need at any given moment on the course.
- Ask learners to look at a range of formatted materials such as forms, health and safety notices, leaflets and so on. Ask them what sort of information they can find (e.g. information, instructions, advice). List these on the flipchart or whiteboard.
- Are there differences in the way these texts are presented? Discuss the different formats and write up in a table, e.g. instructions are often presented as a numbered list, an information leaflet might use paragraphs and subheadings for information and bullet points for key points. Note that some features, for example bullets, are used across a range of texts.
- Hand out copies of the learner page and discuss the featured layouts in turn. Are the featured layouts easier to read than a single solid block of text?
- Discuss the difference between the use of bullets and numbers for lists and instructions. Ask learners to look through the exercises in their course books. What are used most – bullets or

numbers? Point out that when numbers are used in instructions it usually means that the steps need to be followed in a certain order. Discuss the importance of following each step in order to complete the practice exercises in the course book successfully.

- Draw attention to other layout features not previously mentioned such as capital letters, underlining, italics, symbols, use of colour, tables, charts, borders etc. Point out that these are used to **signpost** information and to help us find our way around.
- Ask learners to look through their course book to find examples of these additional layout features. Ask learners to suggest reasons for the use of these features.
- Learners could write their examples on sticky notes and place them around the flipchart sheet. There should now be a comprehensive range of organisational features on the sheet.

Suggestions for learners who are having difficulties

- ESOL learners may need explicit definitions of words such as format and layout. Encourage use of a bilingual dictionary or a simple English thesaurus.
- Create a set of small cards (or use sticky notes) with an organisational feature clearly typed on each one (heading, **bold**, **colour** etc). If necessary, take examples from the course book so that there is a clear context. Get the learner to label a section in their workbook.

Suggestions for advanced learners

- Look at other pages of the course book. Talk about the overall 'house style' of the book (i.e. same fonts used for headings throughout, same colour font for activities, key words listed in margins, use of colour-coding etc.).
- Depending on the stage which learners have reached, ask them to word-process a document displaying a range of formatting features. Learners should be able to describe why the formatting they have used is suitable for the text.

Curr ref	Standards	Key Skills
Rt/L1.4	E3/1.1; L1/1.1;	C1.2; ICT1.1
Rt/L1.5	L1/6a.4; E3/6a.3	

Using the layout

The information in a course book is organised in many different formats, or layouts. This helps you to find the information you need more quickly.

Using a Computer

This chapter will help you to use a computer and to manage your data.

You will be able to:

- identify and use a personal computer, monitor, keyboard and mouse
- access and locate data on the computer
- input small amounts of unformatted text, numbers and symbols
- print a document using the default printer settings
- manage documents and data.

Assessment

This unit does not presume any previous experience of using a computer. After studying Unit 1 your skills and understanding are assessed during a 2-hour practical assignment.

The title of this page is in a **large, bold font**. This helps the words stand out from the page and catch your eye.

Under the title or heading there is often an **introductory sentence** that tells you more about the title or what is coming up on the page or in the chapter.

The colon (:) introduces a list of points. These are objectives (the skills you will have after completing the unit).

The objectives are in a different **font** to make them stand out.

The subheading tells you that the next bit of text is about assessment. Subheadings help to summarise the type of information you will find in each section.

Exercise 2

Switching on (booting up) your computer

1. With the computer, monitor and other hardware connected to the power supply, press the on-switch on the front of the computer and the monitor. In both cases a small light will be illuminated and you will hear the whirring and clicking sounds of the computer starting.
2. If nothing happens then check that the power switch at the rear of the computer is in the on position.
3. Observe what happens – the time to start (boot) the computer can vary considerably depending on what is connected to the machine and how it is configured, so do not be concerned if it takes a few minutes.
4. Eventually you will see the dialogue box requesting your User name and Password.

'Exercises' or activities you need to do may be formatted differently so they stand out.

This exercise is in a **coloured border** and the heading is in a **large, coloured font**.

The steps are numbered clearly so that you follow them in order.

Text in brackets gives extra information, explains terms or gives the correct technical term.

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Using a glossary

ICT includes many technical words and abbreviations. Learners must be aware of how to find out the meanings of these in order to understand the information and complete the course activities. This page explains how to use a glossary and highlights some of the differences between a glossary and a dictionary.

Materials

Large sheets of paper (flipchart paper would be ideal), and a selection of coloured pens for learners, copies of a glossary from an ICT workbook

Learning outcomes (objectives)

- 1 To understand the purpose of glossaries and where they are likely to be found.
- 2 To recognise the structure of a glossary and use one to find the meanings of unfamiliar words connected to ICT.

Suggested teaching activities

- Ask learners if they have any existing strategies for working out the meaning of unknown words, especially technical vocabulary. Expect: glossary, dictionary, asking someone, working it out (or guessing) from the context. Discuss these strategies one at a time, writing key points on flipchart as a list or as a mind map.
 - 1) **Asking someone about the meanings of words:** a useful and quick way to find out meanings, particularly at work. But discuss possible dangers in this (e.g. the person gives you an incorrect meaning).
 - 2) **Predicting the meaning of words from context:** this is a way of working out meaning by using the context of the text. Point out to learners that this is a very useful strategy but may not work well with much of the highly technical ICT vocabulary. Note that this strategy is covered in more detail on learner page 1:5.
 - 3) **Looking up words:** discuss the various places where the meanings of words might be found – glossary, dictionary, web-site, specialist books.
- Point out that not all ICT course books will have a glossary but there may be a similar system used for explaining the meanings of technical vocabulary.
- Look at the glossary excerpt and discuss each of the information boxes in turn. Are learners familiar with the listed words and definitions? Did they know that a glossary will also list abbreviations and acronyms?
- Lead on to the topic of alphabetical order – ensure learners understand this. Point out how phrases and acronyms are ordered and how it may be necessary to look at the second, third or fourth letter to find a word.
- Point out that a glossary will direct you to a word in your given area; a dictionary will include words and meanings not relevant to a vocational area and may cause confusion.
- Point out that a glossary can also give you alternative technical terms as well as a definition written in everyday English. Note also that in the definition of 'bitmap' the term 'pixel' is explained.
- Look at some examples of sections from the ICT course book being used.
- Confirm that ICT vocabulary is often complex and can contain many technical terms. Stress that no one is expected to know all these terms, but it is important to understand them. Point out that often, when difficult terminology is mastered and practised, it can be a quick and more accurate way of explaining precisely what is meant. For example, 'boot' is a quicker and more accurate way of talking about the process that happens when you switch on the computer rather than giving the full explanation. Also if you learn the right technical term, you will be using proper, professional language.
- Use copies of a glossary from a typical ICT course book for practice activities as needed.
- Acknowledge that not all words need be memorised, although some will be vital to the vocational area. Suggest that some learners might like to develop a personal glossary (this could be an alphabetically ordered file created on Word – see tip on learner page) to record important terms and their meanings.
- Point out that it would be useful for learners to use the specialist language when they speak to others on the course, to reinforce learning and aid memory.

Suggestions for learners who are having difficulties

- Some learners may need help with using alphabetical order. If so, cut up a page of the glossary into horizontal strips and ask learners to reconstruct in correct order and check against an original copy.
- Make cards with definitions and technical words. Use them as a matching game, paired quiz or 'glossary bingo'. Or arrange technical word cards (not definition cards) in alphabetical order.
- ESOL learners may need support in understanding the definitions of technical words. Encourage them to write notes in their own language if necessary.

Suggestions for advanced learners

- Create a glossary of words that are not explained fully in their course book.
- Give learners some definitions. Ask them to find the correct word in the course book. This could be developed into a 'Call my Bluff' game, where three or four definitions of a very technical word are given and the players have to work out which is the correct definition.
- Learners could develop other word games using technical words from course, e.g. crosswords, spelling games, quizzes.

Curr ref	Standards	Key Skills
Rw/L1.1	E3/3.1; L1/3.1	ICT1.1; C1.2

Using a glossary

ICT includes a lot of technical words. A glossary can help you find and understand the meanings of technical words.

Words in a glossary are listed in **alphabetical order**.

You may have to look at the second or third letter of the word to find it in the list. For example, HTTP comes after HTML.

A glossary lists single words, **phrases**, abbreviations and **acronyms**.

A glossary may also explain or give **alternative terms** for words in the definition.

A	application	A software program designed to perform a task such as desktop publishing, designing a database or designing a web page.	H	HTML	Hypertext Markup Language: a specialist language used to design World Wide Web pages so that they can be read using a browser.
B	bitmap	An image made up of many dots called pixels. The more pixels in a given amount of space (e.g. a square inch) the clearer the image.		HTTP	Hypertext Text Transfer Protocol: specifies how to access documents on the World Wide Web (e.g. http://www.bbc.co.uk).
	boot	The process that happens when you switch on the computer. It involves the loading of the operating system (e.g. Windows 98) and checking the equipment to make sure that everything is ready for use.		hypertext	Pages of a web site are linked together through a number of hypertext connections. These are shown by underlined words, coloured words, icons and graphic pictures. The links allow the user to jump between parts of the site or even between sites.
C	Column chart	A chart which represents numbers and columns of different lengths.		I	Icon
	F	file			A small picture which represents a computer function or operation.
		A collection of digital computer information.			

It is often better to use the glossary for technical words rather than a dictionary. If you look a word up in a dictionary, you might find several meanings. To see this, try looking up the terms boot and icon in a dictionary.

Tip

Create your own personal Glossary in **Word** – keep it minimised when you're working and add to it when you come across an unfamiliar word.