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Ayr State High School

BYOx – Frequently Asked Questions

Version 2.0 – 26/11/2015

Queensland Government

Version History

- 1.0 – 24 October 2015 – Initial Frequently Asked Questions document
- 2.0 – 26 November 2015 – Amended to clarify that iPads are now considered "Primary Devices".

Purpose of Document

This document details the most frequently asked non-technical questions regarding the schools BYOx program.

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My child has a portable computing device at home already. Will that device be suitable for use at school?

Any device that meets the minimum specifications for the BYOx program is suitable for use at school. These specifications are available on the school website. If you are unsure whether your device meets these requirements, your child is free to bring the device to the school technician.

Where can I purchase a suitable device?

Devices can be purchased from a range of retailers. However, the school has established portals with various suppliers to provide devices to parents that meet the minimum requirements for the school's BYOx program. The portals (or supply arrangements) that the school offers provide commercial grade devices, with commercial grade warranty conditions. As the school has existing relationships with most of the suppliers that are offering portals or supply arrangements, this can facilitate faster repairs.

If I leave the district, will my new school have a BYOx program with the same requirements?

This will not always occur, as each school determines its own BYOx program so compatibility is not assured. Some schools only allow specific devices or operating systems, and it would be their determination whether your device would be eligible.

What is "onboarding"?

Onboarding is the technical term used to describe the procedure that students need to perform to get their devices operational on the school network. Ayr High uses a system that allows safe, secure, and largely automatic onboarding for most devices, and information about the use of this system will be provided to students when they join the BYOx program. If students require any assistance with onboarding their devices, they are free to contact the school's ICT Support.

Can I bring an iPad/Android Tablet/Chromebook to join the BYOx program?

Due to a recent change in policy, some of these devices are now supported as "Primary Devices" for use in the BYOx Program (iPads, and a limited selection of Android Tablets). We have observed though, that due to the limited functions in iOS/Android it may be harder for students to engage with curriculum documents (depending on their requirements). Chromebooks are still unsupported due to them being incompatible with our network.

Will all students have the same device, and if not, how will this affect learning in the classroom?

Not all students will have the same device – many of them will differ in size, type, input method and operating system. In order to minimise the impact that this will have on learning in the classroom, parents are encouraged to purchase using the supply arrangements that we have established so that there are "common" devices that will work with the school's network. The use of these "common" devices will ensure the greatest access to the range of curriculum software used at Ayr SHS, with most curriculum software used by teachers made available to BYOx users for free from the school over a wide range of operating systems.

Due to the wide range of devices supported, it is expected that students are familiar with how their device works, and capable of supporting themselves to an extent. If however, your child does run into difficulties, they are welcome to contact ICT Support to gain assistance. However, as the device is privately owned there is a limit to the level of support we can provide.

How long should I expect my device to last?

Digital devices are generally useful for 3 to 4 years. However, in an education environment devices do get more stress applied to them than in other situations, and in order to ensure longevity some suppliers are offering military grade devices (and Accidental Damage Protection) to students.

Will students be able to participate if their battery goes flat during class?

This cannot be guaranteed in all classrooms. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their device is charged before bringing it to school, and if the device is charged prior to the commencement of the school day the battery power should last all day. There may be some power points available in classrooms for students to charge their devices during lessons, but this cannot be assured.

Will the school assist me with home internet connection settings, or issues?

This is not part of the support offered by the school. The school's support is limited to providing assistance with onboarding the device to the network and curriculum related inquiries. If you require assistance for personal issues regarding your device, your home internet service provider or private computer technician should be able to assist with these enquiries.

What if the laptop is stolen or damaged?

The school will not responsible for the safety of personal devices. Secure storage of the laptop is the student and parent's responsibility. At the point of purchase it may be wise to discuss with vendors arrangements regarding "Accidental Damage Protection", and putting the device on your home contents insurance is highly recommended.

Can I take my personal device to the school's computer technician for repair and/or maintenance?

This depends on where the device was purchased, what warranties apply to the device, and the issue.

- If the device was purchased outside of the supply arrangements that the school negotiated with vendors, there is a limited amount that we can do.
- If the device was purchased through the schools pre-established supplier arrangements, and the fault with the device is a general hardware failure ("it won't turn on", or similar faults), the school is generally able to log the device for repair on your behalf and have it repaired onsite by the service technicians in 1-3 business days.
- If the fault with the device is clearly accidental damage ("the screen is cracked"), the parents will generally have to deal with their insurance provider under "Accidental Damage Protection" policies in this regard. Feedback can be sought from the school technician.

Do students need to backup the data stored on their laptop?

Backup of laptop data is the student's responsibility. Work that is completed at school can be saved to the school's servers. However, work completed at home or stored on the laptop will need to be backed up in case the device encounters a problem such as a hardware failure.

If a device is sent away for service or repair, it is especially important that students back up their data to prevent loss (as it is generally standard procedure when repairs occur to erase the hard drive as a troubleshooting method).

How is the device kept safe when not in use?

At present, there are a number of lockers available for students in the BYOx program to use. It will be the student's responsibility to supply a lock and keys for the locker. It is also highly recommended that parents invest in a suitable bag to carry the computer in that will offer some degree of protection.

How will students be kept safe online?

Access to the Internet at school is filtered. As part of the curriculum, students are instructed on Cybersafety. At home, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure any appropriate content filters or controls are applied to internet services. The school accepts no responsibility for consequences of internet access outside the school.

Do parents need to pay for students to participate in the BYOx program?

There is no separate fee to join the BYOx program. However, school fees must be paid in full before a student can participate in the BYOx program.

If my child is in Year 7, will I need a device as powerful device as a child in Year 10?

There are specific subject requirements in different year levels. You should ask our computer technician about devices that you are considering if you have concerns. Generally speaking, students in Years 7/8/9 need devices that perform the essentials only, and students in Years 10/11/12 will probably require a device that has higher hardware specifications depending on the subjects they are studying. This is especially true if the student is participating in a subject such as Graphics (which uses Autodesk Inventor/Revit which is very demanding), and ICT (which uses Photoshop/Dreamweaver which is demanding as well).

Where can I find information about recommended devices?

The school is unable to recommend specific devices to parents, however, the portals (and supply arrangements) provided by a range of vendors are recommended. The most current information is available on the school's "BYOx" page, on the school website: http://www.ayrshs.eq.edu.au

Why should I purchase through the school portals (or supply arrangements)?

The devices offered through the portals are commercial grade (generally not offered in storefronts), and are competitive in pricing. Most of the warranties provided by the portals are 3-year Next Business Day Onsite repair, which means that they get repaired at the school (or your home) within 1-3 business days (also, generally not offered in storefronts). The school also has a pre-existing relationship with most vendors, which may facilitate faster repair than would otherwise be the case.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you require more information about our BYOx Program, please email the school at: BYOx@ayrshs.eq.edu.au or phone us at (07) 4790 4333.

What should I consider if I am purchasing a new device?

- Specifications – see the minimum specifications in the BYOx brochure (or on the school website)
- Life of the device – consider the length of time you require the device to service the needs of your family
- Curriculum needs – students in the senior school use software that may require faster processors, additional RAM or solid state drives
- Add-ons – beware of adding unnecessary additional features as this will increase the price of the device
- Length of warranty – extending the warranty to 3-4 years is advisable
- Warranty conditions – consider what the warranty covers (read the fine print)
- Personal contents insurance – determine if this covers laptop/digital device damage
- Cost of repairs – screen and keyboard are the most commonly damaged parts
- Access to repairs - are repairs carried out onsite, return to base, or is a hotswap provided?