

Research Skills: 300 words to reduce

The University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory is one of the premiere institutions for computer science research. It was founded as the Mathematical Laboratory, under the leadership of John Lennard-Jones, on 14 May 1937. After the Second World War, Maurice Wilkes became the director of the Computer Laboratory. In October 1946, work began on EDSAC (the Electronic Delay Storage Automatic Calculator), which subsequently became the world's first fully operational and practical stored program computer when it ran its first program on 6 May 1949. It inspired the world's first business computer, LEO. It was replaced by EDSAC 2, the first microcoded and bitsliced computer, in 1958.

In those early days the study of computing as an academic subject and the provision of computing facilities to the University as a whole were intimately bound together. The research undertaken involved either the production of workable computer systems (both hardware and software) or the development of new computer application techniques. Original pioneering work in building complete computers gave way to the early development of programming languages and operating systems. The latter included the first British time-sharing operating system on the Titan computer. Some of the Cambridge developments of that period belong in the basic stock of computing knowledge, for example the ideas of subroutines and of microprogramming.

In 1970, the Mathematical Laboratory was renamed the Computer Laboratory, and was split into two sub-departments: one to handle teaching and research and one to provide computing services to the university and its colleges. The two finally split completely in 2001, when the Computer Laboratory moved out to the new William Gates building in West Cambridge, leaving behind an independent Computing Service.

In 2013, the Computer Laboratory celebrated 75 years. The Laboratory is regularly ranked amongst the top ten computer science departments worldwide (QS World University Rankings).