In today’s exercises, we will explore the ways in which the form and content of documents address the needs of those who use them, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of different document media.

**Pre-tutorial reading:**


Read this article carefully, taking notes, and bring your copy along to the lab session.

Here are Nielsen’s points:

1. Include a One-Sentence Tagline
2. Write a Window Title with Good Visibility in Search Engines and Bookmark Lists
3. Group all Corporate Information in One Distinct Area
4. Emphasize the Site's Top High-Priority Tasks
5. Include a Search Input Box
6. Show Examples of Real Site Content
7. Begin Link Names with the Most Important Keyword
8. Offer Easy Access to Recent Homepage Features
9. Don't Over-Format Critical Content, Such as Navigation Areas
10. Use Meaningful Graphics

**Lab component:**

Working in pairs,

1. Open Microsoft Access. What part of the program do you need to call up, in order to determine the version of Microsoft Access currently in use?

2. Using the program’s various Help features, what can you find out about the improvements contained in this version of Microsoft Access?
   a. What search terms do you use? Which of these prove most useful?
   b. How successful are the program’s Help features in providing the information you require?

a. What search terms do you use? Are these different to the terms used with Microsoft Access’s Help features?
b. Compare the information provided in one of the documents you have found on Google, with that in Microsoft Access’s Help features. Which is more useful for your purposes? Why? How does the kind of language used affect the information’s usability?

4. Look again at Jakob Nielsen’s article ‘Top Ten Guidelines for Homepage Usability’, then open a web site of your choice.
   a. How does the site’s home page measure up to Nielsen’s criteria?
   c. What aspects of home page design do you think Nielsen has got wrong? Why?

5. Review the main points raised in last week’s lecture on information architecture concerning navigation, labels and icons. Now explore each of the following web sites. Which are examples of good information architecture? Why? What improvements still need to be made?
   b. 100hot (http://www.100hot.com/)
   c. Web Pages That Suck (http://www.webpagethatsuck.com/)

**Tutorial component:**

Working in pairs,

a. Examine the documents provided by your tutor.
   a. Identify the primary audiences of these documents, as well as the main points that the authors seek to convey to them.
   b. In what ways are the documents tailored to the needs of their users?
   c. Can you think of particular kinds of users that these documents have overlooked?

b. Imagine that these documents were provided in an online format.
   a. What advantages could such a format hold for users?
   b. What disadvantages could such a format hold for users?
   c. How would the documents need to be modified for online use?
   d. What other formats are needed to ensure that the information contained in these documents reaches all relevant users?

c. Report your findings to the rest of the tutorial.

Your tutor will assign topic areas for the second assignment, so you can spend part of the tutorial planning how you will tackle this group project.