

Management of Campus Information Services

General policies and strategies for Information Technology (IT) in UNIMAS are determined by an **Information Services Committee** chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. The official IT Policy and Strategy document has been circulated some time ago to all heads of academic and administrative units, and should be available for reference from their respective offices.

Under the Information Services Committee is a **Technical Committee** (TECIS) set up to facilitate implementation of the policies and strategies. In particular, it will:

1. promote synergy amongst campus IT providers; specifically, through co-ordination of services currently provided by CAIS, MIS, CALM, COL, and the Faculties of IT and Engineering.
2. ensure that systems and services are developed in line with the IT Policy (particularly interconnection, interoperability and integration policies)
3. regulate systems, standards and quality of services
4. promote a campus IT culture

The roles of providers mentioned in (1) above will be described in this and subsequent issues of the newsletter.

In regard to (2), some guidelines have been produced to help users plan for and decide on personal computer configurations and quantity. Also, an acquisition procedure has now been put in place in line with charters (2) and (3). This procedure covers all IT hardware and software purchases (see page 2).

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The primary motivation for creating this newsletter is to raise IT awareness and to promote a campus IT culture...

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Policies and Guidelines on Personal Computers (Windows-based and Macintosh PCs)

Table 1 below states the prevailing policy on the ratio of PCs to users for the various categories of users. These machines are intended to support normal daily use in course preparation and administration, communication (hard-copy and electronic), research publication, personal management (e.g. electronic diary, spreadsheets), personal databases (e.g. contacts profile), small research databases, INTERNET access, data analysis, general computing, etc. The ratios do not include the use of PCs with special configurations required for specific research or development purposes that are not otherwise supportable on "standard" configurations. For these, the required configuration and number must be appropriately justified.

User Category	PC:User
Lecturers	1:1
Tutors and full-time postgraduate students	1:2
Part-time postgraduate students	1:4
Administration Directors/Managers/Heads	1:1
Administration - PA	1:1
Administration - general offices	based on function

Table 1. PC:User Ratio

Group	No. of Printers
Deanery/HOD Office Area	1
General Office	1
Academics office & Labs	1 for every 15 PCs

Table 2. Number of Printers

Undergraduate Student Usage

General purpose centralised PC facilities for student use are available at CAIS, CALM and in the student hostels. The numbers available will be adjusted from time to time depending on need and affordability. These machines will typically be loaded with frequently used productivity software (e.g. word processors, spreadsheets, network access, etc.). Special-purpose software may be requested but their installation may not always be possible (e.g. resources required, such as disk space or memory, may be insufficient). Where the situation warrants it, upgrades may be considered, or specialised facilities may be acquired.

PC labs may be set up to support specific courses/programmes. Preferably, standard configurations should be used. In planning for an appropriate number of PCs, the following formula can be used:

$$\text{Number of PCs} = \left\lceil \frac{hw \times sn}{hl} \right\rceil$$

where hw = the number of hours per week required by an average student
 sn = the expected number of students
 hl = the number of hours per week that the lab is utilised

A contingency of approximately 10-20% may be added to account for downtime and access timetabling constraints.

In using the above formula, please strive to substitute realistic values, particularly when estimating the average number of hours required by a student per week, and the total utilisation hours of a lab. Please keep in mind also the university definition of one credit when estimating student usage for a given course (or set of courses)

Guidelines on PC Types

Usually, the type of PCs for user categories in Table 1 is Windows-based PC. This is principally due to costs and ease of managing interoperability. Macintosh PCs can usually be acquired over and above personal computing support, i.e. as shared resources to support specialised uses. Special cases, however, may be considered with appropriate justifications.

Standard (Recommended) PC Configurations

Standard PC and Macintosh specification sheets may be obtained from the Computer and Network Section of CAIS.

Procedure for Acquisition of IT Facilities

This procedure applies to the acquisition and upgrade of computers, associated peripherals, add-on components, networks, software¹, and other items as from time to time are included on the grounds that their purchase and deployment have or may have an impact on the campus-wide IT services and operations.

Please refer to the document² "Commentary and Explanations on the UNIMAS IT policy and its implications on Faculties, Centres and Institutes" to understand the need for such a procedure.

The procedure is as follows:

1. Clearly describe the function to be served by the IT facility to be acquired
2. Prepare quotation/tender specifications of the facility (CAIS can assist in translating your requirements into technical specifications, if so requested)
3. Submit the above to their respective HODs/Deans, CAIS, Computer Networking and Services.
4. If requested facilities were standard PCs and adhered to the policies and guidelines on quantity, it would simply be recorded and forwarded to the Finance Section for further action. Otherwise, it would be brought to TECIS for comments.
5. If the matter was brought to TECIS, it will subsequently be forwarded to the Finance

¹ With the exception of software under the Microsoft Select Programme, which is practised now and documented elsewhere.

² This document was circulated earlier to offices of the heads of faculties, centres, institutes and administrative units.

Section (with a copy to the requesting party) with relevant comments, reservations and recommendations. Subsequent action will depend on the specific recommendations and may involve a revision of (1) and (2) above and resubmission of the plans. Otherwise, further action will follow prevailing practices in acquisition.

In any case, please note that if reservations about some facility are not addressed, CAIS will not be obliged to provide central support for such facility.

CAIS Computer Networking And Services (CAIS/CNS)

CAIS/CNS deals with the campus networking and computing infrastructure, and operations.

CAIS PC Lab

This is a general access lab for student and staff. Currently, there are 30 units of PCs available and bookings can be made at the centre's counter. The software available is Microsoft Office Professional (Word, Powerpoint, Excel, Access), Windows For Workgroup and MS-DOS. Special-purpose software may be requested but their installation will depend on availability of resources (e.g. disk space)

Internet Service

The centre provides Internet Electronic Mail (e-mail) services to users which include creating E-mail addresses, preparation of necessary software/hardware as well as guiding users on using e-mail facilities. *Eudora* was chosen as the tool for its ease of use, intuitive graphical user interface and folder management facilities. *Eudora* will download the user's e-mail from the e-mail server to his/her system. Otherwise, if users don't have a desktop, they should have their own "E-mail Diskette" to hold their e-mail.

We hope to provide you with other Internet services like *Usenet News* in the near future.

Microsoft Select Programme

UNIMAS has signed an agreement with Microsoft, the US-based computer software company, which gives us, amongst other benefits:

- Attractive volume-based pricing (e.g. the recommended retail price for "Microsoft Office Professional" is RM 1,600 but the price for UNIMAS is RM 152).
- Faster and easier licence agreement process with standardised policies, i.e. protection from the risk of inadvertent copyright infringement.

The agreement covers a 2 year period (since April 1994) and volume discounts are based on UNIMAS 2 year buying projections of 1,000 points of a given product pool (e.g. Microsoft Office Professional is worth 2 points and Windows NT Advanced server is worth 40 points). It is therefore very important that every acquisition of Microsoft products (including the Windows 3.1/ MS-DOS that you have pre-installed when you buy your computer) be reported and accounted for so that we may continue with this favourable pricing.

Microsoft software products that run on IBM compatible 386 and higher PCs (running DOS/ Windows Operating System) or Apple Macintosh computers can be obtained under this programme.

Computer Virus

A virus is a computer program designed as a prank or sabotage, that replicates itself by attaching to other programs and carrying unwanted and sometimes damaging operations such as destruction of important files. Thus, it is important that you scan your computer for viruses regularly.

The anti-virus software we are using in UNIMAS is called McAfee. However, there are other viruses that cannot be removed by McAfee like Stealth [Genp], 69, DH2 etc. Please contact CAIS/CNS if you have problems removing viruses.

Fault Reporting

Faults or failures pertaining to computer hardware and peripheral purchased through CNS as well as software supplied by CNS should be reported to the section. Action will be taken by the support group to rectify the problems. Current support is limited to PCs and network printing problems. Support for other facilities must be prearranged with the respective suppliers.

Electronic News Update

Most news in future will be electronically communicated. To receive news electronically, you must be a registered e-mail user (please refer to CAIS /CNS for an account, if you do not already have one). You will then receive news as an e-mail.

Summary of Services

Services/Facilities	Clientele	Procedures
CAIS PC Lab	student, staff	Operating time = Library Operating Hours. <u>Individual Bookings:</u> - CAIS Information Counter <u>Bookings for Lectures/Seminars:</u> - Email to NOC
Internet Services	staff (eventually students)	<u>Preparation of Hardware for Networking:</u> - Email to NOC <u>Registration of New E-mail users:</u> - Fill a form at CNS - CNS staff may assist new users on Eudora
Microsoft Select Software Acquisition	UNIMAS machines only	Fill in Borang Perolehan Sofwer at CNS
Removing Virus	staff, student	CNS staff may assist if users have problems removing viruses.
Fault Reporting	all	Email to NOC
Electronic News Update	staff	Staff must have an email account
Standard PCs/computer peripherals specification	department, faculties	Latest specification that has been approved by TECIS is available

Network Operation Centre(NOC)

For fault reporting and/or help on Networking Services please email:

noc@cais.unimas.my

NOC will respond within 2 working days

EMOTICONS

(extracted/adapted from "Minding Your Cyber-Manners on the Internet", Donald Rose, Alpha Books, 1994)

There are not a lot of ways to convey emotion to your electronic messages. However, "emoticons" are one welcome exception. They can be used to convey humour, sadness, silliness, whimsy, anger, and in general show you have a fun side.

You read emoticons by tilting your head (or your mind) to the left. (No, they were not invented by someone who was a pain in the neck).

Should you use these all the time? Perhaps not - it's really up to you. Emoticons help clarify shades of meaning, but remember that making your words clear helps even more.

Here is a selection of emoticons, along with their common names and/or descriptions:

: -)	Smile, smiley, or happy face (indicating humour). The most popular emoticon by far.
:)	a noseless smiley (or sans nose if you speak Frenglish)
:.)	a small-skewed-button-nosed smiley
8-)	smile from someone wearing glasses
B-)	another version
:>	ironic or devious smile
;-)	yet another happy face; a knowing smile (winking, which means there may be a devilish side to your words)
:-)	a happy face with a beauty mark on the upper lip (e.g., a Cindy-Crawford-type model)
:-(the anti-smiley (frown, that is; let down, sad)
>:-(someone mad or annoyed
 :- 	I am not impressed (or "no reaction")
>:-)	evil grin (could use after tricking someone or saying something a bit devilish or controversial)
:-Q	sticking your tongue out at the reader
:-O	a big mouth (e.g., when you feel you rambled on)
:-O	surprised face (or a big mouth, or Mick Jagger, who is often online on DELPHI, BTW)
@>,-,-'	a rose (sometimes useful in virtual dating)
xxooxxoo	love & kisses (which, like the rose, is great for date mail)
:^)	a noseey smiley