COMPUTER STUDIES NOTES

FORM 1

**Compatibility**

A computer is said to be compatible if it can interact with existing hardware devices. For example, one type of memory module may not be compatible with a particular type of computer. However the current trend is for compatibility across platforms. For example manufacturers are producing devices which are compatible across the platform i.e. in both IBM and Apple computers.

**Cost**The cost of an item is another key factor that dictates what you can afford.   
The cost is determined by :

1. Processor make and speed
2. Memory size
3. Computer physical size
4. And the manufacturer

Therefore it is important to shop around for what your budget can accommodate.   
Portability If your work involves a lot of travel e.g. salesmanship then you need a computer that you can carry around with you. Therefore the computer to choose is dictated upon by its portability. Laptops come in handy in such instances.

**User needs**

It is important to consider the users special needs when acquiring hardware because they may require special type of hardware. For example, the blind may need brail keyboard, speakers etc.The user needs also determine the kind of software to be used which in turn determine the hardware to be used. For example design tasks require graphics software which in turn require high resolution display units, large hard disk etc .

**Warranty**

A good computer offer should include a warranty. This means that should the computer malfunction, the vendor should be able to offer repair service free of charge. The warranty period in most cases range between six to twelve months. It is therefore important to choose an offer with a warranty because it can save on repair costs.

**Service support**

These include follow up services such as initial installation and repair works. This is important because you are assured of expert service rather than use quarks.

•Choose whether the following statements are True or False  
•The user needs, like the nature of work determines the kind of software to acquire T / F  
•The portability of a software is not an important factor to consider when selecting a software.

**Software considerations**

Although you may have a powerful computer, you may not achieve your goals if you dont have the necessary software.  
Some of the factors that you need to consider are:

1. Authenticity
2. Reliability
3. User needs
4. User friendliness
5. System requirements
6. Compatibility
7. Cost
8. Portability
9. Documentation

**Authenticity**  
Authentic software is one that is protected by End User License Agreement (EULA). EULA spells out the condition that the user need to abide by before using the software. Therefore it is illegal to acquire pirated software that is not accompanied by the EULA certificate of authenticity. The software must come with a warranty.

**Reliability**

Software is said to be reliable if it is giving the expected output when given the neccessary input.Select software that has been widely tested by several users and proved to be reliable.

**Stability**

Software that works without crashing and is considered to be error free.   
  
**User friendliness**

Human computer interface can either be graphical, menu driven or command line. Most users today go for graphical interface because it is more user friendly than the command line. Special situations may also determine the kind of software you acquire. For example, the blind might need software that produce sound output in addition to text output.

**System requirements**

Read the documentation that comes with the software to see whether your system meets the minimum or recommended hardware requirements.

Every software requires some minimum system specifications for it to run on a computer. These are considered in terms of processor speed, memory capacity, hard disk size and display specifications.

**Portability**

This is the ability to install and run software in more than one computer of different models. Such Software is referred to as portable. Software compatibility refers its ability of a software to work smoothly in cross- platform. In the real world there are two platforms either IBM / PC compatible or Macintosh . In choosing an application software consider the possibility of running it on different machines with different operating systems. Therefore software developers are working towards software that are portable and compatible . A good example is **Adobe PageMaker(R)** that can work in commonly used versions of **Windows, Linux** and **Macintosh operating**.

1. Satisfy changing user needs
2. Enhance reliability and compatibility
3. Competition from other software houses

**Exercise**

Start WordPad from the Programs menus Accessories group, Type the text below as it appears in :

1. Press Ctrl and S simultaneously to save the text Jaribio
2. Press Alt and F4 simultaneously to exit WordPad.
3. Define an operating system.
4. State the functions of an operating system
5. State types of operating systems
6. Describe how an operating system organizes information
7. Create files and folders/directories using an operating system
8. Work with files and folders/directories using an operating system