Creating a data entry form

In this activity you will learn:

- key features of form design
- creating a data entry form
- using font styles and sizes, spacing between fields and character spacing in fields
- use of radio buttons and drop-down menus.

Data can be entered straight into a table but it is better to create a data entry form for the entry of data. The purpose of a data entry form is to make it easy and quick to enter data into the database. For example, a button called a radio button can be used for those fields having only yes/no possibilities. If the button is filled in it means yes and if it is empty it means no. Also you can set up drop-down menus so that a user can select from a list of items when they are entering data where there is a restricted number of possibilities.

Forms are used to view data or enter data into a table or tables. In this activity you will be creating a data entry form for the entry of data into the Employees table.

1. Load Microsoft Access and the Personnel_database if not already loaded.

2. Single click on the Employees table. This lets Access know that you want to base the form you are creating on the fields contained in this table.

3. Click on Create and then Blank Form and in the field list on the right of the screen click on the + to expand the list of fields in the Employees table.

The fields in the Employees table appear as shown below.

4. In the above list of fields, double-click on the fields Employee No, Forename, Surname and Sex in turn and they will be added to the form like this.
You are looking at the form in Layout view which shows how the form will look on the screen with data added.

Change the view of the form to Design View by clicking on and then on the drop-down arrow for View where you should select Design View.

Click at the bottom of the form where the cursor changes into a double headed arrow and keeping the mouse button pressed down, drag down to increase the length of the form. Increase the length to about 9 using the vertical ruler.

5 Click on the right box (called the control) for the Sex field. When selected the field looks like this

Press Del to delete the control.

6 You are now going to replace this with a combo box [also called a drop-down menu] which will allow the user to either choose M or F. This restricts what the user can type in, so it is a good method of data validation.

Click on and then on which is the button for the combo box.

When on the form, the cursor changes to a + with an icon for the combo box attached. Click under the control box for Surname drag to produce two boxes. One of these boxes is for the control and the other is for the label.

When you release the mouse button a window appears from which you should select the following:

and then click Next.

7 In the next window you can enter the values you want the user to select from.

Type in M and F as shown here then click Next.

In the next window we need to tell the system the field to put the entered values into.

Check these selections are made and click Next.

In the window that appears you are asked for text that will appear as the label.

Enter Sex: like this and click on Finish.
Move the control and its label so it is aligned like this.

8 Add the fields DOB and No of IGCSEs from the field list onto the form by double-clicking on them. You may need to move the labels and controls into the positions on the form as shown below. Note that combo boxes are not being used for these fields.

9 Now add the IGCSE Maths field and then delete it using Del and add a combo box like in steps 6 and 7 except this time add the text Yes and No like this and choose the IGCSE field as the field to store the data in.

Your form should now look similar to this.

Select the IGCSE Maths control by clicking on it, click on and then click on . In the Property Sheet section select Format and then use the drop-down arrow to select Yes/No.

Now in a similar way add the IGCSE English field and change it to a combo box. Again the alternatives for the combo box are YES and No and the data needs to be stored in the IGCSE English field. Again you will need to change the Format to Yes/No in the Property sheet.
10 Now add the Position and Salary fields. These are just ordinary controls with their labels. Your form will now look similar to this.

11 Now create a combo box for the Full or part time field below Salary. The alternatives for the combo box should be F or P and this data should be stored in the Full or part time field.

12 You are now going to use a radio button to indicate whether a person has a driving licence or not. Add the control and label for Driving licence held in the position shown here.

Now delete the control and label and click on the form and then on the radio button which is called an option button by Access.

Now click on the form to add the button and its label positioned below the boxes for Driving licence.

Add the text Driving licence held to the the box containing the label.

Click on the button to select it. You will notice the Property sheet appears on the right of the screen.
Select the Data tab and then use the drop-down arrow to select Driving licence held as shown here:

13 Click on Design and then so that you can add the final field to the form.

In the list of fields double-click on Dept to add it to the form.
Select the control and label and delete it using the Del key.
Click on Design and which is the icon for a list box.

From the window that appears select
This will allow you to create a list of all the departments and allow the user to choose one of them. This makes things easier for the user as they do not have to remember all the departments and type one of them in. It will also restrict what can be entered and this will reduce errors.
Click on Next.

Click on Departments and then on Next.
Add Dept to the selected fields.

Click on Next.
At the next window there are no alterations so click on Next.
The list is now shown like this.

Click on Next.
A new window appears. Make the following changes.
Click on Next.
At the next window add the following text for the label
Click on Next.
Your final form design should now look like this:

View the form in Form view. It should appear like this.

You need to check that all parts of the form behave as expected by looking at each record in turn.

Save your form by clicking using the file name data entry form.