



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Computing Standards

Policy Name: Computing Standards

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies the requirements for ordering desktop and laptop computers, software, and other IT-related products and services.

Applicability

This policy is applicable to employees and third-party vendors and contractors.

Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation

The Office of Information Technology Services and Information Technology Council are responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact Information Technology Services. The Chief Information Officer, in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

Defined Terms

A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.

Data Owner

The individual responsible for classification, retention, and security of data produced, managed, stored, or transmitted by a product or service.

Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM)

A structured document that identifies cybersecurity weaknesses, outlines tasks, and resources for remediation to manage risks and security gaps.

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All computer, software, and IT-related product and service purchases must comply with established standards and procurement processes.

1. Standard Configurations.

All desktop and laptop computers purchased with university funds must comply with the hardware and software configurations established by Information Technology Services (ITS). These standards apply to both Windows and Macintosh platforms and are managed and communicated by ITS, aligning with equipment acquired through the ETSU-Sponsored Computers program.

ITS will prioritize configuring high-quality desktop and laptop computers that meet the majority of campus computing needs while minimizing costs to the university. Standard configurations will include upgrade options to provide flexibility for additional use cases. The Information Technology Council (ITC) will conduct an annual review of both hardware and software to ensure that selected systems and applications continue to support teaching, learning, and research at ETSU.

As part of this process, the ITC will approve a standard software image to be installed on all supported devices, including core applications required for general university use. ITS will be responsible for the installation and support of both hardware and software across university-owned devices. In the event of supply chain disruptions, changes to the standard configuration may be made without prior formal approval from ITC; however, approval by ITC will be sought whenever possible. Detailed information about computer configurations and pricing is available on the [ITS computer options website](#).

2. Purchasing Computing Equipment.

All desktop and laptop computer purchases must be initiated through a departmental requisition submitted in the ETSU procurement system (Voyager). Approval from ITS is required for all requisitions before any purchase is made. The requisition will be routed to ITS for approval after obtaining the necessary approvals from the department and/or college. The use of university-issued credit cards for computer purchases is prohibited.

3. Purchasing Software, Products, and Services.

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Users must comply with all applicable software licensing agreements and restrictions when acquiring, installing, or using software. Software purchased with University funds may not be installed on personal devices until such use has been explicitly authorized.

ITS conducts security reviews of all IT-related software, products, and services over a three-year cycle. The ITS Security Unit may exempt products from review if their intended use poses minimal risk to the university. New products must undergo a review by ITS prior to purchase unless specifically exempted by ITS.

ITS reserves the right to re-assess any software, product, or service following a security incident or the identification of a new vulnerability at any time without notification. If a vendor is slow to respond, the security review process will not move forward until all requests for information are fulfilled by the vendor. If a vendor fails to respond or refuses to provide requested information, the product will be deemed to have failed the security review and may not be used. The use of the product may be revisited if the vendor supplies the information at a later date after the security review is failed in the discretion of the CIO or designee.

The results of the security review, including a Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM), will be communicated to the Data Owner in a risk memo. Data Owners must sign and return the memo to confirm their agreement with the POAM recommendations and provide a contact person for incidents related to the product or service. Products or services that are determined to present a high or greater risk to the university may be rejected. If a product or service is rejected, it shall not be utilized on a university-issued device.

4. Exceptions.

Departments requiring computing equipment that does not align with the university's standard configurations may submit an exception request to ITS. The request must include a justification explaining why the standard configuration does not meet the department's operational or instructional needs. Any hardware or software incompatibility issues shall be documented and included with the request. An appropriate ITS staff member will review the request and provide a written response. Approved exceptions will be reviewed annually by the ITC to determine whether updates to the university's standard configurations are warranted. ITC reserves the right to revoke an exception at any time.

5. Advanced Computing.

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Departments with advanced computing needs may acquire equipment with capabilities beyond the university's standard configurations. Departments must consult with ITS in advance to discuss any special purchasing requirements and potential support limitations. Purchases must be reviewed and approved by CIO or designee prior to purchase. Any agreements regarding ITS support for non-standard equipment will be documented in writing. Basic software applications will be installed, and devices will be properly configured to operate securely on the ETSU network. Advanced computing equipment will be tagged to indicate a non-standard configuration.

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Procedures

N/A

Applicable Forms and Websites

[Computer Purchasing Options](#)

[New IT Product or Service Request Form](#)

Authority and Revisions

Authority: N/A

Previous Policy: University Computing Standards

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.