



# Laptop Program Handbook 2025



St Columba's  
College

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SINCE 1897

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# 1. OVERVIEW

The focus of the 1:1 Laptop Program at St Columba's College is to prepare students for their future in a globally-connected society. The program gives students the tools to have instant access to the world of information, but more importantly, to become producers rather than just consumers of information that is available through the use of technology. The College has established an atmosphere that provides students with immediate access to online and local network resources which are essential to survive in the 21st Century.

Research indicates<sup>1</sup> that students who have access to technology on a regular basis show a significant improvement in their learning skills over students who do not have regular access. Technology enhances differentiated instruction and promotes creative learning, allowing students to become actively engaged learners. With this in mind, the program has been established to ensure equal access to technology resources.

The 1:1 Laptop Program allows several things to occur for the benefit of student learning including but not limited to:

- Promoting student engagement and enthusiasm for learning
- Providing greater access to educational opportunities, formative assessments, and differentiated instruction
- Encouraging collaboration among students, teachers, parents, and community members through interactive capabilities and opportunities
- Reducing the use of printed worksheets and thereby reducing paper usage for the benefit of the environment
- Guiding students in their learning and attainment of knowledge
- Allowing students access to information, along with an opportunity to connect it to their learning in a meaningful manner

The aim of the handbook is to provide families with an overview of the program, advice, best practices information, and specific guidelines on the use of technology at the College. This handbook will provide a guide for parents but should also be considered to be a work in progress as the Program develops over the coming years and we respond to the changes that are occurring in the environment around us. While the success of any program of this magnitude depends on individual goals, school-wide goals, and planning, the focus of all strategies relating to the program is the enhancement of student learning.

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Lepp; Jacob E. Barkley; Aryn C. Karpinski. "[The Relationship Between Cell Phone Use and Academic Performance in a Sample of U.S. College Students](#)". *Computers in Human Behavior*. 31 (1): 343–350

## 2. LAPTOP SPECIFICATIONS & PURCHASING PROGRAM

All students at St Columba's College are required to have a laptop as their primary learning device. Participation in the Purchasing Program is compulsory for all 2025 Year 7 students and 2025 Year 10 students.

### 2.1 Information for participation in the Laptop Purchasing Program

Students will be given the care and responsibility of a MacBook Air laptop for the three-year period, February 2025 until December 2027. In that time payments will be made in instalments, so that at the end of the third year, and with the final payment, ownership of the device will transfer to the parents.

The payments for the purchasing program will be \$1800 spread across three years and will be as follows:

- o February 2025 \$600
- o February 2026 \$600
- o February 2027 \$600

(The above payments reflect the 2024 prices and are subject to change for 2025, depending on the pricing of the device which will be known later in the year)

All participants in the Laptop Purchasing Program are required to complete the Laptop Purchase & Agreement Form that will be sent out to families.

### 2.2 Ownership

Due to software licensing requirements the College has entered into, the laptop remains the property of the College until the end of the third year. It is expected that students use the laptop in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this document at all times.

Moreover, St Columba's College administrative staff retains the right to collect and/or inspect the laptop at any time during the purchasing time frame, including via electronic remote access; and to alter, add or delete installed software or hardware.

### 2.3 Specifications

Specifications include;

- Apple 13-inch MacBook Air:
- Apple M2 Chip, 8-Core CPU, 8-Core GPU
- 8GB Memory, 256GB SSD
- Two Thunderbolt/USB4 Ports

Students will be provided with the laptop and power adaptor, protective cover or sleeve, and required software. Only the College's network team can download programs to the student laptops. Internet and email will be provided and protected behind a firewall and filtering appliance. The appliance blocks unsolicited or malicious traffic entering the college infrastructure and denies access to inappropriate websites. More broadly the College has adopted the Essential Eight Framework as part of its Cyber Security Strategy.

We have arranged insurance for the laptops that are a part of this purchasing program that will cover use at school, at home and in between. Any excess charge resulting from an insurance claim will be charged directly to the parent/guardian only when that occurs.

Each laptop is easily identified by the specific numbering system ("Asset Tag") that is placed on it. St Columba's College will retain records of the allocated number of provided equipment.

### 3. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- While the school network system will provide some Internet security through Internet content filtering, there is no substitute for parental supervision when using a computer. Parents are ultimately responsible for monitoring student use of the laptop and Internet at home.
- Parents should ensure that their child adheres to laptop and College network expectations that have been provided in this document.
- Use of the laptop purchased through the College program by other family members is not allowed. The laptops may not be used by other family members and may not be used for personal or business use.
- Unauthorised software is not to be downloaded onto the laptop purchased through the College program and authorised software, certificates or applications are not to be deleted.
- Theft of a laptop must be reported within 24 and followed up with a Police Report.
- In the case of early exiting from the College, parents are responsible for ensuring the return of the laptop and all accessories if the laptop purchased through the College program is less than 18 months old. If it is more than 18 months old then parents will be provided with the option to purchase.

Parents/Guardians should review and discuss the Student Digital Citizenship Policy and the Mobile Device Policy contained in this handbook with their child.

### 4. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Student is solely responsible for any data stored on the laptop. It is the sole responsibility of the student to back up their data as necessary. Never consider any electronic information safe when stored on only one device and students are encouraged to use Cloud-based applications such as GSuite as much as possible to prevent loss of work.
- Students will be required to take their laptop to every class each day, unless told differently by the teacher for that specific lesson.
- Students' laptops are required to be charged nightly and every student must begin the school day with a fully charged battery.
- When the laptop is not being used in class it is to be closed or at a 45-degree angle
- Students are not to use their laptops at recess and lunchtime unless in a College designated work space.
- Students are required to observe and respect license and copyright agreements.
- Students must keep passwords and personal information confidential.

## 5. FURTHER RESPONSIBILITIES - COLLEGE PURCHASING LAPTOP PROGRAM

- Return the laptop to the College Network Team at the end of the third year of the program for system updates and re-imaging of the laptop and transfer of ownership.
- Stickers and other markings on the outside of the laptop during the purchasing program period will not be allowed. Students can personalise their laptop in other ways including screensavers, wallpaper and other images. All items must be appropriate and not violate any College expectations or guidelines.
- Protective covers or sleeves provided by the College must be used at all times.

### NOTE

St Columba's College has provided expectations on Digital Citizenship through which students are educated on acceptable standards of online behaviour. St Columba's College will continue to do everything possible to keep students safe when using technology, however; whilst filters are in place to protect students from specific sites, the College does not have control of all the information that students may be exposed to on the Internet or incoming email.

## 6. TAKING CARE OF A LAPTOP

Students are expected to follow all the specific guidelines listed below and take any additional common sense precautions to protect your laptop.

### 6.1 General Care

- Keep the equipment clean. For example, don't eat or drink while using the laptop. Keep the laptop away from all liquids.
- Ensure the laptop has air circulation while charging.
- Close the lid of the laptop when it is not in use, in order to save battery life and protect the screen.
- Do not walk from one location to another with an open laptop. This is applicable at school and at home.
- It is a student's responsibility to maintain a 100% working laptop at all times. If the student's laptop is not working properly the student needs to visit Helpdesk for troubleshooting or repair work. If the laptop cannot be fixed immediately, where possible the student will be issued a different laptop to use on a temporary basis.
- Shut down the laptop when it won't be used for an extended duration.
- When the laptop is not in use, store it in a secure location. When not in class the laptop should be stored in the student's locker which is required to be locked.
- Do not attempt to remove or change the physical structure of the laptop, including the keys, screen cover or plastic casing.
- Do not remove or interfere with the serial number or any identification placed on the laptop.
- Do not do anything to the laptop that will permanently alter it in any way.
- The laptops are Single User - Do not allow anyone else to use the laptop other than parents or guardians who may be helping the student with their work or a laptop issue.
- Loss or damage that occurs when anyone else is using it will be the student's responsibility.
- All laptop repairs must be provided by the College. Under no circumstances should anyone else attempt repairs on the College laptop.

## 6.2 Cleaning the laptop

- Use a soft, dry, lint-free cloth when cleaning the laptop. If necessary, the cloth may be dampened slightly to assist in cleaning areas that do not appear to be coming clean with the dry cloth.
- Laptop screens show fingerprints and smudges easily; be sure to follow proper cleaning procedures and use a suitable cleaner for cleaning a screen. Never use cleaning products with acetone or ammonia.

## 6.3 Carrying the laptop

- Always completely close the lid and wait for the laptop to enter sleep mode before moving it, even for short distances. Movement while the laptop is on can result in permanent damage to the hard-drive and therefore the loss of data. Sleep mode is sufficient.

## 6.4 Protection from viruses

Students must take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not introduce or propagate computer virus infections within the College community. Such reasonable steps include:

- Regularly (at least monthly) conduct a full scan of the laptop's hard disk drive
- Regularly scan any flash drives used for transporting or distributing files
- Not opening files from insecure sources or sources where security is unknown or questionable
- Not opening email that is of a questionable or dubious origin
- Only opening email attachments that are expected or from trusted sources.

## 6.5 Travelling with laptop

- Students must be mindful of the risk of laptop damage or theft while they are travelling to and from the College each day.
- Students must take great care with their College school bag and keep it in their possession at all times while travelling.
- When using public transport, the College school bag should be on the student's lap while sitting or between the legs when standing.
- If a laptop sustains damage on public transport because it is not in the student's possession, the damage may not be covered by insurance.
- The laptop must never be displayed or used in public while travelling.

## 6.6 Personal Health and Safety

- Avoid extended use of the computer resting directly on a lap. The bottom of the laptop can generate significant heat. Use a barrier, such as a book or devices made specifically for this purpose, if working on a lap. Also, avoid lap-based computing while connected to the power adapter as this will significantly increase heat production.
- Avoid lengthy use involving repetitive tasks (such as typing and use of the track-pad). Take frequent breaks as well as alter your physical position (typing while standing, sitting, leaning, etc.) to minimise discomfort.
- If possible, set up a workstation at home with an external keyboard and mouse that allows the student to situate the screen at eye-level and the keyboard at lap-level.
- Take regular screen-time breaks for eye health.

## 7. STUDENT DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP POLICY

The Student Digital Citizenship sets out College expectations for safe and respectful behaviours while students are online. Please review the [Student Digital Citizenship Policy](#) with your child. Cybersafety is also addressed within various areas of the Learning Program at St Columba's College.

### Student Expectations

When I use Digital Technologies I agree to:

- Be a safe, responsible and ethical user whenever and wherever I use it
- Support others by being respectful in how I communicate with them and never write or participate in online bullying (this includes forwarding messages and supporting others in harmful, inappropriate or hurtful online behaviour)
- Talk to a teacher if I feel uncomfortable or unsafe online or see others participating in unsafe, inappropriate or hurtful online behaviour
- Seek to understand the terms and conditions of websites and online communities and be aware that content I upload or post is my digital footprint
- Protect my privacy rights and those of other students and staff by not giving out personal details including login details, full names, telephone numbers, addresses, images and passwords
- Use the College internet for educational purposes only
- Use digital technology equipment safely and for educational purposes only
- Use relevant social networking sites, for example but not limited to MS Teams, for educational purposes and only as directed by a teacher
- Students will responsibly engage with AI Technologies, ensuring ethical and respectful interactions.
- Students will not submit work as their own that has been created using AI technologies, unless directed by a teacher
- Abide by copyright procedures when using content on websites (ask permission to use images, text, audio and video and cite references where necessary)
- Abide by network security requirements including neither sharing your user name or password with others, or logging in to the network with the sign in credentials of another student
- Not bring or download unauthorised programs, including games, to the school or run them on school computers
- Not deliberately search for, create, print or share inappropriate material
- Use the appropriate borrowing system when borrowing school laptops or iPads and return these items by the end of the school day on which they have been borrowed

When I use my College email account and Direct Messaging on SEQTA, I agree to:

- Use my College email account or DM for school related communication only
- Communicate respectfully with others at all times
- Understand that emails and DMs are not private. The system is monitored for effective service, and as part of school property, any email or DM can be retrieved as a school record.

When I use my mobile device, I agree to:

- Only take photos, record sound or video when it is part of an approved task in a lesson, directed by the teacher, and when permission has been given by all individuals involved
- Seek appropriate (written) permission from individuals involved before publishing or sending photos, recorded sound or video to anyone else or to any online space
- Be respectful in the photos I take or video I capture and never use these as a tool for bullying and harassment.

### NOTE

I have read the Student Digital Citizenship Policy carefully and understand the significance of the conditions and agree to abide by these conditions. I understand that any breach of these conditions will result in internet and mobile technology access privileges being suspended or revoked and the confiscation of a mobile device if it is used inappropriately.



## 8. MOBILE DEVICE GUIDELINES

### Rationale

St Columba's College accepts that parents give their children mobile devices (such as phones) for a variety of reasons. The increased ownership of mobile devices requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure they are used responsibly.

The College has established the following Policy for mobile devices that provides teachers, students and parents with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours. The Policy for mobile devices also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.

It is the responsibility of students to adhere to the Guiding Principles indicated below when bringing mobile devices onto school premises.

### Guiding Principles

- Students who bring a mobile device (such as a phone) onto school premises are advised to keep them in their locked locker.
- The mobile device must be turned off prior to the first College bell. The mobile device should not be used again throughout the day until after school finishes unless teacher permission is granted. If permission is granted for use for a learning activity, the device must be placed on the student's desk in clear view to be monitored by the teacher for designated use.
- Mobile phones/devices being used in contravention of the student digital citizenship policy will be confiscated and returned as per the mobile device escalation chart.
- It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use mobile devices to menace, harass or offend another person.
- Students with mobile devices may not engage in personal attacks, take or send photos or objectionable images, bully other students, or post private information about another person using SMS messages and phone calls.

### Safety Guidelines

- If students and families choose to bring a mobile to the College they take full responsibility for the device.
- Mobile devices which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed in at the office.
- Many mobile phone providers offer tracking software and it is suggested that students have this enabled.
- Students are recommended to mark their mobile device clearly with their name.
- Students with mobile devices must keep their password/pin confidential. Mobile devices and/or passwords may not be shared.
- Confiscated mobile devices are to be placed in an envelope clearly labelled with the student's name/date and handed into Front Reception. Students will have their mobile device returned to them on the first occasion but parents will have to come to the College to collect the device for subsequent breaches.

# Information specific to the College Laptop Purchasing Program

## 9 INSURANCE & WARRANTY

### 9.1 Warranty

AppleCare Plus is obtained by St Columba's College as part of the purchase price of the equipment. Apple warrants the laptops from defects in materials and workmanship. This limited warranty covers normal use, mechanical breakdown or faulty construction and will provide replacement parts necessary to repair the laptop or laptop replacement. The warranty does not warrant against damage caused by misuse, abuse, accidents or computer viruses.

### 9.2 Insurance

All student laptops purchased from St Columba's College have insurance cover for loss and accidental damage for three years. St Columba's College will provide coverage to protect the laptops against accidental damage, theft, burglary, robbery, fire, flood, natural disasters, and power surges due to lightning for the insured laptops.

### 9.3 Damage not covered by Insurance

- Intentional Acts: The policy will not cover losses or damage caused by intentional or negligent damage to the laptop
- Damage due to negligence. This may include:
  - damage or loss resulting from an unattended and unlocked laptop while at school
  - lending the laptop to others other than one's parents/guardians
  - using the laptop in an unsafe environment
  - using the laptop in an unsafe manner
  - using the laptop without the provided cover or sleeve
- If the laptop charger is damaged or lost, the student is responsible for replacing it
- Cosmetic Damage: Insurance does not cover loss for cosmetic damage. Cosmetic damage means damage or changes to the physical appearance of the laptop that does not impede or hinder the normal operational function of the laptop such as scratches, stickers, changes in finish, etc.
- Dishonest acts: The policy will not cover loss or damage caused by the student's dishonesty or anyone acting for the student. Nor will it cover loss or damage arising from illegal acts whether committed alone or in collusion with others.
- Non-authorized attempts to repair the laptop will automatically disqualify an insurance claim.

In the event of damage to the computer not covered by the warranty the payment for an insurance claim will be according to the following schedule:

- First and second Incidents – \$150
- Third and subsequent Incidents in first and second year of program – \$300
- Claims in last 6 months of third year - \$600

If a laptop is damaged, Helpdesk must be notified immediately. Laptops that are lost or stolen need to be reported to Helpdesk within 24 hours. If a laptop is stolen or vandalised the parent must file a police report.

## 10. MAKING AN INSURANCE CLAIM

### What happens when a laptop is damaged?

If the student's allocated laptop sustains damage, the student or parent/guardian will be asked to complete an Incident Report. This incident report form will be the basis of the insurance claim. Insurance claims are routinely lodged for any damage that is not covered by the manufacturer's warranty. If the incident involved other students, or a breach of College rules, it will also be investigated further. A Laptop Incident Report Form will be provided to students when they visit Helpdesk with a damaged laptop.

### How do I fill out the incident report?

Certain information is required before the claim can be processed. To increase the likelihood of a successful insurance claim, the requested details will need to be supplied:

- the specific incident that caused the damage to the laptop described,
- the names of any witnesses provided.

Please note, any claims that do not give clear details of how the damage was caused will be denied.

### What happens if the claim is accepted?

In most cases, the claim will be accepted and the cost of repairs will be covered. The student's repaired laptop will be returned as soon as possible after the claim is lodged.

Paperwork will be provided to the student and payment of the applicable excess will need to be made to Reception before repairs are undertaken.

### What happens if the claim is rejected?

Insurance claims are rarely rejected. When they are, it is usually because of gross negligence in the care of the laptop. If the claim is rejected, the parent/guardian will be required to pay the total cost of repair of the laptop. A quotation for the cost of repair will be provided prior to the laptop being repaired, along with contact details of the repairer, in case there are any questions.

### Replacement of laptop?

Insurance only covers replacement of existing machine with a like machine. Should the laptop issued to students in the first instance be discontinued the College may need to replace it with a more expensive model and this may incur an additional fee to the parents/guardian.

### Who can I talk to about this process?

Please contact Helpdesk if there are any questions regarding the incident or responsibility for the damage to the laptop. You may then be referred to the student's House Leader. For all questions regarding payment of the excess or the cost of repairs, speak to Helpdesk.

## 11. FAQs

1. Will I use the same laptop throughout my entire time at St Columba's College?  
Laptops usually have a life of approximately three years. For example, if you have started the purchasing program in Year 7 (2025) the rapid pace of computer technology means that more advanced units will be available before you complete Year 12.
2. What if I already have another model or brand of laptop?  
All students are required to participate in the purchasing program. No other types of devices are acceptable and will not be able to be connected to the College network.
3. Does St Columba's College provide maintenance on my laptop if it is needed?  
Yes. Help Desk staff will provide maintenance support for student laptops if needed.
4. What will I do without a laptop in my classes if it is being repaired or while I am replacing it if it is lost or stolen?  
Help Desk stocks a limited number of laptops that can be loaned out on a case-by-case basis.
5. If I purchase software in addition to the available software provided through the College, will the Help Desk staff load it for me?  
No. Your laptop will be loaded with the appropriate software required for your classes.
6. What if I want to add options to my laptop?  
For the length of the purchasing period only, St Columba's College is authorised to add options, software and upgrades to your laptop. At the end of the period the laptop will be reimaged and software licences removed and at this stage you can then add options to your laptop.
7. What if I want to run another operating system on my laptop?  
Only the operating system chosen by the St Columba's College will be authorised to run on a laptop purchased through the program.
8. If the accessories to my laptop are lost or stolen, how much will it cost to replace them?  
It is the student's responsibility to maintain the charger and other accessories, including the sleeve/cover. The student/parent will replace lost or damaged chargers and accessories. Any replacements need to be purchased from an authorised seller. Helpdesk can support you in finding the nearest seller.
9. What if I come to school and my laptop is not charged. Can I get a power adaptor from Helpdesk?  
Daily charging of laptops is the student's responsibility. During a normal school day, a fully charged MacBook will last the entire day for classes with no additional charging required. If a student comes to class with a laptop that is not charged, specific consequences may occur for the student and they will not be able to obtain a power adaptor from Helpdesk. It is recommended to establish a routine at home for the charging of the laptop so that it can charge overnight in a central location in the family home. It is strongly recommended that overnight charging does not happen in a young person's bedroom.
10. Can I use earbuds with my laptop and do you supply them?  
Headphones should be cabled with a 3.5 Headphone Jack (works on all new MacBook's). AirPods should be discouraged. Wireless earbuds/headphones do not work for online tests such as NAPLAN. Students are to use Airpods/headphones only if invited by the staff member, otherwise they are to remain in their locker.