

We were pleased and excited to welcome our students last week. Everyone has settled into their course and accommodation well. The long range weather forecast for Oxford this month is good, which will enable the students to explore the City. There is certainly something here for everyone, great shops and markets, beautiful buildings and parks and, of course, the rivers. Some students may even be tempted to try their hand at punting along the Isis or Cherwell!

The Michaelmas term at the Oxford Union begins this week. For students in Oxford the Union offers a fantastic experience, wonderful entertainment and the chance to engage with fascinating people. See <http://www.oxford-union.org/home> for information. **Angela Liddiard**



Career opportunities online

It was reported last month that the recession shows signs of recovery. Certainly the job market seems to be picking up and we have many employers and agencies approaching us. At the moment we have a great selection of vacancies on our website. These include openings for more experienced staff. If you are a past student looking to progress, keep looking at the website for the latest opportunities.

Website of the month

<http://www.jobsite.co.uk/bemyinterviewer/> Whilst the job market might be becoming more buoyant it will still be necessary for you to plan and prepare for an interview. Imagine walking into the interview room and discovering Duncan Bannatyne waiting to see you – I feel certain that he would expose any poor preparation on your part! This website emulates you being interviewed by a selection of top business people and entrepreneurs including the aforementioned Mr Bannatyne and Ruth Badger, runner-up in the BBC reality show The Apprentice.

This month's IT Tip

If you would like to create a visual representation of your data in Excel it is not necessary to create a chart. In the column next to your data type the following formula: =REPT("X",B1). Then replicate the formula downwards.

	A	B	C	D
1	Mary	6	XXXXXX	
2	Peter	8	XXXXXXXX	
3	Phillip	2	XX	
4	Susan	12	XXXXXXXXXXXX	

=REPT returns a text value a certain number of times. This formula asks Excel to return an X for as many instances typed in cell B1, which is then replicated

down. You can change the X to any letter, number, symbol or string that you would like; just remember to put it in inverted commas within the formula (as above).

Password grabbers

I am building up quite a collection of phishing emails from a well known and well respected High Street bank. Apparently they have set up an online message centre, where I can have personalised contact with my Account Manager 24/7. In order to access this Account Manager I need to follow the link to a website and input my account number and password. I'm no Sherlock Holmes, but I was instantly suspicious ... mainly because I don't have an account with this particular bank!

Fraud attempts like this are well reported and most people will know never to give personal, confidential information away on the Internet. Unfortunately this doesn't mean that we have beaten the fraudsters – it just means that they have to be more inventive in their methods of extracting this information from us.

If we are now too 'net-savvy' to fall for these scams and input our password directly, the next best thing for the fraudsters is to put a small piece of code onto our computers which watches what keystrokes we make. Frequently used patterns of keystrokes are likely to be passwords and, armed with this information fraudsters can do damage to your bank account and to your personal reputation.

How do they get this code onto your computer? By infecting certain websites. According to the Internet security firm McAfee, one of the more common type of website for this sort of scam is celebrity websites. Apparently you have a one-in-six chance of being infected with key-logging software if you search for Jordan/Katie Price. Jude Law and Victoria Beckham are also 'risky'. The reason for this is not personal to them; it is simply that they are in the news and therefore public interest is created. Fraudsters want to infect as many computers as possible, so it makes sense to infect popular websites. As soon as you visit the website the code is dropped onto your computer and it immediately begins to analyse everything that you do. There is no way of knowing whether the website that you are visiting has been infected.

Obviously you should have good up-to-date protection on your computer including a firewall and anti-virus, adware and spyware software.

Last year I wrote in the newsletter about the On-Screen keyboard. This is an accessibility feature which enables you to input data via the mouse rather than the keyboard. It probably would not totally defeat the most sophisticated of key-logging software, but anything that makes life more difficult for them is worth considering.

To access the On-Screen keyboard go to your computer's Start button, then Programs/Accessories/Accessibility/On-Screen Keyboard.

