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The BCA/CCG Intensive Teaching School in X-Ray Structure Analysis. Robert O. Gould, Structural Biochemistry Unit, ICMB, Univ. of Edinburgh. Michael Swann Bldg., Mayfield Rd., Edinburgh EH9 3JR Scotland.

The Chemical Crystallography Group of the British Crystallographic Association has been running biennial courses in structure analysis since 1987. The course lasts a week, and is aimed at students who have solved a crystal structure, and is thus an “advanced” course. During the time the course has been given, the nature of the material covered has changed as the subject developed – for example, between 1997 and 1999, data collection by area detectors rapidly overtook that by serial diffractometers. On the other hand, the technique of running and organising the course changed considerably in the early days, but has remained fairly constant since. Key features in the technique developed were to have not more than 4-5 lecturers, who are available for the length of the course, and sufficient tutors to have students working in small groups on all aspects. Except for database searching, there has been no on-line computer use, and exercises have been chosen that can be done by hand in the groups. Emphasis has been on helping students to get a feel for the different aspects of the subject, to enable them to get maximum advantage from reading more deeply. Examples from the courses will be discussed.