

Choosing a tablet

If you're reading this, you may have already decided that you or your centre could benefit from using tablets in your day to day assessment. If you have not already made that decision, however, here are some reminders of why assessors gain so much efficiency from the use of tablets.

Tablets (such as iPads, Galaxy Notes, HP Slates etc) offer assessors an incredibly convenient interface when they are assessing. A tablet loaded with SkillWise's **VQMobile** app:

Can work in an off-line mode

Can present a learner's progress graph

Can show the learner's assessment plans

Can show the learner's activity log

Can allow new evidence to be recorded, especially voice recordings, images, video and scans – and for this evidence to be mapped against the qual framework.

Allows the creation of new assessment plans

Allows inputs into the activity log

When choosing a tablet to use, here are the things you should bear in mind:

- Screen size – smaller is more portable, but too small becomes hard to use. We recommend a 7" screen as being the smallest that's still easy to navigate.
- Camera – make sure it has a camera that faces away from the screen – this is really important when you're recording observations or scanning documents.
- Sound recorder – make sure it has a good inbuilt sound recorder, and a microphone.
- Operating system – VQMobile is compatible with the major operating systems: IOS8, IOS9, Android Jelly Bean, KitKat and Lollipop.
- Ruggedness – an assessors may give the device quite a hard life, so choose a reputable make that is physically quite robust. Also, consider buying a ruggedised case to make it environment-proof. A good source for these is www.ruggedstuff.co.uk
- Battery life – it would be very frustrating if the tablet lasted just half a day; make sure the battery life is suitable for a full day's assessment.

Or.... Encourage your employees to bring their own technology to work. Providing a ruggedised case so that you employees can confidently use their own personal equipment without fear of damage, may prove to be a more cost effective option. Again, chat to Rugged Stuff for advice.