HelpDesk Service Level Agreement

This document serves as a set of guidelines to inform decision making within Earlham Computing Services (ECS) as well as a guide for community members to better understand the Micro Computer support services provided by ECS. The document is limited in scope in that it sets official policy for providing help through the HelpDesk. Because ECS is very service minded there are other avenues by which service is provided, e.g., staff freely help students in the Lilly computer lab even in the evenings and on weekends; staff interact with faculty, staff and students across campus in many settings besides a formal "office call." By setting down these policies and channeling requests for help through the HelpDesk we hope to provide better service, have an accurate profile of user training needs, and demonstrate the appropriate level of staff needed to handle the volume of requests.

In developing this document, ECS and the Information Technology Policy Committee (ITPC) assume that training is an important aspect of effective support for the use of computer technology. Through tracking the kinds of questions received at the HelpDesk, ECS plans to develop and offer timely and appropriate training sessions.

This document will change over time as circumstances warrant and therefore it is a work in progress. The document was prepared by Information Services and reviewed by ITPC. Questions and comments are welcome. Please contact the Director of Computing Services, Coordinator of Information Services or members of ITPC.

Who Is Covered Under This Agreement

This agreement is intended to cover all Earlham College Administrative and Academic departments, units, and programs as determined by ITPC, including:

| Student Government and Organizational Offices |
| Students Connected to the College Network |

Methods of Contact

The HelpDesk acts as a central point of contact for all technical support, including hardware and software questions and consulting, installations, networking, network connection requests, and troubleshooting. Faculty and staff may submit requests online, by sending e-mail to helpdesk@earlham.edu, or by calling 973-2000 (on campus, dial x2000). Please note that due to staffing limitations phone support may not be immediately available at all times.

Hours of Operation

Assistance will normally be available from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except when the College is closed due to holidays, administrative closings, or inclement weather. Phone coverage may not be available at all times due to staffing limitations. Requests can be submitted online or by e-mail 24 hours a day.
Responsibilities of Those Making a Request

Before contacting the Helpdesk users should explore help that is readily available in their departments. This help might come from the help utility that is built into each application and the operating system software, and/or peers in the department.

When such local help has been exhausted and assistance is needed, then the users should contact the HelpDesk through one of the methods described in Section 2. In contacting the HelpDesk provide the following information:

- Complete contact information (first and last name, department, and phone number)
- Type of computer on which you are experiencing the problem (Dell or Macintosh, Desktop or Laptop), and operating system (Mac OS X, Windows 2000 or XP)
- A clear and specific description of the problem or request, including information regarding any error messages you may have received.

Computer Equipment Replacement Guidelines

Replacement Cycle

The average replacement cycle for college owned computers, in primary placement locations, is 4 years. Primary placement locations include ECS managed labs and systems specifically designated to individual faculty and staff.

Computer equipment located in secondary placement locations, such as departmental classrooms, non grant-funded departmental labs, student government organizations, departmental student worker systems, etc., will be replaced with suitable recycled systems as they become available.

Computer equipment originally acquired through grant funding or direct departmental funds, will be replaced with suitable recycled systems and treated as secondary placement equipment, if additional grant money or departmental funding, is not available to replace it with new equipment.

Expansion of primary or secondary computer equipment, must be approved by the Director of Computing Services in consultation with the IS Directors and appropriate senior administrators.

New Computer Hardware Expansion Guidelines

Requests to add new computing equipment to our existing inventory, that are not being funded through grants or departmental funds, must be submitted to the Director of Computing Services, by the departmental supervisor. The requests will be reviewed by a committee that will be composed of the IS directors, one faculty member from ITPC and the Instructional Technologist or other experts as appropriate to the request. Funding will be sought for requests that pass this review.

Replacement Equipment Guidelines

In an effort to improve support and keep costs down ECS selects computer configurations and models that will meet the computing needs of the average user for the term of the replacement cycle. ECS will upgrade components of the system as appropriate to keep it at a reasonable level of functionality for the term of the replacement cycle.

The selected system should allow the user to create word processing documents, spreadsheets, simple multimedia presentations, and web pages, as well as check e-mail and access information on the Internet in a reasonably efficient fashion.
Hardware Support

Hardware support is divided into three different categories: fully supported, minimally supported, networked only.

**Fully Supported**
This category refers to college-owned hardware purchased through or in consultation with Computing Services that fall into one of the following three criteria.

ECS has chosen Dell to be the PC vendor of choice for all operating systems (such as Microsoft Windows, Linux, Free BSD) that function on an Intel-based platform and will fully support the Dell hardware models listed below.

- Optiplex Desktops
- Precision Workstations
- PowerEdge Servers
- Latitude Laptops

ECS also fully supports the following models of Apple Macintosh Computers.

- G3 & G4 PowerBook Laptops
- G3, G4 and G5 Desktops
- G3 & G4 iBook Laptops
- G4 & G5 iMacs

IBM Laptops, Dell Dimension desktops, and older Macintosh PowerPC models will be supported as legacy systems until they are replaced.

**Minimally Supported**
This category of hardware includes all college-owned hardware that is not covered in the fully supported category.

Hardware in this category will be included in the college’s desktop inventory and given the ability to connect to the campus wide network.

The support for this hardware and all the software installed on it (excluding inventory and antivirus software) will be the responsibility of the department or individual who purchased it.

Hardware in this category will only be eligible for college owned site-license software that is used to inventory equipment and to protect the system as well as the network, such as antivirus software, patch management and policy enforcement software.

**Networked Only**
This category will include all non-college-owned hardware.

Student owned equipment is covered under this category.

Student owned equipment is directly supported only for the purpose of connecting it to the campus wide network. This support will consist of assistance in ensuring that the network card is correctly configured for the student's operating system to properly function on the Earlham Network. It is the student's responsibility to insure that the operating system software is functioning properly and that the computer is free of viruses, spyware, and adware. Non-direct support assistance* will be available during scheduled hours.

Faculty and Staff personally owned equipment is discouraged on the college network, but in certain instances, with the approval of the Department Head or Convener, ECS will provide the ability for this hardware to be connected to the network. ECS cannot provide any other type of support for this hardware.

Hardware in this category will only be eligible for college owned site-license software that is used to protect the system as well as the network, such as antivirus software and policy enforcement software.
* Students can schedule a time to come into ECS to get assistance with their computers. Days and times for this service will vary semester by semester. The student is expected to be present during this time and will be guided by ECS student workers or staff to repair their own computers.

Software Support

Software support is broken into four categories; fully support, partially supported, installation only, and not supported, that are described in more detail below. The first three categories apply only to fully supported hardware. This support is intended for software installed on college-owned computers, excluding those in managed labs.

Fully Supported

The software packages in this category are considered the college standard packages for each of the noted application types. Upgrades for these standard packages are to be done on all of the college owned computers in a “reasonable” timeframe. Although exceptions are possible the packages in the Productivity Tools categories will be upgraded once every four years at the start of the new replacement cycle. Requests for an exception to this cycle will be considered by the Director of Computing Services in consultation with the IS Directors, ITPC, and the appropriate senior administrators.

Operating System software will be kept up-to-date with the latest security patches and updates, as they are made available. Major OS upgrades will be performed at least once every four years at the start of the new replacement cycle. Exceptions to this cycle are will be considered by the Director of Computing Services in consultation with the IS Directors, ITPC, and the appropriate senior administrators.

Software in the Utilities category will be upgraded as is necessary. Many of these packages get automatically upgraded as regular operating system updates are performed.

ECS will install, troubleshoot, and help in the use of these applications. All of the software listed below comes installed, as appropriate to platform (Mac or PC), on newly installed desktops/laptops, with noted exceptions.

Operating Systems
Macintosh Operating System: OS X (10.3.x)
Windows Operating System: XP Professional

Productivity Tools
Word Processing: MS Word 2003 (PC) & 2004 (Mac)
Spreadsheet: MS Excel 2003 (PC) & 2004 (Mac)
Presentation: MS PowerPoint 2003 (PC) & 2004 (Mac)
Web Page Editor: Macromedia Dreamweaver MX 2004 (PC & Mac)
PDF Creation Utility: Adobe Acrobat 7 (PC & Mac)
Reporting Tools: Hyperion Explorer (Formerly known as Brio) * (PC)

Utilities
Email Client:
- Eudora 6.2 (Sponsored Mode or “Light Mode” only.)** (PC & Mac)
- Apple Mail (Mac)
Virus Protection:
- Sophos (PC, Mac & Unix)
Internet Browsers:
- MS Internet Explorer 6.x (PC) & 5.x (Mac)
- Mozilla Firefox 1.x (PC & Mac)
- Safari 1.x (Mac)
Image Editors:
- Photoshop Elements 3.0 (PC & Mac)
- Irfan View (PC)
- Preview (Mac)
Media Players:
- Windows Media Player (PC)
- RealPlayer (PC & Mac)
- Quicktime (PC & Mac)
- WinAmp (PC)
PDF Reader:
Web-Based Software Packages
A number of web-based software packages are available for use by authenticated Earlham users and in most cases are fully supported. The list below represents the most common packages.
- WebMail
- WebDB
- Moodle
- Banner
- SunOne Calendar
- WebEvent Calendar
- Library System

* Hyperion Explorer (formerly Brio) can be purchased by Administrative offices for creating reports from the Banner database.

**For Eudora there is a “Paid Mode” version that does not contain advertisements. Individual departments may make the choice, at their expense, to have this version installed. Paid Mode is fully supported by ECS.

Partially Supported
ECS will support these older packages, but will no longer install them. The newest versions mentioned above will be installed when systems are upgraded or replaced.

Macintosh Operating System: OS X (10.1.x & 10.2.x)
Windows Operating System: 2000
Word Processing: MS Word Versions prior to 2003 (PC) & 2004 (Mac)
Spreadsheet: MS Excel Versions prior to 2003 (PC) & 2004 (Mac)
Presentation: MS PowerPoint Versions prior to 2003 (PC) & 2004 (Mac)
Email Client: Eudora All versions prior to 6.2
Image Editors: Macromedia Fireworks Versions prior to MX 2004
Web Page Editor: Macromedia Dreamweaver Versions prior to MX 2004
Internet Browsers:
- MS Internet Explorer Versions prior to 6.x
- Netscape All Versions

Installation Only
ECS will install these products, but users must learn how to use them on their own. Classes may be available through Element K, an online training site. Call Computing Services to check on the availability of classes and to get assigned an Element K account.

Image Editors:
- Adobe Photoshop
- Macromedia Fireworks
Page Layout:
- MS Publisher 2003 (PC)
- Adobe PageMaker (Mac)
Word Processing:
- WordPerfect
Statistical Packages:
- SPSS 13.x (PC) & 11.x (Mac) *
Database:
- MS Access 2003 (PC) **
- FileMaker Pro (Mac)
FTP:
- LeapFTP (PC)
Unix Terminal Emulator:
- X-Win 32 (PC)

* This software is provided with the computer at no cost to the department, through a Campus Site License negotiated by ECS, or because it is provided by the vendor at no cost.
*** This software is available at no cost to the department, through a Campus Site License negotiated by ECS. Departments or individual requesting this software should consult with the Administrative Computing Manager.
A special category of 'Installation Only' software is specialized software used by a few people because of its discipline or departmental related special purpose. In these cases ECS will work with the individuals to determine if the software will work on the current standard operating system installed on new machines (i.e., in 2005 Windows XP Professional, MAC OS 10.3.x). ECS will provide installation of this software on "Fully Supported Hardware" if the user does not feel capable of performing the installation. Support of this type of software will be the responsibility of the user.

**Not Supported**

ECS will not assist in installing, using, or troubleshooting any products not covered in the list above. See Section 9.

ECS reserves the right to remove any unsupported software if it is suspected the software causes a recurring problem on a college-owned system that ECS supports.

**Responsibilities of Computing Services**

Computing Services, using tracking software, will maintain records of incoming requests as they are received. If a user reaches a person by telephone the Helpdesk staff member will try to determine the nature of the problem and refer the query to the appropriate specialist. Based on the "Priorities and Response Times" statement below the requests will be answered. However a Helpdesk staff member will make personal contact with the requestor within seven working days.

**Priorities and Response Times**

The HelpDesk will use the following guidelines in prioritizing requests and will strive to begin working on the problem within the target timeframe. Actual response times may be shorter or longer depending on the volume of requests at any one time.

| Priority | Criteria | Target Response Time *
|----------|----------|----------------------
| 1        | Affects more than five individuals; or is mission critical and there is no workaround available. Examples: E-Mail services are not functional; network printing is not available; classroom computing technology is not functioning pending a class. | Will call or page technicians for immediate response. |
| 2        | Affects one to five individuals, no workaround available. Example: Personal document located on user's hard drive must be printed, but user's monitor is not functional. | Initial response within 8 working hours. |
| 3        | Affects fewer than five people, workarounds available. Example: Can't check e-mail from one computer, but could use WebMail from another computer. | Initial response within three working days. |
| 4        | No affect on productivity, or unsupported software. Examples: Monitor showing b/w instead of color. CD player has no sound. | Best effort as time allows. |

* Target Response Time is defined as the time between receipt of the call and the time than a Micro Support Team member begins working on the problem. Due to the wide diversity of problems that can occur, and the methods needed to resolve them, response time IS NOT defined as the time between the receipt of a call and problem resolution.
Rights and Responsibilities of users

Academic faculty and staff
When new Dell PCs are installed users must log onto the machine. Users are given access rights as a “User” or as a “Power User.” If a user wishes to be approved as a Power User for the college-owned desk or laptop provided for their use, the user must sign a statement accepting responsibility for the legal ownership and use of software other than that installed by Computing Services. A copy of the statement can be viewed at http://www.earlham.edu/ecs/html/policies/softpiracy.html. Users may also opt for access rights as a user only. In that case the user will need to contact Computing Services for the installation of software beyond the basic set listed above.

Administrative faculty and staff
When new Dell PCs are installed users must log onto the machine. Users are given access rights as a “User.” If a user needs the ability to install software as part of their work responsibilities, approval will be given by the department’s supervisor for the user to be approved as a Power User for the college-owned desk or laptop provided for their use. The user must sign a statement accepting responsibility for the legal ownership and use of software other than that installed by Computing Services. A copy of the statement can be viewed at http://www.earlham.edu/ecs/html/policies/softpiracy.html. Without the “Power User” access it is necessary to contact Computing Services for the installation of software beyond the basic set listed above.

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