BYOD @ RONGOTAI COLLEGE - A Quick Guide to Digital Devices

TYPE OF DIGITAL DEVICE	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	SUMMARY	COST
iPad, Android or Windows Tablets A tablet is a device that is similar in design to a smartphone, except it has a much larger screen (usually around 8 to 10"). Tablets don't have built-in keyboards, but do have touch screens. A typical device in this category is the Apple iPad or a Samsung Tablet. **Note:** There are some cheaper tablets that lack many features of a regular tablet. To be safe stick with Samsung, Acer or Asus.	• Lightweight, small and portable. • "Instant On" a tablet is instantly ready, without requiring a boot-up or logon process. • Cheap apps -an application is often free or less than $5 to purchase and easy to install. There's normally an app for almost everything that you need to do! • Superb battery life that will easily get students through the day. • Can be cheaper than a laptop. • MS Windows 8 devices tend to come with a keyboard. • HD cameras and microphones make them superb devices for being creative.	• You cannot plug a USB flash drive into many tablets to copy a file on or off the device. • File transfer needs to be done via e-mail or a Cloud based solution. • The size of the screen can be limiting. • Tend to lack a built-in keyboard, however third party accessories (Bluetooth keyboard) can be purchased to help with this issue. • A tablet is not equipped to run all of the specialist applications that a laptop can run (e.g. Photoshop). • iPads cannot run Flash, which some websites rely on (e.g. Mathletics). Some other tablets can (e.g. Android).	Tablets are great for instant access to web browsing and e-mail. Apps can provide a wealth of different and unique functions. However, a tablet should not be considered the equivalent of a laptop.	$250 - $1500
Ultrabooks and Chromebooks This is a new type of laptop, usually with screen sizes around 11"-13". These devices combine high-powered components with portability through light weight. The MacBook Air is a popular example in this category, as is the Asus Zenbook and a range of branded Chromebooks (eg Acer, HP, Samsung)	• Screen size is small enough to be portable, but large enough for extended use. • Thin (<10mm - 20mm) and very light (1-1.5kg). • Instant boot-up and and superb battery life. • Often includes a Solid State Drive (SSD), which are fast and robust. • Uses cloud based software (e.g. Google Docs) and has free cloud storage.	• No built-in DVD/CD drive. External USB drives can usually be purchased separately if required. • Hard drives are usually small in size (you are dependent on cloud storage). • Unable to install specialized programmes such as Photoshop. • Chromebooks need Wi-Fi to function – there is very limited off-line functionality and therefore Wi-Fi at home is essential.	An excellent compromise between portability and versatility. You get a full sized laptop with the speed, battery life and instant access of a tablet. ***We are using the functionality and flexibility provided by Chromebooks increasingly in our classrooms at Rongotai College.***	$400 -$2000
Laptops Netbooks and Notebooks The type of portable computer you're probably most familiar with. Laptops usually have screen sizes from 13" - 17". Laptops have good versatility for students.	• Full-functioning and versatile device, capable of performing a wide range of tasks from web browsing and e-mail through to word processing and viewing video. • High quality laptops are capable of photo and video editing. • The larger screen and fixed keyboard size means that they are suitable for extended periods of use. • Able to run specialized software programmes such as Photoshop.	• Usually heavier and larger than the above devices. • Additional software (e.g. Microsoft Office, anti-virus, Adobe Photoshop, Final Cut Pro etc.) costs significantly more than apps for tablets. • It takes a lot of power to run bigger screens and therefore, battery life isn't as good. • There is no rear-facing camera on a laptop (just a front-facing webcam) – this requires you to use a separate device if you want to capture photos or video.	A notebook/laptop is suitable for the widest range of tasks that students will encounter. However, there is also a wide range of price and quality available. ***Year 11, 12 and 13 students needing to use specialist software should considering using these devices in the classroom.***	$500 - $2500