



School of Information Technologies
Faculty of Engineering & IT

LAP-TOPS IN PERSONAL AND UNIVERSITY OWNERSHIP

Risk Management's advice is that long periods of laptop use cause greater numbers of overuse injuries than do desk top computers. The Australian Standard for computer use, which covers aspects such as correct visual distance and screen height, cannot be met when using lap tops alone (without supporting equipment).

Therefore, permission is given for staff and students to use lap top computers, only under the following circumstances:

Ergonomic Issues:

- a. The following procedures must be in place, when working on lap tops for more than one hour per day.
 - a) When using a lap top, users must also use
 - an external keyboard (preferably narrow)
 - an external mouse (must be used at the same height as the keyboard)
 - a stand to raise the monitor to the correct height for the user (top of monitor at eye level when seated).
 - b. Users must ensure correct seating posture see "[The Posture Checklist](#)"
 - c. Safe working guidelines should apply, as with all computer use:
 - Rotation of tasks
 - Regular posture change
 - Avoid glare on screen
 - Ensure correct height of screen
 - Ensure correct posture
 - Use alternate hands if needing to use mouse excessively.

Security Issues:

- a. Security cables and stands are to be purchased for each lap-top, and used whenever the lap top is in use the cable must be carried with the lap top.
- b. When the lap top is not in use for a period of time it should be kept in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet etc.
- c. The lap top should not be left in an unlocked and unattended area.
- d. The lap top should not be left in a vehicle in plain view. If left in vehicle it should be placed in the boot, and should not be left in the vehicle overnight.
- e. Security should be maintained on the equipment when used in a private residence.

- f. **Privately owned computer equipment** can only be insured under the University's policy if the following conditions apply:
- The computer equipment is being brought onto campus for the purpose of conducting university work.
 - The School has no university owned computer equipment available.
 - The HOS has given prior consent to the use of the privately owned computer equipment.
 - The computer equipment is secured by means of a cable and not left in an unlocked or unattended area.
 - A copy of the letter of approval signed by HOS is forwarded to the Risk Management Office.

Postgraduate Student laptop provision policy:

It has been recent practice - though it is not formal policy - to provide PC computing resources to each new research postgraduate student, to the value of \$3,000 (this might involve the re-issue of a previously used PC).

In place of that PC, a postgraduate supervisor may elect to assign a lap top to a student. That lap top must be accompanied by the additional equipment itemized above, to eliminate as far as possible, risks of an OHS kind. The total cost of the lap top and additional equipment beyond \$3,000 will not be borne by the School, but must be borne by **the research laboratory** to which the supervisor belongs.

Given the high risks in this area, the insurer may refuse a claim, or require an excess (of around \$1,000) to be paid again this cost is to be borne by **the research laboratory**.

Before authorizing the purchase of a lap top, the research group leader should take into consideration all the risk factors, and the additional costs which may be incurred. The likelihood of the loss of the equipment is high - the student will be using the equipment both on campus and at home, so it is likely to be frequently transported. A substantial responsibility is placed upon the student and the risk will be fully borne by **the research laboratory**.