

CUSTOMER SUPPORT NOTE

Using Python with LUSAS Modeller

Note Number: CSN/LUSAS/1037

This support note is issued as a guideline only.

The LUSAS logo consists of the word "LUSAS" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letters are set against a blue rectangular background that has a vertical gradient, transitioning from a lighter blue at the top to a darker blue at the bottom.

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Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	INSTALLATION	1
3.	FURTHER READING - COM AND PYWIN32	3

1. Introduction

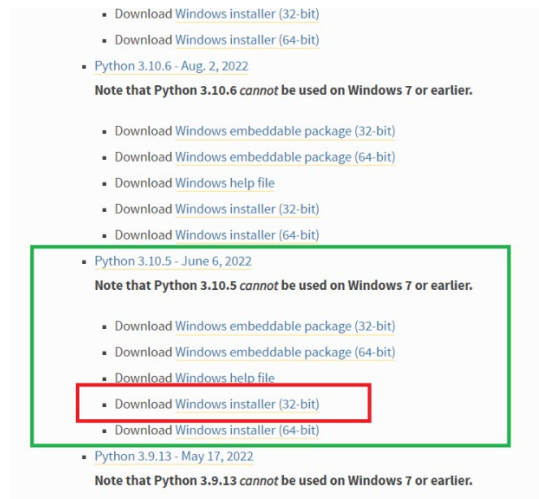
This document explains how to install Python and test that it works with LUSAS Modeller. It also briefly summarizes some Component Object Model (COM) aspects.

2. Installation

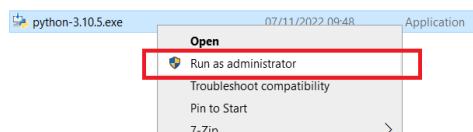
These instructions have been written using Python 3.10.5, and that version has been tested for use with LUSAS. However, Python has frequent releases, and there will be several more recent releases available to you.

To install Python, it is necessary to:

1. Go to www.python.org/downloads/windows.
2. Scroll down to find the section for your chosen version (3.10.5 is recommended and shown highlighted in green below). Within that section, click on the link “Download Windows Installer (32bit)” (highlighted red).



3. Find the file you downloaded in your downloads folder. Right click on it and “run as administrator”

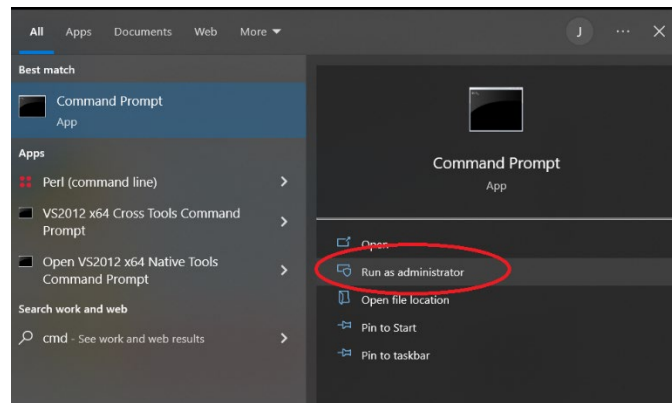


4. Ensure both checkboxes are switched ON as shown below:



5. Press “Install Now”

6. Press the Windows logo key to open the Start menu, type CMD, and then click “run as administrator”

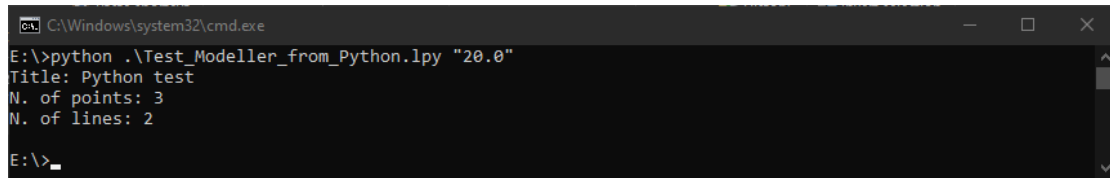


7. Within the Windows Command Prompt window, type `python`. You should see a message like the one shown below.

```

C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe
E:\>
E:\>python
Python 3.10.5 (tags/v3.10.5:f377153, Jun 6 2022, 15:58:59) [MSC v.1929 32 bit (Intel)] on win32
Type "help", "copyright", "credits" or "license" for more information.
>>> exit()
E:\>_
  
```

8. Type `exit()` to exit the Python interpreter and return to the Windows Command Prompt.
9. Type `pip install pywin32`.
10. You may see a message telling you that a more recent version is available, this is not important.
11. You can try the following two Python test scripts:
 - a. `Test_Modeller_from_Python.lpy`
 - b. `Test_Python_from_Modeller.lpy`
12. Make or locate a temporary folder, for example `C:\temp`.
13. Copy the two scripts to that folder.
14. Change the working folder of the Windows Command Prompt window to that folder, e.g. type `C:` and then `cd temp`.
15. Identify any properly installed version of LUSAS. Any version will do, but you should use the most recent you have. For example, if you have V21.0 installed, type this command:
`python .\Test_Modeller_from_Python.lpy "21.0"`
 Whereas if you only have V20.0 installed, type this command:
`python .\Test_Modeller_from_Python.lpy "20.0"`
 Or similar if you have some other version installed (you only need to do this once, even if you have many versions of LUSAS installed).
16. The script takes around 30 seconds to run. If it ran successfully, it will have created `Python_test.mdl` in your temporary folder and it should show a message like the one shown below.

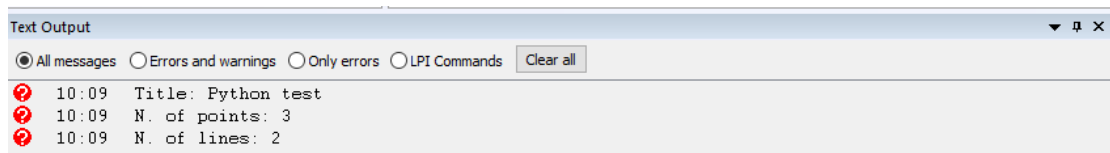


```

C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe
E:\>python .\Test_Modeller_from_Python.lpy "20.0"
Title: Python test
N. of points: 3
N. of lines: 2
E:\>

```

17. Within the cmd prompt window, change directory to this folder: C:\Users**<your username>**\AppData\Local\Programs\Python\Python310-32\Lib\site-packages\win32comext\axscript\client¹
18. Run the command `python pyscript.py`. You should see the message “Registered: Python”.
19. Start an instance of your chosen version of LUSAS Modeller normally.
20. In Modeller, open the file `Python_test.mdl` from your temporary folder.
21. In Modeller, run the script `Test_Python_from_Modeller.lpy`². If the script ran successfully, the text output should look like the one shown below. Note: you may need to type in the script name to run it.



```

Text Output
All messages Errors and warnings Only errors LPI Commands Clear all
10:09 Title: Python test
10:09 N. of points: 3
10:09 N. of lines: 2

```

If you see these results, installation has been successful, and you are finished.

3. Further reading - COM and pywin32

LUSAS Modeller can only be driven by scripting languages that are compatible with COM. As explained in the Installation section, **it is necessary to install the Python package pywin32 to use COM from Python.** This is a third-party package that is not maintained by the Python Software Foundation.

It is important to understand the concept of early and late binding in COM. Binding is a process of matching function calls written by the programmer to the actual code that implements the function. In our case we want to match the calls to LUSAS Programmable Interface (LPI) functions to the actual code. The COM support in pywin32 will either generate a class on the fly which represents the COM object we are interested in (late binding) or will make use of a generated Python module which contains the class definition (early binding). It is important to use late binding when calling LPI functions. To ensure this, we use the pywin32 function `win32com.client.dynamic.Dispatch`. Using other pywin32 dispatch functions might result in using early binding.

The following websites (on the next page) contain additional information about the package pywin32:

¹ If you cannot find this folder, follow these instructions to locate it:

1. Within the Windows Command Prompt window (ran as administrator), type `python` to start the Python interpreter.
2. To find the Python installation folder, type the following command which prints the absolute path of the executable binary for the Python interpreter (this file is located in the installation folder).
`import sys; print(sys.executable)`
5. Append `Lib\site-packages\win32comext\axscript\client` to the folder reported

² LUSAS Version 19.1 will not show `lpy` scripts by default in the file open dialog, but you can nonetheless type its name, and it should run successfully. LUSAS Version 20.0 and 21.0 will show the file in the list.

- github.com/mhammond/pywin32
- pypi.org/project/pywin32