

# Exercise 1a – How the Web Works

## Objective

In this practical session, you will:

1. Construct a simple Web page using an ASCII text editor.
2. Load that page from the file system into a web browser.

## Overview

### **Construct a simple Web page using an ASCII editor**

At this stage, we will keep things as simple as possible, so as to get you started with the business of writing HTML. You will create one page, store it in a file, and then read it from the file system (using File/Open, rather than a URL). No web servers will be involved.

To begin with, run an ASCII editor of your choice. You can use Notepad if you wish.

Create an HTML file (index.html) with the message "Hello World". At this stage in the course, you don't need to know much about HTML, so just type this:

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
<title>First Page</title>
</head>
<body>
Hello world!
</body>
</html>
```

The text between angle brackets (< and >) forms the HTML mark-up code. These should be entered exactly as shown here.

Save this file to disk in the starter directory.

## **Load that page from the file system into a web browser**

Run your preferred browser and load this page.

- You can type in the full path and file name in the Address field near the top of the window, and the browser is intelligent enough to know that you are entering a file reference
- Alternatively, you can use the Open command (the keyboard shortcut is Ctrl+O)
- Or you can drag the file from within Windows Explorer and drop it in the browser
- Or you can double click the file itself in Windows Explorer

## **How do browsers cope with incorrect HTML?**

The information between the angle brackets is important, as it tells the browser how to display the information held in the page. However, browsers are designed to limit, as far as possible, the effects of incorrect HTML. Most browsers do their best to display something meaningful, no matter what errors there may be.

To test this out, make the following “deliberate mistakes” in your HTML page. As you enter each “mistake”, save the file and then reload or refresh the page in the browser and see how it handles the incorrect HTML.

- Omit the final `</html>` tag
- Omit the `</title>` tag
- Omit the angle bracket before `</body>`

What happens if you take out all the tags and leave only the text?