

Information Technology and Digital Services Protocols During the COVID-19 Pandemic

This document outlines several Technology programs and services to support the University community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further information regarding these programs and services can be found at:

<https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/covid-itds>

1. COVID-19 Laptop Program

The following protocol outlines how University Laptops will be loaned to support Western Sydney University identified critical staff roles and students should the situation arise where they are unable to work on campus. The University has obtained a limited number of laptops which will be deployed on a priority basis in alignment with the University's asset management procedures.

Devices will only be allocated to staff who have a critical forward-facing role and do not have a pre-existing University issued laptop or personal device. Staff in specific critical roles are exempt from this provision.

The University will not provide additional devices and peripherals such as iPads, tablets, Wi-Fi internet dongles, headsets, microphones, webcams etc.

The University reserves the right to reclaim any devices at any time. Divisions and University Entities will be financially responsible for loss, theft or damage incurred to any devices that have been provided under the loaned device arrangement.

Priority 1

The University will issue devices to identified essential staff in forward facing or critical operational roles e.g. Contact Centre, Service Desk, Specialised Application Support, Security etc. The distribution of devices will be based on advice provided by management with the final determination to be made by the relevant portfolio Senior Executive Group Member. Allocation is done on a prioritised basis and is subject to availability.

Priority 2

The University will issue devices to academic staff in teaching and research roles on an as needs basis. The distribution of devices will be based on advice provided by management with the final determination to be made by the relevant portfolio Dean or Senior Executive Group Member. Allocation is done on a prioritised basis and is subject to availability.

Priority 3

The University will issue devices to students where the student makes a formal request and the need is verified. It is anticipated these requests will be managed by Student Welfare Services and/or Graduate Research School. Allocation is done on a prioritised basis and is subject to availability.

Special Cases

In extraordinary circumstances other University entities e.g. The College may request devices for their staff and students. In this situation the final determination will be made by the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor.

The relevant delegate in each of the above priority areas will have the authority to, on a case-by-case basis, provide cellular internet access.

The laptops will be distributed to each campus. Delivery will occur via a 2 campus per day, scheduled in conjunction with blocked appointment times e.g. 10am – 12pm and 1pm – 3pm. This will be managed by the Procurement, Asset & Equipment Team.

Divisions and entities will be responsible for any damage incurred to the loan laptop fleet. In the case of students, students themselves will be liable for any damage that may arise.

2. Home Internet, Mobile Phone and Data Services when working from Home

In the scenario where Western Sydney University staff are required to alter working arrangements and work at home as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the following apply

- The University will not provide financial support to staff requiring home internet and/or mobile telephony and data services for work at home.

Staff are encouraged to refer to the Australian Taxation Office for information on working at home deductions:

<https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/income-and-deductions/deductions-you-can-claim/home-office-expenses/>

Staff with personal mobile and internet services may wish to consult their telecommunications provider to ascertain if relief options are available during this pandemic.

Staff are permitted to use home WIFI or hot spot their personal mobile phone to University laptop to get internet connectivity when home.

- Where a staff member's function is identified as critical to the University's operations by their member of Senior Executive, staff will be entitled to claim the normal allowances under the Mobile Phone policy from the University for the duration of the pandemic.
- Staff members who have a University issued mobile phone and/or data service should use the service reasonably and responsibly. Costs incurred will be charged to individual cost centres as per normal practice. Such staff can hot spot their mobile phone to their University or personal devices.
- The portfolio Senior Executive will consider, on a case-by-case basis providing cellular internet services where a staff member has been issued a laptop as part of the COVID-19 Laptop Program and does not presently have access to the internet.

3. Access to University VPN Services

Western Sydney University has implemented a limited capacity Virtual Private Network (VPN) solution, which provides secure access to the University network through PC or Mac using a software client. The VPN service provides access to:

- University telephony infrastructure for call centres and other critical functions.
- Windows File Shares and Folders e.g. My Documents
- Internally hosted Services, only accessible via the Western network e.g. Syllabus Plus.
- Specialist instrumentation connected directly to the WSU network in certain cases.
- Interactive services such as Secure Shell servers (SSH) and/or Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP) in certain cases.

The VPN is not a mainstream service, and is not intended to be accessible to the entire University community. The VPN will be compatible with University issued Windows and Mac OS devices. Access on personal devices will be considered where there is a genuine need and parties can demonstrate a suitable virus scanner is installed.

Staff can apply for a VPN account by contacting the ITDS Service Desk, making a request and answering a number of questions to demonstrate the need. The questions will include:

- What services do you need access to that cannot be accessed using Citrix or normal internet access?
- Will you be accessing this from a University device or a personal device?
- If you intend to use a personal device, what operating systems are you using and what security controls have you implemented?

- If no controls are implemented are you prepared to install a virus scanner on your device.

The Chief Information and Digital Officer or nominated delegate will evaluate each case on its own merits and make a determination. Further information will be published on the ITDS COVID-19 website:

<https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/covid-itds>

4. Office Telephony Services when at Home

Staff of Western Sydney University each have an office phone and corresponding number.

During these challenging times, staff will be at the office infrequently or not at all and may feel compelled to forward their desk phone to a mobile phone number.

The University does not support forwarding desk phones to mobiles for technical reasons, except where explicit approval has been granted by the Chief Information and Digital Officer.

Staff are urged to leave a voice mail directing enquiries to an alternate phone number. Instructions on setting up or changing your voicemail can be found here:

https://wsu.service-now.com/it?id=kb_article&sys_id=7dd0309b70b3814023beff9b82ab5a9

5. University Call Centres

The University will continue to operate its call centres on campus as long as it can and in the event of a closure, remotely where possible. The call centres are:

Contact Service Centre
Student Central
Transition Success
Western Success
Client Services Team
Student Experience, Administration and Enquiries
IT Service Desk
Human Resources

Staff in these call centres are considered critical forward-facing staff and as such, special technology considerations will apply in terms of laptop distribution, telephony support etc.

6. Taking University Equipment Home

The University will not allow staff to take desktop computers home. It will however permit monitors, keyboards, mice, docking stations etc. to be taken home. A register of any equipment being taken off site must be kept and forwarded to your department head in accordance with the Universities asset management procedures.

Divisions and University Entities will be financially responsible for loss, theft or damage incurred to any devices that have been provided under the loaned device arrangement.

For further information, regarding Equipment and Assets please contact the Procurement Asset and Equipment team via email pae@westernsydney.edu.au or 02 4570 1487.