Input devices - These enable you to tell your computer what to do.

1 The keyboard - The keyboard has a lot of useful keys, other than the letters used for typing. Save your index finger from clicking the mouse by navigating with the Tab, Arrow and Enter keys.

2 The mouse - **Laptops have the touch pad which can be very sensitive** - As you move the mouse the pointer on the screen moves in the same direction. Left click carries out an action and right click reveals options depending on where the pointer is. Remember, "More haste, less speed" try using the keyboard, it is better in the long run.

3 Router - This connects the computer to the internet. Your telephone line or cable connection will give you constant high speed access with a broadband circuit to your Internet Service Provider (ISP). The internet is a network of computers with millions of websites that allow you to email your friends, research, shop and be entertained.

Output devices

4 Monitor - The computer screen (can also be a normal tv). Reading from a screen can hurt your eyes so remember to take regular breaks.

5 Speakers - Enjoy music, video, internet radio and 'listen again' (to progams you've missed).

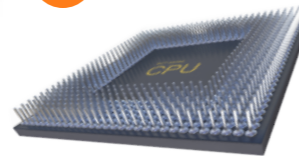**6 Printer** - All in one printers allow you to print high quality photographs as well as scan and copy documents.

Computer software

- **The Operating System** (e.g. Windows 7, Vista or XP) - This software enables the computer's hardware to "talk" to its programs and to you – the person at the keyboard. The computer talks a digital language of electrical "on" and "off" pulses. The operating system translates your input (key presses and mouse clicks) into binary "1"s (on) and "0"s (off) which the processor understands. The results are translated to an output device (the monitor, speakers or printer).

- **Software applications:**

  Internet Browser (e.g. Internet Explorer, Firefox or Chrome) - This enables you to read and interact with web pages on the internet. **Word processing** (e.g. Microsoft Word or Works Word Processing), **Spreadsheets** (e.g. Microsoft Excel) & **Music management** (e.g. iTunes or Windows Media Player)

Remember: Computers do what you tell them to do, not what you want them to do! They are not easy to understand but a little knowledge goes a long way.

Inside the System Unit

7 Hard disk drive - This is the busiest part of your computer. It contains all the software and files and provides permanent storage.

8 Processor or CPU - **Central Processing Unit -** This is where all the calculations take place – typically a mind boggling 3 million per second! It gets hot.

9 RAM - **"Random Access Memory"** - this is essential as it gives fast access to data and stores software temporarily only while your computer is on.