



iPads in the Sixth Form at Langley Grammar School

The purpose of this document is to help answer questions that are frequently asked by Sixth Form students and their parents in relation to iPads at Langley Grammar School.

How has the use of iPads in the school developed over time?

In May 2013, the school began an exciting journey with the launch of a pilot project, providing 1:1 devices for a group of students who were then in Year 9. From the very outset, the school wanted to put technology in the hands of staff and students to provide opportunities for students to learn in more creative and independent ways. Building on the success of this pilot and learning lessons along the way, 1:1 devices have been rolled out to every student in the school, including to those in the Sixth Form. In 2017 the school was recognised for its innovative practice in the use of iPads for learning in being one of only 25 schools in the UK and 400 schools globally to achieve Apple Distinguished School status.

What value do we see in students having an iPad in the Sixth Form?

“In times of change learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.” – Eric Hoffer

We live in a world of rapid technological change, where computing power is increasing, mobile connectivity is almost a necessity and the unprecedented access to information has transformed our social and work lives. By providing students with access to tablet technology, and opportunities to use it in the curriculum, we aim to prepare our Sixth Form students for both future study and the modern workplace. We know universities and employers value digital literacy and independent learning and believe that developing such skills in our students can give them the competitive edge.

In addition to preparing students for their future, we also see value in using iPads as a tool to enrich and enhance learning in lessons. We've seen how iPads can improve in school communication and be an aid to private study. Students with iPads have better access a wider range of resources, can be more creative in how they learn, will benefit from subject specific applications and can more easily collaborate with their peers.

Overall we hope that we can create new kinds of learning experiences for our students. For example, students in year 12 have had the opportunity to run training for teachers and even address high profile conferences, such as the Education Reform Summit, on behalf of Apple and Jigsaw24, our suppliers. Such unique and inspiration experiences will stay with students for a lifetime.

How are iPads used in the Sixth Form lessons?

We see iPads as a tool that, when used effectively, can enhance teaching and learning. Our hope overall is that they make learning more efficient (for example, quicker distribution of resources, access to a richer variety of learning material, e.g. podcasts, websites, subject specialist apps, range of media), and therefore deeper, as time is gained for discussion and the formulation of personal opinion and understanding. The technology also enables teachers to monitor and assess students' individual understanding more effectively and efficiently. In turn, this enhances the feedback from teachers to students.

Students will find that each department will expect students to utilise iPads in different ways. In some A Level subjects they are fully integrated into teaching and learning with many activities involving their use, whereas in other departments, iPads are used less frequently and sit alongside more traditional approaches. The difference in approach is for two reasons. Firstly, we encourage teachers in departments to adopt a critical approach to integrating technology into the curriculum, using it where tangible benefits are gained. We believe that the use of iPads is not an end in itself, but that technology should be used in ways which improve teaching and learning. Secondly, different A Level subjects are at different stages in developing an approach that ensures that using iPads adds value to students' learning. We still value more traditional approaches to teaching and the use of text books and other resources in A Level programmes of study and recognise that such approaches may at different times be preferable to the use of iPads for different students.

Individual subject leaders are able to provide more information on how iPads are used in their particular A Level courses.

How can the use of iPads improve analytical and critical thinking skills?

Depending on the student's needs, there are a number of apps that significantly aid the thinking process. Padlet is an app that accelerates class discussion and debate. Popplet and other mind-mapping apps provide students with the tools to record their ideas as fast as they generate them. Other apps provide space for quieter students to express themselves and engage in class discussion. There are many others apps that are rooted in educational research and we are training staff and students to use them, as appropriate.

Are the quality of the apps used in lessons as good as textbook material?

The short answer is sometimes they are and sometimes they are not. Positively, some subject specific apps can completely transform the potential for understanding material (e.g. 3D Human Bodies for Sciences and PE). Others provide the opportunity to put industry-level tools into the hands of students and therefore work in ways that were previously impossible (e.g. ArcGIS in Geography). E-Textbooks can be good value-for-money replacement for paper textbooks, as well as reducing the number of books carried by students. These are apps are not specific to iPads however, and sometimes are browser-based. However the best apps develop our students' cognitive and creative thinking by allowing them to express their understanding in ways that were not easy to achieve, or assess before.

Will working on an iPad affect my ability to write at speed in examinations?

We have no evidence that this is an issue. Our A Level programmes are designed so that students are thoroughly prepared for their examinations and include practice examinations which students complete on paper. We believe in a blended use of technology into the curriculum. Even in those subjects where iPads are most fully integrated into the curriculum, students are still expected to hand write a significant amount of work.

What options are available for getting an iPad?

There are three main ways that students are able to have access to a device. They can:

- Borrow a device from a small pool of older iPads that we have available in school (there is no charge for this).
- Provide their own new or refurbished iPad from home.
- Choose to lease a device through our two partner organisations, Jigsaw 24 and Burnetts Insurance. There are a range of payment plans and options available through this scheme.

Further details of each of these options are provided on our accompanying letter.

Why can't the school fund a new iPad for every student?

Unfortunately the school cannot afford to fund individual iPads for our students. Our budget simply does not allow us to do so. In practice, the vast majority of students have a device that is paid for by their parents. We do rely on the support of parents to enable every student to have access to a 1:1 device. Where finance is an issue, we do have a small pool of iPads that students can borrow from on a day-to-day basis at no cost. Moreover, students in receipt of the Sixth Form bursary can use this funding to invest in a device.

What are our expectations of students in the Sixth Form in relation to iPads?

We want to ensure that all students in the Sixth Form have 1:1 access to an iPad. In turn, this allows teachers to make assumptions in their planning, that they can use a specific app, or functionality of iPads, with their classes. All students are expected to agree to and follow our acceptable use policy for ICT and devices, and enrol their device on our Mobile Device Management (MDM) system, Jamf ('Casper').

Why does the school require students' iPads to be managed by the school's device management system even though the iPads are not provided by the school?

We have a statutory responsibility to keep students safe in school, which includes the use of technology by all year groups. Casper gives the school the capability to restrict access to some functionality of the iPads. We do not use these restrictions for the vast majority of our students. They are only used when a student contravenes the school's behaviour policy or where their actions affect the safety and well being of others. Consultation with parents is made beforehand by our pastoral team. Further, we follow the practice of most modern workplaces, where employees are

required to adhere to the workplace ICT policy – we also require students and indeed staff to adhere to the school's ICT policy.

However, the main advantage of the school managing iPads is that it enables us to easily deploy apps to devices at no extra cost to students. We can also particular pieces of software such as Apple Classroom, which we are deploying over the next few months. This piece of management software will enable teachers to distribute resources and switch apps for students in lessons at the touch of a button. It will also enable them to monitor in real-time how students are working and which apps they are using.

Sixth Form students choose to work in a variety of ways so why does the school require all students to have access to an iPad?

Expecting all students to have access to an iPad brings a number of advantages. For example, teachers are able to plan lessons confident in the knowledge that all students will have access to particular apps, and won't be disadvantaged. Also, students can more easily collaborate in their learning than if they were using a range of different tablets.

We do however recognise that students in the Sixth Form will want to work in different ways and many students use paper, laptops and other devices in lessons or for private study as well as their iPads.

Why has the school decided to utilise an iPads rather than Surface or Google tablets?

There is increasing competition from Google and Microsoft and the school always considers the evolving strengths and weaknesses of different platforms. In our pilot project we evaluated the products and services from all 3 companies after considerable debate found that Apple hardware, powered by Microsoft Cloud services (Office365) to be the most robust solution. We continue to believe that Apple's AppStore is the safest and most reliable product for an educational environment. iTunesU, for example, is a vast educational resource available for students with iPads which has huge academic value, particularly for Sixth Form students.

Sixth Form students can continue to bring in and complete work on their own laptops alongside their iPad. In addition, we are able to offer the purchase of MacBook Pros. Further details are available in our accompanying letter.

If I want to find out more about iPads in the Sixth Form, who can I ask?

External students joining the Sixth Form are provided with more information about iPads as part of their induction in the autumn term.

Enquiries relating to financing and insurance should be referred to Greg Trigg, our School Business Manager. GaryBotha@lgs.slough.sch.uk

Other enquiries can be referred to Daniel Mace and Stacey Jenkins, our Lead Practitioners with responsibility for technology for learning: danielmace@lgs.slough.sch.uk staceyjenkins@lgs.slough.sch.uk or to our Deputy Headteacher, David Harding , who has overall responsibility for teaching and learning across the school: davidharding@lgs.slough.sch.uk