Database Practical 2 1999-2000

Objectives To print a form and a table. To customize a form.

(a) As you login, connect one of the Central Printers.

(b) *If you successfully saved a database last week,* use **Explore My Computer** to copy that database to **d:\docs** Go into **Access 2000**, open your database, and open the table. If you have time at the end, you should try out the importing technique given in **(c).**

(c) *If you did not successfully save a database last week,* use **Explore My Computer** to copy the file **e:\examples\jgb\europe.txt** to **d:\docs** Then go into **Access 2000** and choose **New Database** (**File** menu), making sure your new database is created in **d:\docs** Choose **Get External Data** from the **File** menu, then **Import**. Change the **Files of type** box to **Text Files.** Select the **Europe.txt** file and click on **Import**.

The Import Text Wizard has the following (bulleted) stages, each with its own dialogue box with navigation buttons (Next, Back etc):

- In the first dialogue box, make sure that the format is **Delimited**. What does this mean? The open squares indicate characters that will not display.
- In the next dialogue box, long thin vertical lines show what Access takes to be a field with the selected delimiter. Experiment with selecting the space, tab and semicolon delimiters (Access takes the whole first line of the file to be 1 field with the semicolon delimiter). Make sure that **Tab** is the selected delimiter, **{none}** is the **Text Qualifier** and that the **First Row Contains Field Names** box is selected before moving on.
- Choose to store your data **In a New Table.**
- Notice that Access has made its best guess at a data types for the fields. Select each field by clicking on its column and change its data type if necessary (you will need to scroll).
- By default, Access tries to add an AutoNumber field as a primary key. Change this to another field if you wish. Finish the import, giving the table a suitable name, and open your new table in the database window. Check that your table makes sense!

(d) *In either case,* use **Print Preview** (in the **File** menu, or the toolbar button) to look at your table as it will appear when printed. Try out the **Zoom** (click left mouse button). Go into **Print** (in the **File** menu, or by the toolbar button). You should find the printer you connected on login as one of the choices offered under **Name. Select** it, then **OK** to close the dialog box, and **Print.** From now on, you should add to your practical file a record of the work you do.

(e) You might like to recap *Working with Forms* => ***Forms: What they are and how they work.***

(f) Use a **FormWizard** to set up a single column **(Columnar)** form from your database. Customize the layout, using the help pages indicated, so that

- the font is not the default sans serif. Read:-
  *Working with Forms => Form Basics => Creating and Modifying Forms => **Ways to customize a form***
- the country is at the top of the form in large type in an unlabelled text box;
- the date the form is printed is given at the bottom (with an appropriate label). Read:-
  *Working with Reports => Designing Reports => Adding Page Breaks and Numbering Pages => **Add the current date and time...***
- the area of the country is also (calculated &) given in the other units; *(note that 1 square mile is about 2.59 square kilometres*). Read:-
  *Working with Forms => Calculating Totals => **Create a calculated control …***
  Note that field names should be enclosed in square brackets e.g. [Area]
- the population density is given on the form.

Also make any other changes that you think would improve the appearance of your form. Remember to save your customized form!

(g) If you have not already done so, investigate the **Property Sheet** of your control that calculates the area in the other units. Read about property sheets in *Working with Form, Report, and Page Design Tools => Working in Design View => **What is a property sheet?*** You can find out how to get and use the property sheet in *Programming Information => Advanced Programming Concepts => Setting Properties and Options => **Set Form, Report, and Control Properties*** Note the use of right-clicking a control to display a pop-up menu, which includes **Properties;** this technique is useful in other Access contexts.
Use the property sheet to make this control show a sensibly small number of decimal places (or none!). Note that you need to set the **Format** to **Fixed** before the value you give for **Decimal Places** takes effect. Do the same to other controls, where appropriate. Save any changes you have made.

(h) Ideally, the visual structure of a form ought to reflect the logical structure of the data. For example, logically related pieces of information should be grouped together, with the grouping made visually explicit, perhaps by lines, rectangles or extra spacing. Modify your form so that it does this.

(i) **Print** a copy of your form for your Practical File.

(j) ***Get your practical signed off.*** The demonstrator will check that you have made the required changes to your form, and may look at other things as well.