

FAQs for the roll-out of the Personal Learning Devices (2024)

Overview

1. How does the PLD Initiative impact Teaching and Learning (T&L)?

The PLD Initiative will enhance T&L by:

- a. Supporting greater customisation and differentiation in learning,
- b. Empowering students to engage in self-directed learning anytime and anywhere,
- c. Enhancing the development of 21st Century Competencies and Digital Literacy,
- d. Empowering teachers with deeper data-driven insights into student learning,
- e. Supporting the pervasive use of the Singapore Student Learning Space (SLS) in schools and allowing students to have seamless access to online learning in and out of class.

2. Will the devices and SLS resources replace textbooks?

The devices and SLS resources will not replace textbooks, as textbooks are currently designed as curriculum-aligned reference for students.

3. Do all students in 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?

For a smooth learning experience, students are strongly encouraged to use a device with the same Operating System (OS) and similar technical specifications as the model prescribed by the school. Students who do not wish to purchase the school-prescribed device and would like to use their own devices will have to seek approval from the school before they can pursue this option. The school will ascertain whether the students' devices run on the same OS and have similar technical specifications that allows the Device Management Application (DMA) to be installed.

The following are the minimum specifications required for student-owed devices:

- Laptop Minimum Hardware Requirements:
 - Processor: N4020 or better
 - RAM: 4GB or higher
 - Storage Capacity: 64GB eMMC/SSD or 500GB SATA or larger
 - Screen Size: 11.6 inch or larger
 - Screen Resolution: 1366 x 768 (HD) or higher
 - Device should not be older than 4 years from manufacturing date
 - Battery should hold charge for at least 4 hours
 - Microsoft Windows License Version Requirements:
 - Windows 10 Professional*
 - Windows 10 Education*
 - Windows 10 Professional Education*
- *Updated minimally to build 2004 onwards
- has inking functions
 - has good portability

ICT-Related Provisions

4. Will Microsoft Office be provided, or will parents/guardians have to purchase the licence?

Microsoft Office 365 will be available to students for access. The Microsoft products available under the package are Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote.

5. How will students without internet access at home be supported?

Students from eligible low-income households may apply for the DigitalAccess@Home scheme by the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA), which provides subsidised broadband access. More information can be found at: <https://imda.gov.sg/dah>.

Price

6. Can parents/guardians opt for device technical upgrade and purchase additional accessories outside of the school-prescribed device bundle?

We regret to inform that this option is not available. Whatever technical upgrades (e.g., RAM or memory), or accessories deemed as necessary would already be included in the school-prescribed device bundle and made available to all students. This would help to mitigate any potential comparison among students.

7. Why does the price of the device appear higher than the same models sold in the retail market?

The enhanced device bundle parents/guardians purchase through the school includes a 3-year insurance and 3-year warranty, which allows for two repairs or one replacement. This would not be included in the retail price of similar models sold in the retail market.

Ownership of Devices

8. Can students share one device with their siblings?

For a smooth learning experience, each student should have his/her own device as prescribed by the school. This is because different schools may tap on different devices for T&L. In addition, as students will be required to use the devices in school daily and for their learning after school, it might not be practical to share the device with their siblings.

9. Can students opt not to purchase the device?

Every student is required to have a device for learning purposes. They are encouraged to purchase one through the school. Students who already own a device running on the same OS and do not wish to purchase another device will have to seek approval from the school before they can pursue this option.

In the event the student's laptop is assessed to be suitable for use in school, the laptop will be wiped out to factory settings, which means that all data inside will be lost. It will then be followed by the installation of DMA and other necessary software.

Care and Maintenance of Devices

10. What is the expected shelf life of the device? What happens to the device after the student graduates?

The devices have an average shelf life of 3-4 years, which sufficiently covers the time a student is in secondary school. The school will uninstall the DMA from the devices upon students' graduation, and graduated students will have full control over their devices.

11. Will students be allowed to store the devices 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 their own lockers/bags and lock the classroom doors when they are away from their classrooms. Students should bring the devices home at the end of the school day so that they can utilise them for learning at home and to charge them fully for use the following day in school.

12. When a student's device is not able to function or is lost, is he/she able to loan a school device for short-term use?

Yes, students can be provided short-term loans due to loss or repairs.

Warranty and Insurance

13. Does the device purchased include insurance? If so, what is covered under the insurance?

The devices come with the enhanced 3-year insurance and warranty bundle (which allows for two repairs or one replacement). The following events are covered by insurance:

- Fire
- Lightning
- Power Surges
- Accidental e.g water spillage, drop etc
- Theft due to forcible entry
- Robbery

The insurance coverage is only applicable to situations of damages and loss not due to negligence, where the student has taken precautions to safeguard the device. Accidental loss will not be covered by insurance.

14. What happens if the device is stolen/lost?

The student will have to report it to the ICT team and a police report will need to be made for the insurance claim.

15. Does a police report need to be made if a student loses his/her PLD due to negligence?

Accidental loss due to negligence is not covered by insurance and a new PLD will need to be purchased by the parent. The school will assist in purchasing a replacement PLD.

16. What happens if students damage their devices accidentally?

They will have to report it to the school's ICT Team. The school will coordinate with the vendor on the assessment of damage and repairs. If there are additional costs, the vendor will contact the parent/guardian before proceeding with the repair. All additional costs for repairs will be borne by the parent/guardian if not covered by insurance. Edusave funds cannot be used to pay for the cost of repairs.

If the device is damaged beyond economical repair and is not covered by insurance (coverage against damage and loss/theft), the replacement device will have to be paid for by the parent/guardian/student. MOE will provide subsidies to limit the out-of-pocket expense for students from lower income families who need to replace their devices not covered by insurance.

17. Does the insurance cover the accessories (e.g., styluses, keyboard cases)?

Insurance coverage is for the main device only and does not cover accessories.

18. Does the insurance cover damages or losses that occurred while overseas?

Yes. When making such a claim, the vendor will require a written declaration from the student/parent/guardian that no other insurance policies are being claimed for the device to ensure that in a case where the student/parent/guardian has purchased travel insurance that included coverage for the device, they are not making duplicate claims for the same device.

For stolen/lost device covered under insurance (refer to Q14), a local police report in the country that the loss/theft was committed must be made.

19. Can students still send their device for servicing to the respective centre after the warranty lapses, and how will the charges be imposed?

After the device warranty lapses, students can still send their device to the Service Centre for repair. The charges will be provided by the Service Centre and students/parents/guardians will have to assess the reasonableness of the charges and decide whether to take up the repair. Alternatively, students can consider going to other shops to perform the repairs after the warranty is over.

General Information on DMA

20. Is the DMA installation compulsory for all students?

Yes, it is compulsory for all student devices, whether they are procured from school or are students' own devices.

21. Why is there a need for DMAs in PLDs?

DMA allows teachers to have appropriate controls in place to manage students' device usage in classrooms. In addition, the DMA addresses parents'/guardians' concerns regarding access to undesirable content online (e.g. pornography, gambling etc) and excessive screen time arising from PLD usage.

22. Why does the school have to download the DMA into students' PLDs to restrict their use if the PLD is purchased and paid for by the students' Edusave and/or parents/guardians?

The PLDs will be used more pervasively in schools as part of a more blended learning experience. Hence, while the PLD is purchased and paid for by parents/guardians, MOE needs to ensure that students have a safer and more conducive digital learning environment when using the PLDs for learning. This is especially important for younger students who are still learning to be discerning and self-regulated in their engagement with digital content and use of devices.

Furthermore, as the PLD is intended primarily as a T&L device, these DMA features complement existing efforts by teachers to help students use technology safely and effectively for learning. The DMA would restrict students' ability to freely download their own apps and programmes into the PLD, which may become a source of distraction during their learning. In addition, the default DMA settings also disable the use of PLDs from 11pm to 7am to help ensure that students get sufficient rest.

While the PLDs would have DMA default settings at the start, MOE provides options for parents/guardians to manage their child's/ward's PLD settings after school hours if they prefer to have a greater say over how their child/ward uses their device at home. The DMA will be uninstalled from the PLDs when the student graduates from secondary school.

23. How will parents/guardians be able to exercise more control of DMA settings after school?

Should you wish to opt for parental control after school hours, you can indicate your preference to the school to either:

- (i) be given rights to customise the DMA settings for your child/ward after school hours [Option A]; or
- (ii) have the school disable the DMA after school hours [Option B].

24. Can parents/guardians change their minds on the after-school DMA options?

Parents/guardians can switch to another After-School DMA Parent Option should they change their minds subsequently by sending the request to:

<https://form.gov.sg/615fd833d09a290014ac2f05>

The request will be processed by the school on a monthly basis. Changes will take effect by the end of the month.

25. For parents/guardians on Option A who choose to customise the after-school DMA options, will applications that have been installed for after-school purposes be accessible during school hours?

As a default, applications that have been installed for after-school use by parents/guardians will be automatically blocked for use during school hours.

26. What happens to the DMA when a student leaves secondary school?

When students leave their secondary school, the DMA will be uninstalled from the students' PLD and the PLDs de-enrolled from the MOE-managed DMA system. Students will then have full control over their PLDs, with no restrictions.

For students in the graduating cohorts, the DMA uninstallation and de-enrolment exercise will only commence after the end of the national examinations. This will ensure the students can access their revision material in their PLDs during the examination period.