

COMPUTER LIFECYCLE POLICY

I. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy defines the guidelines for procuring, deploying, renewing, replacing, and decommissioning of desktop and laptop computers within the University of Massachusetts Boston (the university).

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set the standards and responsibilities which define and facilitate the lifecycle of desktop and laptop computers for university employees.

Most university employees need a computer to do their job, and these computers must be fully functional so the employee can work efficiently. The Information Technology Services Division (IT department) has been charged with the responsibility of ensuring that employees who need one, have a fully functional computer as defined by this policy document. For the IT department to perform this responsibility effectively, this document describes the standards for a functional computer and describes the responsibilities of all stakeholders.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of UMass Boston who require a computer to perform their work obligations as approved by their department head. It defines additional responsibilities for members of the IT department as well as administrative staff from each university department. The scope of this policy is limited to university-owned computers used by individual employees. Shared access computers such as computer labs and kiosks are outside the scope of this policy. Grant-funded computer purchases are also outside of the scope of this policy, with the caveats described in section 2.4.D.

IV. POLICY

1. Policy Statement

All applicable employees will be provided with a computer which meets the standards for a functional computer described in section 2. The IT department will facilitate the lifecycle of these computers as described in section 3. Departmental administrative staff will assist with interactions between IT and employees, and perform other duties as described in section 4. Employees will follow all IT policies and help IT staff in their duties as described in section 5. For edge cases and legitimate business needs not sufficiently covered by this policy, an exception process is described in section 2.4. By accepting use of a university-owned computer, an employee is agreeing to have read, understood, and agreed to the terms in this policy.

2. Standards for a Fully Functional Computer

This section sets a series of standards to ensure university computers are fully functional, that employees can have a functional and consistent experience in using them, and that the IT Department is able to fully support the computers as described in section 3.

2.1. Required Capabilities

This section defines those technology services and capabilities that most UMass Boston users need, and as such defines a baseline functionality for all university computers.

- A. University computers must be capable of performing certain functions, be able to access certain web services, and be compatible with certain software. A list of these standard technology services which all university computers must be compatible with is included in Appendix section 1.
- B. University computers must have additional hardware capabilities as described in Appendix section 2.
- C. The computer must be able to be supported, repaired, and renewed by the IT Department or approved third parties such as manufacturer warranty repair services.

- D. The computer must be able to be properly secured, based on the standards of the Information Security Office (ISO). It must be able to support all security software and configurations mandated by the ISO. The computer must be managed and connected to the university's endpoint management system allowing it to be remotely tracked, locked, and wiped in the event of theft. The computer must be using the latest versions of the operating system and installed software that is supported by their vendors with patches. See the ISO's "UMass Boston Information Security Policies" document for more information.
- E. The University requires the standard of "one computer per person". Most employees should only need only one assigned computer to do all aspects of their job. For proper business and instructional continuity, and to enable the current hybrid work modalities in place on campus, employees who are approved for a hybrid schedule need their assigned computer to be a laptop which can be transported between campus and remote work locations. Specific positions which are required by their manager to be 100% on campus without any need for the ability to work remotely may be assigned a desktop computer instead of a laptop.
- F. Any deviations from the standards described in this section and this policy, including requesting additional computers or tablets, alternate manufacturers, models, or specifications, or other changes, must complete an exception approval process as described in section 2.4.

2.2. Minimum Viable Computer Specifications (Existing Computers)

To support the required capabilities listed in section 2.1, as well as to enable the IT department to fully support the computers as described in section 3, this section describes a minimum viable set of computer specifications for existing computers, in addition to those requirements listed in section 2.1.

- A. University computers must meet minimum viable hardware specifications to support the required capabilities listed in section 2.1. A list of these specs is included in Appendix section 4.
- B. Computers that do not meet the Minimum Viable Computer Specifications may be eligible for Computer Renewal as described in section 3.4. Computers that are not able to be renewed must be surplussed as described in section 3.4, but if the computer is the only one in possession by the employee then it may be eligible for Computer Replacement as described in section 3.5.

2.3. Purchasing Requirements (New Computers)

While section 2.2 describes minimum viable specs for older computers, this section lists requirements for newly purchased computers.

- A. Newly purchased university computers are limited to certain models from Dell and Apple. A list of the specific acceptable computer models is included in Appendix section 3.
- B. New computers must be selected from the purchase list defined by the IT department as listed in Appendix section A. Selection of a computer model requires approval from department head.
- C. If there is a need to purchase a computer outside of the standards described here, an exception approval will be required as described in section 2.4.

2.4. Other Needs and Exceptions

While this policy describes the computing needs for most university users, and the responsibilities of stakeholders in most situations, there will be edge cases not covered by this document.

- A. If any part of this policy does not meet a business need of a member of the university, that person may request an exception be considered by their area Vice Chancellor in collaboration with the CIO.
- B. If any part of this policy does not meet a personal need of a member of the university, for example in relation to a health issue, that person can go through the existing HR Accommodations Request, after which IT will implement the plan developed with HR.
- C. If an exception is to be sought for the purchase of a computer outside of what is described in section 2.3, parties must create a written plan for potential incompatibilities by first meeting with the Assistant Vice Chancellor of IT Client Services and the Director of IT Desktop Services to discuss the level of support they can expect from IT for the type of computer they are considering. This plan should then be included in their exception request. Departments with equipment unable to be supported by the IT Department are required to fund and put into place the necessary trainings, services agreements, and other support that may be needed to support any such equipment.
- D. Grant funded purchases of computers which are outside of the standards described in this policy do not need exception approval before purchasing. However, the purchasing department is responsible for creating a support plan for the computer being purchased. The standards in this document ensure the IT Department's ability to support the computer and deviations from it will limit the support that IT can provide. Grant recipients

intending to deviate from the standards in this document should meet with IT as described in sections 2.4.C to understand what to expect from IT if the purchase is made, and then work towards planning to make up the difference in the support the computer would need.

3. Responsibilities of the IT Department

Per the Controller's Office "Property and Inventory Control" policy, all computers purchased by the University are the property of the institution. The IT Department has been charged with the responsibility over the deployment and management of these computers. This section describes those responsibilities. Refer to that policy document to learn more about responsibilities for the IT Department.

- 3.1. **Support and Training** – The IT department will provide tech support to employees, only on university owned computers and university supported technology services. All support requests should be initiated at the IT Service Desk and will be routed to the staff person best able to help. The IT department also provides training and consultation sessions to individuals and groups by request about basic use of university computers.
- 3.2. **Computer Selection Consultation** – In addition to the Purchasing Recommendations listed in section 2.3, the IT staff are available to meet with departments before selecting a computer to plan which one can best meet their needs. As described in section 2.4.C, this consultation is required before requesting an exception.
- 3.3. **Receiving and Imaging** – During the normal processing of incoming packages performed by the Receiving department, any package containing a computer will be identified and routed to the IT department, regardless of the shipping address. The computer will be entered into the IT Asset Management inventory system. The computer must be listed in the inventory as in possession by the employee who will be using it, with a separate field for their supervisor. The computer will then be connected with the university account of its future end user, configured to function with university technology services, and encrypted and secured per the Information Security Office security and privacy standards. The end user will be identified, and a time will be coordinated for the computer to be picked up from/or delivered by IT.
- 3.4. **Computer Renewal** – The IT department has techniques to renew older computers to improve their performance. Through relatively inexpensive hardware upgrades or even by performing various no-cost actions like cleaning files or reformatting operating systems, significant improvements can be made in what might otherwise be an unusable computer. Request for computer renewal assistance should be initiated at the IT Service Desk.
- 3.5. **Computer Surplus** – When a computer no longer meets the minimum viable computer specs described in section 2.2, it is required to be surplussed to remove it from active use and from the inventory records. The surplussing process is initiated by department administrative staff as described in section 4.6, but the IT department will assist through the process of removing and surplussing the equipment. The IT Department is responsible for working with UPST to make arrangements to dispose of equipment once surplussed.
- 3.6. **Computer Replacement** – If a computer is required to be surplussed, and the employee has no other viable computer, they will be eligible to receive a renewed or new computer to replace it. The new computer will be selected from the purchase list in Appendix section 5.
- 3.7. **IT Asset Management and Inventory** – The IT department is responsible for maintaining an inventory of university-owned computers, and keeping it updated as computers are purchased, transferred, and surplussed. The IT department is responsible for running an inventory process automatically through the endpoint management system. For any computers granted a section 2.4 exception, this inventory review may need to be done manually in collaboration with department administrative staff and individual employees. Refer to the Controller's Office "Property and Inventory Control" policy to learn more.
- 3.8. **Lost or Stolen Devices** – The IT department is responsible for assisting employees with lost or stolen devices. The endpoint management system can be used to help locate a device, and if it is confirmed as stolen, a command can be sent to remotely wipe the device before sensitive data is accessed. For these to happen, the end user must report it stolen as soon as possible, as described in section 5.5.
- 3.9. **IT Standing Inventory** – The IT department is responsible for maintaining a standing inventory of new computers listed in Appendix section 5, as well as of renewed computers. The number of items held should be sufficient to meet the number of computers forecasted to be needed at the next updating of the Minimum Viable Computer Specifications, as compared against the current university inventory. A small additional number of computers from Appendix section 5 (new stock) should be held to account for unexpected needs such as new position creation or damage to existing equipment. An IT Standing Inventory ensures quick delivery to employees without having to wait for manufacturer shipping delays.

- 3.10. **Minimum Viable Computer Specifications Updates** – The IT department is responsible for updating the Minimum Viable Computer Specifications and other specifications listed in the Appendix of this document, to ensure that they reflect the latest increasing requirements of the Required Capabilities listed in section 2.1, especially the latest currently supported versions of the Windows and Mac operating systems.

4. Responsibilities of Department Administration

- 4.1. The head of each department is responsible for ensuring the proper use and safekeeping of all computers assigned to staff within their department.
- 4.2. The head of each department assumes responsibilities of the department's property custodian unless a designee is assigned to this role. Refer to the Controller's Office "Property and Inventory Control" policy to learn more about the Property Custodian's responsibilities.
- 4.3. The department's property custodian is responsible to assist IT with tasks needed for IT Asset Management and Inventory as described in section 3.7 by helping to locate missing computers, coordinate with an employee in possession of a computer, fill out needed forms, record keeping, and by the additional items listed below.
- 4.4. When a computer is needed for a new employee, or as a replacement computer for an existing employee, the employee can select the model desired, but the department head must approve the selection. Department administrative staff may also submit a computer request for the employee.
- 4.5. When an employee leaves the university, the department is responsible for ensuring their computer is returned to the IT department. To start this process, the department must fill out the form, "PRO-01- IT Equipment Data & Department Removal Form" and submit to the IT Service Desk. If the computer needs to be transferred to a new person, such as the leaving-employee's replacement, department administrative staff still must work with the IT department to transfer the computer to ensure that the personal data of the previous user is deleted, that the computer is properly configured for the new user, and that our inventory files are updated.
- 4.6. If an employee is transferred to another department on campus and their computer is to be kept by that person, the first department is responsible for notifying the IT Service Desk to initiate a transfer of the computer so that the computer is properly listed as being in the custody of the new department.
- 4.7. When a computer no longer meets the spec or capability standards described in section 2 and needs to be surplussed, the department is responsible for initiating the surplus process. To start this process, the department must fill out the form, "PRO-01- IT Equipment Data & Department Removal Form" and submit to the IT Service Desk.
- 4.8. Department administrative staff are responsible for encouraging quick communications by employees with the IT department and facilitating a reply in the event of a delay.
- 4.9. Department administrative staff are responsible for ensuring that individual employees working within the department fulfill the responsibilities described in section 5.

5. Responsibility of Individual Employees

- 5.1. It is the responsibility for all employees to use the technology which is required to perform their work duties.
- 5.2. Employees using university-owned computers must agree and abide by the "Acceptable Use Policies" of the IT Department and the "Information Security Policies" of the IT Information Security Office, including having all required security and privacy software and configurations always applied and active.
- 5.3. To ensure smooth operations, all employees are required to respond in a timely manner to IT staff's outreaches about computer support topics.
- 5.4. To keep the university inventory accurate and reduce the risk of equipment and data theft, employees are required to turn in computers to IT when they are no longer needed, for example, employees must turn in any old university computers they still have upon receipt of a new replacement computer.
- 5.5. If a device is lost or stolen, employees are required to report the incident to IT through the IT Service Desk.

V. VERSION CONTROL (Revisions and Dates)

Revision Number	Date	Name	Description
R1	12/22/2022	John Mazzearella	Computer Lifecycle Policy Draft.
R2	3/23/2023	John Mazzearella	Incorporate editorial feedback into draft policy.
R3	5/20/2024	John Mazzearella	Inclusion of HR Accommodations Review for exception requests for personal or health related needs.

SIGNATURE PAGE

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APPENDIX

The following are specific determinations of capabilities and specifications described in this policy as of the time of this document's writing. As the specific details listed below need to be changed, this Appendix will be updated as needed to keep the information current and relevant.

1. Standard Technology Services

The following university-supported technology services are those that all university computers must be able to achieve.

- 1.1. Web browsing, specifically these web applications: Blackboard, WISER, HR Direct, Peoplesoft/Summit, Office 365, and Outlook Online.
- 1.2. Common office software, specifically: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Acrobat Pro.
- 1.3. Video conferencing tools, specifically: Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

2. Required Hardware Capabilities

University computers must also have additional hardware capabilities described below.

- 2.1. Network connection via wifi for laptops or ethernet for desktops.
- 2.2. Ability to listen to audio via built in or external speakers, as well as headphones.
- 2.3. Ability to record video via built in or external web camera.
- 2.4. Ability to record audio via built in or external microphone.
- 2.5. Capability to support an external monitor, keyboard, and mouse.

3. Standard Supported Computer Models

University computers must be purchased from this list of manufacturers and models. For specific models available for purchase, see Appendix section 5.

- 3.1. For Windows computers, the standard laptop is the Dell Latitude, and the standard desktop is the Dell OptiPlex.
- 3.2. For Apple computers, the standard laptop is the MacBook Pro, and the standard desktop is the Mac Mini.

4. Minimum Viable Hardware Specifications

The following are the minimum viable hardware specifications for computers to support the services listed in section

- 2.1. Anything meeting or exceeding the following specs is sufficient.

- 4.1. Operating systems: Windows 10 or macOS 11 (Big Sur)
- 4.2. Hardware Specs: CPU: Intel Core i5, 6th gen; Ram: 4 GB; Storage: 128 GB

5. Computer Lifecycle Purchase List

The following is a standardized list of computers for purchase by the university, including model, specs, and prices.

- 5.1. Standard Dell Laptop: Dell Pro 14; 14-inch screen; CPU: Intel Core Ultra 7; SSD: 512GB; RAM: 32GB; Fingerprint Reader
- 5.2. Standard Mac Laptop: MacBook Air; 13-inch screen; CPU: M4 Chip-10 Core ; SSD: 512GB; RAM: 24GB
- 5.3. Standard Dell Desktop: Dell Pro Slim Plus; CPU: Intel Core Ultra 7; SSD: 512GB; RAM: 16GB. External monitor, webcam/speaker/mic unit, keyboard and mouse included.
- 5.4. Standard Mac Desktop: Mac Mini; CPU: M4 Chip-10 Core ; SSD: 512GB; RAM: 24GB. External monitor, webcam/speaker/mic unit, and Apple Magic Keyboard and Apple Magic Mouse included.
- 5.5. External Monitor: Dell 27-inch screen with built-in "dock" for USB C, USB A 3, and ethernet. Adjustable height, pivot (rotation), swivel, and tilt motion.

