



Ironsides BYOD Program – Laptop Specifications

We have based the specifications for the BYOD program off the current software list as of 2025 Q4. Often, as software developers add features to their software the system requirements may change. To allow for this we have endeavoured to maintain a minimum device specification level that will last at least 2 years. Choosing a device with recommended specifications will not only be better equipped but should allow for continued use beyond 2 years which may be beneficial for future studies. Devices running the minimum specifications are likely to be slower in many instances but not unusable. We cannot account for the resources of any additional software outside of the school's requirements that may be installed by the user. If you have additional software that you would like to install, we can only suggest that you purchase a device that adheres to the minimum system requirements of all additional software.

Selecting a device for school

Do not purchase a Chromebook or Android/Galaxy Tablet as they are not compatible with the EQ Network.

Do not purchase a device without 5Ghz Wi-Fi.

Laptops equipped with Qualcomm Snapdragon ARM-based CPUs are not fully compatible with the Department's Bring Your Own (BYOD) Program at this stage and we advise to purchase devices with Intel or AMD processors at this time. While these devices can be enrolled in school management system, it's important to note that Intune may have issues trying to deploy Company Portal due to missing dependencies, currently we cannot provide support to assist in rectifying these issues with Qualcomm Snapdragon devices.

SIM slots in laptops are allowed but an active inserted SIM card that allows Internet access is prohibited.

Mobile broadband devices are also prohibited.

BYO Portal

There is a BYO portal that is listed on the school's website to assist families in easily acquiring a device that will suit our schools' program. There is no requirement to use this portal, and you can purchase from any retailer, however this will ensure you have access to devices with education pricing and commercial warranty/ADP options and that all devices listed will meet the minimum specifications required for our program. Accessories are also listed in the portal to purchase at the same time.

Minimum Laptop Specification

Category	Minimum		Recommended
Operating System	Windows 11 Home, Pro or Education 64 Bit		
Operating System Build	24H2		25H2
Wi-Fi / Bluetooth	5ghz (Dual Band), 802.1x Bluetooth 5.0		
Form Factor	Clamshell Laptop		2 in 1 Convertible Laptop
Processor (CPU) Make/Model	Intel Core 3/Core i3 AMD Ryzen 3		Intel Core 5/ Core i5 AMD Ryzen 5
Processor (CPU) Cores/ Threads	2 Cores / 4 Threads		4 Cores / 8 Threads
Memory (RAM)	8GB (16GB Preferred for best use of device and likely to become minimum standard before the end of 2026).		16GB
Solid State Drive (SSD)	256GB+		
Display	11 -12" Non-touch Screen 1280 x 800 resolution or more 250+ nits brightness		12 -14" Touch Screen 1920 x 1200 resolution or more 300+ nits brightness Featuring Corning Gorilla Glass
Camera	1080p FHD camera with Privacy Shutter		1080p FHD camera with Privacy Shutter and World facing camera for document capture and filming
Antivirus	Windows Defender included for free with all windows devices.		
Warranty	1 Year Manufacturer Warranty extended to 2 Years or more		1 Year Manufacturer Warranty extended to 3 years or more including ADP
Accidental Damage Protection	Highly recommend considering options that include this protection with the device, usually needs to be arranged within 7 days of purchasing with the retailer.		

***The specifications above are a guide only. If you have a specialised need or use case, please consult take these into consideration.**

Accessories

To get the most out of your new laptop or tablet computer/s, you may wish to consider accessories that will improve the usability or overcome their form factor limitations.

Carrycase / Backpack/ Bag

- Ensure that the size listed matches the device it is being used for, the size of the laptop is generally measured by its screen size (e.g. 12.5" – 14.1" bag will not fit devices with a 15" screen)

Keyboard and Mouse

- Wired accessories are preferred due to simplicity and cost; however, wireless options are available for a neater install
- Wireless accessories usually run on AA or AAA batteries that need to be factored into the total cost over time. Look for options with built in rechargeable batteries charged via USB C
- Ergonomic options are also available from some suppliers
- Wireless accessories can be connected by USB "dongle" or Bluetooth
- Dongles can be lost over time and are often unique to the keyboard and/or mouse, keep them safe
- Dongles left in the laptop USB ports can damage the laptops ports especially during transport, avoid this where possible
- Bluetooth is more expensive and doesn't require a dongle, but the computer you're connecting to must have Bluetooth (normally built into the devices Wi-Fi card, so laptops will normally have Bluetooth)

Other Considerations for student devices

- Devices need to be assessed for robustness and transportability e.g. shock proof, handle, screen structure.
- Blended learning requirements
- Student engagement with devices e.g. colour choices, aesthetic
- Consider the full details when purchasing Accidental Damage Protection (ADP) - some have a low purchase price but a high excess (cost to initiate claim), while others might limit the number of claims per period (i.e. 1 claim per year)
- All newly purchased laptops will come with a minimum of 1 year warranty. Often laptops can be sold with Accidental Damage Protection (ADP), this will cover any damages that may occur from drops, bumps and spills and is highly recommended.
- As a minimum, we recommend obtaining warranty to cover the laptop for regular hardware faults during the period the student will be at school (e.g. 2 years).

Software

You **do not** need to purchase any optional software (e.g. Microsoft Office) with your laptop, students are given a Microsoft software licence with their Student Email account.

We **do not** recommend Using **Trend Micro** or **McAfee anti-virus** along with any other 3rd party antivirus software as they often have issues on the EQ school Wi-Fi network and can reduce performance of the device unnecessarily, the built in Microsoft Anti-Virus Solution is strong enough for student usage.

There are many antivirus and internet security packages available on the market and can be used as a replacement for our minimum specified if you wish to, but please check the system resources for your own antivirus software prior to making your laptop selection and make accommodations accordingly.

All antivirus software will need to be kept up to date, and a full scan must be completed regularly. Please deactivate any VPN, or DNS reconfiguring components as these will disable internet usage while at school.

We have identified 5 questions to ask when choosing a device.

Can it connect to the school network?

Devices must be compatible with a 5Ghz Wi-Fi Network, often called "Dual Band Wi-Fi"

Do not buy Apple, Chromebook or Android devices as they are not supported under our BYO program and will not be allowed to connect to the school's network.

If in doubt, ask your retailer "Does this device run Windows 11 and will this device connect to 5 Gigahertz Wi-Fi?"

Will it last the whole school day?

Battery life can vary depending on usage and batteries degrade over time.

We recommend an advertised battery life minimum of 10 hours.

If in doubt, ask your retailer "Will this device last an entire school day, even after three years of use?"

Does it have enough storage?

Our experience shows the main indicators of BYOD performance is the number of CPU threads, RAM memory and SSD storage.

Never buy a device with a mechanical HDD, always choose a **256GB** or larger Solid-State Drive (SSD).

Look for devices with 16GB of RAM. 8GB will work, however as we work increasingly online, RAM will be used more extensively, and insufficient RAM capacity will lead to eventual slowdowns impacting ability to complete tasks in efficient time.

Always buy a device with 4 or more CPU threads.

- If in doubt, ask your retailer "Is the storage drive a 256GB or larger solid-state drive, does this have 16GB or more RAM and does this device have four or more CPU threads?"

If it breaks, can it be fixed?

Technology fails and accidents happen. By choosing a device with more repair options

- Save money by repairing instead of replacing

- Reduce stress when accidents occur

We recommend choosing a 3-year Warranty and \$0 excess Accidental Damage Protection (ADP) with your device.

Or choose a device which can be repaired by your local laptop repair shop if it breaks

If in doubt, ask your retailer "What repair options do I have for this device if it breaks?"

What steps can I take to protect my laptop?

When not in use, always store your device in a hard case, often called an EVA Case.

Never put the device in a bag with a water bottle.

Identify your laptop with a security stickers or engraving.