

Supported Operating System Standard

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Approval

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1 Introduction

To ensure secure and supportable OS software on all computers and devices connected to the RTE network.

1.1 Rationale and Guiding Principles

The intention of this policy is to ensure that the underlying operating system of any technology system in RTE can be maintained in line with the overall security requirements of RTE during that system's lifetime. Given the potential risk to the organisation through the use of operating systems which no longer receive security updates, the use of such legacy operating systems is to be eliminated.

At all times, all operating systems deployed in RTE must be running an operating system which is still in the main support phase as defined by the manufacturer. Any updates the manufacturer requires to be installed to stay within their support policy must be deployed.

Choice of operating system for new installs is guided by a desire to ensure a long supportable life, which necessitates that only recent versions are to be deployed.

For example, at the time of writing, the current versions of Windows Server are 2008, 2012 and 2016. Their end of support dates are in January 2020, 2023 and 2027 respectively. By choosing a more recent version of an operating system we can extend the supportable life of a system by many years.

Exceptions can be made where an overarching business need requires one. Such exceptions will be risk assessed and treated accordingly and must receive written approval Head of Technology Infrastructure or the Director of Transformation and Technology prior to deployment.

2 Supported Operating System Standard

All computers and devices connected to the RTE network **MUST** run an operating system which is fully supported by the developer. (see Supported operating systems and Devices below).

Operating Systems **MUST** be upgraded to a supported version **PRIOR** to their end of life date.

New servers **MUST** be deployed on an Operating System which is at most one version behind the most recently released major version from the developer. New servers **SHOULD** be deployed on the most recent applicable operating system version.

All projects **MUST** account for ongoing Operating System support during their lifecycle. Projects deploying on operating systems that are scheduled for end of support by their manufacturer during the life of a project **MUST** be risk assessed and treated accordingly and **MUST** receive CTO approval prior to deployment.

2.1 Operating System Specific Guidance

All newly deployed operating systems **MUST** be 64-bit.

All new Windows Servers **SHOULD** be deployed using a version in the "Mainstream Support" phase.

All new Windows Servers **MUST** be deployed using a version no older than "N-1" (Where N is the most recent version in General Availability, and N-1 is the preceding version).

RTÉ's preferred Linux versions are Centos and Redhat. If Ubuntu is required then it must be deployed using an "LTS" release.

Regardless of whether a developer has issued patches outside of their stated support policy, an operating system **MUST NOT** be used beyond the end of life.

For CentOS and RHEL the end of life is the end of Production Phase 2.
(<https://access.redhat.com/support/policy/updates/errata#Details>)

This policy applies to all systems, people and processes that constitute the organization's information systems, including board members, directors, employees, suppliers and other third parties who have access to RTÉ systems.

The following policies and procedures are relevant to this document:

- RTE Bring your own Device (BYOD) Policy
- Software Policy
- Mobile Device Policy

Where a contradiction occurs between the above mentioned policies and this document relating to devices within the scope of this policy then this policy will take precedence