

# First Year Studies Materials Checklist

NCAD | Common Entry, Art, Design & Education  
2024/25

## Digital Equipment Checklist

All students use digital equipment such as a laptop and a camera to support their studies at NCAD. It is ideal if students purchase a laptop in readiness to be able to complete work for all your modules for Trimester 1 with ease. If you feel unconfident making this purchase you can wait to purchase equipment with advice after beginning your course. If you have existing equipment you can bring it to college to see if it is sufficient to support your college work.

If the purchase of equipment is a cause of financial concern there are some limited supports available to students through the laptop loan scheme which is managed by the NCAD Access Office.

Here are the recommendations for each:

### USB Memory stick

128Gb USB 3.0 stick as standard (can be purchased on Amazon). Example - <https://bit.ly/43F7Kf4>

HDMI cable for connections to screens & projectors. (USB-C to HDMI adapter depending on the ports of your laptop)

### DIGITAL CAMERA

The quality of cameras on modern smartphones is generally acceptable for First Year.

### LAPTOP

It is required that all students have a laptop for writing, research and carrying out digital editing for studio, professional practice, and visual culture work. The recommended hardware specifications are listed on the next page. The choice between Windows PC or MAC is up to individual personal preference, however the Windows PC or MAC should have the optimum specification in mind for the Department specialism. The machine needs to be powerful enough to run specialist design software such as Adobe Creative Suite or 3D rendering programs such as Solid Works/Rhino. Students will need laptops with very good batteries to use in seminar rooms.

**Important!** Chromebooks, iPads, and any other devices that cannot run either a full Windows or Mac operating system are NOT acceptable alternatives.

### EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE

1Tb rugged external hard drive such as this one: <https://bit.ly/45HnrV3>

A rugged portable hard drive can store and transport data in harsh environments, such as studio, workshop. They can have features like water resistance, drop-proofing and shock and vibration protection. Standard small form factor external hard drives can break very easily.

### SOFTWARE

The software you will require will depend on your chosen department of study, the most commonly used are Adobe Creative Suite and Microsoft Office. Seek advice in October, as there are often free trials available and student discount subscriptions, there are also free/open-source options available, along with sales events in November for Adobe products (providing significant discounts). There are several software enabled desktops available in the department for use onsite.

## Recommended Minimum Specification for a Laptop

School of Fine Art	School of Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 16GB RAM (minimum)</li> <li>● A dedicated graphics card – GeForce or Radeon (Integrated GPU like Vega or Intel Xe is not suitable)</li> <li>● A minimum of 500GB internal hard drive (more hard drive space is preferable)</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations for all courses in Fine Art:</b></p> <p>Currently the best entry level option is <a href="#">Lenovo IdeaPad Gaming 3 - 82K201UPMH</a> @ €809, a better option would be the <a href="#">HP Victus Gaming 16-s0476ng</a> @ €1149</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>or</u></p> <p>The 13" Macbook pro has been discontinued, the <a href="#">14" is the best value option</a> - with the 16Gb RAM upgrade. It comes in at €2149, this only has 512Gb Storage, <a href="#">the 1Tb upgrade will cost an additional</a> €250. It is not advisable to go for the 16" as these laptops start at €2849. Prices subject to change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 16GB RAM (minimum)</li> <li>● A dedicated graphics card – GeForce or Radeon (Integrated GPU like Vega or Intel Xe is not suitable)</li> <li>● A minimum of 500GB internal hard drive (more hard drive space is preferable)</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations for Communication Design, Product Design, and Interaction Design and Jewellery &amp; Objects, Fashion Design and Textile Surface Design</b></p> <p>Currently the best entry level option is <a href="#">Lenovo IdeaPad Gaming 3 - 82K201UPMH</a> @ €809, a better option would be the <a href="#">HP Victus Gaming 16-s0476ng</a> @ €1149</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>or</u></p> <p>The 13" Macbook pro has been discontinued, the <a href="#">14" is the best value option</a> - with the 16Gb RAM upgrade. It comes in at €2149, this only has 512Gb Storage, <a href="#">the 1Tb upgrade will cost an additional</a> €250. It is not advisable to go for the 16" as these laptops start at €2849. Prices subject to change. *MacBook Air is not suitable</p>

### NOTES:

- **Second-hand / Reconditioned:**  
It is possible to purchase a good quality, powerful, second-hand / refurbished machine that has all the required spec. Be aware of the age, support lifetime of the computer / operating system.
- **Important!** Chromebooks, iPads, and any other devices that cannot run either a full Windows or Mac operating system are NOT acceptable alternatives.
- **Student Discounts** – if you are purchasing a device check for student discounts.  
Student beans – [discounts for students](#)  
Apple - go to the Apple [education store](#) as you will get approx. 5% discount.  
Microsoft - go to [the Microsoft education store](#) for a 10% discount.  
Acer – [Student store 15% discount](#)  
[HEAnet - Student deals](#)