

Technical issues with tablets

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There are number issues specific to the make and type of tablet which we are using. These can be split into problems with the specific tablet device used (Dell Latitude Slate) and problems with the Operating System (Windows 7). Although some problems with the OS may be improved by the implementation of Windows 8, the current pilot program can only evaluate the OS which is currently available. The following table summarises these issues and possible solutions.

Problem	Device or Operating System (OS) problem?	Possible solutions
Windows 7 interface is not very touch-friendly. <i>Icons and buttons are hard to select as they are very small, no shortcuts to relevant programs on the desktop and keyboard.</i>	OS	• Modifications to interface to make it more touch friendly (increasing DPI, using large icons, having appropriate shortcuts on the desktop and toolbar). However, these have not been able to be implemented on the student machines due to IT difficulties. • Additional training for students in using the machines. Additional time with the devices would allow them to develop their skills further so that teaching time is not wasted on navigating the operating system and finding programs.
Difficulty with using the stylus to input text.	OS and device	• Modifications to interface to make text input easier (increasing the size of the text input area, docking the text input bar, turning on editing flicks). However, these have not been able to be implemented on the student machines due to IT difficulties. Students cannot personalise some of these things themselves due to lack of administration rights. • Additional training for students in using the machines. This may allow them to become more proficient with the text input methods, including tools such as editing flicks, and the handwriting recognitions accuracy will improve. • Add external keyboard. However if we are always using a keyboard then the tablet becomes pretty much a netbook with a touch screen. • Use traditional laptops when inputting large volumes of text.
Stylus Attachment	Device Stylus Connection	• The pen can easily become disconnected and get lost. Use a stronger connection – type of string for pen.

Limited availability of touch-friendly educational applications.	OS	• Use internet-based flash tools, however these are not designed for touch but for mouse control. • Choosing an alternate tablet OS, such as iOS on iPad or Android (on many devices), which have a variety of educational applications designed for them, and additional development is ongoing. Windows is not the prime focus of developers of educational applications at this current time.
Device itself is slow and not very responsive specially when running multiple things at once.	Device	• When making future purchases, choose a device with a large working memory to enable improved multi-tasking. Needs a lot more RAM than these devices have.
Students often have difficulty connecting to the school network and / or internet.	Device	• Fix problem. From further investigation, we have realised it is not a server problem but a hardware problem with the tablet caused by the size of the processor. • Choose an alternate tablet without connectivity problem.
Trolleys sometimes do not properly charge the devices.	Device trolley	• Fix problem. Is it the plug in connection or is it the tablet?
The cases purchased are very bulky, and reduce the size benefit of a slate over a netbook.	Device case	• Choose an alternate case when making future purchases.
The current case and trolley combination means the devices have to be regularly turned around in their cases after use in order to be charged.	Device case and trolley	• Choose an alternate case and / or trolley when making future purchases. Consider the interaction of the two things, especially how it will charge.