

Laptop Essentials

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR HUNTER CENTRAL COAST TEACHERS



Troubleshooting Tips for Laptop Classrooms

Visit our Laptop Support COW

The Laptop Support COW is part of the Hunter Central Coast Regional COW's (Collaborative Online Workspaces).

Access

Access the COW's via the link on the HCC Regional Intranet:

https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/regions/hunter_ccoast/

Login with your DET portal username with the suffix @det

e.g. Jennifer.Wise@det

Using technology in the classroom can add a dynamic and engaging aspect to a lesson or unit of work. However at times, despite best laid plans, issues can arise which can be both frustrating and disruptive. This issue of Laptop Essentials will deal with the more common problems that arise when using laptops for learning.

Wireless Connectivity

Most teaching spaces in NSW secondary schools now have wireless access points.



Above: A wireless access point

While the DER laptop will connect to this wireless network automatically, at times individual students (and teachers) may experience problems with connectivity.

If a user is not able to connect to the wireless network, the first thing that must be checked is that the wireless radio is turned 'ON'. Accessing the wireless radio is slightly different on each model. Use the following shortcut keys/buttons to access the 'Wireless Radio' control panel:

Lenovo S10e	-	
Thinkpad Mini 10	-	
Thinkpad Edge	-	

When turned ON, the control panel should appear as follows:



Another problem that can occur is when a 'gold star' appears on the Network icon on the Task Bar (see below). This indicates that the user is experiencing problems connecting to the wireless network.



Above: A gold star on the Network icon

To overcome this issue, there are a number of strategies that can be used:

1. Make sure that the student has logged on with the full @DETNSW username e.g. brad.gordon@DETNSW. A poster to remind students of how to logon can be downloaded from the Laptop Support COW.
2. Ask the student to restart the laptop and login again

3. 'Open the Network and Sharing Centre' by right clicking on the Network icon on the task bar, then select 'Troubleshoot problems'. Choose the 'Network Adaptor' option and follow the prompts.

If these strategies are unsuccessful, contact the school Technical Support Officer (TSO).

Printing

While the DER network caters for printing, it is at the discretion of the school to allow staff and students access to printers.

Many schools in the Hunter Central Coast Region have allowed students to print to specific Hewlett Packard and Fuji-Xerox printers while others have chosen to prevent this functionality. It is important that the school executive and technology team make decisions about their policy for printing based on their needs and budget.

In the case where printing is not permitted from DER devices, students should be encouraged to print from a computer connected to the school computer network. Students will need to transfer the required file via a USB memory stick or by emailing the file to their DET email account.

Battery Life

While the Lenovo battery is designed to last a full school day, students can experience a flat battery well before the final bell rings. To maximise battery life, there are a few simple strategies that users can adopt.

- Turn down the screen brightness
- Limit the use of video and audio played on the laptop
- Turn off the computer when not in use – rather than simply closing the lid (stand-by).

Password Changes

Staff and students need to be aware that the password that is used to login to a DER laptop is the same as the password used to access the DET Portal and Internet. If users change their DET Portal password (see screen shot below), this will impact on the password used to login to their DER Laptop.

After any password reset, users should be encouraged to 'Restart' their laptops while they are within range of a DER wireless network. A password reset in the portal should take around 30mins to synchronise to the DER laptop.

To change your DET User ID Password, please fill in the form below.

Existing Password:	<input type="password"/>
New Password:	<input type="password"/>
Confirm Passwords:	<input type="password"/>
<input type="button" value="Submit"/> <input type="button" value="Clear"/>	

Above: The 'Change My DET Password' screen

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