Hello

The following is general advice on the purchase of laptops for Midwifery students. It is not so much a recommendation of specific brands or stores but the laptop specifications i.e. how powerful or capable they are.

Apple Macs are generally quite good, they can do things that PC’s cannot, but you are paying a premium price for features that are not likely to be used by your typical Midwife student. Hence, ‘PC’ laptops are generally better value.

If you do decide to buy a Mac Book, do not buy anything that is older than two years due to compatibility issues with software commonly found at Otago Polytechnic (OP). Technically speaking Mac version 10.14 or newer is preferable. For Mac’s you should aim to have a minimum of 8 GB of RAM and 256 GB SSD for storage.

For PC’s your minimum RAM should be 8 GB and storage (Hard Disk Drive, HDD) should ideally be 256 GB or better. However, there are some good value for money models that only have 4 GB storage that have other good features which can make up for this. SSD stands for solid-state drive, they have superseded the older ‘rotational’ drives and are by far a much better option in terms of reliability and storage space.

In terms of software for non-Apple laptops you should aim for either Windows 10 Home or Windows 10 Pro. Some Windows laptops have Windows 10 S operating software, S means it has restrictions as in only being allowed to download Microsoft software. This can be changed to normal unrestricted mode but laptops with this ‘S’ mode tend to be more limited in their capabilities.

Please remember that you get the latest copy of Microsoft Office, also known as Office 365 (O365), from OP for free. You can access it via student email account the ‘Office 365’ button by going to:

<https://studentservices.op.ac.nz/it-support/office-365/> If you are unsure of the installation process we are only to help to install it for you.

Please make use of another important application and that is MS One Drive. This is cloud-based storage, which is files and folders saved in a remote application not on your own device. We strongly urge you to back-up and save your files in a remote location such as this. This way if your own device gets lost or damaged you don’t lose important data because it is saved elsewhere.

Consider how many ports (such as USB, Display Port and HDMI) you might need to run other devices such as USB memory sticks and printers. Most modern printers can be connected via Wi-Fi but it is a good idea to be able to connect via a cable port as a backup. Given the nature of your course, it is recommended that you have a webcam as well.

HP, Dell, Toshiba, Lenovo, Microsoft and Dell are good and reliable brands that work well overall. Typical price range for what your students need are about $600-$1100.

If you are buying 2nd hand thru the likes of Trade Me or private sales be very careful as you don’t always know what you are getting. Always ask questions like ‘why are they selling’ or ‘has been it upgraded since the original purchase’?

Please note that the web links below will not last forever, but you can still refer to the Brand/Model types for further information. The links were accurate for the week ending 21/10/2020.

<https://www.jbhifi.co.nz/computers-tablets/laptops/lenovo/lenovo-ideapad-3-3020e-15ada05-15-6-laptop/383943/> The **Lenovo ideapad3 3020e** is a good basic unit costing $699 with the minimum capabilities of 4 GB of Ram and 128 GB SSD for storage. It has the ‘S’ version of Windows 10 which can limit its capabilities. It does have a reasonable screen size.

<https://www.noelleeming.co.nz/shop/prod190733.html>. **Microsoft Surface Go 2 Pentium Gold** 8GB RAM 128GB SSD, cost of **$989**. A good lightweight laptop, easier to cart around and reasonably priced for its features. Good storage and processor, only downside is a smaller screen.

<https://www.harveynorman.co.nz/computers/laptops/hp-15s-fq1031tu-15.6-laptop.html>

**HP 15S-FQ1031TU 15.6" Laptop,** cost of **$1498**

While this is more expensive than others it is good value for money. It has good storage and processor capability with a good-sized display and web cam as well.

<https://www.harveynorman.co.nz/computers/laptops/?sort_by=price&sort_order=asc>

**Acer TravelMate B118 Celeron N4000 11.6" Laptop**, at a cost of only **$497** this is a good entry-level device designed for study. While it has limited features compared to other laptops this is great value for money, even taking into account the small screen size 11.6”

**Chromebooks** are cheaper still and work ok but have rather limited functionality and only allow Google apps to be installed on them. There are applications that you will use here at OP that may not work on Chrome devices. The same goes for some of the in-house brands at the likes of Warehouse Stationary and the Warehouse.

**Tablets** such as Samsung Android and Apple IPads are handy lightweight devices but they sometimes lack the functions and features which Midwifery students are likely to need. If you are looking at getting one, please feel free to get our advice.

Another point to note for students, extended warranties can be overpriced and should be treated with caution. All devices have an automatic 1-year warranty, which is guaranteed by the consumer guarantees act 1993. If you do go for an extended warranty, you should not pay any more than $100 for a 1-year extended warranty. Typically, you will be offered one for $120-140, not worth it at that price.

Virtually all laptops come bundled with free Norton’s or MacAfee’s anti-virus programs. We don’t advise paying for an extended subscription on these two programs. They work ok however there are plenty of other good free programs like ‘Avast’ and ‘Malwarebytes’, they work well for student’s needs and they are free! IT Service Desk is more than happy to help set them up for you as well as provide general IT advice.

It pays to shop around and see what deals and special offers the different shops offer. Most will offer a student discount, so don’t forget to bring your student ID card!

**Disclaimer**: While every effort is made to be accurate and up to date prices and availability do change, particularly with Covid 19 affecting the supply of computer equipment here in NZ. What has been listed is intended as general advice and not intended as a specific endorsement of a particular brand or shop. We just want you to get a good value for money device that will help get you through your studies :-)

Best Regards

IT Service Desk, Room H107