



## Guidance for use of Word Processors in school and in examinations.

St George's School values good handwriting and expects that most students will handwrite in lessons and exams.

A word processor cannot be granted to a student purely because he/she prefers to type, can work faster or because he/she uses a word processor at home.

However, there are exceptional circumstances, as identified by the school, where students may need to use a word processor. Referrals for assessment for use of a word processor must be made to the Assessments Officer/SENCo by subject teachers detailing evidence of need.

In addition, the use of a word processor **MUST** reflect the student's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the student's needs. This therefore requires that an agreement for the use of a laptop be agreed and trialled well in advance of any public exams.

The list below helps to identify students who may need to use a word processor in lessons and exams:

- A specific learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to write legibly
- A medical condition/physical disability (e.g. hypermobility)
- A sensory impairment
- Very poor handwriting to such a degree that writing is virtually illegible
- Planning and organisational difficulties when writing by hand.

### Procedure

- An assessment of the student's handwriting legibility and speed and typing speed will be completed by the Assessments Officer in agreement with the SENCo.
- Following assessment, if the student qualifies for the use of a word processor (in agreement with the SENCo), the arrangement will be added to the student's details on SIMS and to the Exam Access Arrangement/Reasonable Adjustments list.

## Use in class

- Only students who have been assessed and qualify for word processor use may do so in lessons.
- In some lessons a word processor may not generally be needed or may not be appropriate, e.g. Maths.
- Due to the increased organisational demands in using a word processor (i.e., printing out work and sticking into book etc.), approval is generally only given to pupils in Year 9 upwards. Pupils in Year 7 or 8 would only be considered for use of a word processor in lessons in very exceptional circumstances or if it is cited as their normal way of working on coming into the school
- Students are informed once they qualify that they need to either:
  - a) borrow a lap-top from the Learning Support Department
  - b) Bring in their own lap-top

Students are responsible for the safe-keeping of these lap-tops.

- A review of provision will be undertaken on a regular basis to determine if the use of IT remains effective for the student's needs.

## Use in examinations

- If you are entitled to a word processor in exams, you will be using ExamWrite. This will be without spellcheck, unless you would otherwise be entitled to a Scribe, in which case spellcheck will be enabled.
- Most students will complete their exams on desktop computers in one of the computer rooms near Aim Higher, as shown on their personal timetable. Work will be saved onto a secure area of the school network, and you will have a different login for this purpose. At the end of every exam, it is **essential** that you check the printout of your work before leaving the exam room.
- If you normally sit exams in a smaller room, because you have another access arrangement that requires it (e.g. you are also entitled to a reader), you will use a laptop provided for you and save work to a memory stick. In this case, your invigilator will bring you to the Exams Office with the memory stick to print the work.
- In all cases, you will be provided with detailed guidance notes before each set of exams, and a copy will also be available in the room where you are sitting the exam.
- Students may use their hard copy answer book in addition to the word processor if they wish to do so.

- A student does not need to use the word processor for all exams (i.e. one will not generally be needed for Maths exams and a student may opt to use one for high literacy subjects only). However, the provision must be agreed with the SENCo and Exams Officer prior to the examination period.
- Students permitted to use word processors in public exams (GCSEs, iGCSEs and GCEs) must have been using a word processor as their normal way of working for lessons, homework and internal tests, for a prolonged period of time.
- A pupil may also use a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of an exam.
- It is important to realise that while we make every effort to ensure that things will go smoothly, on rare occasions either the hardware or software involved can malfunction, and unfortunately, in these circumstances we are not able to take responsibility for any consequences. If your work fails to save and/or print in a school exam, you will generally be given an opportunity to redo the paper at another time, at the discretion of the department concerned. In a public exam we would make an application for special consideration, and the exam board would calculate an estimated mark for the paper concerned, which could be lower or higher than, or the same as, the mark you would actually have achieved had the work not been lost. It is important to understand that by using a word processor in an exam you are automatically accepting these conditions.

Questions relating to entitlement to a word processor in exams should be directed to the Assessments Officer/SENCo.

Questions relating to use of a word processor in exams should be directed to the Exams Officer.