



E - WASTE MANAGEMENT OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA



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e WASTE



E-waste Management: The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL)

In today's rapidly changing world, the concept of sustainability has emerged as a fundamental pillar shaping the future of our planet. OUSL, as hubs of knowledge, innovation, and social progress, plays a pivotal role in championing sustainable practices and inspiring the next generation of leaders. Embracing sustainability means reducing our carbon footprint conserving resources and fostering a mindset that values environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic resilience. Through research, education, and community engagement, OUSL is cultivating a generation of eco-conscious thinkers and problem solvers equipped to address the pressing global challenges related to climate change, resource depletion, and social inequality.

With the proliferation of electronics also comes the challenge of their proper disposal. OUSL is grappling with ways to efficiently and cost-effectively handle the issue of electronic waste, or e-waste, on university premises. It's normal for people to discard products due to normal wear and tear, but technological advancements have accelerated e-waste growth as students, faculty, and administrators frequently upgrade to better gadgets. This surge has forced university administrators to carefully examine and address the environmentally responsible disposal of these products on a campus-wide scale.



1.0 Introduced used-battery collection bins for each division



Rechargeable batteries are a prime source of university e-waste, as they power most portable electronics like cellphones, laptops, digital cameras, camcorders, and PDAs. An on-campus recycling program for batteries is one component of an overall e-waste management strategy that allows facility administration to provide an environmentally sound method for disposing of products that are potentially hazardous to the environment.

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) is exceptionally aware of e-waste generated at the university. Therefore, all used batteries are collected under each division as a first step. In this regard, the Center for Environmental Studies and Sustainable Development (CESSD) has provided used-battery collection bins for each division. Once the bins are filled, batteries are handed over to E-waste recyclers through CESSD according to the university E-waste disposal protocol.



Introduce used-battery collection bins for each division



2.0 Disposal of UPS batteries

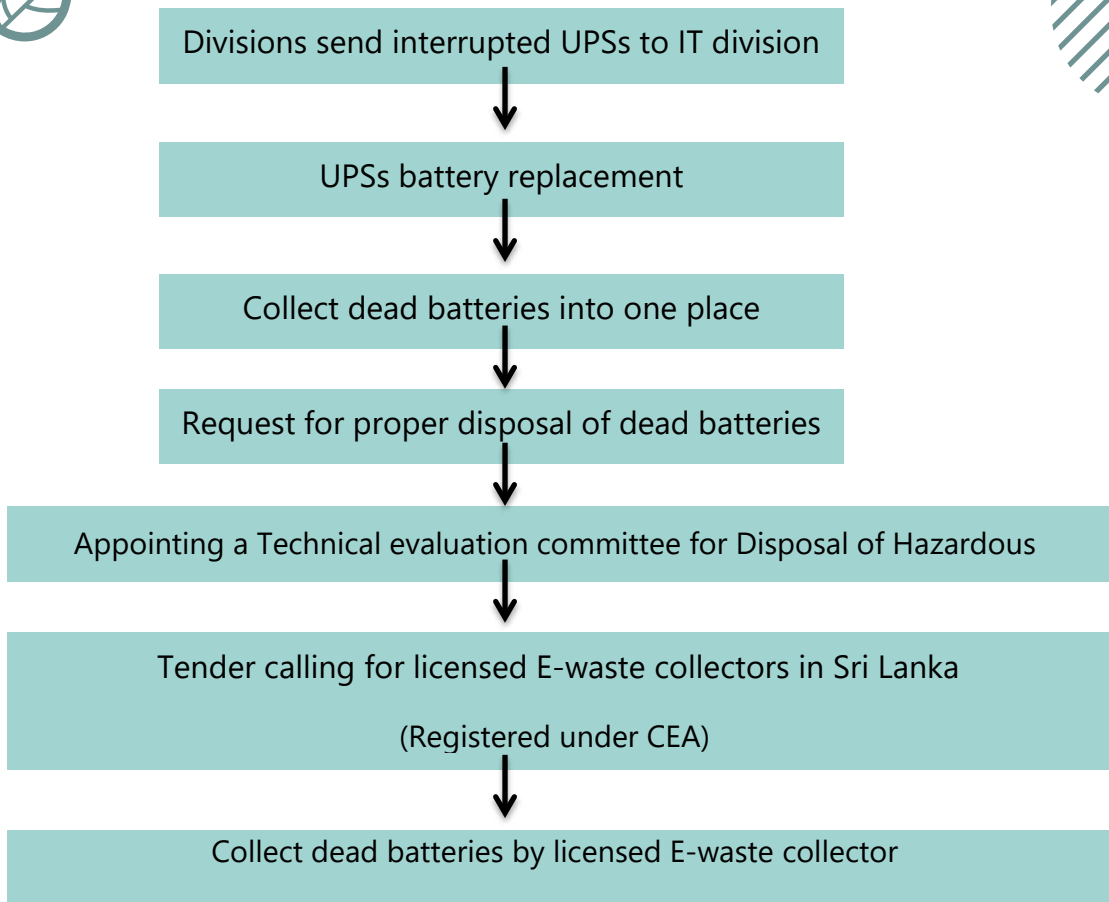


On average, the life cycle of many batteries in UPSs is 3–5 years, even though UPSs can survive for 10+ years. Therefore, the university has implemented an e-waste recycling process. Accordingly, interrupted UPSs are sent to the IT workshop for battery replacement, and dead batteries are collected there. The collected e-waste is handed over to e-waste recycling companies that are registered with the Central Environmental Authority (CEA) through calling tenders.

OUSL has arranged more than 500 UPS batteries for disposal with the agreement of CEA-registered licensed E-waste collectors.



Disposal mechanism of UPS batteries



Collected dead batteries for disposal

3.0 Disposal of Computer E-Waste



In the age of rapid technological advancement, the issue of computer E-waste, or e-waste, has become a significant concern worldwide. Universities, as hubs of innovation and technology, find themselves at the forefront of this challenge. Proper management of computer e-waste is not just a matter of compliance but a moral and environmental imperative. As OUSL embraces cutting-edge technology to facilitate learning and research, the disposal of outdated computers and electronic devices demands careful attention. Implementing efficient e-waste management practices is crucial not only to mitigate environmental hazards but also to set a precedent for responsible technological consumption. In this context, OUSL is uniquely positioned to lead the way by adopting comprehensive e-waste management strategies that prioritize recycling, refurbishment, and responsible disposal, thereby contributing to a sustainable future while serving as an exemplar for the broader community.

To serve this, the OUSL IT workshop plays a major role in refurbishment or maintaining discarded or broken electronic items in the university.





3.1 University IT Workshop

Within the realm of the university IT workshop, a commendable initiative revolves around repairing broken computer items to promote their reuse, thereby minimizing electronic waste and maximizing the lifespan of technological resources within the university. This practice involves skilled technicians meticulously diagnosing and repairing malfunctioning laptops, monitors, printers, CPUs, projectors, and other components, ensuring that they are restored to optimal working conditions. By dedicating their expertise to refurbishing these items, the IT division not only saves valuable resources but also significantly reduces the environmental impact associated with electronic waste. Moreover, this approach aligns with sustainability goals by extending the lifespan of electronic devices, allowing the university to derive the maximum utility from its technological investments. This commitment to repair and reuse not only demonstrates fiscal responsibility but also represents a deep-seated philosophy of environmental stewardship, showcasing the university's dedication to creating a more sustainable and eco-conscious university environment.



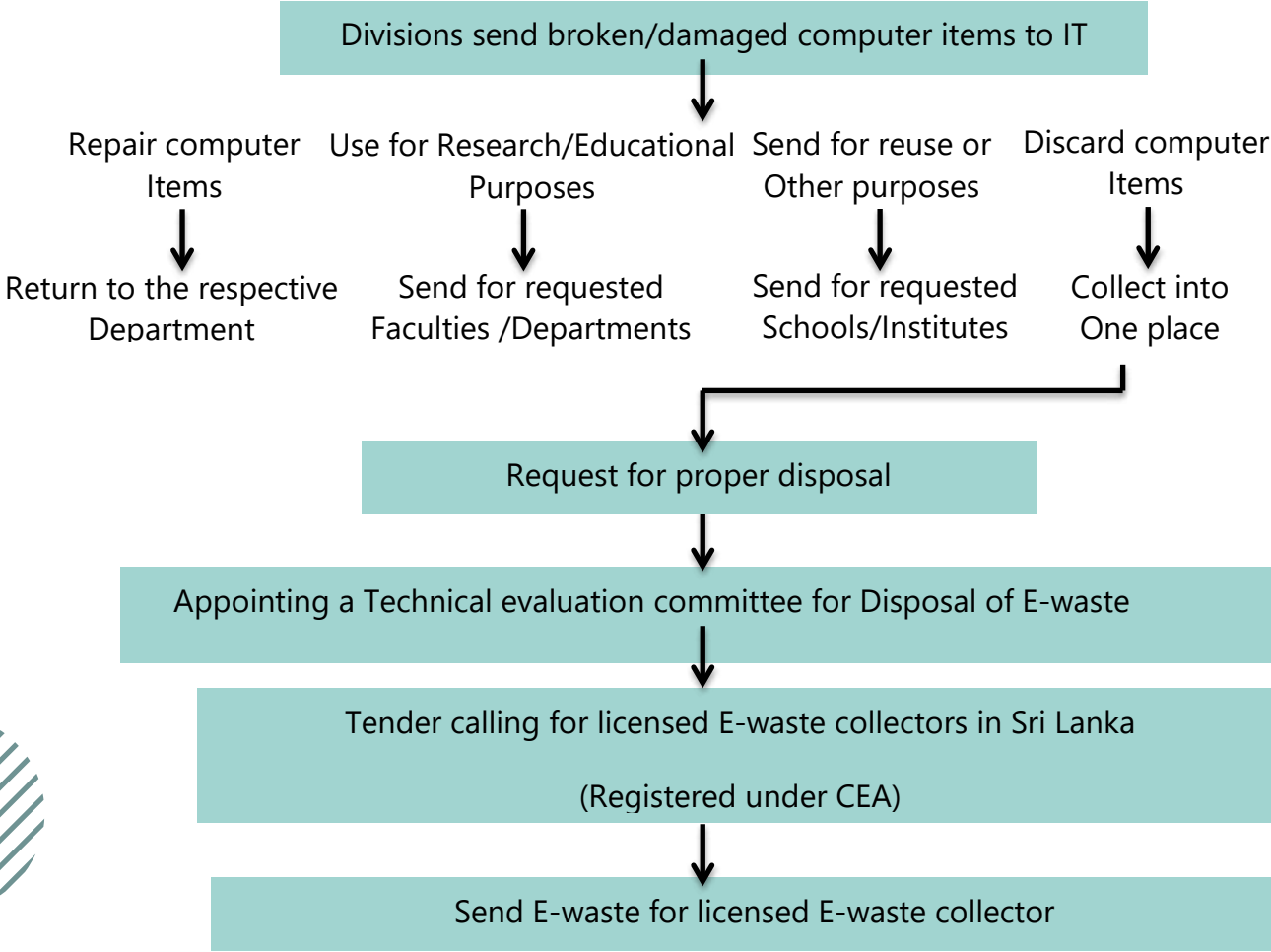


The maintenance division of the IT workshop

The university IT workshop receives broken or discarded computer equipment generated at every division of OUSL. Those are repaired and handed over again to the respected division for re-use up to their maximum level.



Disposal mechanism of Computer E waste



Computer and relevant accessories in disposable condition

