

How to be a critical e-Citizen

The next three pages have the assumed syllabus for the eCitizen project from the British Computer Society. The text has been copied from a PDF from Parity Training. The actual e-Citizen site has a lot of promotional spin but not yet much detail on content in my opinion (accessed Feb 9th 2005)

<http://www.ecitizen.co.uk/>

<http://www.parity.net/ecitizen/>

The idea seems to be to offer something both easier to understand than the European Computer Driving Licence and more up-to-date, with an emphasis on the browser and the web.

I have suggested the idea of a 'critical' e-citizen as this connects with educational theory and also allows the syllabus to be reviewed. I think there are many things missing from it and it will have limited appeal as it stands.

For many years Internet cafés have offered support and training. Much of the knowledge created can be related to this syllabus. I think the most obvious thing missing is the browser extensions such as Flash, Adobe Reader, Quicktime etc. The sound and vision content is a major reason for people to invest in bandwidth. One of the issues the e-Citizen project intends to address is the absence of web access in some parts of the UK. It seems unlikely people will pay for this just to fill in government forms.

My own interest is mostly around PDF. I imagine UK government will offer PDF forms with Reader Extensions within the lifetime of many people studying this syllabus. Flash and Quicktime can be used to communicate official information.

In principle a critical approach could result in endless variations of the syllabus. I will concentrate on a PDF emphasis. There could be a Life Bytes version including games and media. Psand may suggest links to open source. Microsoft will not be ignored, but also I think the confusion around the European Computer Driving Licence should be avoided. The syllabus is not linked to specific software. This document exists as a PDF so please add comments. You must download the latest Adobe Reader. Bruce Chizen claims it loads in 8 seconds, not including the download time obviously.

www.life-bytes.co.uk

www.psand.net

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www.inxpress.co.uk previous Exeter café now online only

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1. BASIC IT

Using the Computer

- Components of a PC
- Switching on and off
- Using the mouse and keyboard
- Components of the desktop
- Using Windows
- Files and Folders
- File names and types
- Viewing directories
- Using applications
- Opening applications
- Creating files
- Opening existing files
- Saving files in various formats
- Text entry and editing
- Getting Online
- What is the Internet?
- Connecting to the Internet
- Moving between web pages
- Web addresses
- Hyperlinks
- Searching and finding web pages
- Using Favourites and History
- Saving/printing web pages



2. EMAIL

Concepts of Email

- What is email?
- What are the component parts of an email address?
- What is an ISP?
- Creating an email account
- Personal safety online
- What are junk mail and spam?
- Computer viruses
- Sending email
- Create an email
- Sending an email
- Attaching files to an email
- Finding an email contact
- Receiving email
- Opening an email
- Replying to an email
- Forwarding an email
- Handling mail
- Creating folders for storing messages
- Dealing with junk mail



3. EXTRACTING INFORMATION

Range of Content Available

- Government: local (*e.g. elections, by-laws, services*)
- Government: central (*e.g. elections, justice, taxation*)
- Emergency information
- Health care
- Leisure (*e.g. cinemas, events, sports*)
- Transport (*e.g. train/bus information and timetables*)
- Holidays and Travel (*e.g. air travel, holiday information*)
- Academic (*e.g. libraries, learning*)
- Searching for content
- Finding a relevant search engine or site
- Searching within a geographic area
- Searching within high level domains
- Interacting with a search system
- Qualifying a search
- Reliability of sources
- Date of website production
- Access content structure
- Web navigation
- Site indexes



4. INTERACTION WITH THE INTERNET

Range of Services Available –

- Government: Local (*e.g. paying council taxes, applying for grants*)
- Government: central (*e.g. submitting tax returns*)
- Leisure (*e.g. booking holidays*)
- E-Commerce (*e.g. online shopping for goods and services*)
- Consumer advice and information
- Completion of online forms
- Accessing the online form
- Understanding the functionality of the form
- How to use and interact with the form
- The process of form completion
- Data checking on forms
- Safety of personal information and credit card information (*including personal details outside non-encrypted sites, e.g. bulletin boards*)
- Use of online forms
- Forms for statutory obligations (*e.g. tax returns*)
- Forms for government information
- Forms for online banking (*including paying bills*)
- Forms for online retailing
- Forms for information and online booking (*e.g. timetables*)
- Online Banking
- Concepts of online banking
- Rights and access to online banking
- Viewing balances and transactions
- Online transactions
- Purchasing online
- Rights and protection as a user or consumer
- Comparing pricing online

