Purchasing IT Equipment for Research

# Introduction

As a member of staff involved in research you may find that your normal IT resources – for example your desktop PC, [H: and S: drives](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/cit/OnCampusService/SavingFiles/Pages/SavingFiles.aspx) – do not allow you to carry out your research in the most appropriate or efficient manner. In some cases it is possible to overcome these limitations through the purchase of additional IT equipment, but before doing so you should ensure that you have considered all of the services provided by Information Services and are complying with the University’s [Research Data Management Policy](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/research-innovation-office/Documents/Research%20Data%20Management%20Policy.pdf) and [Information Security Policies](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/cit/infosecurity/Pages/InformationSecurityPolicy.aspx). IT equipment which is not compliant with these policies will be unusable with the University network and other IT systems and services.

# Research Data Storage

Research projects are increasingly producing data in electronic formats and this data may need to be retained while research is ongoing as well as after research findings are published. All research data is valuable and needs to be [stored](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/research-innovation-office/research-data/Pages/Storing-Data.aspx) safely, but certain types of research data e.g. clinical data or proprietary information are often provided only on the basis that certain security requirements are met. There also may be restrictions or specific requirements from your funder (research or commercial) around the management and storage of your data. You should ensure that you are aware of these additional conditions, if applicable. If you are uncertain, you should contact [RDM@napier.ac.uk](mailto:RDM@napier.ac.uk) with details of your project on [Worktribe](https://napier-research.worktribe.com/) and/or your [data management plan](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/research-innovation-office/research-data/Pages/Data-Management-Plan.aspx).

Security doesn’t just mean restricting access to data to authorised individuals, it also means ensuring that the data is protected against unintended alteration and loss. Similar to the H: and S: drives provided for use by individuals and schools/departments, all PhD research students are given access to a personal V: drive and any researcher can additionally request the creation of a project-specific X: drive via the IS Service Desk.

While it may seem convenient and cheap to purchase a consumer-grade external USB hard drive or Network Attached Storage (NAS) device for storing research data, doing so may leave your research data at risk of inappropriate disclosure, corruption or outright loss and you may be breaching the conditions under which third-party data was supplied to you, as well as the University’s own [Research Data Management Policy](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/research-innovation-office/Documents/Research%20Data%20Management%20Policy.pdf).

To ensure that your research data is stored securely and that adequate backup arrangements are in place, **you should complete the** [**Data Storage for Research Staff**](https://napier.unidesk.ac.uk/tas/public/ssp/content/serviceflow?unid=4ef280831a0647419920a9a629d93a7a&from=44f3f075-a341-4fd6-bd3f-ac7af4771719&openedFromService=true) **form,** which will be directed to our Data Centre and Operations team who will contact you to discuss your requirements and offer you advice.

# Desktop Computers, Workstations, Laptops (e.g. Windows and Mac)

Information Services provides a managed desktop service which permits access to University storage, lets you utilise University-licenced software applications, enables use of the Multi-Functional Devices for printing and ensures that preventative maintenance is undertaken automatically overnight.

Anyone considering purchasing a desktop computer for research should follow the guidance in the Authorised PC Specification document provided by [Procurement](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/finance/Pages/A-ZDocuments.aspx#procurement). If the specification of the standard PC is unsuitable, **you should complete the** [**Workstations/PCs/Laptops For Research Staff**](https://napier.unidesk.ac.uk/tas/public/ssp/content/serviceflow?unid=b83a0778101f46ce943d7257a20a622c&from=44f3f075-a341-4fd6-bd3f-ac7af4771719&openedFromService=true) **form before making a purchase**.This will log your request and put you in direct contact with a member of our Client Services Team who will be able to advise you further.

If you are considering purchasing a [laptop](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/cit/OnCampusService/Pages/University-owned-laptops.aspx) computer, you should complete the following [**Workstations/PCs/Laptops For Research Staff**](https://napier.unidesk.ac.uk/tas/public/ssp/content/serviceflow?unid=b83a0778101f46ce943d7257a20a622c&from=44f3f075-a341-4fd6-bd3f-ac7af4771719&openedFromService=true) **before making a purchase** to ensure you get the best advice.

# Tablets and Smartphones (e.g. Android and iOS)

Mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones have equivalent levels of functionality to desktop PCs and with similar abilities to access University data. To ensure that this data is protected against loss or malicious activity e.g. theft of the device, it is important to follow the guidance on [Mobile Devices](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/cit/telecommunications/Mobile/Pages/MobileDevices.aspx) and to enrol University devices in the [Mobile Device Management (MDM) service](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/cit/telecommunications/Mobile/Pages/Mobile-Device-Management.aspx).

Mobile devices are purchased by departments and a list of named individuals who should be your first point of contact when looking to buy a new mobile device. The list of contacts can be found [here](https://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/finance/Procurement/Documents/MobileDevicesDeptContacts.pdf).

# Printers and other Peripherals

The University has invested in a [Multi-Function Device (MFD) service](http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/cit/OnCampusService/MFDs/Pages/Multi-Function-Devices.aspx), therefore there shouldn’t be any need to purchase an alternative printer unless an exception permitted by the [University Printing and Print Device Allocation Policy](https://staffworkplace.napier.ac.uk/Services/CIT/centralservices/userinfo/downloads/StaStuUserDocumentation/PMO-1030%20University%20Printing%20and%20Print%20Device%20Allocation%20Policy.pdf) is identified.

Other peripherals such as headsets, webcams, graphics tablets, etc. should be usable without any problems, but you can always seek advice from the IS Service Desk if unsure.

# Servers

Server hardware is typically high-performance and has particular requirements for power, cooling and other environmental factors, as well as requiring regular maintenance to ensure correct operation. The Information Services Data Centre and Operations Team has specialists who perform this work and the servers themselves are housed in dedicated data centres where they are protected and monitored. The University also operates a virtualised data centre environment, allowing server virtual machines to be created quickly, while ensuring that resources are used efficiently and security is maintained.

If you believe your research will require one or more servers, you should complete the following [**Server Request for Research Staff**](https://napier.unidesk.ac.uk/tas/public/ssp/content/serviceflow?unid=801bc68cf04c425e9006dd3a4ce55af7&from=44f3f075-a341-4fd6-bd3f-ac7af4771719&openedFromService=true) **form before making a purchase.** This will log your request with the Data Centre and Operations Team who will contact you directly to discuss your specific requirements. It may be possible to provision servers within the existing virtual environment, or to host new physical servers within University data centres, our Data Centre Team will be able to advise you on your options.

# Network Equipment including Switches and Wireless Routers

The University data network – both wired and wireless – is operated by the Information Services Network & Security Services Team, where specialists aim to ensure high degrees of performance, reliability and security. Due to the design of our network, any expansion of or changes to the existing network need to be carried out by Information Services staff. This is to ensure that any new network infrastructure does not disrupt or interfere with existing services.

If you believe your research will require additional wired or wireless network infrastructure, **you should complete the following** [**Networking Equipment For Research Staff**](https://napier.unidesk.ac.uk/tas/public/ssp/content/serviceflow?unid=7da607f8231c4c34a92da71d600e2113&openedFromService=true) **form,** which will be directed to the appropriate team.

The team will then contact you to discuss your requirements further.

# Advice

If you would like to speak to someone about your requirements, fill in the [Networking Equipment For Research Staff](https://napier.unidesk.ac.uk/tas/public/ssp/content/serviceflow?unid=cfe9b34b1092400baf49b0e0d4fd1674&openedFromService=true) and someone from the most appropriate team will contact you.

Contacting the IS Service Desk

**Online:** <https://napier.unidesk.ac.uk/>  
**Email:** [ISServiceDesk@napier.ac.uk](mailto:ISServiceDesk@napier.ac.uk)  **Telephone:** ext 3000 or (0131) 455 3000 from an external line.