National Secondary Schools Computer Fund

Frequently Asked Questions – for parents

These questions were created for schools participating in the NSSCF Q3 rollout – as such some questions assume one or two themes: the device is an NSSCF Q3 bulk purchased laptop and/or the school is participating in a Home Use program. Please consider the application of these themes in validating if the questions are appropriate for your situation.

I had intended to purchase a laptop for my child. Should I proceed?
All students in Years 9 to 12 will have access to a high quality, high performance laptop with the latest software installed, that can be used both at school and at home. You are encouraged to take advantage of this 1-to-1 program so the student can maximise the use of this learning environment at home as well as at school.

Will students need to bring the laptop to school every day?
Yes. Teachers are transforming the way they teach to take advantage of students having unlimited access to technology. The new digital platform curriculum means that computers will be essential tools in each classroom.

Will students be disadvantaged if they do not wish to participate in the Home Use program?
Any student not participating in the Home Use Laptop program will be provided with access to either a desktop computer or school laptop during school hours. School laptops will have to be booked out each morning and returned at the end of the school day.

Will all students have the same laptop?
No. As time progresses and new laptops are required, the model supplied may change. This is because of the pricing available through the Government contract, new models being released and changes in the value of the Australian dollar. However, all laptops will be capable of fulfilling their primary task of education for students in the digital world.

Will students be permitted to use the laptop during school holidays?
Yes. Students are permitted to keep their laptops during holiday periods unless it has been recalled for maintenance. The school has the right to ask that laptops remain at school during the school holidays. This is generally done to deal with any warranty service, software upgrades or annual stocktake. Your school can provide you with further information on this.

Will students still be able to participate in class if their battery goes flat?
There will be limited numbers of power points and chargers available but if the laptop is fully charged prior to the commencement of school, the battery power should last all day. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure their laptop has an adequate charge before bringing it to school.

How is the laptop kept safe when not in use?
Students will have their laptop with them at all times except during non-classroom activities such as sports. Individual schools will make decisions about laptop security when they are not required for classroom lessons. Please contact your school for more information.
Do students need to backup the data stored on their laptop?
Yes. Work 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 of device problems. Sometimes a student can spend considerable time on writing assignments and this work can be lost if the device experiences a problem. Please remind and encourage your child to backup their documents daily, both at school and at home.

If a device is sent away for service or repair, it is important that students back up their data to prevent loss.

How will students be kept safe online?
The Department of Education and Training has provided all laptops with a Cybersafety Help Button designed to keep children and families safe online. It is an online resource hub that provides instant 24 hour access to cybersafety help and information. All students are encouraged to use this should they feel uncomfortable with any online interactions. Further information for parents/care givers and students can be found at:


For information on internet filtering, please see the department’s web filtering guide:


Do Parents need to pay for students to participate?
Although the federal government is funding the provision of laptops, Schools may incur some overall expenses. Where on-costs are charged by the school, these will also be managed and communicated by the school.

Please contact your school’s principal for further information.

Can I claim back the school’s annual fees through the Education Tax Refund scheme?
If you are currently eligible to claim, for more information please contact the ATO or an accountant. Information is also available at:


What is on the Laptop

What is the MOE?
The Managed Operating Environment (MOE) is a suite of software that offers students access to;

- School licensed software
- Secure filtered internet
- School printers
- School network resources
- Other school software resources

What software is included in the MOE?
The laptop will include Windows 7 operating system, the Microsoft 2010 Office Professional suite, anti-virus software, plus additional utilities.
How will the computer connect to the internet?
At school there are both wired and wireless solutions dependent upon class location. At school there is a wireless network for your computer to connect to, on occasion there may be opportunity to also use a wired network. Outside of the School network 3G roaming capabilities can be utilised. The use of home internet connections will require the Student and/or Parent/Guardian arrange connectivity via third parties.

Will the school assist me with home internet connection settings and issues?
No. Your home internet provider or a private computer technician can assist you with these enquiries.

Will the school protect the student laptops from virus attacks?
Yes. Each laptop will have Queensland Department of Education and Training owned anti-virus software installed and this will be refreshed when the student logs onto the school network. The network also has anti-virus protection so all precautions are taken to prevent against malicious software. However it must be realised that 100% protection cannot be guaranteed.

What is permitted on the laptop
Can students install their own software and games on the laptop?
This is an individual school-based decision and one that requires appropriate sign-off by the school principal. A valid software license is always required. The laptop is still school owned and students must not store illegal or inappropriate materials on it as per the school’s Responsible Behaviour Plan. Students who breach this policy may risk serious consequences and possible removal from the home use program.

What is deemed inappropriate?
Any illegal (unlicensed) software; pirated music or videos; defamatory documents, or images, or any content not suitable for viewing by persons under the age of 18 are deemed inappropriate.

Who is responsible for data stored on the laptop?
The school has a backup procedure in place to ensure students do not loose data saved by the student on the school network. However for any data stored on the laptop, it is the students’ responsibility to backup their data. It is recommended they do so to a USB device (drive or memory stick).

Privacy
Students will never publish or disclose personal information including names, addresses, email addresses, photographs, credit card details or telephone numbers of themselves or others. This advice is for their protection and security.

Intellectual property and copyright
Students must never plagiarise information and shall observe appropriate copyright clearance, including acknowledging the original author or source of any information used.

Students will ensure that permission is gained before electronically publishing other people’s works or drawings. Always acknowledge the creator or author of any material published.

Material being published on the internet or intranet must have the approval of the Principal or their delegate and have appropriate copyright clearance.
Repairs and maintenance

Will my laptop be required for maintenance?
Yes. There may be a need to deploy software updates. Students will be notified when their laptop is required. Parents may have the opportunity to elect notification of a maintenance period via email. Should illegal or inappropriate material be found on the laptop, it will be restored to the original settings and all data stored on it (school and personal) lost.

What if the laptop is broken?
There is accidental damage cover and some items are covered under the manufacturer’s warranty. There is an expectation that students will be responsible and take care of this valuable asset. An excess applies – the cost ranges from $50 to $200.

What is accidental damage?
Accidental damage is where a laptop is damaged as the result of an unexpected and non-deliberate external action.

For example, a student trips dropping the laptop and resulting in damage to the laptop.

What is wilful or malicious damage?
Deliberate damage is where a reasonable person could expect that their action will cause damage to the laptop but completes the action anyway.

For example, a student forces a foreign object into the USB port.

Where the damage is determined to be wilful or malicious, then the full cost of repairs will be charged to parents.

Will students have access to a replacement laptop should the home laptop require repair?
The School will make every effort to provide a replacement laptop whilst the original machine is being repaired. The student will still have access to all school software and files stored on the network as per normal. The duration of the loan period will vary depending upon the complexity of the repair.

What if the laptop is lost or stolen?
Theft or Loss. On receipt of a police report and a statutory declaration from parents, the NSSCF program will initiate recovery procedures via built-in protection software. Should a device be unrecoverable, the cost of replacement is as follows:

- First case: the excess charged to parents is $200 ex GST
- Subsequent cases: full replacement cost.

Will my personal software and data be restored?
No. Students must be aware that should a laptop require repair, all data will be wiped as the machine is restored to its original settings.

Can students hand back their laptop and receive a newer model?
No. The laptop will stay with the student for four years and any damaged laptops requiring replacement will be replaced, subject to school discretion, with a model of a similar age.

Return of Laptops at the finish of year 12
When students leave school at the end of year 12 the laptops are returned to the school and will be removed from the school network. Depending on the age of the laptop it will have all licensed software and data removed and will be restored to original factory state. At that time the Department of Education and Training will make a decision about the disposal, sale or recycling of the used laptops as appropriate.