

Here are the first few critical things you need to do to gain access to College and Departmental computing facilities. Please note that the Department of Computing is known as **DoC** for short.

### 1 Activate Your College Account

First, you must activate your College account – finding out your College username, and choosing yourself your initial College password — unless of course you've already done this. Activating your College account allows you to read your College email, and to access other College (and Departmental) resources:

You can either use your own device, either at home or on campus, to do this:

1. Go to <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/activateaccount>
2. Read and accept the College Conditions of Use of IT facilities. Then enter information to identify yourself (you will need your College Identifier, your CID, to do this). It will tell you your College username, and let you choose your initial College password.
3. After this, you should be able to read your College email via the Office365 web interface:  
<https://email.imperial.ac.uk/>

Or you can do this using any DoC linux lab machine on level 2, as follows:

1. Our separate **About the Teaching Labs** document describes the level 2 teaching labs, and how to switch a lab machine from Windows to Linux if necessary. Once you are sitting at the Linux login banner, which looks rather like this:



Make sure the mouse pointer is over the ‘Username’ box, then type in the user name ‘activate’. Hit return and the screen will show the ‘Password’ box. Now type in the password ‘Activate!’, exactly as shown (but without the quotes if we’re being pedantic), i.e. with the capital A, and trailing exclamation mark, and hit return once more.

2. A web browser will start, and will automatically display the Account Activation page:  
([www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/activateaccount](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/ict/activateaccount))
3. Please read the College Conditions of Use of IT facilities carefully and then click ‘Accept’. On the next screen, enter information to identify yourself and then choose your own College password. If you have problems enabling your College account or logging in, after trying a couple of times, please come to the CSG helpdesk (room 305, Huxley Building).
4. Having activated your account, logout by clicking on the close button at the top right corner of the web browser.

## 2 Check that your DoC account works

Next, please check that your DoC account has been setup. You can check your DoC account in two different ways: First, you can check this using your own device, either at home or on campus:

1. Make sure that you have an ssh client installed on your device (which might be a laptop, tablet, smartphone or home desktop PC). Practically all modern operating systems - Windows 10, Linux and MacOS - come with an ssh client built in, but you may have to choose to install it.
2. Once it's installed, use that ssh client to login to one of our 5 publically accessible **shell** or **gateway servers** that allow you to access DoC linux systems from offsite without using the College VPN:

```
ssh YOURUSERNAME@shell3.doc.ic.ac.uk
```

(of course you replace **YOURUSERNAME** with the College username you discovered while activating your College account. Also, there are 5 shell servers, so replace 3 by any number from 1..5 to spread the load. If your username was **xyz21**, and you decide to access **shell4**, you'd type: `ssh xyz21@shell4.doc.ic.ac.uk`

3. You'll probably be asked, as it's an unfamiliar host, to confirm that you're happy to connect to it: say yes. When prompted for your password, enter your College password.
4. If the shell server lets you in, then your DoC account has been setup and everything is ready for you (now type "exit" to, well, exit the shell you just created). If it does not let you in, please contact your Lab Organiser who can diagnose the problem for you.

Alternatively, if you're in the teaching lab, especially if you've just sat down at a Linux lab PC and activated your College account, you can simply:

1. Login on that lab PC with your College username and newly chosen College password.
2. If the login box says "Incorrect username or password", try again. Once logged in as yourself, the standard Gnome desktop will appear.
3. On the left-hand side of the screen, you will see some icons (Firefox, Thunderbird, Terminal, Welcome and the Trashcan). Clicking on the Welcome icon launches a web browser with the rest of the information you need.

## 3 Read Computing Support Group (CSG) documentation

Computing Support in DoC is provided by the **Computing Support Group (CSG)**. The CSG website has lots of information about the computing facilities the Department provides to students:

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/computing/csg/>

Particularly important information can be found via the New Users pages. For example, there are pages about: **ssh**, the **lab machines** that you can ssh to (via a shell server), the **DoC private cloud**, and **Gitlab**, our Git repository hosting service.

## 4 Ask your Lab Organiser what's next

Assuming you're on an organised undergraduate or MSc course, please ask your Lab Organiser what you should do next. They'll be organising a programme of introductory exercises and tutorials for you to do.

## 5 Ask for help when things go wrong

When some DoC computing service doesn't seem to be working correctly, either ask your Lab Organiser or CSG. CSG's email address is: [doc-help@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:doc-help@imperial.ac.uk). Please tell us the name of the lab machine you're using whenever you report a problem involving a lab machine - and ideally try a second lab machine before reporting the problem to us.