

# Word Processors in Examinations

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This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams. References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020-2021 and Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2020-2021 publications.

## **Introduction**

### **1 Policy Statement**

This Policy details how Ewell Castle School complies the regulations and guidance of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of a word processor (which, for the purpose of this policy, includes computers, laptops and tablets) in examinations/ assessments at Ewell Castle School (“the Centre”).

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement.

(AA 4.2.1)

The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

(AA 4.2.2)

Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

(AA 4.2.3)

Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. ALS leads/SENCOs must consider the need for access arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis.

(AA 4.2.1)

The Additional Learning Support lead/SENCO must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage a candidate.

(AA 4.2.7)

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination.

### **2 The Use of a Word Processor**

The Centre will

- Allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled (switched off) where it is their normal way of working within the centre (AA 5.8.1)
- Award the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs which may include:
  - a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to write legibly
  - a medical condition
  - a physical disability
  - a sensory impairment;
  - planning and organisational problems when writing by hand

- poor handwriting (AA 5.8.4)
- only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AA 4.2.1)
- not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2.2)
- consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AA 4.2.3)
- consider the needs of the candidate at the start of the candidate’s course leading to a qualification based on evidence gathered that firmly establishes the candidate’s needs and “normal way of working” in the classroom, internal tests/exams, mock exams etc. and confirm arrangements in place before the candidate takes an exam or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
- provide access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AA 5.8.2)

The Centre will not

- simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they prefer to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

### Exceptions

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate would be

- in the event of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course (AA 4.2.4)
- where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically

## 3 Arrangements at the Time of the Assessment for the Use of a Word Processor

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in the following manner:

- where numbers permit, candidates using word processors will be seated in the Sports Hall.
- if there are too many candidates to be seated in the Sports Hall, candidates will be seated in Room 24
- candidates who have access arrangements in addition to the use of a word processor with or without extra time may be seated in other suitable examination rooms

To comply with ICE 14, the Centre

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) (ICE 14.20).
- (where a candidate is to be seated with the main cohort without the use of a power point) checks the battery capacity of the word processor before the candidate’s exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam (ICE 14.21)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer e.g. 12345/8001 – 6391/01 (ICE 14.22)
- ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6 (ICE 14.23)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals
- instruct the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking (ICE 14.24)

The Centre will ensure the word processor (ICE 14.25):

- is only used in a way that ensures a candidate's script is produced under secure conditions
  - is not used to perform skills which are being assessed
    - is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
  - is in good working order at the time of the exam
  - is accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
  - is used as a type-writer, not as a database, and is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
- 
- is cleared of any previously stored data
  - does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc.
  - does not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these
  - does not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using speech recognition technology (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
  - does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
  - is not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

#### **Portable Storage Medium (ICE 14.25)**

The centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used

- is provided by the Centre
- is cleared of any previously stored data

#### **Printing the Script after the Exam is Over**

The Centre will ensure

- the word processor is either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- the candidate is present to verify that the work printed is their own
- a word processed script is inserted into any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- where an awarding body requires a cover sheet to be completed this is included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)

## **4 Review and Development**

### **4.1 Procedure**

This document, together with the effectiveness of it, is reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team and as events or legislation change requires.

## **4.2 Links with other Documents**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Access Arrangements Policy
- Examinations – Disability Policy
- Examinations Policy
- Special Educations Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

## Appendix 1

### The criteria Ewell Castle School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

#### Statement

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he or she now wants to type rather than write in examinations, can work faster on a keyboard or uses a laptop at home. The principle is that the use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

#### The use of word processors

Ewell Castle School may consider the following candidates eligible for the use of a word processor for lessons and examinations:

- 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

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor may be considered for a candidate would be

- on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of the assessment
- where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

#### Arrangements for the use of word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the Deputy Head of Learning Support and the Exams Officer.

Statement produced by: **N. Andrews (Deputy Head of SS Learning Support) & S. Bailey (Head of SS Learning Support)** Statement date: 14/10/2020