

Windows Desktop Licensing for Academic Institutions

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. My academic institution is looking for the most cost-effective way to acquire new PCs running Windows operating systems. What is the best way to obtain PCs with fully licensed Windows software?

A. The most cost-effective way to acquire genuine Windows licenses is to purchase PCs with Windows software preinstalled by a computer manufacturer.

Q. If my academic institution has an Academic Volume Licensing agreement that currently provides a Windows upgrade, are my PCs still required to have a license for the full Windows operating system as well?

A. Yes. All Volume Licensing agreements including Academic agreements provide only the license for the Windows upgrade—not the full Windows license. You are required to have a separate license for the initial full eligible operating system deployed on any PC.

Q. If my academic institution purchases PCs with Windows desktop operating systems preinstalled by a PC manufacturer, can those operating systems be transferred to newly purchased PCs that are acquired without operating systems?

A. No. An OEM Windows operating system may never be transferred from the PC on which it was originally installed, even if the PC is no longer in use.

Q. I would like to save my academic institution money by buying my PCs without Windows operating systems. What are the risks in doing this?

A. Getting Windows preinstalled on your PC is your most cost-effective option, but this can only be done at the same time you purchase your PC. Getting the Windows license “after the fact” will limit your options, will be more costly, and will increase your risk of getting a counterfeit or unlicensed copy.

Getting genuine Windows software can save you time and money and will reduce security risks and legal liability. Know the facts below to ensure your academic institution is properly licensed.

Windows Desktop Licensing Rules:

Each PC running Windows desktop software needs to have its own FULL Windows desktop license.

With the introduction of Windows 8.1, there are two ways to legally acquire the initial full version of Windows. The first is preinstalled on a PC through a PC manufacturer or system builder—this is the most cost-effective way to get a genuine Windows license on a new PC. The second way to legally acquire the initial full version is through retail stores as full packaged product.

Microsoft Volume Licensing agreements cover the Windows desktop UPGRADE ONLY.

This is true for **all** Academic Volume Licensing agreements—Campus, School, Academic Open, and Academic Select Agreements, regardless of whether the agreement was purchased with or without Software Assurance. Windows upgrades are designed to upgrade a previously acquired qualifying license. An academic institution must first have the full qualifying underlying license before using a Volume Licensing agreement to upgrade that license to a new or different version.

Keeping Your Academic Institution Properly Licensed:

- When purchasing PCs make sure your request for a quote or bid includes a genuine operating system preinstalled.
- Resellers may attempt to save costs by excluding the Windows license. Getting Windows software preinstalled is your most cost-effective option. Getting an unlicensed PC is likely to cost you more in the long run.
- Using a Volume Licensing agreement to install the initial full Windows license on an unlicensed PC will leave your institution mislicensed and legally non-compliant.
- Make sure you understand licensing rules to keep your academic institution compliant.



Legalization Options:

If your academic institution finds itself at risk, there are options for legalizing.

Visit <http://www.microsoft.com/piracy/knowthefacts/default.aspx> for more information.