

Device Policy

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1 Purpose

1.1 The Device policy is issued by the University of Reading (UoR) to establish awareness of the available options for organisationally supplied personal computer devices (henceforth, devices) and accessories attached to, but not integral to, personal computers, also known as computer peripherals. The device choices, including the applicable attainment and use of those, are defined to ensure clarity of the available service offerings surrounding devices and their management.

The University recognises computing devices are an essential part of everyday life and integral to the working day for the majority of people. As many in the workforce carry out their duties from multiple locations, including away from UoR premises, it is accepted that personal computing needs to be equally agile. The supply of flexible devices and peripherals, and sustainable management of the device lifecycle, including financing and replacement, is therefore imperative.

The Device policy covers the selection, purchase, deployment, reuse and recycling of UoR devices and peripherals by and on behalf of UoR staff and post-graduate research (PGR) students (henceforth referred to as staff).

The total cost of ownership of computing devices for the University, including purchasing, maintenance, IT support and sustainable recycling, is significant. The initial purchase cost typically constitutes only around a third of the total cost of ownership of a device, the remainder being a combination of hardware and software support, software licencing, secure equipment disposal, as well as the cost of the underlying IT infrastructure required to operate the device service.

The University operates a notable computing estate, with associated significant costs to maintain and upgrade, and which embodies substantial carbon emissions. These cost elements, and the sustainable concerns around managing this estate, can only be effectively controlled through the adoption of a common approach to the procurement and management of devices and their peripherals. The Device policy enables the University to efficiently manage the cost and risks associated with the ownership of such a large computing estate, as well as considering sustainability as a core premise throughout the lifecycle of equipment.

1.2 This Policy aims to:

- Optimise the cost of devices and peripherals by offering a recommended range of equipment provided by DTS through agreement with a premium supplier.
- Simplify the device service through clarifying the principles of the service offering. This includes offering flexibility in the device and peripheral choice to reflect the intended use.
- Support digital sustainability through focus on providing computing and device lifecycle management that incorporates social, economic and environmental sustainability aspects.
- Through a centralised purchasing approach minimise the risk of unwarranted and wasteful IT equipment spend.

2 Roles & Responsibilities

- 2.1 Policy owner is DTS.
- 2.2 The Director of Digital Operations and Service Delivery is accountable for its implementation, monitoring and review. The Director will also carry out, or delegate action to carry out, minor updates in accordance with the Review of this policy section.
- 2.3 Major updates may require approval through relevant UoR committees (Approval Authorities), including but not limited to IMPS.
- 2.4 The Head of Service Delivery is responsible for the operation, day-to-day monitoring (including relevant process and procedure oversight), and escalations.
- 2.5 Heads of Schools and Directorates are responsible for promoting the policy in their relevant areas, for ensuring staff adhere to the policy, including dealing with any breaches, and for escalating any issues relating to the policy, its processes and procedures, to DTS.
- 2.6 Staff are responsible for complying with the policy and for raising any breaches/issues with their line management and DTS, as appropriate.
- 2.7 Line Managers are responsible for dealing with members of their team that are considered to have breached to this policy. Advice will be sought from Human Resources and consideration about action under an HR procedure will be undertaken in these circumstances.

3 Scope

- 3.1 The principles of the policy come into effect on the Effective Date. The policy principles will not apply retrospectively to funding or devices already issued prior to the Effective Date.
- 3.2 The policy applies to all staff at UoR (for a definition of staff please see Appendix A) unless specifically excluded within the policy.
- 3.3 The policy excludes overseas UoR Offices, unless devices are specifically provided by UoR in the UK, although the overarching principles are expected to extend to device and peripheral management there.
- 3.4 The policy excludes non-personal computing equipment such as servers, networking devices, printers, lab computers and teaching/meeting space specific Audio Visual equipment.
- 3.5 The policy excludes mobile phones. Mobile phones are covered in the Mobile Phone policy ([Microsoft Word - proc Mobile Phone Policy March 2014 \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)).
- 3.6 The policy excludes personal devices, these are covered in the BYOD policy ([Information Compliance Policies \(reading.ac.uk\)](#))
- 3.7 The policy applies to all devices and peripherals purchased using University funds and/or used for University business regardless of their manufacture and operating system.
- 3.8 The policy comes into effect on 1st April 2024 (Effective Date).

4 Policy detail and key principles

4.1 General principles

- a) Computing devices must be requested through DTS. Only in exceptional circumstances, and in consultation with DTS, should equipment be purchased through other channels. All procurement must be done in accordance with UoR procurement policy ([procurement-policy-v14-may-2023-final.pdf \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)).
- b) DTS retains responsibility for the assignment, utilisation and disposal of all computer equipment (see guidance notes: [Device Lifecycle \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)), including the re-assignment of any serviceable device to new or existing staff and students. (see [it-equipment-disposal-policy-may-22.pdf \(reading.ac.uk\)](#))
- c) Devices and peripherals remain the property of the University until such time they are appropriately disposed. The sole exception is any equipment wholly funded by research grants or similar, where the grant is transferring to another institution. Here the equipment follows the grant and the ownership will transfer accordingly. Should other funding models exist where the title to the equipment is not UoR, please contact DTS for further advice.
- d) Non-standard devices such as devices brought via the IT Hardware Exception Process (e.g. tablets, research devices) should be returned to DTS for data wipe and redeployment (where possible).
- e) The primary user of a device is the person to whom a device is assigned in the DTS asset records. This user is assumed to be the person who performed the initial setup as part of receiving a device.
- f) **Devices and peripherals must be returned promptly to DTS (with an associated ticket) when a staff member leaves.** The return, and ticket creation, is the responsibility of the line manager. This includes the return of any equipment where a former member of staff remains associated with the University, e.g. emeritus. This ensures the safe removal of data, licences, update of asset records and secure disposal where required.
- g) Where staff are absent for a longer period, and where it is appropriate to do so, devices and peripherals can be returned to DTS for reuse. This ensures devices are updated and safely stored, as well as being available for use. Please note any device returned for reuse will be reset to factory settings and any data stored on the device will be removed, this will be in consultation with line management who can then liaise with the owner of the device. Upon return a ticket should be logged with DTS for a device 'Health check' and to ensure the device remains fit for purpose. Should a temporary staff member join to cover a role then please request a device for this purpose.
- h) Where a new staff member joins to take up the existing role a ticket must be raised by the line manager or their agreed deputy for a new device informing of the ticket for the returned device of the previous staff member. For funding see 4.2 a).
- i) Devices and peripherals must not be exchanged by staff without explicit approval by DTS. This ensures records are updated and appropriate licences assigned. The

original recipient, and their department by extension, remains accountable for the equipment, and potential replacement costs, in accordance with DTS records.

- j) Staff are expected to receive a laptop for smart working (see [Smart Working](#)). Only in exceptional circumstances, and by following the relevant process (e.g. OH referral), will a desktop computer be considered and approved by DTS.
- k) If intending to travel with a UoR device please refer to the guidelines in the Travel Policy ([travel-policy-v14-260623.pdf \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)).
- l) Devices and peripherals will be included as managed devices, meaning they will have the relevant device image or configuration as determined by DTS. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with an appropriate business case, will a non-managed setup be considered and approved by DTS.

4.2 Funding and purchase

- a) **DTS will fund and support one device per existing role in the organisational structure.** Should a person move from one role in the organisation then the device will travel with them to their new role. In case the device is not fit for purpose in the new role, please contact DTS for a review and possible reassignment. Note: for sustainable reasons any requirement beyond the one device will need to be vetted using the Hardware Exception process ([Device Lifecycle \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)).
- b) The **default device is a Windows laptop** for smart working and optimal operation with the University's IT systems. Apple devices can be offered to existing Apple users. Any switch from a Windows to an Apple device will be subject to validation of the business case and approval from local line management as well as DTS. Should you want a Linux operating system please log a ticket for review.
- c) Any additional role added to a departments organisational structure is funded locally. However, it will then be included in the lifecycle replacement (see 4.3).
- d) Devices and equipment, where required in addition to any DTS funded device, e.g. for home use, travelling, and the like, are funded locally. This includes any adaptive equipment required for equality, diversity and inclusion purposes, as approved and specified by the relevant authority (e.g. Occupational Health),
- e) The provision of a device assumes a local desk-side setup is available, consisting of a monitor, docking solution, keyboard and mouse. Should this not be the case then the provision of desk-side technology can be raised with DTS. Funding will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

4.3 Device Lifecycle replacement

- a) DTS operates a rolling device refresh programme referred to as Device Lifecycle (DL). The programme aims to replace Windows, Linux and Apple devices approximately every 5 years.
- b) Should a device no longer be fit for purpose or beyond economical repair, then DTS will replace it sooner than the standard DL planned cycle. For any such issues the standard DTS Incident reporting process (Please see [Digital Technology Services \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)) applies.
- c) Devices, and peripherals where appropriate, will be replaced according to the equipment deemed relevant for the role.

4.4 Equipment disposal

- a) Old devices and peripheral equipment will be appropriately reused or recycled following the University's Equipment Disposal policy ([Information Compliance Policies \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)).
- b) Any residual equipment value realised through reuse will benefit the receiving department, or be directed through appropriate recycling schemes for common purposes.

4.5 Lost, stolen or damaged

- a) A ticket must be logged immediately with DTS to ensure data protection and loss prevention. DTS, in turn, will inform Information Management and Policy Services (IMPS) and any other relevant department. The ticket will assist in the allocation of a replacement device where required. The owner of the device or peripheral is responsible for lodging the claim and for raising any risk of data loss/theft in accordance with the Data Protection policy ([Information Compliance Policies \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)).
- b) Devices must be repaired by or by approval by DTS.
- c) Stolen devices should be reported to the police immediately and a crime reference number obtained.
- d) Please report any lost, stolen or damaged devices to the Insurance team on uor-insurance@reading.ac.uk.

4.6 Device specification

- a) Equipment will be procured from the University's approved supplier and from a list of DTS approved devices ([Buyers guide \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)).
- b) Should a device be required with a different specification than the standard DTS funded device, then this can be provided with a locally funded and DTS approved business case, raised by the DTS Hardware Exception process. ([Buying Computer Equipment \(reading.ac.uk\)](#))

5 Process and Procedures

- 5.1 The policy is retained with other relevant DTS policies.
- 5.2 Any lack of appropriate response to requests made in relation to this policy, or general process issue with regards to devices, must be raised with the Head of Service Delivery for further investigation and action.

6 Compliance and monitoring

- 6.1 Compliance with the policies and procedures laid down in this document may be monitored via review by the Director of Digital Operations and Service Delivery. This may be supplemented by independent reviews by both Internal and External Audit on a periodic basis.
- 6.2 The Head of Service Delivery, is responsible for the ongoing monitoring of compliance including reviewing the effectiveness of associated processes and procedures.
- 6.3 Any lack of appropriate and timely response, or other misuse of the policy, should be raised immediately with the Head of Service Delivery for further investigation and

action. Should it be required then the next level of escalation is the Director of Digital Operations and Service Delivery.

7 Exceptions

- 7.1 Should the organisation develop overarching sustainability policies that affect computing devices then these will need consulting alongside this policy.
- 7.2 Any force majeure situation where ad-hoc device and peripheral decisions are required that do not conform with the policy. These must be sanctioned by the Director of Digital Operations and Service Delivery and be communicated as a special addendum to the policy as soon as feasible.
- 7.3 Any policy conflict to be settled through direct engagement by the Head of Service Delivery, supported by the Director of Digital Operations and Service Delivery where required, and the affected party.

8 Review of this policy

This Policy shall be reviewed at regular intervals and documented within the revision history. Reviews will take place as a minimum annually and in the event of any of the below:

- Significant change in University operations
- Significant change in legislation, regulatory requirements, industry guidance or similar
- In the event of a compromise of data protection or security where the content or compliance with this policy is identified as an aggravating or mitigating factor
- Any other identified requirement necessitating substantive changes ahead of scheduled review

Substantive changes shall be reviewed and approved by the Approving Authority as detailed within the Roles and Responsibilities section.

Non substantive, minor, or administrative changes may be made by the Policy Owner, or representative of the Policy Owner.

9 Related Documents

- 9.1 There are no effects noted of any changes made to this document.
- 9.2 Documents which refer to this policy: None
- 9.3 Documents which this policy refers to: Procurement policy, found: [procurement-policy-v14-may-2023-final.pdf \(reading.ac.uk\)](#). Data Protection policy, Equipment Disposal policy, Information Security Policy (staff definition), Guidance on devices can be found in the [Device Lifecycle \(reading.ac.uk\)](#). Policies are stored; [Information Compliance Policies \(reading.ac.uk\)](#).

10 Document control

Version	Section	Keeper	Reviewed	Approving Group	Approval Date	Start Date	Next Review
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1.0		DTS	04 Dec 22 (policy creation)				
1.1		DTS	15 Jan 23				
1.2		DTS	30 Jan 23				
1.3		DTS	May 23				
1.4		DTS	10 July 2023				
1.5		DTS	12 and 17 Oct 23				
1.6		DTS	Oct/Nov 23				
1.6a	4 and 9	DTS	Mar 24	DTSD	1 st Mar 2024		

11 Appendices

Appendix A – Definitions

Term	Meaning
Computing Device	All devices with a CPU (central processing unit) for the processing of information. E.g. a laptop, desktop or tablet.
Computer Peripheral	Electronic equipment that can be connected to a computing device providing input and/or output, e.g. a headset or a keyboard
Computing resources	An aggregate term for the available hardware, software, documentation, personnel and support services
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees (including temporary or short-term workers) of the University or a subsidiary company of the University. • Volunteers, interns and those undertaking placements or work experience. • Contractors engaged by the University. • Students working for and/or on behalf of the University, including Postgraduate Research students. • Those with University accounts by virtue of a visiting or courtesy title conferred by the University. • Any other individual who is working on behalf of the University if they are processing University data or information.