Exercise 1 – Just for Fun

Objective

To become familiar with a typical Linux desktop

To experiment with customising a desktop

1. Review questions
2. What is the fundamental purpose of the operating system?

To allow for users to easily navigate, use, and install software on computers and customise the “system” to their own personal tastes (wallpapers, lock screen, screensavers etc.)

1. What is a common element of all Linux distributions?

Linux is a free OS to use with a number of variations (“Flavours”) suited for a user’s need. Some companies may sell support for these releases.

1. What is unique about Linux licensing, as opposite to other versions of UNIX?

Linux is Open Source, meaning that if the source code is requested then it has to be submitted by the developer.

1. Imagine a scenario whereby the graphics card failed on your computer, which is running Linux. What consequence would this have to the effectiveness of the operating system?

The computer would no longer be able to output anything graphical, this could cause the computer to “fall back” to a terminal/command prompt in the best case scenario, at worse the computer would be “dead” however due to the portability of the Linux OS it could be used on another working system without issue.

1. Login into the Linux workstation provided for you

For this first logon will use a default GUI (Graphical User Interface) login screen.   
Your instructor will tell you what user name and password should be used. Please ask your instructor if unsure!

* 1. Type in the user name and password as provided by your instructor.

1. Explore the desktop environment and available applications

Main Linux system facilities are accessible via the dropdown menus on the top toolbar: Applications, Places (sometimes also: System).

Please remember that Linux supports variety of desktop managers, and their derivatives. For that reason, just about every single distribution has its own look and feel…

1. Spend a couple of minutes exploring various tools and utilities. Have a look at the system configuration tools.
2. Identify and run the **Settings** > **Details** menu item.
3. Switch between the workspaces to confirm all applications are still present and available…
4. Open an application for terminal session

There are (usually) two methods of opening a terminal session in a Linux GUI environment. One is to find it amongst the menus (somewhere under Applications). The other method is to right-click on your desktop and select “Open in Terminal”.

1. Open a new terminal window by selecting the Files icon on the left-hand pane Go into the Documents folder, right-click and choose “Open in Terminal”.
   * 1. Now, start a new terminal session, by right-clicking on your desktop.
     2. Compare the two sessions. Can you see the difference? At this point, don’t worry about the meaning of the difference, just notice it.

If time allows

1. Familiarisation with the GNU GPL
2. It is rather important that everybody using Linux has at least a passing familiarity with the text and the meaning of the General Public License.

One good source of information about it is:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GNU_General_Public_License>

Please spend a few minutes browsing through it, not necessarily just now, though...