

FAQs

When will the Academia store be available?

Very soon. It will offer a choice of three MacBook Air devices ranging in price from £1,200 to £2,100 (installment plans available from £40-70 per month over four years). This price includes a UAG case, installation of educational software and apps, 4-year mechanical warranty and accidental damage cover (which continues after leaving ACS). Fact sheets about these devices are available now.

When will students be required to have an ACS-managed device?

We will be phasing out the BYOD policy over the next few years. For the 2024-25 school year, we will introduce managed devices beginning with new students and rising 9th graders.

I only plan to be at ACS for a year or two. Will I have to buy a new Apple laptop?

Yes, in most cases. For students with compatible devices, we can enroll personal machines into the managed service. Students entering in Grade 12 can lease a managed device from ACS for an additional fee.

What if I've already bought a device in anticipation of using it next year in 9th grade?

If it's a compatible Apple device, we can enroll it in our managed device programme. We strongly recommend that you purchase a new device, but we can by exception—and with the appropriate safety waiver—provide legacy access as we are planning for current 9-11th grade students.

Why is ACS requiring Apple laptops?

ACS is an Apple IT estate for learning and teaching, with some divisions recognised as [Apple Distinguished Schools](#). We work with Apple Education as a leader in innovation and creative applications, following on from our 1:1 iPad programme for younger students. Our classroom technologies and device management programmes are part of an integrated system. (Students in specialist courses may learn in non-Apple lab settings.) Network access records show that more than 85% of ACS students in grades 9-12 use Apple devices under the current BYOD policy.

Why didn't ACS create a year-by-year leasing programme, or include a school device in the basic school fees?

Pricing options for parents and associated costs for ACS made leasing financially unattractive. When ACS introduced its 1:1 iPad programme, lower and middle school fees were increased to account for ongoing IT equipment and support costs. To offer more choice and support technology investment costs for families, we chose a different approach for students in grades 9-12. The new approach balances a range of concerns and represents the lowest overall cost.

What control will students/families retain over the device? Will they be able to download applications, access social media, watch movies, and play games?

Students will be able to choose from a library of educational and productivity applications, and they will have the same (filtered and monitored) access to the internet they enjoy now. Administrator rights to the device will be limited for everyone's protection.

Will parents be able to impose additional device-level controls?

Families will need to apply additional controls at the home network or network provider level.

What about after school hours, weekends, and school holidays?

As we do for boarding students at ACS Cobham, we can apply different access rules for non-school times. Search results and activities will still be protected and filtered (but not monitored in real time), providing age and role appropriate safeguards—similar to the way we manage and protect ACS staff and their work devices when they are at home.

What about students with financially assisted places whose devices are already provided by ACS?

We will transition bursary students to the new plan and enroll their current devices. New bursary students with IT support included in their aid package will be provided with a device managed by ACS.

When I leave ACS, what happens?

As part of our transfer and graduation IT processes, your computer will be unenrolled from ACS managed services.

Won't this just push students to use personal devices that they hotspot to mobile data plans, entirely avoiding all the safeguards provided by the school's network?

That's always possible. We are always looking for ways to balance effectively the competing demands of access and age-appropriate safeguards. We hope everyone is aware of technology's promise and power for personal growth, entertainment, and learning. However, we are also mindful of the dangers that technology can pose to young people. ACS works in collaboration with parents and our online safety partners to provide secure spaces for students as they grow and take increasing responsibility for their digital profiles and personal ethics online.

ACS also has statutory responsibilities to protect students from harm online. We urge parents to talk with their children about their internet use, and to implement appropriate parental controls for devices with 3/4/5G data access.

As is the case with all diverse international communities, ACS families will have a wide range of personal values and parenting practice. We must, however, maintain legal standards on school networks that we control, provide, and require for engaging in our educational programme. We also work to ensure that any consequences of individual family choices do not endanger other students or disrupt the learning environment through our Online Safety, Acceptable Use, Privacy, and Behaviour Policies.

Parents share responsibility for online safety. Talking openly with children about life online and being a good digital role model will always be essential in keeping children safe online. (Many mobile service providers have [advice for digital parenting](#) [Vodafone UK]).

Does an ACS-managed device guarantee that my child will be safe online?

Managed devices are safer because they provide another layer of protection. They represent additional but, unfortunately, imperfect guardrails and precautions against known threats. As we all know, technology advances quickly, and vigilance is always required against bad actors and poor judgment. Managed devices are an important tool, but they are not a panacea. Education, dialogue, and personal awareness remain the best defense against unsafe digital practices.

Will ACS monitor device usage when it's not connected to ACS networks?

Managed devices will have additional protection against viruses, malware, and Potentially Unwanted Applications/Programmes (PUA/PUP) at all times. They will be subject to advanced filtering through a device-level policy designed not to be changed by the user.

When the device is not on the school network, ACS does not have real-time monitoring capabilities. However, the device's internet history is reported when it reconnects to the network, and its use can then be reviewed by our safeguarding and pastoral care teams as needed.

Is ACS profiting monetarily from this change in policy?

No.

What if an ACS filter or device policy keeps a student from accessing the resources I need to complete assignments or learn independently?

Students can request access to resources that have been blocked. No filtering system is perfect, and we work to create a reasonable balance between accessibility and safety.

Why can't ACS just run a 'hot spot' wireless network like a hotel or university?

As a school operator, ACS has additional safeguarding responsibilities that aren't fully compatible with a less managed network for which users can accept legal responsibility as adults. Extra protection must be in place for children under 18 years of age, including legal requirements for [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) that don't apply to post-secondary institutions.

Why is ACS imposing a £50 IT service fee for grades 9-12?

This fee covers new costs incurred from managed device licensing and additional IT support required to service all student-owned devices. For transparency, we have identified it as a separate charge from our standard fees.

Is teaching and learning at ACS becoming overly dependent on screen-time, digital devices, and life online?

ACS teachers, school leaders, pastoral care teams, and safeguarding experts are all very aware of the threats that life in a digital age can pose to young people's safety and wellbeing. We want to empower young people to use technology responsibly. We encourage a balanced approach to teaching and learning: purposefully taking advantage of contemporary resources and innovative methods, while also continuing to value human connection, traditional models, and face-to-face learning beyond the classroom.