IT Equipment Disposal Policy

1 Purpose

1.1 This document sets out the University’s policy on the disposal of computer equipment and data storing devices. It aims to ensure that the University observes various pieces of legislation, including:
- the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA)
- the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2006 (WEEE)
- the Environmental Protection Act 1990
- the Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991

1.2 It aims to protect both University-IT equipment and sensitive information from unauthorised access and use.

1.3 It aims to ensure that the University’s recycling objectives are met.

1.4 It aims to ensure that the University complies with any software licence obligations that may be on the disk.

2 Why IT-equipment disposal is important and the consequences of non-compliance

2.1 The development of sophisticated data retrieval techniques mean that information previously thought to be deleted from University-owned devices can now be ‘reformed’ or ‘undeleted’; this creates significant risks for the University, including reputational damage and enforcement action from the Information Commissioner who can impose monetary penalties of up to £500,000 for breaches of the DPA.

2.2 The disposal of IT equipment therefore requires careful, professional handling to ensure that it is done securely and competently.

2.3 Staff may need to consider the licensing provisions for software on IT devices. Advice can be sought from the University’s Copyright and Compliance Officer on copyright@reading.ac.uk
3 Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all staff, students and anyone who use University-owned IT equipment.

3.2 It applies to University-owned IT equipment and devices, including computers, servers, laptops, notebooks, iPads, tablets, mobile phones; any printers, photocopiers, and scanners with internal data storage facilities; and any external hard drives, memory sticks and any other data storing device not listed above.

3.3 Members of staff may also dispose of their private data bearing devices and accessories through the University’s on-line store.

Users of this service should note that once items are logged for disposal neither devices nor data on them can be retrieved. Users should assume that both will be securely destroyed. It is the responsibility of users to ensure data is removed. The University will not be held liable for the loss of any data, or any device, once submitted for disposal.

4 Policy statements

4.1 Other than devices that have held high risk personal data or sensitive information (see www.reading.ac.uk/encryption-policy, section 7), all IT equipment that is no longer required should be offered to other University units prior to disposal (See Procurement Website www.reading.ac.uk/closed/procurement/policyproceduresguidance/proc-inventory.aspx#9 for further details). Devices that have high risk personal data or sensitive information (see www.reading.ac.uk/encryption-policy, section 7) must be disposed of as detailed in 4.2 below.

4.2 If no other School or Department within the University can use the equipment and it has to be disposed of then the online disposal form must be completed: - www.fmd.reading.ac.uk/For_University_staff/Campus_services/Waste/Disposal_Request/

4.3 University-owned IT equipment must not be sold or given to any member of staff, student or third party.

4.4 University-owned IT equipment must only be disposed of via the University’s contracted company for the disposal of computer equipment.

4.5 All University owned computer equipment awaiting disposal must be stored in a secure area.

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