

POLICY TITLE: Disposal of Information and Communication Technology Equipment (Electronic-waste management)

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BREIF DESCRIPTION:

Information and Communication Technology equipment has an average useful life span of four years. After the lapse of its useful life, this equipment is considered to be obsolete. Obsolete equipment should be disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner.

The University as one of the highest consumer organizations of ICT equipment is obliged by law to implement a sustainable environmentally friendly electronic waste disposal policy.

All information and Technology equipment has an average life span of 4 (four) years because new computer technology evolves almost every 6 months. After 4 years this equipment gets depreciated and obsolete. Obsolete equipment may continue to function during its salvage value for a while before it outlives its usefulness. War and tear of obsolete equipment can be hastened by the conditions which the equipment is subjected to like power stability, dust, end-user handling and moisture.

ICT equipment that is due to outlive its useful life continues to erode the quality of end-user output through regular breakdown until it completely degenerates for disposal. Before disposing of any hardware, functional components of some ICT equipment like computers may be salvaged to assemble a functional equipment like personal computer, which may then be re-deployed for use, donation or sale.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The central University ICT Support unit (DICTS) is mandated with the monitoring of acquisition and management of disposal of all university equipment. The central support unit in consultation with the User unit, will develop guidelines and make recommendations for useful life spans of different equipment, salvaging, storing, donating, trashing and disposing of obsolete information technology products. Through the ICT Central unit, the University will maintain university partnerships with relevant policy and disposal organizations like the National environmental Authority (NEMA), Electronic waste collectors, refurbishers, ICT importers and assemblers, distributors and retailers.

All University user (academic and administrative) units are required to avail obsolete ICT equipment to the central ICT support unit for disposal.

PROCEDURE:

The central ICT Support Unit, will electronically track the physical locations and status of all core ICT hardware components on the university network in its database.

Any user unit wishing to dispose of obsolete ICT equipment should contact the central ICT support unit which will evaluate the hardware and determine the appropriate course of action, according to set guidelines.

ICT equipment may be disposed of in the following ways:

- Recoveries from offices/labs - Equipment identified for disposal during the bi annual information system hardware audits, from offices /labs may be salvaged and re-assembled. The refurbished computers maybe placed in a pool of computers of allocation to new staff or staff in need of computers for document production. Alternatively the computers may be placed in student common rooms for general computing needs (Internet browsing, document production etc).
- Hardware sale - Obsolete hardware may be sold at salvage value. The University Finance Department (Bursar's office) may assess the hardware and advise appropriate market price for the hardware sale. The Finance department may also advise on the procedures of hardware sales. All hardware for sale should be presented to the central ICT support unit for technical inspection to ensure that it does not any licensed software or university information. The Systems Administrators at the user units will delete all information on the hardware and replace existing software with free equivalents, before the technical inspection.
- Hardware donations – Obsolete hardware for donation to community outside the university should follow guidelines laid down by the national policies on deployment of used technology equipment and environmental conservation. All hardware for donation should be presented to the central ICT support unit for technical inspection to ensure that it does not any licensed software or university information. The Systems Administrators at the user units will delete all information on the hardware and replace existing software with free equivalents, before the technical inspection.

Hardware can be sold or donated to deserving communities, recyclers that include collectors, importers and assemblers.

- Hardware destruction - Obsolete hardware that may neither be salvaged, nor sold nor donated may be destroyed. An inventory of hardware that has been destroyed or is due for destruction must be maintained. All hardware destruction should be done in accordance with available hardware destruction statutes or legal requirements.

Glossary of terms

Consumers	An organisation or individual that uses electrical and electronic equipment and then discards it as waste after the equipment has reached its end-of-life. Note that the end-of-life for a consumer is the functional use of the equipment by that consumer, and may feed into the second-hand market directly or through refurbishers.
End-of-life	Refers to the end of the useful life of equipment in a particular environment. The equipment may then be passed onto the second-hand market. This is distinct from lifespan, which describes the total functional life of the equipment.
E-waste	Electronic waste (e-waste) refers to electrical or electronic equipment, which is waste, including all components, subassemblies and consumables, which are part of the product at the time of discarding. It includes computers and entertainment electronics consisting of valuable as well as harmful and toxic components.
Distributors / retailers	Include all bodies selling equipment to the end-consumer, including donated computers.
Recyclers	Organizations dismantling, separating fractions, and recovering material from e-waste after the lifespan of the equipment. This includes plastic, copper, gold etc.
Refurbishers	Refurbishing extends the functional life of equipment. Refurbishers include the repair and service centres. They often feed into the second-hand market.
Importers/ assemblers	Importers and/or assemblers of branded and non-branded electrical and electronic equipment.
Collectors	Formal or non-formal bodies that collect e-waste. This may involve procuring bonded computers from government and parastatals, collecting old computers from private sector organisations etc. Includes informal rag-tag collectors.