GHENT UNIVERSITY

Information for (Future) Laptop Students

Laptop usage is increasing in UGent's psychology and pedagogy programs. Some practica are entirely conducted with laptops. Below, we offer some advice (purchase, usage, etc.) regarding laptop use for studies within the PPW.

You must have a computer capable of running the latest software versions of R, RStudio, Citrix, Cisco VPN, and other programs. This means you need the latest versions of MacOS or Windows.

Overview

Purchase

What specifications are sufficient?

The following specifications are sufficient for the average PPW student:

Processor: Intel i3 or i5 (or AMD Ryzen)
RAM: 16 GB (max 32 GB)
HD: 512 GB SSD

The choice of screen size (11 inches, 13 inches, or 15.6 inches) is personal, but keep in mind that most devices with screens smaller than 15 inches do not have a numeric keypad.

You can also choose an Apple (Mac). Any model they offer is more than sufficient.

Which system? Windows? Mac? Chromebook? Linux? Android laptop?

Windows: Yes
MacOS: Yes
Ensure your Windows or MacOS version is as recent as possible, as older versions may cause problems when installing the latest software required for lessons.

Chromebook: No
Linux: No
Android laptop: No

Where to buy and No UGent notebook promotion?

UGent does not offer a notebook promotion. However, we can suggest some websites where you can buy good laptops.
This is not an obligation, and you can buy from any regular (web) store.

A well-known site is https://www.campusshop.be/. Student discounts are also available at Apple https://www.apple.com/be-nl-edu/store and Dell https://www.dell.com/nl-be/lp/students.
(remark: these are 'Belgian' sites)

Many (web) stores also offer good deals for prospective students at the beginning of the year.

There are also 'refurbished' computers. These are devices from companies that, after a few years of service, are checked and offered for sale through websites, usually at a very attractive price. Before you buy, make sure the device meets all your specifications (e.g., Azerty, Qwerty, etc.).

Is extra warranty/service needed?

Anything can break. But should you go for extra warranty/service?
UGent does not offer replacement devices, and you cannot rent devices. If you have temporary access to a spare device, you might forego extra warranty/service. This would allow time to repair your device or purchase a new one if needed.
However, if you're always the person with "bad luck", you might consider getting extra warranty/service. Never pay more than 1/3 of the purchase price for extra warranty/service.

Extras

What software do I need to buy?

You can download Office as a student via https://office.ugent.be, both for Windows PCs and Macs. You don't need to buy Office.

A good antivirus is standard in every version of Windows, so you don't need to buy one.

All other necessary software is often free to download (R, RStudio, PsychoPy, etc.), available as web apps, or offered through Athena (see https://helpdesk.ugent.be/athena/en/index.php).

While the PPW programs minimize the need for licensed software, you may occasionally need to purchase some for specific tasks, similar to buying books or courses.

You don't need to buy extra software initially, but you may need to purchase licenses for certain software during your studies.

What else do I need?

A good, sturdy bag/backpack to protect your laptop.

Handy: An external hard drive for regular backups.

A decent headset (possibly with a microphone) is a must, as you will often be in the same room, and there is a lot of audio and video material available within the programs.

Support

Need financial support?

In that case, you can contact the UGent Social Service via their website
https://www.ugent.be/en/facilities/social-services/overview.htm.

Can I get technical support?

During each lesson, you will receive the necessary information about the software and applications to be used.

We understand that not every student is technically inclined, so for technical support, contact Franky.Maes@UGent.be. Please note that this support does not cover substantive questions, such as how to solve statistics problems.

Helpdesk

There is a lot of information at https://helpdesk.ugent.be/online/en/index.php.
You can also contact the UGent Helpdesk via: https://helpdesk.ugent.be/helpme/en/index.php.