Guideline on Microsoft Licensing for Schools

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INTRODUCTION - TREND IN MOVING TO CLOUD BASED PLATFORMS

Over the past few years, there has been a notable shift among organisations, including schools, towards using cloud-based platforms. The adoption of cloud computing is driven by its advantages, including scalability, flexibility, cost-efficiency, and accessibility. Schools are increasingly using cloud-based solutions to encourage collaboration and simplify how they manage user accounts, devices and school data to support teaching and learning. Microsoft 365 and related products have reflected this move to the cloud.

HOW MICROSOFT IS CHANGING PRODUCT LICENSING

- **Perpetual/Device Licence:** In the past, schools typically purchased a device along with a Microsoft Office licence as a one-time download for desktops or laptops. If the device became unusable, the office licence could be transferred to another device, but upgrading to a more recent version required purchasing a new license. Perpetual licenses can still be purchased, such as a one-time 6-year licence for approx' €45 per device, including online and desktop apps, device management (Intune), and Minecraft Education. However for schools who want to purchase a lot of devices, this could be costly. Also, the trend towards cloud services makes alternative licence models more appealing and relevant.

- **Subscription Licence OVS/ES (min 1 year):** Microsoft has a subscription licence for schools, an OVS-ES licence (Open Value Subscription Education Solution). This model is based on the number of full-time equivalent staff members and a school can sign up for 1-3 years. This gives users (students and staff) access to both the online and desktop version of Microsoft apps (Office 365 A3). Schools must purchase a minimum of 5 licences.

- **Subscription Flexible, monthly, yearly, any number of licences, CSP:** In line with the demand and move to cloud services, Microsoft have introduced Microsoft 365 via a Cloud Solution Provider (CSP). Microsoft 365 includes Office 365 but also adds Enterprise mobility and security, Windows desktop, and Minecraft education. Similar to OVS/ES but based on EQU (education qualified user i.e. staff numbers) with Student Use Benefit. Subscriptions can be monthly or annual, are flexible, so schools can add or remove user licences as needed. There is no minimum quantity, so schools can purchase a minimum of a single licence.

- **Microsoft Intune:** Microsoft Intune is a cloud-based service that allows organisations to manage and secure their users' devices, apps, and data, enabling efficient mobile device management (MDM) and mobile application management (MAM) across various platforms.
  Intune for Education primarily focuses on managing Windows devices. While it does support some management features for iOS and MacOS devices, its capabilities might not be as extensive as those provided by specialised solutions such as Jamf for Apple device management.

SUMMARY TABLE OF LICENCES

	Office 365 A1	Office 365 A3	Office 365 A5	Microsoft 365 A1	Microsoft 365 A3	Microsoft 365 A5
	Free Online apps incl' Teams	Subscription Inc A1 features plus desktop apps + Intune	Higher subscription Inc A1 + A3 features plus additional security and analytics	One time subscription per device for a 6-year licence, Desktop apps + cloud mgmt' of devices (Intune) + Minecraft Education	Office 365 online + desktop + Windows + some security, mobility (Intune)+ Minecraft Education edition	M365 A3 features plus additional security, privilege access management and analytics
		Older OVS-ES model based on FTE (full time equivalent) staff members 1- 3-year subscription. Will be phased out, min purchase is 5 licences.		Per Device Licence for 6 years available via CSP	Newer CSP model based on EQU (education qualified user i.e. staff numbers) with Student Use Benefit Can be a monthly subscription or annual, more flexible, you can adjust i.e. add/remove user licences as needed, flexible as little as 1 licence can be purchased.	
Approx Cost (€)	**Free**	**40-55**	70-95	40-55	**75-95**	135-170
Comment	**Storage limited**	**Common subscription**	Not used much	Not used much	**Most common subscription. Becoming more popular with schools.**	Large organisations requiring tiered Admins and Enterprise Users
Examples of Licences most commonly used in schools						
Cost per year € **Small School** 8 Staff 50 students	**FREE**	**400**			**680**	
Cost per year € **Medium School** 15 Staff 200 students	**FREE**	**750**			**1275**	
Cost per year € **Large School** 50 Staff 750 students	**FREE**	**2500**			**4250**	
NOTES						
Costs are approximate and based on averages and may vary by reseller						
Costs are for licences only, and do not include installation or configuration costs etc.						

Note: As the cost of A5 licences is very expensive, schools generally use A3 licences based on staff numbers. In this model, <u>one</u> A5 global admin licence per school (either managed by the school itself or by their '365 provider') could be used to manage some of the main school '365' configuration and policy settings. This model allows a school to use some A5 more advanced features while not incurring the A5 licence costs for all staff. This reduces the costs for schools, while allowing access to some A5 more advanced features.

DETAILS OF THE MAIN MICROSOFT PRODUCTS/SERVICES THAT ARE RELEVANT TO SCHOOLS

OFFICE 365 FOR EDUCATION

Microsoft Office 365 Education is an integrated cloud-based platform tailored for educational institutions, offering a combination of online and desktop applications, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and collaborative tools including Teams and OneNote.

Office 365 A1
This is a **Free** subscription plan offered by Microsoft for educational institutions. It is designed to provide basic productivity tools and **online** services for students and staff. Below the key components included in Office 365 A1 are:

Online Versions of Office Applications:
Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote: Online versions that can be accessed through a web browser.

Email and Calendar:
Exchange Online: High quality email service with a 50 GB mailbox per user.
Outlook on the web: Web-based access to email and calendar features.

Online Storage:
OneDrive for Business: Cloud storage for documents and files with 1 TB of storage per user.

Collaboration Tools:
SharePoint Online: Collaboration platform for sharing and managing content, documents, and applications.
Microsoft Teams: Collaboration platform for chat, video meetings, file sharing, and collaboration on documents.

NOTE: Effective February 1, 2024, users of Office 365 A1 (free subscription) will be limited to a maximum of 100GB for OneDrive storage, within the 100TB of pooled storage for the school tenant. Schools will have the option to purchase incremental storage based on their needs.

Office 365 A3 – there is a subscription per annum for this service and it comes with additional features, notably the desktop applications as well as the online apps featured in **A1**.

Office 365 A5 – there is a higher subscription for this and as well as the features of **Office 365 A1** and **A3,** with **A5** there are additional enhanced security features for example more analytics.

MICROSOFT 365 FOR EDUCATION
Microsoft 365 is a more comprehensive solution than Office365, bundling Office 365 with additional features that extend its capabilities to cover features such as managing devices, mobility and security, desktop operating systems, and educational tools like Minecraft Education. As with Office 365 there are different plans available to schools as follows:

Microsoft 365 A1
This is a one-time-per-device learning solution to meet the needs for staff and students. Every user would have access to desktop apps like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Microsoft Teams, Minecraft Education Edition, and more. This license also provides cloud management through Microsoft Intune for Education to save time by managing school devices in a single 'dashboard' view.

Microsoft 365 A3

As well as including all the features of Office 365 A3 i.e. online and desktop applications such as MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook email, Storage, Teams, and One Note, Microsoft365 A3 includes management and mobility with Intune, Windows OS, and Minecraft education edition. This is fast becoming one of most popular licenses for mid to large schools, particularly Post Primary schools.

Microsoft 365 A5

This solution includes all the features of Microsoft 365 **A3** plus additional features such as advanced security features like ATP (Advanced Threat Protection), Microsoft Defender for Office, Privilege access management and a number of other security features.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ANTIVIRUS

- In the past Anti-Virus (AV) software was required by schools as an important additional 'security' software tool which helped to protect their data and IT systems from harmful software 'viruses'. In more recent years Microsoft Windows operating systems and Microsoft 365 have added integrated security tools including 'Microsoft Defender', which is a security feature that includes malware/antivirus protection, web protection, and real-time security notifications. For schools that are using both Microsoft Windows 10 or 11 Professional operating systems and are also using **Microsoft 365 A3**, (and with their relevant security features appropriately configured, as per Microsoft guidelines), an additional 3rd party Anti-Virus software product is no longer seen as essential.

- Some schools still opt for third-party antivirus solutions such as Symantec, ESET, Kaspersky, McAfee, or Sophos, among others, albeit at a per-device cost. The pricing variance among these options can be significant, hence obtaining quotes for at least three different types is advisable.

  NOTE: It is important to ascertain the type of Microsoft Licensing your school has in place, as additional endpoint security may already be incorporated (eg., in A3 or A5), potentially eliminating the need for additional third-party licences.

- Other devices such as Chromebooks or iPads tend not to require any antivirus software. In some cases, schools choose to use a freeware type (these however may not give full protection).

DATA PROTECTION AND CYBERSECURITY

Data Protection and Cyber Security are critical areas for all schools and are concerned with managing and protecting school data, and reducing the risks that data is deleted/compromised, lost or stolen. Schools need to have an overall data and cybersecurity strategy in place which outlines the main objectives of their strategy. To support schools in this area Oide Technology in Education have developed a cybersecurity guide which can be downloaded at the following link.
https://www.oidetechnologyineducation.ie/technology-infrastructure/data-security/

For additional queries or support schools can email us at ictadvice@oide.ie