

Before you start your SKE course:

In brief you will need the following for the course:

(See next page for more details about hardware and software requirements)

✓ A desktop or laptop computer (PC or Mac)	essential
✓ A reliable Broadband internet connection	essential
✓ A headset with a USB connection including integrated microphone and noise-cancellation capability*	essential
✓ A webcam	desirable (especially for languages), but not essential

Guidance on home computer specification for SKE Participants

To study on the SKE course, you have to be able to:

- Use your University e-mail
- Access key University websites and services
- Use the University's Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment
- Take part in remote tutorials (using Blackboard Collaborate online videoconferencing)
- Access the online Pebblepad system for the e-portfolio (for STEM courses only) or online Rosetta Stone Catalyst 2 system (for Language courses only)

The specification shown on the next page is primarily for Microsoft Windows PCs, the system used and supported by the University. However, if you use a Mac, ensure it has:

- an internet connection and the **Chrome web browser** (see next page).
- QuickTime to play .WMV files
- Office software: see note about Office 365 (see next page)

Whilst **some** features of the courses *may* be accessible via other devices, many are not. Therefore, **we do NOT support the following** as your primary mode of accessing the course:

- Tablets (whether iPad or Android)
- Smart phones
- Chromebooks

Internet Connection

You will need a **stable, reliable internet connection** to access the Blackboard VLE, other software and your University email from home.

Headset

- **For ALL our courses:** We specify a USB headset because it automatically switches off the internal speaker and microphone on your laptop or computer during use – otherwise the quality of online tutorials may be adversely affected for all participants.
- **For our language courses:** Speech-recognition technology is a key element of the course. For best results, the USB headset should be certified for speech recognition, either by the vendor or a third party. We recommend the microphone should easily adjust into a consistent position, one to two inches from the corner of your mouth.

Retailers, Brands & Prices

The University cannot recommend where you buy your PC from, or what makes to consider, except to suggest that:

- you buy from a well-known PC retailer you can trust so that, if something goes wrong, you easily have somewhere to go and get help.
- you buy a well-known make as you generally get what you pay for – cheaper, less well-known brands generally are less reliable.

Prices vary, but you **do NOT need to buy a very expensive, 'high spec' PC**. A low to middle-of-the-range PC or laptop will be fine.

Computer Specification:

Hardware	Minimum	Recommended
Processor	Desktop or laptop computer with a 1.5Ghz processor	2.0 Ghz+ multi-core processor
Memory (RAM)	At least 1 GB (Gigabyte) of available memory	4 GB+ will be more than enough.
Hard Drive	50 GB minimum	120 GB+
Available Hard Disk Space	50 MB	100 MB +
Sound Card	A sound card for playing audio and video. (Almost all new PCs come with one.)	
Display	A minimum screen resolution of 1024x768	
Internet connection	A reliable broadband connection.	A fast, reliable broadband connection
USB Ports	At least enough USB ports to connect any devices such as a USB headset, printer/scanner, etc.	4 or more USB ports will be useful.
Headset (USB)	A comfortable headset including an integrated, noise-cancelling microphone with wired USB connection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have stereo sound (NOT 7.1 surround sound). Bluetooth connections will not work. 	Examples include Logitech PC Headset 960 USB and Microsoft Lifechat LX-3000 USB headset.
Webcam		External or internal webcam (especially for language courses)
Scanner or digital camera	<i>For STEM courses only:</i> A digital (eg mobile phone) camera or scanner to capture any hand-written work legibly for the e-portfolio.	<i>For STEM courses:</i> Scanner with ability to create multiple page pdf files.
Software	Minimum	Recommended
Operating System	Windows 8 Mac OS 10.10	Windows 10 Mac OS 10.10 or later
Supported Browsers	When accessing Blackboard, all users need to use Google Chrome. To download the latest version of Google Chrome: https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser	Google Chrome is the recommended browser for Blackboard. Note: In particular, Internet Explorer and versions of Safari older than version 12 are <i>not</i> supported.
Office Software	Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Office 365 ProPlus is free for CCCU students while they are studying at the University: https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/students/current-students/it-services/Software-and-Digital-Services/free-and-discounted-software.aspx	Although not needed for the course, you can find a wide range of software which can also be purchased at discounted prices through Student Software Suppliers: www.software4students.co.uk/
Other Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adobe Acrobat PDF reader – this is free and can be downloaded from https://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/ Flash Player: You can check to see if you have it installed and also download it from https://helpx.adobe.com/uk/flash-player.html In your browser, you will need to have Flash and JavaScript enabled, and allow pop-ups. 	Save to PDF facility: For STEM courses, we prefer your e-portfolio evidence files to be in PDF format. PC: built into Windows 10. Mac: built into the operating system.
Anti-virus/Internet Security	All professionals strongly recommend anti-virus and internet security 'firewall' software. Ensure that you keep your anti-virus software updated regularly.	CCCU provides Sophos Antivirus free for CCCU students on both Windows and Mac systems.