Laptop Loan Scheme Policy
Last Reviewed/Updated: 29.01.2021
Next Review/Update: 28.01.2022

What is the Policy?

The policy outlines the responsibilities that Regent College London (RCL) students must accept when they are issued a laptop. This device will be loaned to you only for the duration of your study and it must be returned back to the college in the same state as it was when issued to you.

Objective

To provide students with a loaned laptop for educational purposes for the duration of their course with RCL. The laptops are provided to further enhance academic achievement and they are strictly for educational purposes.

Students will use the laptop responsibly, safely, and respectfully. Students are responsible for the general care of the laptop and accessories they have been issued by RCL.

Why has this Policy been Created?

Laptops provide the convenience of portability. This convenience exposes the college to certain risks. These include but are not limited to: Theft of college property – laptops are easy to steal and their relatively high value and easiness to sell makes them common targets of theft. Exposure of sensitive data or information – misplaced or unsecured laptops may expose sensitive information to the public. Loss of such data could be utilised by sections of the public for illegal purposes. Damage of authority property – laptops can be susceptible to damage both due to their nature and their relatively fragile construction.

What do I Need to Do?

Any student issued with a laptop will need to confirm, by signing an agreement form, that he/she has read, understands and will comply with the policies. The agreement will need to be signed by the student, with a copy kept by the IT department at RCL.

Students will be required to attend a pre-arranged orientation meeting before the laptop will be issued. At the orientation meeting the student will be required to confirm they have read the laptop loan scheme policy and complete the Laptop Loan Scheme Responsibilities Agreement Form.

Usage

When a student is provided with a laptop, he/she accepts responsibility for safeguarding the laptop itself as well as the data stored on it. Students are expected to exercise reasonable care and take the following precautions;

- The laptop should always be locked with a password.
- Avoid leaving your laptop unattended and logged on. Always shut down, log off or lock the screen before walking away from the machine.
- Individual students are accountable for all network and systems access under their user ID, so passwords should be kept absolutely secret. They should never be shared with anyone.
- Will use the laptop in ways that are appropriate and educational.
- The RCL issued laptop must not be loaned or allowed to be used by others.
- The laptop and case must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers or labels that are not the property of RCL.
- Will not disassemble any part of the laptop or attempt any repairs. Disassembling the laptop will invalidate the warranty.
- Laptops should not be used in environments that might increase the likelihood of damage.

Screen Care

- To avoid damaging the screen, only the power supply and power cord should accompany the laptop inside the sleeve.
- Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the device to prevent damage.
- Never close the laptop with anything on the keyboard, such as pencils or notebooks.
- Avoid touching the laptop screen. If you need your screen cleaned please use a clean, soft cloth. No cleansers of any kind.

Protecting and Storing Your Laptop

- Take appropriate steps to protect the laptop from theft and vandalism; laptops should not be left unattended at college or elsewhere.
- The laptop should be kept in a padded carrying case or sleeve if transported.
- Laptops should not be left overnight in college.
- Laptops should never be left in a car.
- When the laptop is not in use, store it in a secure location.
- Protect the laptop from extreme heat and cold.
- If the laptop has been in extreme cold or hot temperatures, let it come up to room temperature before operating it.
- Keep all liquids away from the laptop.
- Never eat or drink while using the laptop.
- Heavy objects should never be placed or stacked on top of the laptop. This includes books, musical instruments, etc.
- Laptops should not be placed on or under soft items, such as blankets, pillows, or sofa cushions. This may cause the laptop to overheat and result in physical damage to the machine.

Virus Protection

Viruses are a major threat. Laptops are particularly vulnerable if their anti-virus software is not kept up to date. We have already pre-installed anti-virus software in every system. You are not authorised to uninstall any existing software from the laptop or install any new software in the system.

Email attachments are one of the main sources of computer viruses. Avoid opening any email attachments unless they are expected from a legitimate source. Report any security incidents (such as virus infections) promptly to the IT Service Desk in order to minimise the risk of damage.

Software Installations

Do not download, install or use unauthorized software programs. Any software that is required to be installed must be installed through IT Services. The IT service will need to have proof of license and will store the license securely for audit purposes.

Laws, Regulations and Policies

You must comply with the relevant laws, regulations and policies applying to the use of the laptop. Software licensing has already been mentioned and privacy laws are another example.

Inappropriate Materials

RCL will not tolerate inappropriate materials such as pornographic, racist, defamatory or harassing files, pictures, videos or email messages that might cause offence or embarrassment. Never store, use, copy or circulate such material on the laptop and steer clear of dubious websites.

Health and Safety Aspects of Using Laptops

Laptops normally have smaller displays and pointing devices that are less comfortable to use than desktop systems, increasing the chance of repetitive strain injury. Please ensure you take suitable breaks when working on a laptop. Where possible, place the laptop on a conventional desk or table. If you experience symptoms such as wrist pain, eye strain or headaches that you think may be caused or exacerbated by your use of the laptop, stop using it and consult your GP at your earliest convenience.

Data Storage and Personal Details

Storing of personal data on the laptop is strictly prohibited. Personal data is represented by but not limited to:

- Files – documents, photos, music files, copies of IDs (driving license, passport copy, national ID)
- Personal emails
- Personal login details to various online platforms such as social media websites, online shopping, banking, etc
- Syncing browsers (logging in with your personal account in one of the browsers)

Acceptable Use of the Webcam and Microphone

All the laptops have a built-in webcam and microphone to facilitate learning using Microsoft Teams. The use of the webcam and microphone is allowed strictly in the context of digital classes provided by RCL and will not be used for any other purposes such as online chat or any other aspect which is not directly related to RCL digital classes.

Damage to or Loss of the Laptop

If the machine is damaged or malfunctioning, it must be reported immediately so it can be repaired or replaced. Under no circumstances should anyone else attempt repairs on the laptop. All laptop repairs must be provided by RCL.

If a laptop is lost or stolen, it must be reported immediately to the college and the police. We will require a police report from you once this has been carried out. Failure to comply with this policy could lead to disciplinary action.

If a student's laptop is stolen/damaged (this will include any disassembly work or parts replacement), the student will be responsible for the replacement costs of £500.00.

Reporting Damage or Loss

Any damage or loss must be reported at the very earliest opportunity to RCL's IT services. The Service Desk can be reached by email at support@regentgroup.org.uk. Please have your machine asset tag number (which is blue and can be found on the front of your laptop keyboard) and your Higher Education (HE) student number to hand when contacting the IT Service Desk.

Returning Your Laptop

All laptops may need to be returned to RCL at the end of each academic year to inspect and carry out any maintenance. Students will be contacted before the end of each academic year to make arrangement to drop off the machine if this is required.

Students MUST return the laptop at the end of their course or immediately if they withdraw or are excluded from their course. It is their sole responsibility to return the laptop. Failure to return the machine will result in the student being invoiced for the full replacement cost of the laptop and/or we may place a hold on graduation until the laptop is returned.

The laptop must be returned in the same condition in which the student received it and in the same packaging in which it was given to them. This can be returned in person or by using a reputable courier service. If a courier service is used, the student must ensure the laptop is insured for loss during delivery. The student remains solely responsible for the machine until it is received by the college.

Supervision and Monitoring

RCL and network administrators and their authorised employees monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on RCL's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions, and will furnish evidence of crime to the relevant authorities. They may also be referred to a safety and well-being officer in certain circumstances.