

Supporting digital equity at Aston University

With increasing numbers of students studying Computer Science, Aston University wanted to find progressive and more flexible modes to efficiently deliver engaging, interactive teaching for their students and to ensure resilience in terms of student access to resources.

Fixed computer labs were proving restrictive in terms of both numbers and scheduling whilst not supporting flexible and collaborative working.



In 2021, as part of the University's commitment to the student learning experience, the department of Computer Science launched a trial whereby they provided a laptop that would support all their students' learning needs from First to Final Year. They wanted to distribute devices to all students entering their First Year to ensure every student had the same reliable platform they could use as a base for their teaching and learning. The devices provided consistency of experience for all students on the technology-intensive courses and enabled the flexibility to continue their studies through any potential disruptions experienced.

The University was looking for an ideal deal partner to

assist with the organisation and physical distribution of devices to support the students. They invited Getech and Lenovo to support the planning and delivery of the program and to join their University counterparts on campus in November 2021 to assist with the distribution of the devices – **a Lenovo workstation laptop and backpack, generously gifted by the University to each recipient.**

Devices were distributed to around 400 students over two days in 2021. The following year, in 2022/23, the programme was expanded to all students across all years, including MSc, within Computer Science due to its success.



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The combination of the laptop specification and access provided via the University VDI (Virtual Desktop Infrastructure) meant that students have anywhere, anytime access to high-quality resources to support their learning, whether on campus or studying remotely. There was no cost to students and the laptop is theirs to keep.

Aston University can now efficiently deliver Computer Science teaching and support learning in more innovative, flexible ways, including sessions that enhance the transferrable skills that graduating students will require when they leave the University.

Professor Jo Lumsden, Head of Department, Computer Science, added, ***“At Aston University, we are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do, especially teaching and access to learning. Providing students with a laptop that we know will meet their learning needs removes financial or technological barriers to study and places all students on an equal playing field regarding access to resources they need.”***

Reflecting on the programme, Getech Account Manager, Michael Kelly, said, ***“We were delighted to be able to assist the University in handing out the devices and supporting the student experience at the University.”***



Device chosen

Lenovo ThinkPad P14s

Perfect for high performance on the go, the ThinkPad P14s mobile workstation gives entry-level professionals, educators and students the ability to innovate freely, anywhere. It powers through applications like AutoCAD®, Revit® and SolidWorks® without missing a beat.

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