



**CENTRALLY FUNDED
ACADEMIC IT
EQUIPMENT SCHEME

POLICY DOCUMENT**

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Document Approval

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Introduction and Scope

The college has agreed funding in the financial year 2012-13 for IT to provide a number of new services to staff in academic departments. This document covers the policy/rules for the distribution and scope of the way that funding is spent.

The aim of the funding is to start a programme of cyclical computer replacements across all academic departments at RHUL with the aim of improving the performance and reliability for the user and to take advantage of some of the environmental savings that could be realised.

This scheme was trialled initially in 2010-11 and approximately 500 machines were deployed. From that trial further funding has been agreed and the scope expanded to improve the offering.

The Scheme:

- The scheme will provide new and existing staff with one computer per FTE post.
- A staff member will be eligible under this scheme if their post is within an academic department and their current main device is beyond its 4 year lifecycle.
- The lifecycle of computers at RHUL is 4 years. This scheme has been designed and funded based on this.
- The standard offering will be a desk based PC. However, if there is a requirement/case for another style of device instead, e.g. laptop, or more mobile device such as a netbook etc. this will be provided. It should be noted that the level of support currently provided for these other types of device may vary from the current standard.
- For some posts in the department, the choice of machine will be limited because of the software/functionality required i.e. use of RHUL corporate systems which in the main are currently only supported on Windows based machines.
- The device could be PC or Apple Mac based (see appendix A).
- Not all devices/platforms will deliver the same functionality and IT will provide support for making the correct choice based on a user's requirements.
- The choice of computer will be from a catalogue of supported machine configurations.
- If staff require more than one device then this will need to be funded outside of this scheme.
- The amount of annual funding is finite and its distribution will be planned as fairly as possible.

- In rare cases some staff machines may be requested that are above the base specifications. In these situations a case should be made, and if approved, funding can be used from this programme to part-purchase the specialist computer. Costs in addition to that of the standard specification device are charged to the end department.
- In a number of academic areas there is a requirement for specialist computer equipment, e.g. video editing, attachments for mass spectrometers or powerful modelling kit. This scheme excludes such computers.
- The offer does not include personal, small-medium network or specialist printers.
- The funding will extend to the provision of 1 Multi-function device per academic building if necessary to discourage the use of 'expensive to run' smaller printing devices.
- This scheme does not cover the funding of existing PC-Lab arrangements between departments and IT nor does it cover teaching labs within departments not currently centrally funded.
- This scheme does not cover postgraduate computing facilities e.g. PhD student computers, but the budget will be reviewed annually and if funds are available these would be considered.

Appendix A:

Support of Non-Windows Computers (Mac, Android etc.)

For the last 10 years the focus of corporate IT has been with Windows computers with lip-service paid to the alternatives except in specialist areas such as media, marketing etc. Manufacturers of these alternatives have done little to fit into the corporate environment and provide little ability for central management and integration with corporate systems, processes and services (e.g. printing). This situation still remains the case today although manufacturers are realising this and are improving these parts of their systems.

RHUL recognises that at present there is a large gap between the level of support and central management that can be given for alternative equipment. IT are currently assessing this gap and starting to investigate and develop strategies to reduce the gap and trying to understand the associated cost of doing so.