



St Philip Howard
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Word Processor (Computers, Laptops and Tablets) Policy

This Policy has been approved and adopted by the Governors of the Standards committee

Approved	Review
March 2025	March 2026



Statement for the use of a word processor during exams

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations and guidance of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)

St Philip Howard Catholic School values good handwriting and imposes high standards on presentation of work, and expects that most students will handwrite in exams. However, there are exceptional circumstances, as identified by the School, where students may benefit from using a word processor and in these cases SPH staff will allow use of a word processor for note-making in class, for homework, and for internal and public examinations.

Students with access to word processors in exams are allowed to do so in order that barriers to assessment are removed for disabled candidates, preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The School will allow students to use word processors in exams when they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- **The student has a specific learning difficulty/disability (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their substantial needs and reflects their normal way of working;**
- **The student has a physical difficulty/medical condition (such as hypermobility/juvenile arthritis) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;**
- **The student has a sensory impairment (such as vision or hearing impairment) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;**
- **The student has very poor handwriting and would lose marks due to the examiner finding his/her answers illegible;**
- **The student's quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand.**
- **The student's handwriting speed is significantly slower than that of their peers (as measured by standardised tests), placing them at a disadvantage and therefore uses a word processor as their normal way of working.**

This use of a word processor also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.

Students permitted to use word processors in public exams (ie GCSEs, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals, A levels) must have been using a word processor as their normal way of working for classes, homework, internal tests and internal exams.

It is not school policy to allow use of a word processor for a student solely on the basis that they prefer to type or that they can work faster on a keyboard because they use a laptop at home.

A student may also use a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury.

The school will provide word processors with spelling and grammar checkers and predictive text facility removed for use in internal exams and public exams. These word processors are not able to connect to the internet.

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.

The need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject by subject basis. Students who have permission to use a word processor in exams do not have to use it in all exams, e.g. they may opt to use it in subjects with extended writing demands only. The provision will be agreed with the SENCO during mock/practice exams.

Students may use their answer booklet in addition to the word processor if they wish to do so. For example, a student may type certain questions and handwrite shorter answers.

The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

Where possible students using word processors in external exams are internally accommodated together in an alternative room within the school.