



Verdala International School

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide

VIS recognizes that technology supports its mission and educational goals. Our BYOD approach is a part of this strategy and students of the Middle and High Schools are required to bring their own laptops to school on a daily basis.

This guide contains important information regarding our BYOD programme. Specifically, families will find:

- [Minimum specifications](#)
- [Software requirements](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

If you have any questions about the content of this document, please do not hesitate to contact the respective Principal or the Director of IT Integration.



Verdala International School

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide

Minimum Specifications

The table below should help you in selecting and purchasing a laptop for your child to use while they are at VIS. While there are many options, these are minimum specifications that we require to support your child's learning at VIS.

Please be aware that our curriculum programmes are designed to work with the specifications below, devices that do not meet these will make it difficult/impossible for students to fully engage with learning activities. Devices older than 4 years may well not meet these requirements.

If you have any queries about the suitability of a specific device, please speak to the Director of IT Integration.

Machine Type	Windows or Apple Laptop (11" screen or more) Note that Tablets/Chromebooks are not currently supported
Processor	Intel Core i5 or higher AMD Ryzen 5 or higher M1 chip or later (MacOS)
RAM & Video RAM	8 GB DDR3 or higher For Windows machines, at least 1 GB of VRAM (highly recommended) ¹
Hard Drive	256 GB or higher <i>Please note the device should have a minimum of 50 GB of free storage to allow for required software installation</i>
Operating System (minimum)	Windows 10 Home or later, Mac OS Sierra or later <i>The operating system must be in English.</i>
Battery Life	6+ hours <i>Students are expected to bring a charger (UK plug) to school on a daily basis</i>
Browser	Google Chrome
Virus Protection	The laptop must be equipped with an up-to-date licenced virus and malware protection software.
Wireless	802.11n or higher <i>Must support WPA2 encryption</i>
Connectivity	Either through built-in ports or through additional dongles, the device should be able to connect via USB-A, USB-C, HDMI, Ethernet, VGA
Input	Keyboard Pointing device (touchpad, mouse) Built in microphone Recommended additional device - Headphones with mic
Portability	The laptop must be conveniently portable to and from school, independently by the student. <i>Students should have a sleeve for their device for better protection and are expected to carry their device in the sleeve at all times.</i>

¹ Students may want to install Adobe Creative Suite on their laptops, this will only work with a certain minimum amount of VRAM on Windows. They will still be able to use the software in the Design Labs if their device is not powerful enough.

There is no VRAM requirement for MacOS devices which operate differently.



Verdala International School

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide

Software requirements

Students/families are responsible for ensuring that software is kept up to date, especially virus and anti-malware software.

Internet Browser

Google Chrome

Please note that Chrome is integrated into Google Workspace for Education and we make available shortcuts and other resources through the browser.

These resources cannot be accessed when using other browsers.

We require Google Chrome to be installed and students are expected to use this browser for school-related activities.

We recommend an additional browser be installed as it may be useful when troubleshooting. Students may also prefer to use a different browser for their own personal use (when not accessing school accounts)

Laptop/Mobile location tracking (highly recommended)

Be aware that the school accepts no responsibility for lost laptops - it is the student's responsibility to take care of their device(s).

- [Prey Project](#)
- For Mac users signup for an apple account <https://www.icloud.com/> and enable Find My Mac

Online Storage/Backup

- Google Drive for Desktop (log in with school email account)

Additional software requirements will be communicated by the teachers throughout the year. Where a paid-for license is required, this will be provided by the school.



Verdala International School

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What are the advantages of BYOD?

The advantages of student-owned devices are greater than that of a standardized device program where the school maintained control of many features of the device because:

- there are greater opportunities for more personalized learning
- students have greater agency in choosing what tools to use
- students develop greater familiarity with the technology
- there are increased opportunities for more responsible use of technology

The locus of control is now with the student and, by extension, the family of the student.

How is responsible use of technology supported?

All students, and their parents, are required to read and sign the Technology Acceptable Use Agreement on an annual basis, which outlines our expectations and extends to the way students behave online and whenever they are acting as a member of the VIS Community.

The exercising of academic integrity, conducting research, management of personal information, appropriate behaviour online, balancing off- and online activity, and other matters related to appropriate use of technology are all dealt with throughout a range of lessons and learning experiences.

Who is responsible for purchasing education-specific software on student-owned devices?

Most of the resources we use are web-based and accessed via students' school email accounts, and the school pays for the licenses/subscriptions for these as necessary.

Who is responsible for the maintenance and updates of these devices?

All maintenance for the hardware device, operating system, software and/or apps purchased by the family are the responsibility of the family. Families should ensure a quick maintenance turnaround for student devices. All computers should be equipped with up-to-date virus and malware protection software.

How do students or staff store and share their digital work?

Students and staff will use Google Drive for saving and sharing documents. They should download the ***Drive for desktop*** app from their Google Drive which then mirrors files locally and can be used for storing local files, ensuring these are backed up as well.

Do I need to purchase Insurance for my BYOD device?

We do recommend you purchase damage protection for your laptops. You may be able to include this within home or personal insurance, or you may need an additional service.



Verdala International School

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide

For Apple products, we recommend you purchase Apple Care though you may also need to obtain additional insurance for damage protection. Please check the conditions carefully so you know exactly what protection you have in place.

All insurance claims must be settled between you and the insurance company. Students are expected to not leave their laptops unattended and ***VIS will not be held responsible for damage to students' devices at any time, while on campus or at home.***

How do we ensure students remain “cyber safe” in and out of the classroom?

Digital citizenship is an essential component of the BYOD program and it will be integrated with classroom learning. All students and parents sign the Acceptable Use Agreement annually which outlines the use of technology in the online community.

For more information on staying cyber safe at home, see a list of [online resources](#) later in this document.

What are some examples of healthy habits about “screen time” that can be promoted at home

Recent research is providing evidence that heavy use of screen time, particularly in the final 30-60 minutes before sleeping, can have implications on quality of sleep. With this in mind, VIS will work with parents to take a united front on establishing positive healthy habits with digital technologies.

What about cloning?

We do not clone student laptops.

What if I forget my laptop at home?

Students will be required to bring their laptops to school each day; students without laptops will not be able to access the full academic program.

What about malicious hacking?

Students at VIS receive digital citizenship guidance. If you have questions or concerns about appropriate computer use please refer to our Acceptable Use Agreement.

What about file sharing? (P2P)

Students at VIS can share files digitally using approved file sharing services such as Google Apps. File sharing services that are generally used for software piracy will not be accessible at school. Although students will be bringing their own devices to school, VIS's strong filtering software will still be working across all platforms when students are on campus.

What are the school rules? What documents do I need to know about? (What are the laptop use rules?)

All of the information you need to know is contained in the Student Handbooks.



Verdala International School

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide

How many devices may I bring?

Although we currently do not have restrictions in place, students should bring no more than two devices to school to be used on the school internet. This means that they could bring, for example, a laptop and a tablet or a phone.

Note that rules for using these devices during school time differ across Middle and High School, please check the relevant student handbook or speak to the Principal for more details.

What are the rules about surveillance (monitoring student laptops)?

We do not currently monitor students' laptops. We do, however, keep a log of internet traffic on the VIS network. The VIS Acceptable Use Agreement and the Student Code of Conduct will apply to misuse of the internet or the VIS network.

Will students require their laptops for assessments?

Students can expect to use their laptops daily for a wide variety of learning activities, including assessments.

Can students use their laptops during their free time?

Specific guidelines for laptop use during breaks, lunch, and other free time can be found in the relevant student handbook.

How should students transport their laptops?

Students are required to purchase a laptop sleeve or bag to transport laptops. Students will be expected to keep their laptops in these sleeves and their backpack should be large enough to comfortably fit their laptop inside its sleeve.

As a parent, how can I best support my child at home with the laptop?

We strongly encourage you to work as a family to set ground rules for the care, maintenance, and usage of the laptop. Families should have set work routines that allow for completion of homework tasks separately from play or socializing on the computer.

Given the safety and family concerns of some internet content, we strongly suggest students use laptops in such a way to provide family members a direct line of sight to laptop screens and have on-going family discussions about appropriate internet use. Also, parents should have access to passwords for their children's accounts online.

Families can also help by encouraging students to have only one program open at a time in order to engage more completely with one task. We also strongly encourage families to set ground rules about the use of chat or other social networking services while students are working on their laptops at home.

For more details, check out our list of recommended [online resources](#).



Verdala International School

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guide

What about internet filtering for my child's laptop at home and school?

The school has a secure firewall that takes care of internet filtering on the school campus. However this does not work when off-campus.

There are various filtering services available. A good starting point would be to check with your internet provider, as they may make this service available already.

Can my child use a VPN at school?

We understand that for various reasons, students may use a VPN at home, however these must be turned off for students to access school services while connected to our network.

What online resources are available for families?

You may find these websites a useful starting point

- [Better Internet for Kids](#)
- [Balanced Use - Internet Safety, Safer Internet for Children, Online safety - Malta Communications Authority](#)
- [Online Safety \(for Parents\) - Nemours KidsHealth](#)
- [Safer Internet Day 2022 - Advice for Parents](#)
- [Parents and Carers - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)