BYOD Program Recommended Devices

Last Updated: 21st *October 2016*

In this document

- Device Choice Introduction
- Purchase a Device via Purchase Portal
- BYOD Model
- Additional device(s): iPads and other tablets
- Device Recommended Specifications

Related documents

- BYOD Program Guide
- Device Setup Guides

Device Choices - Introduction

As the Investigator College BYOD team delved into the nuances of educational BYOD, it became evident that the more significant issue was not the "device" per se, but the delivery of software and services that impact educational activities. The traditional definition of BYOD was quickly superseded by discussions about how student and teacher owned consumer technology was impacting every aspect of educational ICT: technology strategy and procurement, pedagogy, assessment, professional development, policy and even nature of teaching itself.

The questions the team asked were:

- What are the benefits of BYOD?
- Is what we are currently doing right?
- Are we on the right path?
- What is the educational outcome we think we are chasing with BYOD?
- How can we best support the curriculum delivery?

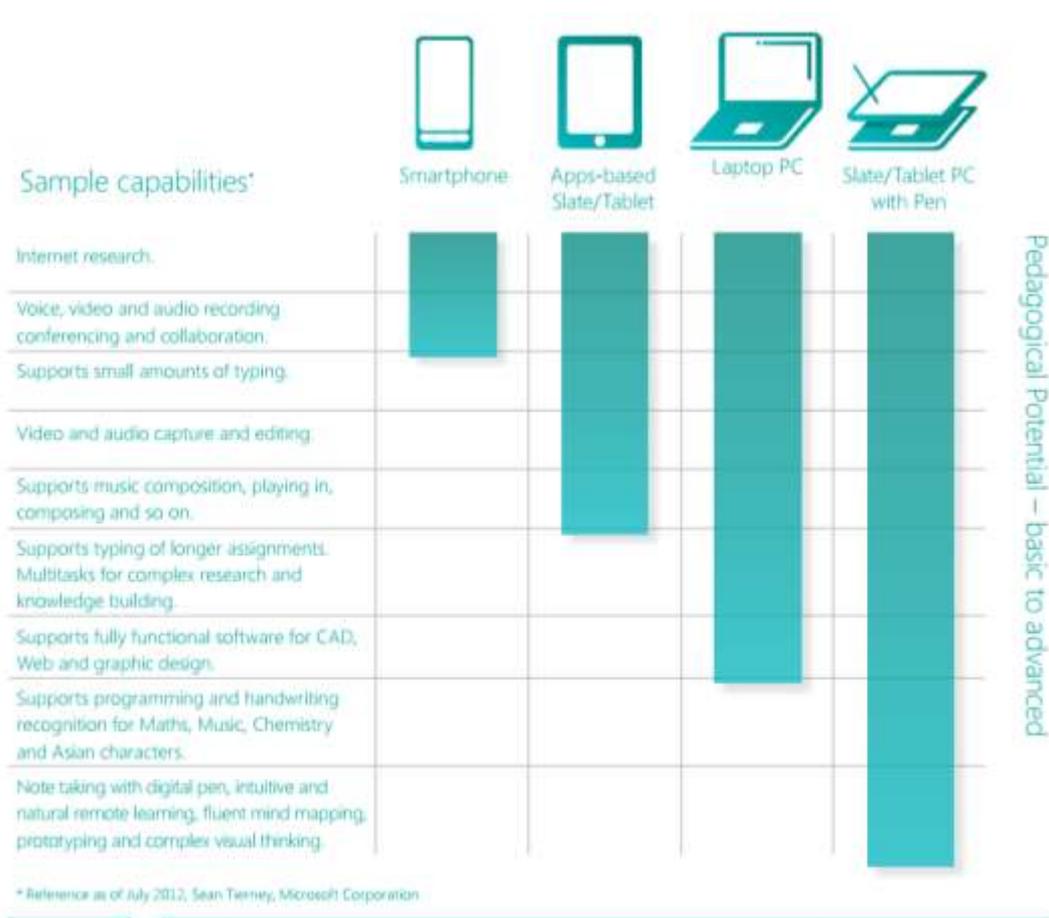## Device Choices – What device suits my needs?

Figure 1: Computing Capability Taxonomy (Dixon & Tierney, 2012, p.5)

With these important questions in mind, Investigator College has tested many device platforms over the course of several years and found that in order to simplify the purchase process a device needs to run either Windows 7/8/10 or Apple MacBook OS. With this research the College settled on the following options.

Bring Your Own Device – Recommended Platforms

Students may bring any Windows 7 or 8 laptop, or Apple MacBook and connect to the wireless and access the self-service BYOD portal to install software.   Students will also have access to the internet to download and install software. This allows families to purchase devices ranging from as little as $400 to much more expensive models, depending on the student's needs.

Self-service connection guides will be made available to students and IT staff will run one or more 'getting connected' with BYOD with each class at the start of the year. Once connected to the wireless, students will then use the BYOD portal in Office365 to access self-service software installers and to access the Learning platform.

Once connected to the network, IT Support will be able to help in a limited fashion, but will not be responsible for removal of viruses or cleaning of unwanted malware programs etc. In the event that a laptop's software is faulty and causing the computer to malfunction, the student would need to backup all files to an external device or their Office365 cloud drive, and then use the 'restore to factory defaults' function to restore the laptop to a working state.

Parents will need to insure the device as they see fit under the current home and contents insurance policy.

Ideal Specifications

Devices running Windows 7/8/10 or a Macbook should contain the following specifications:

- 4Gb RAM
  - Required for Office and Adobe products
- 5+ hour battery life
  - Most modern devices include 'all-day batteries' to allow a student to work without recharging
- Solid State Drive (SSD) of at least 80Gb in size
  - A solid state hard drive uses the same type of technology as USB sticks. It has no spinning disk and no moving parts, thus saving power and reducing the risk of crashed hard drives when devices are moved around when powered on.
- 3 Year Warranty
  - Warranty for retail devices is generally 1 year 'return to manufacturer' and could involve several weeks of delay. A warranty upgrade to 3 years should be considered, and the possibility of onsite warranty option should be explored.
- Wireless devices can be either 2.4Ghz or 5Ghz on the College network
- Function to 'restore to factory defaults'

Purchase a device via Purchase Portal

Investigator College has selected JB Hifi Education to provide a purchase portal for parents.

This allows parents to have the flexibility of purchasing a device that is delivered directly to the school and choose payment options that suits each budget. The devices in the portal match the required minimum specifications listed above.

Please see the purchase portal page for the latest information.
http://www.investigator.sa.edu.au/byod/byod-purchase-portal/

Additional Devices – iPads and other tablets

After reviewing the Year 11 curriculum, it became clear that using an iPad or similar tablet as a primary device would

not be completely compatible with all current software needs. Students may elect to use an iPad secondary device on the wireless such as an iPad, iPhone, or other tablet, and could consider a Bluetooth keyboard option.

Students may find that an iPad is compatible with some subjects where specific software is not required.

Students may elect to use software on the iPad such as Pages/Numbers/Keynote to author assignments, but the responsibility will be on the student to submit assignments in a 'cross platform' format that the teacher can read and mark.   Cross platform file formats such as PDF documents, MP3 audio and MP4 video files are good examples of what can be viewed on any platform.

Printing directly from iPads will not be supported, but of course students can print previously authored work from another device on the network.

Open Access College remote learning requires the use of Java which only works in a Windows or Mac environment.

As of August 2015, Office365 apps are available and are now very well supported by iPads. Students can install the app version of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and Yammer to connect directly to their Office365 login. iPhone and iPod touch devices also connect fairly seamlessly.

Android devices do connect to the college wireless network but are slightly more troublesome, and the College has not invested much time into researching Android due to the wide variety of after purchase support. Software updates may or may not be available as hardware manufacturers such as Samsung are interested in selling more devices, not maintaining the ones previously sold. Apple is financially motivated to keep as many of their products working as possible because they take a 30% commission of sales through the App Store. Students are welcome to try and use Android devices and assist each other, but College IT staff do not know enough about them to be able to suggest help and support the devices.

Concluding Comments

The College investigated a range of options to allow students to access 21st century learning. We believe the range of options offered provide excellent flexibility, upgradability and value. We are also aware that many students and families already own compatible devices and that the highly competitive computer sales environment works to the benefit of students and families.