

A-Track USB / NCE Interface Unit – Installation – Windows XP

The **A-Track USB / NCE (ATUN) Interface unit** is based on a commercial USB to Serial Port adapter, the MCP2200EV-VCP device from Microchip, with some customisation of its embedded software.

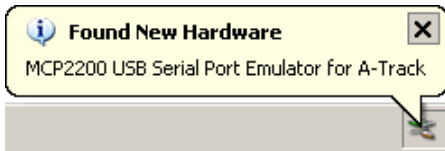
The MCP2200EV-VCP uses standard software drivers which are already part of the Windows operating system but, before using it with A-Track or any other application program, it is necessary to link the appropriate Windows drivers to the device. This is done by loading a driver information file, based on the generic file supplied by Microchip, to your computer. Linking the ATUN Interface unit to the PC only has to be done once per computer, and the required file, **MCP2200_A-Track.inf**, is located on the A-Track distribution CD.

Before connecting the ATUN Interface unit for the first time, ensure that no applications other than this installation file (in WordPad) are running on the PC, and that the active User has administrative rights (this is the normal status when the operating system is either Windows XP Home or Media Editions, but you may need to log on as an Administrator when using Windows XP Professional Edition). Once the ATUN Interface unit has been linked to the Windows drivers it will operate for any User, and with any application program, with or without administrator privileges.

After driver installation is complete, close the WordPad window displaying these instructions before proceeding to install the A-Track software.

Now connect the ATUN Interface unit to any PC USB port using the supplied USB cable. There is no need at this stage to connect the ATUN Interface unit to the NCE Command Station.

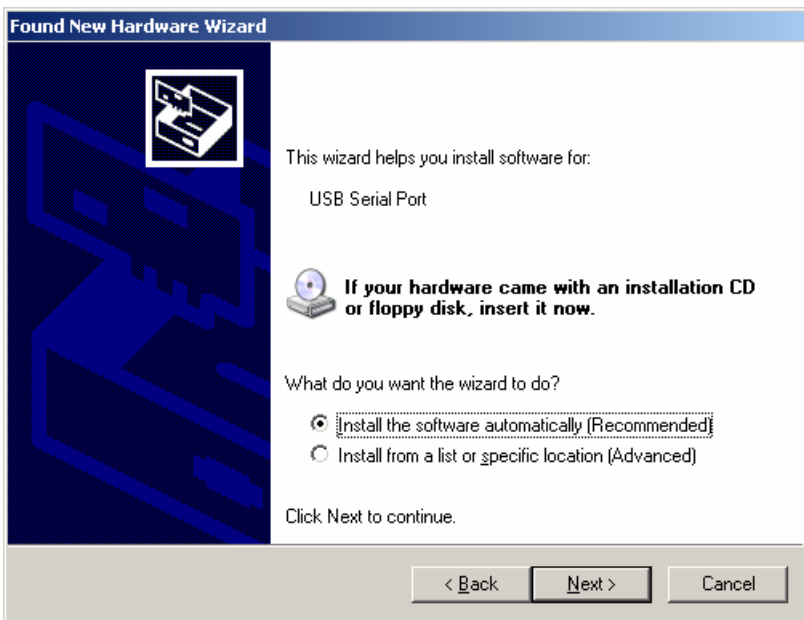
After a few seconds you should see a small notice appear above the Taskbar announcing that the operating system has found the MCP2200 USB Serial Port Emulator for A-Track, followed a little later by another notice showing that this is a USB Composite Device –



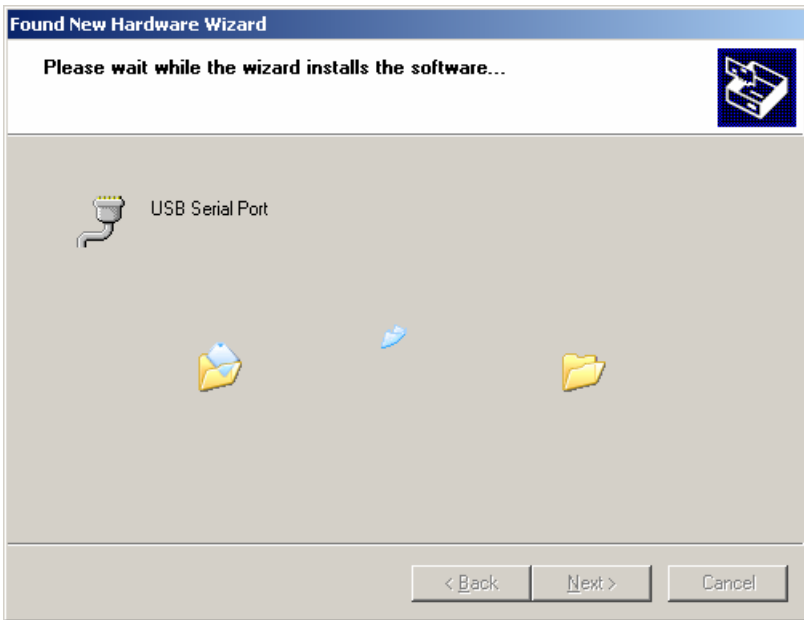
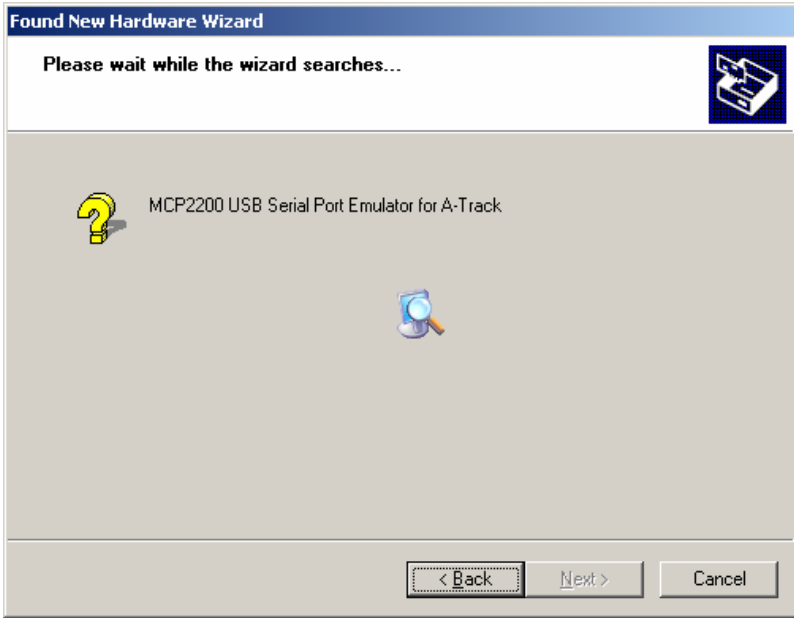
Windows XP will then launch its '**Found New Hardware**' wizard to guide you through the simple installation process –



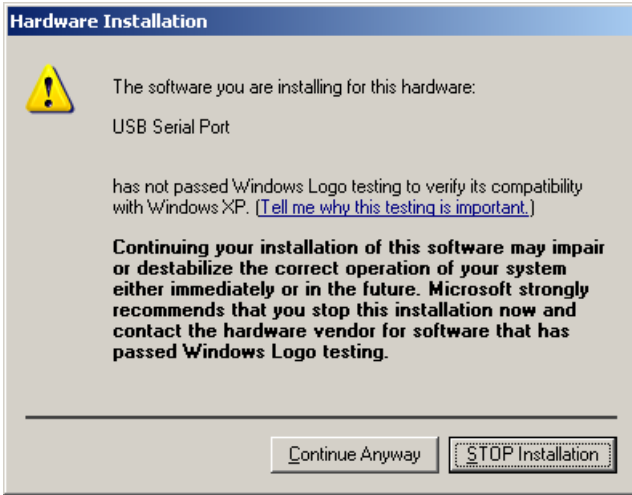
In this case, we do not want Windows to connect to the Internet to search for the required drivers, so click on the **No** option, as shown above, then click **Next**.



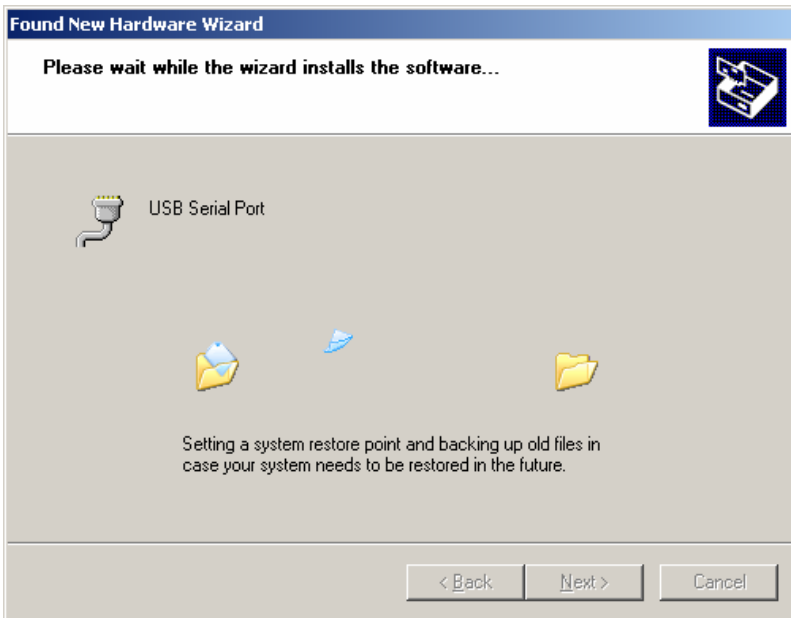
Since the A-Track distribution CD will be in the appropriate drive at this point, leave the selection at the **'Install the software automatically'** option and just click **Next**, allowing Windows to locate the correct drivers and link the ATUN Interface unit to them, so that it will be recognised in future as a USB Serial Port, each time it is plugged into the PC –

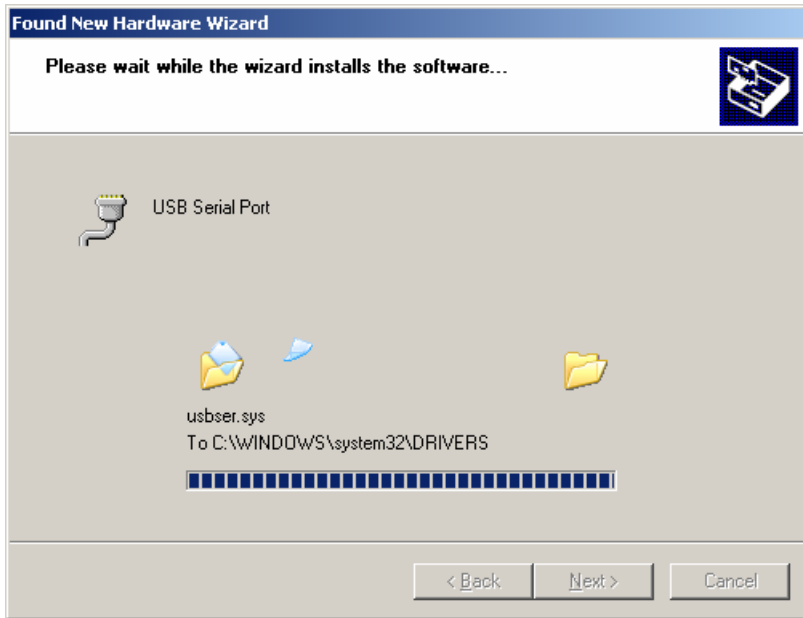


As the installation progresses, a warning will be displayed –

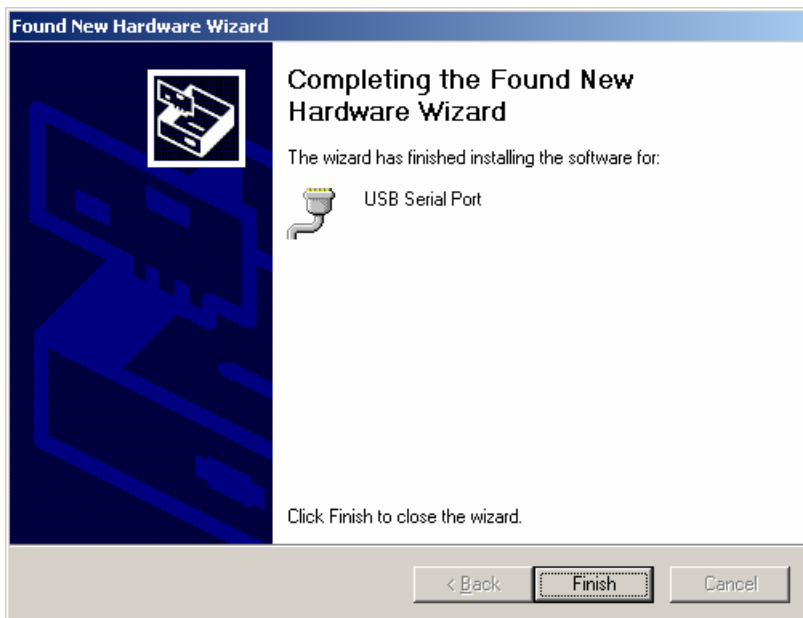


This is just Windows complaining that the driver information file has not been formally submitted to Microsoft for their approval – be assured that it is perfectly safe to click the **Continue Anyway** button to complete the installation –

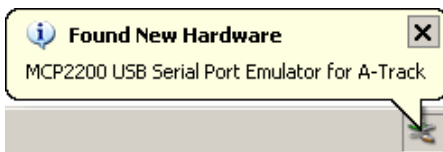




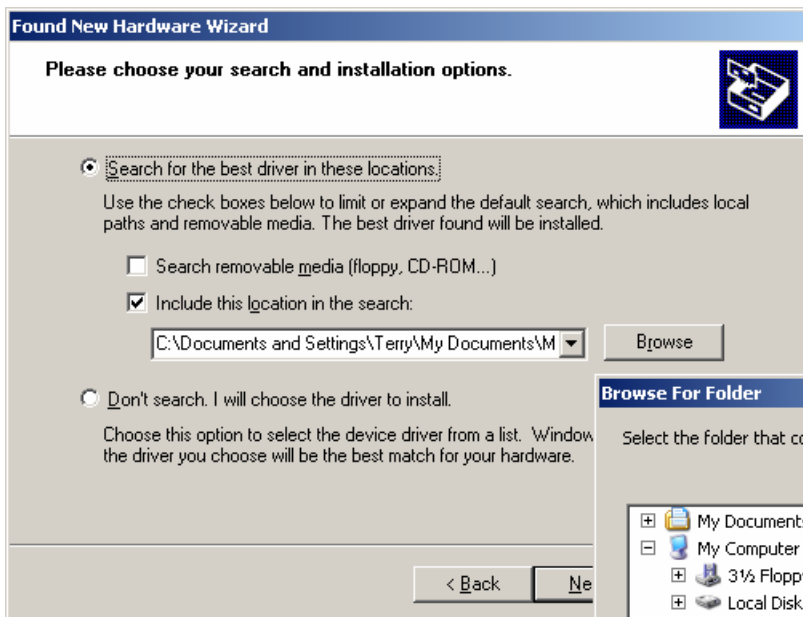
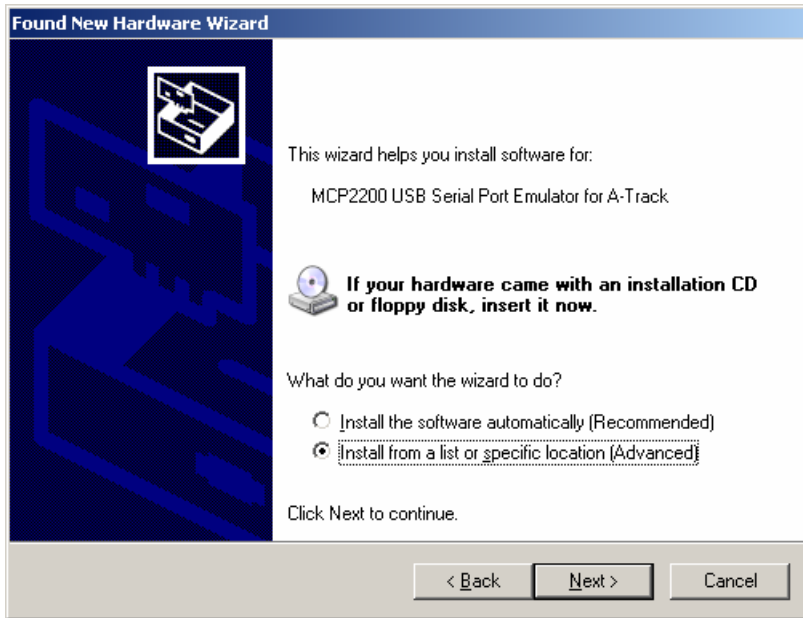
When the final page of the 'Found New Hardware' wizard appears, as shown below, click **Finish** to complete the installation process –



A further set of notices then appear above the Taskbar, with the final notice (hopefully) indicating that the ATUN Interface is ready for use –



If, for any reason, Windows fails to locate the **MCP2200_A-Track.inf** file, return to the first page of the Found New Hardware Wizard (you may have to disconnect and reconnect the ATUN Interface unit to restart the wizard), select the '**Install from a list or specific location**' option, then click **Next** –

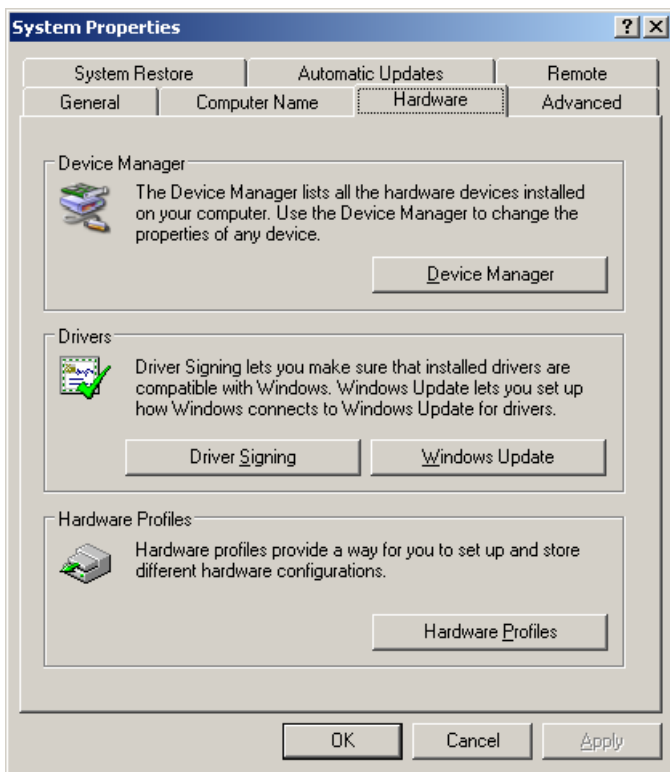


Ensure that the '**Include this location in the search**' checkbox is ticked, by clicking on it if necessary, then click **Browse** to open a second window where you can navigate to the folder (**D:\A-Track4** here) which contains a copy of the **MCP2200_A-Track.inf** file. When the right folder is selected the **OK** button will be enabled, and should be clicked to continue – which will also close the Browse window – then click **Next** to proceed.

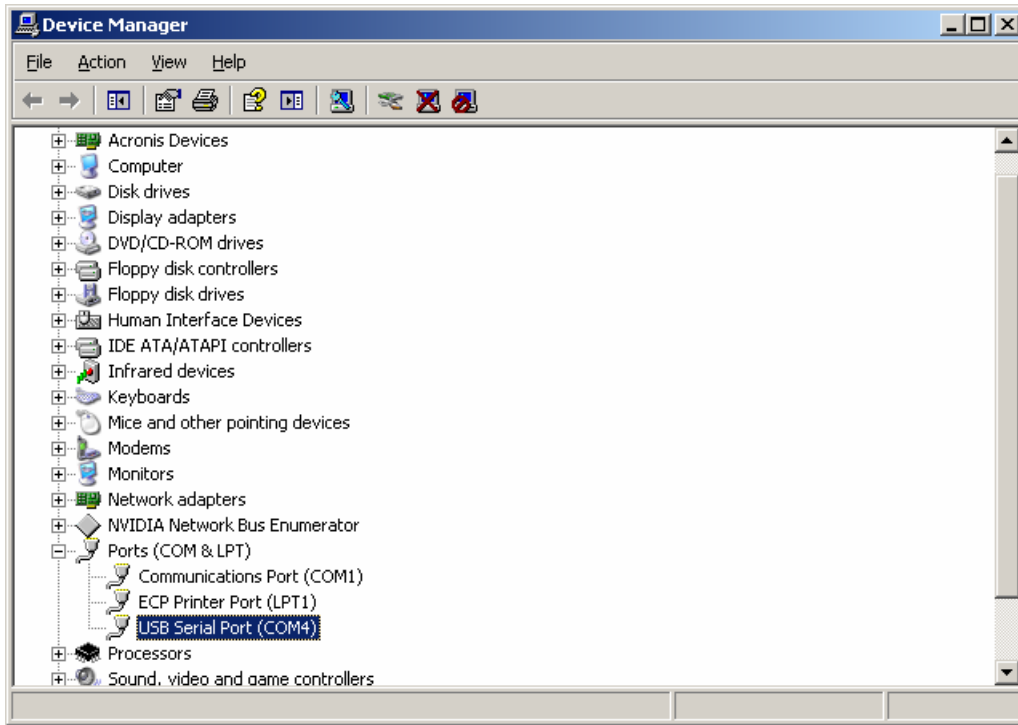
Once the Update Driver Software wizard has finished, you can check that the installation is satisfactory by **right-clicking** on **My Computer** (in the Start Menu, on the Desktop, or in Windows Explorer), and then clicking **Properties** on the pop-up menu –



This opens the **System Properties** window (which you can also reach by opening Control Panel and selecting System) where you should select the **Hardware** tab and then click **Device Manager** –



The ATUN Interface unit should appear under the **Ports** heading as a **USB Serial Port** in the Device Manager window as shown below –

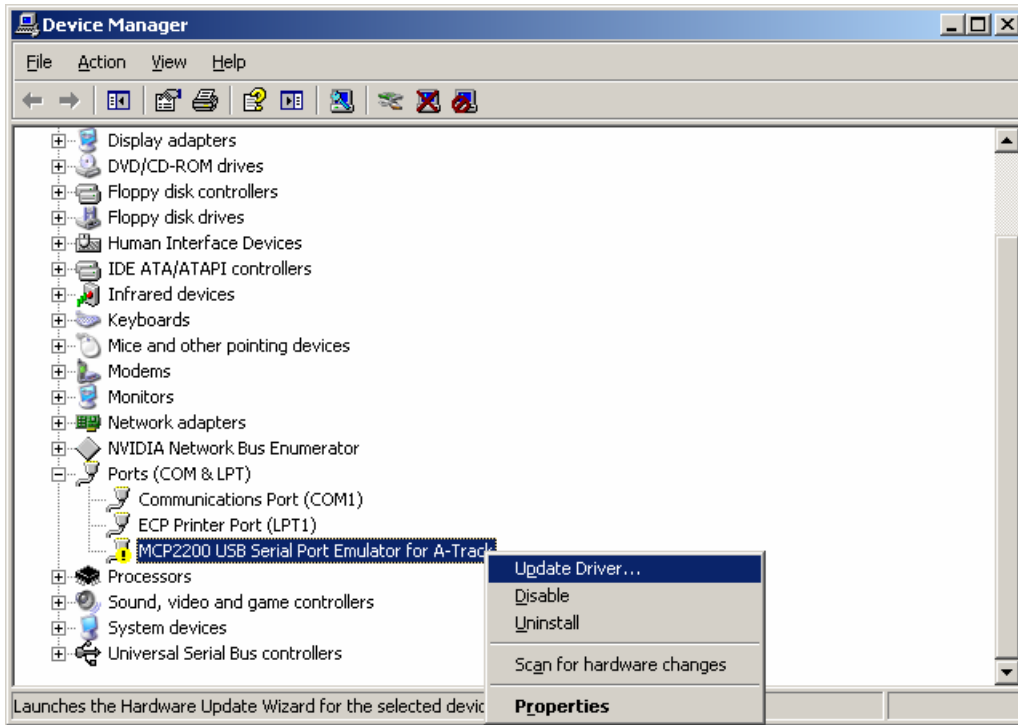


The **COM** number allocated to the port will vary depending on how many other serial ports are present in your computer, and whether any other USB Serial Port devices have been installed prior to the ATUN Interface unit (although not necessarily connected at this time).

A-Track will find the correct USB Serial Port automatically when the program is launched, but you may care to make a note of the number in case you use the ATUN Interface unit as a general-purpose USB to Serial Port converter with some other application software (such as Decoder Pro from JMRI).

The MCP2200 device is quite well-behaved, so that the allocated COM number should remain at the initial installation value every time you switch on your computer.

If the ATUN Interface serial port installation has not succeeded, then Device Manager will reveal a problem as shown below –



Right-click on the problem entry for the port and attempt to re-install the driver by clicking on Update Driver, and then following the Found New Hardware Wizard, as described previously, to correct or update the installed driver software.