

Wollondilly Anglican College



'MyTech'

Question and Answer Booklet

Version 1
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'MyTech' Questions and Answers

In this document, you will find a list of questions you may have about the 'MyTech' Program along with answers or suggestions. We are currently in the planning stage of the program and as such anticipate that some things may change between now and Term 3 2017. We have endeavoured to be as comprehensive as possible throughout this document, however, if there are areas that we have not addressed, we welcome your feedback.

We acknowledge Nowra Anglican College for giving us permission to use material that they have found helpful in running a similar program to 'MyTech'.

To access a digital copy of this booklet please go to the 'MyTech' website <http://mytech.wac.nsw.edu.au>

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'MyTech' Questions and Answers

1. About the Program

Q: What is 'MyTech'?

A: 'MyTech' is a part of the College's ongoing technology development. Under 'MyTech' every secondary student will bring their own device, such as a laptop, to College. In many schools it is called a BYOD (bring your own device) program. By 2020 all students in the secondary years will be bringing their own device.

'MyTech' will mean that teachers will no longer move their class out of specialised classrooms to access computers for a lesson. It will also allow teachers and students to access a wide variety of online learning activities and tools anytime, in any lesson, while they are still in their normal classrooms.

Q: Why 'MyTech'?

A: Technology has revolutionised almost every part of our lives. It is an important tool used in most workplaces to increase efficiencies and enable people to perform their jobs better. In order to prepare students for this kind of workplace we need to be exposing them to a wide variety of technologies and providing them with the skills to be able to adapt to the rapid pace of technological change. This includes teaching them healthy digital citizenship values to match their skills.

'MyTech' will allow us to help our students become 21st century learners who are creative and critical thinkers and can work collaboratively with others. When each student has access to their own device, teachers have much greater flexibility to work at developing these skills. To facilitate this, the College is also implementing a new cloud based Learning Management System called Canvas. Used well, technology can create more interactive and engaging lessons. When students are engaged they learn more. The College anticipates the 'MyTech' program will not only provide students with access to expanded, global resources and content but will also give students the opportunity to take ownership of their learning and be creative in their problem solving.

The 'MyTech' program will continue to allow teachers to work in partnership with parents to develop a wide range of skills that will help ensure our students are well equipped to move into further education or into the workforce.



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Q: What is Canvas?

A: Canvas is a cloud based Learning Management System that is designed to make teaching and learning easier. It will replace our current Moodle platform and will offer superior usability and functionality. Students will be able to access Canvas anywhere that they have an internet connection via a web browser or mobile app. Some of the benefits of Canvas for students are that it allows them to:

- access and catch up on missed work;
- revise past work and class activities;
- access extension work;
- work collaboratively with other students;
- check due dates for homework and assessments tasks;
- submit work digitally; and
- receive feedback and grades digitally.

Canvas will allow students to access class work and move through activities at their own pace. While many students are consolidating their understanding of key concepts, more advanced students can be working on higher order thinking tasks to challenge and extend themselves.

It also has benefits for teachers in terms of enabling digital marking, greater analysis of student results and easier distribution of learning materials.

Q: When does the 'MyTech' Program commence?

A: The 'MyTech' Program at Wollondilly Anglican College will commence on Day 1 of Term 3 2017 for Years 8 and 9. In 2018, Day 1 of Term 1, students in Years 7 and 8 will also bring their own device. This will then flow into the Collegiate years (11 & 12). By the beginning of 2020 every student in Years 7-12 will be bringing their own device to the College.

MyTech rollout for each year group

2017 Term 3	2018 Term 1	2019 Term 1	2020 Term 1
	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7
Year 8	Year 8	Year 8	Year 8
Year 9	Year 9	Year 9	Year 9
	Year 10	Year 10	Year 10
		Year 11	Year 11
			Year 12



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Q: Why wait until Term 3 2017 to implement 'MyTech'?

A: To ensure that 'MyTech' is implemented smoothly we are allowing time for teachers, parents and students to prepare. Staff are already well advanced in the application of this technology and this will continue. Although it is really just another piece of equipment that students will bring to class, for it to be integrated properly there are a number of issues that have to be considered and addressed. These include:

- the College ensuring we have the suitable hardware and systems in place to cope with such a large number of devices accessing our network;
- suitable programs and policies need to be put in place to ensure our students know how to use their devices appropriately and strategies are in place to prevent inappropriate use;
- staff completing training to enable them to adapt their teaching to use this technology effectively in the classroom;
- parents need time to budget for and purchase a suitable device for their children.

Beginning the roll out in Term 3 2017 will allow us time to address all the above issues and ensure a smooth implementation of 'MyTech'.

Q: Why doesn't the College buy laptops for each student?

A: There are a number of different options as to how a school can implement a 1:1 device program. One option is for the College to purchase identical devices for each student and add this to the fees and another is for students to bring a device that best suits them. No one option suits all students or families and schools have to decide what option best suits the majority. The College has chosen the latter option as it will allow students and parents to choose a device that most closely matches their needs for both the College and at home. It provides ownership of the device and helps to ensure that students value and look after it.

Q: What are my options for purchasing a device for my child?

A: There will be several options for how you can buy a suitable device for your child.

1. Purchase an approved device from the College purchasing portal

The College has set up a purchasing portal with a third party that will offer a range of suitable devices. The Portal will be ready to make purchases in mid-November 2016. The advantages of this are that parents can be confident that the device will meet or exceed the requirements of the 'MyTech' program. The portal will provide a variety of competitively priced devices at a range price levels.

2. Purchase an approved device from a supplier of your choice

Provided the device meets the minimum requirements, a student can bring a device that has been purchased from a retailer of your choice (eg Harvey Norman, JB Hi-Fi). It is important that you are very careful to ensure that the salesperson only sells you a device that meets all the specifications and it is



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recommended that you take the detailed specifications with you to the store.

3. Bring an existing device

Provided the device meets the minimum requirements, a student can bring a device that is already owned by their family to the College for the 'MyTech' program. To meet these requirements it would need to be a relatively new device that is up to date and still has sufficient battery life.



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2. Teaching and Learning

Q: How often will students be required to bring their device to the College?

A: Students will need to bring their fully charged device to the College every day.

Q: How will the devices be used in class?

A: Currently our staff use technology in a variety of ways to teach students. This ranges from setting specific online tasks to giving open-ended tasks where students are expected to use technology to solve a problem. With the introduction of our 'MyTech' program the use of technology in classroom teaching will become more fluid and prevalent. Much of the content and many teaching activities will be delivered to students through our new Learning Management System, Canvas. It will allow students to take greater ownership of their learning and provide them with the opportunity to collaborate, communicate and research on a global level in real time.

The technology won't replace the explicit teaching of concepts or the interaction between the teacher and the students. Its purpose is to enhance the method and practise of teaching. Students will still be required to complete handwritten tasks, particularly in Years 11 and 12, as we are conscious of the need for students to maintain their handwriting skills.

Q: What effect will the program have on textbooks?

A: The College is moving towards electronic textbooks or eBooks, starting 2017 with Geography and History for Years 8 and 9. We plan to extend this across as many subjects as possible for Years 7 to 9 in 2018. The benefits of using an eBook are twofold; they contain interactive content and students won't need to carry textbooks to and from the College each day.

Q: What effect will the program have on exercise books?

A: The College will still use a blended learning environment meaning that traditional classroom methods, such as the use of exercise books and textbooks, are combined with the internet and digital media. Depending on the type of activity, the teacher will decide on the best tool to use and will clearly communicate this to the students. It is envisaged that the device will be an integral part of most, but not all lessons.



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3. Suitable devices

Q: What types of devices does the College recommend?

A: The College recommends a relatively new Windows based PC. Other devices including MacBooks are suitable provided they meet the minimum specifications that can be found at the end of this booklet.

Q: What are the minimum requirements?

A: We have included a set of minimum requirements at the end of this document. In most cases, if you purchase a new personal laptop computer it will meet these specifications.

Q: A computer for around \$500 seems too good to be true. Is there a downside?

A: For general College use, a basic Windows computer will meet the needs of the majority of students. Senior students studying an IT, D & T or Visual Arts course may need a higher powered computer to run software like the Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, etc.) or Microsoft Access. Some students may also want to use their device beyond the classroom for other activities that may require higher specifications.

Q: Will my child be at a disadvantage in the Senior Years in IT, D & T or Visual Arts subjects if they only have a cheaper laptop?

A: No. We will have some College computers available to run specialised software for these courses. Obviously student access to these computers will be governed by demand.

Q: Is an Apple MacBook an acceptable device?

A: Yes. Provided the MacBook is relatively new it should meet the minimum specifications detailed at the end of this booklet.

Q: What are the benefits of purchasing a MacBook?

A: A MacBook may provide students with greater multimedia capabilities should they require them for visual media based subjects. Microsoft Office 365 is available for a MacBook.

Q: What are the disadvantages of purchasing a MacBook?

A: A MacBook is generally more expensive than a Windows based laptop. They may also require extra software and carry additional technical support overheads for the user.



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Q: Why aren't iPads or tablets included?

A: Many schools have trialled iPads and are now moving away from them as they do not provide all the functionality that is needed in the learning environment. Disadvantages include the small screen and keyboard sizes. Additionally, only a limited range of programs can be run on these types of devices.

Q: Should I buy insurance?

A: The security of the device rests with the individual owner; as such Wollondilly Anglican College takes no responsibility for stolen, lost, or damaged devices. While College employees will help students to identify how to keep their devices secure, students will have the final responsibility for securing their devices. You may wish to check your homeowner's insurance policy regarding coverage for portable personal electronic devices. Some policies cover loss or damage.

Q: I have an old laptop at home, can I give this to my child to use?

A: We strongly recommend that the device your child brings to the College is as new as possible so that it meets our minimum requirements and is as functional and reliable as possible. Devices over three years old will probably not be suitable.

Q: My children all share a laptop, will this do for the 'MyTech' program?

A: All students will be set individual classroom tasks involving their 'MyTech' device on a regular basis and across a variety of subject areas. For this reason, it is essential that all students have their own individual device.

Q: I have bought the device, now what do I do?

A: Once you have purchased a device you need to make sure all the necessary software, as detailed below, is installed. To get connected to the College WIFI network students will be expected to attend a 'MyTech' Boot Camp on a date to be advised in 2017. In the meantime, we recommend your child gets comfortable using the device and avoids installing too many programs or games because they take up valuable memory and slow the computer down.



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4. Software

Q: What software will students need?

A: Students need to have software that will allow them to access, view, and create documents and undertake various other learning tasks. All the necessary software is detailed below and is available free to educational students. Links to download the software can be found on the 'MyTech' website.

Internet Browser: All devices are recommended to have Google Chrome browser.

PDF Reader: Adobe Acrobat Reader needs to be installed.

Productivity Software: Every student will need to have software or applications that allow them to complete basic tasks such as word processing, graphing and creating presentations. Students can use either Microsoft Office 365 or Google apps to do this. The College will provide each student with a Microsoft Account which will allow students to download Microsoft Office 365 for free. The Google apps suite of productivity software is web based and can be used on any device.

Audio/Video Software: A suitable audio and video application will be required. Due to the wide range of video types which exist, we strongly recommend that the free program VLC Player is installed in addition to those already installed on the device (eg QuickTime, Microsoft Media Player) as it can open and view many different forms of video.

Anti-Virus Software: Up-to-date Anti-Virus Software is a 'must have' to keep your child's own files and other students' files safe. Various free Anti-Virus programs exist, such as Avira, AVG or Avast. These are available for both Windows and Mac OSX. The College does not provide any support for these but if you are interested in using the Anti-Virus programs listed above, links can be found on the 'MyTech' website.

Q: What is Microsoft Office 365 Education for Students?

A: Office 365 Education for Students is available for free to students who attend academic institutions. This plan allows students to install Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneNote, Publisher, and Access on up to five PCs or Macs as well as Office apps on other mobile devices including Android, iPad®, and Windows tablets.



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5. Purchasing a Device through the College Purchase Portal

Q: How will this work?

A: A website (purchase portal) has been set up specifically for purchasing devices for our 'MyTech' program. Parents may choose to purchase a device through this website or may purchase a device elsewhere. The Portal purchases are facilitated through the College's preferred supplier of ICT equipment.

Q: Why is this option available?

A: While it is not essential that you purchase your device through the Portal, doing so will ensure that your device meets or exceeds the required specifications and is competitively priced.

Q: What type of devices will be available on the Portal?

A: The devices for sale on the purchase portal will be a variety of Windows based laptops or Apple MacBooks.

Q: Will my child be disadvantaged by not having a device purchased through the portal?

A: There is no disadvantage. The same connectivity support is provided to devices purchased elsewhere to those purchased through the portal, however, you may not achieve the same competitive pricing through a non-portal purchase.



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6. Connections

Q: Will the College provide WIFI 24/7?

A: The College will provide wireless internet connectivity to students while they are on College premises during College hours.

Q: Will there be web-filtering?

A: When students are on College premises and connected to the internet through the College's WIFI network, web-filtering will be active. Whilst no web-filtering solution is perfect, the College will do its best to prevent access to inappropriate websites considered to contain age-restricted material, potentially harmful material or illegal content. In addition, Facebook and other social media sites not deemed to be of educational value, will be blocked. When your child is connected to the internet at home, employing web-filtering will be a decision for parents to make. The College's web filtering will not work when the 'MyTech' device is being used outside of the College WIFI network. It is suggested that you use something such as K9 Web protection or OpenDNS Family Shield. The College does not provide any support for these but if you are interested in using them, links can be found on the 'MyTech' website.

Q: Will my child be able to use 3G/4G connections instead of the College WIFI network?

A: Students must only use the College's WIFI service to connect to the internet whilst on College premises and **devices must not have a mobile data connection**. No 3G/4G device will be available for purchase through the Portal.



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7. Day to Day Use and Support

Q: Will my child be able to download songs, movies and other media on their device?

A: While connected at College, students should be browsing the internet and downloading resources for educational purposes. Conduct regarding access to internet resources, email, and complying with copyright legislation on 'MyTech' devices is governed by the College *Information and Communication Technology Student Usage Guidelines* in the student diaries. Generally speaking the downloading of songs, movies and other media would contravene the above guidelines.

At home, parents will need to govern this type of activity as they see fit.

Q: What do we do about printing?

A: Instructions regarding the printing of documents and other files will be provided at the 'MyTech' Boot Camp.

Q: Will it be possible to charge the device at College?

A: Personal devices must be fully charged before students arrive at College each day and run on battery power whilst at College. Due to Work Health and Safety issues, devices cannot be charged at the College. We strongly recommend you purchase a device which has a substantial battery life so that it lasts the full College day.

Q: Will the College provide spare devices if my child's device is being repaired?

A: The College will have a small number of devices available for emergencies if a student's device becomes damaged and needs to be repaired. We recommend that, should you anticipate a repair taking more than two weeks, you arrange an alternative spare device for your child.

Q: What happens if my child's device malfunctions or is broken?

A: The College IT staff will only provide technical support in so far as it is related to the connection between the device and the College wireless network and Internet. Support for this will take place initially during the Boot Camp as well as, on an ongoing basis throughout term time.

For hardware issues, you will need to contact a Computer Technical Support service or the place where you bought the device. Unfortunately, the College IT staff cannot attempt to repair personal devices as this could invalidate warranties.



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Q: What happens if another student damages my child's device?

A: It is important that students are very careful in looking after their device and it is their responsibility to ensure that it is always left in a safe place. To minimise the risk of damage and keep it safe, students can leave their device in their locker when it is not being used. If a student is found to have maliciously or recklessly damaged another student's device, they will need to pay for it to be fixed or replaced.



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8. MyTech' Device Minimum Requirements

Minimum requirements for 'MyTech' devices

- Screen size: 10.8 inch
- Screen resolution: 1024 x 768
- Windows/Mac hard disk minimum storage: 64 Gb (If laptop only has a 32Gb drive (like some new models), check you can add a 32Gb SD card to make 64Gb in total)
- Windows/Mac minimum memory: 4 Gb, preferably 8Gb RAM
- Wireless Connectivity: 802.11 G or N
- Audio/Video: Headphone and Microphone Ports
- No 3G/4G embedded support/no SIM cards allowed
- Full QWERTY Keyboard suitable for touch-typing
- Minimum expected Battery Life of six hours
- Robust carry-case

Examples of devices that are NOT suitable

- Smartphone of any kind
- Older Windows laptop running Vista or XP
- Android tablet, or Apple iPad
- Windows Surface RT (any version, but Surface Pro are okay)
- Any older device that doesn't meet the minimum requirements
- Device with less than 6 hours battery life
- Devices with a 3G/4G embedded support or SIM cards.

Examples of devices that ARE suitable

- Windows laptop running Windows 10 or Windows 7 (ie HP, Acer, Asus, Dell, Toshiba etc)
- Apple Macbook/Air/Pro laptop running the latest OS X version (updates are free)
- Microsoft Surface Pro

If students already have a device that meets the minimum specifications, then there is no need to purchase another device.



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9. Further questions

If, after reading this booklet, you have further questions please check the 'MyTech' section of the College website <http://mytech.wac.nsw.edu.au>. If you are still unable to find the answer please email your question to mytech@wac.nsw.edu.au or contact Mr Wayne Baulch (Secondary Learning Innovations Coordinator).