

# Operating Systems (OS)

Response to student feedback in 2022/23 course survey

Thank you for the feedback! I have taken note of your feedback in this course survey, and have the following main comments in response:

- I apologize for the frustration caused by the fact we adopted InfOS in this course. InfOS is a “toy” or “educational” operating system, it has been developed here at Edinburgh with the goal of let a student learn OSES without studying a very large code base, such as the Linux kernel source-code. On the other hand, unfortunately, it is not very well documented. Indeed, another issue is that InfOS is written in C++, which is not largely known to many these days.
- To tackle the lack of documentation and the lack of C++ knowledge, the OS course is going to transition from InfOS to Linux. Now, Linux is written in C, and does largely use pointers. Therefore, the idea is to keep C tutorials and substitute the C++ tutorials with some practical tutorials on the Linux kernel internals (maybe some do and don’t). While Linux is very well documented, adopting Linux scares me because it is a VERY LARGE code base, and students may be likely able to easily find solutions online. Let’s see how it goes ...
- Tutorial were introduced in 22-23 because demanded by students in the 21-22 edition of the course. So, we were running in “experimental mode”, sorry!
- While I was always happy to accept students from any sort of background, I may consider to more carefully check prerequisites in the next iteration of the course. This with the goal of avoiding dissatisfaction created by a skew of background needed for the course.
- Not really sure what to say about TAs. I do believe the majority of them did their best. Anyway, dropping C++ and InfOS may make their work easier in the next edition of the course. Also, I will look into student-TA hours.
- The material seems a little too compressed: transitioning from 2hrs to 3hrs per week is something that requires a school process and cannot be actioned immediately (at least to the best of my understanding). I will try to move the coursework presentations to labs or tutorials hours, and use such hours to better cover the existent material.

**Antonio Barbalace, 9/7/2023**