



ST JAMES
Senior Girls' School

Laptop and Portable Device Policy

St James Senior Girls' School

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Policy Scope

The aim of this policy is to clarify the School's position with respect to the use of laptops, smart phones, other portable devices and wearable technology, both in school and in examinations.

The School believes that this policy currently offers the most appropriate and practical level of support for pupils, whilst allowing pupils to embrace and harness the benefits of using new technologies.

Definitions

- The term “laptop” refers to any portable device that will not fit into a blazer pocket: a laptop, a tablet PC, an iPad etc;
- The term “smart phone” refers to any portable device that will fit into a blazer pocket that has the ability to connect to the Internet by either a WiFi or 3G/4G connection.
- The term “Wearable Technology” refers to a device that is worn on one's person e.g. Apple Watch.
- The term “professionally assessed” refers to an assessment made by a fully qualified Educational Psychologist, an appropriately qualified psychologist or a specialist teacher holding a Level 7 qualification.
- Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) - pupils bring their own mobile devices into the classroom, allowing internet access, data sharing and collaborative learning.

The Use of Laptops in School

Use of Laptops, Portable Devices and Wearable Technology in Lessons

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased use of technology for remote learning, the school is currently reviewing its use of technology. The limitations below may be changed for the current academic year.

- Pupils who have a learning need (Special Educational Need or Disability) as decided by the SENDCO, may use laptops in lessons.
- Pupils in Year 8 and above may use laptops in lessons. They must have signed the BYOD agreement in advance (see Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils).
- Pupils may only use smart phones and wearable technology in lessons, with permission of their teacher - and only when instructed to do so. At no time should the device be used to distract or cause nuisance to others. Smart watches can be used as normal watches but must not be used as an internet enabled device in school.

Recording of Lessons

Pupils may not record lessons or any part of thereof, unless instructed by their teacher to do so.

The Use of Laptops in Examinations

School Internal Examinations

Pupils will only be permitted to use laptops in school examinations in the following circumstances:

- Those who have a learning need (Special Educational Need or Disability) as decided by the SENDCO.
- Those whose teachers have acknowledged that their writing structure and expression significantly improves by using a word processor.
- In all cases use of a laptop is their normal way of working.

Senior School Entrance Examinations

Pupils will only be permitted to use laptops in Senior School Entrance Examinations in the following circumstances:

- Those who have a learning need (Special Educational Need or Disability) as decided by the SENDCO.
- In all cases use of a laptop is their normal way of working.

School Examination Provision for Examinations

The School will provide pupils with:

- “clean” laptops: no internet access and the spell-checker is disabled. It is a JCQ requirement that the laptops that are used for examinations are “clean”. Candidates are not permitted to use their own laptops in examinations.
- Mains power
- Memory sticks (as required by JCQ regulations).
- Printing facilities (as required by JCQ regulations).

Liability Issues

- Pupils and parents should understand that using a laptop in an examination is not without risk. The School shall use reasonable endeavours to ensure the laptop is suitable for use by the pupil in an examination, is in good working order prior to any examination and is capable of operating by its own power source if necessary.
- Unless negligent, the School accepts no responsibility for any malfunction or failure of a laptop to operate properly during an examination.

Process

- Head of Learning Development (SENDCO) to evaluate (including liaising with external specialists if necessary) and liaise with subject teachers.
- Use of a word processor - computers, laptops and tablets (as defined by JCQ) - in examinations should be an extension of the pupil’s normal method of working.
- It is the pupil’s responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with any laptop provided to them by the School for examination purposes.

Permission

- All pupils in Years 8-13 can bring their own device once they and their parents have signed the BYOD agreement.

- For pupils in Year 7, permission to use a laptop in lessons will be granted to a pupil with a learning need or condition, whose assessment shows that this would lessen or remove the effects of a substantial disadvantage.
- Exceptions may apply in the case of a personal injury.
- Permission to use a word processor in examinations will be granted within the framework and guidelines issued by the Joint Council for Qualifications.

Cost

- The School will bear the costs of providing “clean” laptops in examinations for pupils with a professionally assessed special educational need or disability.

The Use of Laptops in Examinations for Pupils without a Specific Learning Difficulty

JCQ guidance on word processors 2019-20

The following is taken from the guidance:

- There is not a requirement to process an application using Access Arrangements online or to record the use of the arrangement. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement. (This also applies where a candidate is using a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury.)
- Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. 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. (This also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.)
- The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.
- It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers. N.B. 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 candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and computer screen.
- In all cases a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) must be completed.
- A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home. They must have a genuine need to use a word processor as decided by the SENDCO in consultation with subject teachers
- The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate’s normal way of working within the centre
- Girls with the following needs might benefit from using a word processor:
 - a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;
 - a medical condition;
 - a physical disability;

- a sensory impairment;
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;
- poor handwriting.

This list is not exhaustive

- For a candidate to use a word processor with the spelling and grammar check enabled, their writing would be at a level where a professional has advised the use of a scribe. A scribe would write or type a candidate’s dictated answers to questions. Use of a scribe is rare and in all cases the candidate will not have access to marks for spelling, punctuation and/or grammar unless she has independently dictated spelling, punctuation and/or grammar, and this has been recorded on the scribe cover sheet.

Applications for Laptop Use

In consultation with the SENDCO, the Exams Officer asks those candidates known to use laptops as their ‘normal way of working’ in school which exams they intend to use a laptop for at the start of the academic year. Candidates must attend an IT training session to learn to use the exam laptop effectively, arranged by the SENDCO.

Signed by:	Hugh Venables Chair of Governors
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Policy owner (SMT)	Deputy Head (Academic)