Laptop Minimum Requirements

There seems to be increasingly frequent situation occurring in our department that needs addressing. What I'm referring to is purchases of laptops makes and models outside of our recommended standards. We're seeing an increasing number of lower-cost laptops that our clients have purchased and brought to us to configure for use in our IT network.

On the surface that's not a bad problem because it does save some money going in, something that is especially important in our present budget woes. The problem comes from when we have to configure the laptops according to the standard minimum, mandatory security configuration that ITS requires.

Encryption is required on all laptops that handle [sensitive information](http://help.unc.edu/help/what-is-sensitive-data/) in any way. With Apple products this is accomplished using File Vault that comes with the Mac. Windows laptops however, due to the choice made by ITS of which encryption software mandated, have to use a program called BitLocker.

Some versions of Windows 8, which is the Operating System installed on most of the user-purchased laptops do not work with BitLocker yet.

One of the choices we have is to reimage any computer that comes in to us with windows 7. This is often done but results in two problems:

1. Re-imaging a non-standard laptop with Windows 7 to have the minimum requirements is time consuming and sometimes impossible for us to do, resulting in a great deal of extra time that could be avoided. Also, there is the issue of software licenses etc. to be dealt with.
2. Many of the less expensive laptops are cheaper because they leave out things, like the better operating system, and, in this case, often are missing a vital chip on the motherboard that we need to have on the computer in order to be able to encrypt the machine.

**Recommended Configurations for Windows Laptops**

**Windows Devices**

**Operating System**

* Windows 7 Enterprise
* Windows 8 Pro
* Windows 8 Enterprise

**Hardware**

Processor WITH TPM chip

* Minimum Intel i 3 processor (Laptop)
* Intel Atom Processor 1.5 ghz (Tablet)

**Memory**

Ram (PC)

* 2 Gb Minimum
* 4 Gb Standard user
* 8 Gb -16 Gb depending on intended use (check with DOM-IS)

Ram (Tablet)

* 2 Gb