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News Release

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Starter's guide to supercomputing gets you up to speed in weeks

The workings of the world's most powerful computers are being made clearer for non-experts in a free online course.

No programming experience or specialist knowledge is needed to take part in the five-week programme, run by experts at the University of Edinburgh.

Course leaders from the University's high-performance computing centre, EPCC, will aim to give students an understanding of the world's most powerful calculating machines.

Participants can expect to gain an overview of the devices, which typically fill a large room. Supercomputers use many processors in parallel to perform millions of billions of calculations a second.

The machines are used to study complex mathematical problems or engineering challenges, such as forecasting climate change, designing spacecraft or modelling disease spread.

Students taking the course will have an introduction to what supercomputers are, how they are used and how their power can be applied to scientific challenges.

The course, entitled Supercomputing, uses simple analogies and everyday examples. Videos, quizzes and discussions will be used to explain fundamental concepts. Anyone interested in leading-edge computing technology, supercomputers or the role of computer simulation in science and engineering can apply.

The programme, hosted by the FutureLearn platform, is the latest in a series of open online courses from the University, which to date have been taken by more than two million people.

David Henty, course coordinator, EPCC, said: "Every day, challenges such as forecasting the weather are met using supercomputing. We hope that lots of people, who are curious about how and why this is done, will enjoy learning about this technology and its applications."

For more information or to register, see: <http://edin.ac/supercomputingcourse>

For further information, please contact:

Catriona Kelly, Press & PR Office, 0131 651 4401; 07791 355940; Catriona.Kelly@ed.ac.uk

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