Q&A for the roll-out of the Personal Learning Devices

Q1. Can my child not purchase the device?

Every student is required to have a device for teaching and learning purposes and is encouraged to purchase one through the school via MOE's bulk tender. Students are encouraged to use the device model prescribed by the school, as the uniformity of systems and software would ensure a smooth learning experience for everyone. The device purchased through the school will come with the necessary warranty and insurance as well.

Students who do not wish to purchase a device because they already have their own devices will have to check with the school to ascertain whether the specifications of their existing devices meet the schools' requirements. These existing devices must also be installed with a Device Management Application (DMA) software to manage the student's access and usage. Due to the compatibility of DMA, the school will only use Window 10 Professional OS laptop.
Below is the minimum specifications requirement for the DMA installation.

Minimum Specifications:
  Processor: Intel i5 or better
  Processor Base Frequency: 1.6 Ghz or higher
  RAM: 8GB or higher
  Capacity: 512 SSD or higher
  Screen Size: 14 inch
  Resolution: 1366 x 768 or higher

Q2. My child loaned a device from the school for Home-Based Learning (HBL). Can he/she continue to use the loaned device instead of purchasing a new one?

Students are encouraged to use the device model prescribed by the school under the PLD initiative, as the uniformity of systems and software would ensure a smooth learning experience for them. The devices will be used both in and out of class. In class, the devices will be used to support learning of the curriculum subjects independently or collaboratively. Beyond the classroom, students will be able to use the device for home-based learning.

Devices purchased under the PLD initiative belong to the students, and they can continue to use the devices after graduation. For students who are receiving financial assistance, they will be provided additional subsidies such that their out-of-pocket expenses for the device will be zero.

Q3. Do all students in a school have to use the same device? What about students who opt out of using the school-selected device and wish to use their own? How will this affect their learning?

Students are encouraged to use the model prescribed by the school for a smooth learning experience. If students wish to use their own devices, these devices must meet the necessary specifications stated by the school. They must also be willing to allow the school to install Device Management Application software to manage the device, similar to all school-selected devices. If parents have questions about the devices, they can approach their child's teachers or school leaders for assistance.

Q4. What happens to the device after my child graduates?

The school will uninstall the DMA from the devices upon students' graduation, and students will have full control and personal ownership over their devices afterwards. If the student's device needs to be installed with DMA in JC/MI, it can be reinstated.

Q5. Will the devices and SLS resources replace textbooks?

With the devices, students can now access curriculum-aligned resources in the SLS both in and outside of class at their own pace, to complement their learning. The devices and SLS resources will not replace textbooks, as textbooks are currently designed as curriculum-aligned reference for students.

Q6. Will my child need to purchase software for their devices? If so, can these be paid for with Edusave?

The school may prescribe software that support the teaching and learning requirements. However, Edusave cannot be used for purchase of software (and relevant licences).

To support the development of digital literacy, MOE will also be rolling out the following applications in the Personal Learning Devices in early 2021: Google Suite for Education, Microsoft Office productivity suite which includes only Word, Excel, Powerpoint, OneNote & Publisher, and Zoom.

Q7. What is the expected weight of the device? Are there concerns that it may be too heavy for students to carry to and from their home on a daily basis?

MOE has taken factors such as size and weight of the devices into consideration when preparing the tender specifications for the Bulk Tender.

Q8. Will my child be allowed to store the device in school overnight? Where will students store their devices when they go for recess or PE lessons?

Students are expected to secure their devices in the common storage cupboards/their own lockers/bags and lock the classroom doors when they are away from their classrooms. Students should bring home the devices at the end of the school day so that they can utilise them for learning at home.

Q9. How frequently will the devices be used in class? Is there a recommended limit to screen time in class?

There is no recommended screen time as it depends very much on the nature of the activity. According to the American Academy of Paediatrics (2016), there is no one-size-fits-all approach to limiting the amount of screen time for teenagers. The academy recommends that screen time takes into consideration a child's developmental stage, how the technology is used, the quality of the content and design of the material. Schools will design their learning programmes to ensure that the students' use of PLDs is balanced in relation to other activities and modes of learning.

However, all PLDs will be installed with DMA, which allows teachers to manage students' screen time if they so desire. Teachers will also continue to ensure that the amount of assignments set (both online and offline) is guided by the school's homework policy.

Q10. Can parents approach the tenderer to make separate purchases?

No. The purchase of PLDs, and peripheral accessories, e.g., headphones and screens, riding on the MOE Device Bulk Tender has to be made through the schools. The schools will make their professional decision on the suitable specifications of the device model and accessories that best meets their teaching and learning requirements.