Laptop Policy

Introduction

The number of students using laptop computers for school work is increasing. The School is committed to ensuring that students are properly prepared and can enjoy the maximum benefits arising from laptop use; that teachers understand how to accommodate their students' laptop use; and that parents, staff and students are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

This policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, in line with JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AA) and Instructions for conducting examinations 2017/18 (ICE).

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that all students have equal access to the curriculum
- To enable all students to achieve the best possible for their ability.
- To provide guidelines for students and teachers on safe, appropriate and efficient laptop use
- To outline how the school operates in line with JCQ and ICE guidelines for laptop use in exams and assessments

Who may use a laptop as their normal way of working in school?

Students with a disability may use a laptop as their normal way of working in school in order to prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties. Use of a word processor is only granted if it is appropriate to a student's needs (for example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand). Permission must have been received from the Learning Support Co-ordinator (in conjunction with the Director of Staff).

The following conditions must be met before permission will be given for a student to use a laptop as their normal way of working in school:

- A specific recommendation has been received from either:
    - an educational psychologist, specialist teacher or medical expert
    - the School's Learning Support Co-ordinator
- Touch-typing speed should exceed handwriting speed (c.30 wpm).
- Students and parents have signed the Laptop Code of Practice as well as the ICT Acceptable Use policy.
- The laptop is adequately marked and insured.

The Learning Support Co-ordinator will confirm the list of laptop users. Concerns related to possible laptop use should be referred to the Learning Support Co-ordinator in time for arrangements to be in place at the start of the course in order to show normal way of working

to meet JCQ requirements. The Examinations Officer will liaise with IT support over requisite technical support and the provision of 'clean' laptops.

Staff with any concerns e.g. illegible writing should see their Head of Section, who will pass concerns onto the Learning Support Co-ordinator. The Learning Support Co-ordinator will see pastoral and academic staff and liaise with the Examination Officers. JQC regulations will inform the decision made in every case.

How and when is a laptop used?

In class:

- Laptop use is allowed with the agreement of the subject department head and the subject teacher.
- Work must be printed out by students and stuck into exercise books or placed in a file as required by each department. Work must be submitted in an acceptable format: a minimum of 12 point font and double spaced unless otherwise instructed.
- Students must ensure that laptops are charged every evening.
- Laptops must be capable of being run on battery, and that battery power should always be used. For health and safety reasons mains cables can be used only with specific permission to do so.
- Laptops must be on mute at all times.
- Any integrated recording devices must be disabled at all times.

Homework

- Written homework tasks must be printed at home and, where appropriate, stuck into an exercise book or placed in a file as required by each department.
- Work must be submitted in an acceptable format: a minimum of 12 point font and double spaced unless otherwise instructed.
- Students may email homework to teachers only with the express prior permission of that teacher.

Controlled Assessments and Course Work

The school provides access to word processors to students in non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments or coursework) components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

Examinations

St Helen & St Katharine complies with AA *Adjustments for pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

- The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled student
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
- Students may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our students, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis

- The use of a word processor is considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course. Students are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework
- Students are made aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments/coursework)
- The use of a word processor for students is only granted if it reflects the support given to the student as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:
    a. in the classroom; or
    b. working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
    c. literacy support lessons; or
    d. literacy intervention strategies; and/or
    e. in internal school tests and mock examinations
- The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment. In such cases, the school may ask to see medical documents as evidence of need.

The School allows students to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers. The school is also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where students will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The student avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen

In all cases, the school:

- ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each student's typed script
- does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a student because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

Spelling and grammar checks and predictive tools will be disabled (in very specific circumstances an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Teacher Assessor may recommend differently) as will any connection to the internet.

The School will provide a clean memory stick and the student must save work on this at regular intervals.

Scripts will be printed out on School printers as soon as each examination ends. The student must be present for this to check that all pages have been printed and then sign each page.

Word processors and their programmes

St Helen's complies with ICE 8.8 *Word processors* instructions by ensuring:

- word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used
- an unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a student
- where required, students are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff
- word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination

- word processors are accommodated in such a way that other students are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- where a student using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used
- word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- documents are printed after the examination is over
- students are present to verify that the work printed is their own
- word processed scripts are inserted in any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body
- word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- students are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc when using a word processor
- graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these
- predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the student has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet included), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the student has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
- word processors are not used on the student's behalf by a third party unless the student has permission to use a scribe

Laptops and tablets

St Helen's further complies with ICE 8.8 instructions by ensuring:

- students will be provided with access to a laptop/tablet in the main examination hall which is either connected to a mains power supply or is 'free standing' with a battery, checked to ensure sufficient capacity for the entire duration of the examination, allowing for any additional time.
- students are reminded that their centre number, student number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer
- students using Notepad or Wordpad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script; students are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way
- students are instructed to appropriately number each page
- students are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- invigilators remind students to save their work at regular intervals
- where it is possible 'autosave' is set up on each laptop/tablet
- students are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Students using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

Students will be seated in the main examination hall unless they have another access arrangement which requires separate invigilation, for example a read aloud.

Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors is no different to any other invigilation since students are accommodated in the main exam room.

Liaison with Parents

- The Learning Support Co-ordinator will be responsible for liaising with relevant parents so that they are fully aware of the school's procedures. She will ensure that they have a copy of the school's policy.
- She will indicate that it is the parents' responsibility, in line with the original request, to ensure that their daughter has adequate touch-typing and operational skills.
- She will reiterate to parents the requirement that the laptop is properly insured.

Code of Practice

Students and parents will be asked to sign a Laptop Code of Practice. This ensures each student agrees to follow the basic rules of laptop use to ensure that it is a tool to support and does not hinder progress.

Parents will be responsible for organising any extra support required to ensure the student has adequate touch-typing and operational skills.

Occasional laptop use:

Members of the Sixth Form may use their laptops in the Sixth Form Centre and the Library for their own independent learning, providing students and parents have signed the Sixth Form Laptop Use Terms and Conditions and they are followed.

Girls suffering from an injury that temporarily prevents them from writing may bring in their own laptop for use in lessons and must also fulfil these three requirements. Alternatively, they may request to borrow a school laptop for use in school time which will be provided dependent on availability of free resources.

Use of a laptop either of these ways does not constitute a normal way of working and does not impart the right to use a laptop in internal or public examinations.

Policy Last Reviewed: Michaelmas 2017

Next Review due: Michaelmas 2018

Signed: John Hunt, Director of Staff & IT   **Date:** Michaelmas 2017

Appendix 1 - Statement of Rationale for the Provision of Word Processors in Exams

Students with a long term disability may use a laptop in exams where it is their normal way of working in order to prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties. Use of a word processor is considered on a subject by subject basis and is only granted if it is appropriate to a student's needs. Permission must have been received from the Learning Support Co-ordinator (in conjunction with the Director of Staff). Where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment, the school may ask to see medical documents as evidence of need. Further details are out lined in the school's Laptop Policy.

Signed: Date: 14/11/17

John Hunt, Director of Staff& IT

Appendix 2 - Laptop Code of Practice (for students)

Your teachers are very happy for you to use your laptop in their lessons and for producing all written homework tasks. However, it is essential you follow these simple requirements:

- Your laptop MUST be fully charged as you will not be allowed to plug it in during lessons. It is your responsibility to charge it at home, overnight.
- Your laptop must be accompanied by your memory stick.
- It is your responsibility to save all work on your laptop appropriately.
- It is your responsibility to print out any homework so it can be handed in on time and in the required format (a minimum of 12 point font and double spaced unless otherwise instructed).
- You must make sure that your laptop is on mute and all recording devices are disabled.
- You are allowed to use only authorised software and in lessons you may not use your laptop to access the internet without staff permission. You must be aware that all internet traffic is monitored and that the School's internet usage policy applies on all machines used in School.
- Email and Office 365 tools (SharePoint, OneDrive) can be accessed using any web browser.
- The owner of the laptop is solely responsible for how the laptop is used regardless of who is actually using it.
- It is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that the laptop is insured and that it is safe and secure whilst in school.

This code of practice is in addition to the School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy. The laptop is not to be used for any illegal activity, peer to peer file sharing, hacking or cracking the network and downloading large files.

By signing this code of practice you are agreeing to follow these basic requirements so that your laptop will be a help rather than a hindrance, both to yourself and to your teachers.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

November 2016

Appendix 3 - Laptop Code of Practice (for parents)

Criteria for the use of a laptop as a normal way of working in school:

- A student needs an Educational Psychologist's report recommending the use of a laptop, or a recommendation from the School's Learning Support Co-ordinator.
- Parents must ensure that the student has reached the required standard in touch typing and laptop use as set out by the school.
- Students' own laptops may be used in school. This is understood to be at the parents' risk and therefore it is recommended that parents ensure that the laptop is permanently marked and appropriately insured.
- Students are responsible for the safety and security of the laptop whilst in school.
- Students may use school laptops designated for exam use (JCQ *Special Arrangements,* p54, 5.8).They will not be able to use spell checker (unless they qualify for a scribe), thesaurus or have network/internet access. Exam papers will be printed out at school.
- Students may only use laptops in exams where it has been their normal way of working.
- Other than exams, it is the responsibility of the student to print out work and stick it in their exercise book or put it in their files in an appropriate format.
- Parents must ensure that laptops are fully charged for the start of each school day.
- All laptop power supplies, if required, should be PAT tested by the school Estates staff before being used at school.

Student Laptop Specifications

Students who require a laptop for use in school do not need a specific brand but it should meet the following requirements to ensure it is a practical and compatible solution.

- Screen Size – 11" to 15.62"
- Weight – no more than c. 2.2kg
- Operating system – Microsoft Windows 10
- Applications – Microsoft Word, Anti-Virus program.

Parents should consider carefully the durability of any laptop build for handling the wear and tear of a school environment and for carrying the laptop around the school.

Signed:_____

Date: _____