



# Word Processor Policy (Exams) 2021/22

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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| Approved/reviewed by  |           |
| <br>Principal |           |
| Date of next review   | Sept 2022 |

## Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

| Role            | Name(s)                        |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| ALS lead/SENCo  | <b>David Griffiths</b>         |
| Exams manager   | <b>Jade Robson</b>             |
| Exams Assistant | <b>Lucy Russell</b>            |
| SLT member(s)   | <b>Kathy Hardy – Principal</b> |
| IT manager      | <b>Greg Hughes</b>             |

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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 2021-2022](#) and [Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2021-2022](#) publications.

## Introduction

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

(AA 4.2.1)

The purpose of an access arrangement/ reasonable adjustment 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/adjustments 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/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. ALS lead/SENCoS must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis.

(AA 4.2.1)

The Additional Learning Support lead/SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/ reasonable adjustment 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)/ reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination.

## Purpose of the policy

This policy details how The de Ferrers Academy complies with AA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 14.20-25) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations.

The term 'word processor' is used to describe for example, the use of a computer, laptop or tablet.

## The use of a word processor

The centre will

- ▶ allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with 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 where appropriate to their needs  
For example, a candidate with:
  - 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 (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)
- ▶ process access arrangements/reasonable adjustments at the start of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working, ensuring arrangements are always approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
- ▶ provide the use of 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 now want to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

### **Exceptions**

The only exceptions 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 the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

### **Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor**

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in a different room away from the main hall.

In compliance with the regulations the centre:

- ▶ provides 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, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20)
- ▶ (where a candidate is to be seated with the main cohort without the use of a powerpoint) 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)

If a candidate is using the software application Notepad or Wordpad these do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer. In such circumstances once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed script, they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

- ▶ 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. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet to ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost)
- ▶ instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to make marking easier for examiners (ICE 14.24)

(ICE 14.25)

The centre will ensure the word processor

- ▶ 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 typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable 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 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**

(ICE 14.25)

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 attached to 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)

## Appendix 1

### The criteria The de Ferrers Academy uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

#### Criteria to award and allocate word processors for Examinations

JCQ Access Arrangements allow centres 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.

The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

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.)

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 screen.

**The de Ferrers Academy will follow the regulations on the use of word processors in written examinations, please see section 8.8, page 25 of the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations (commonly known as the JCQ 'ICE' booklet) <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations> <sup>[SEP]</sup> In all cases a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) must be completed.**

It should be noted that 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.

**The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.**

**All applications for the use of word processor in examinations must be directed to Mr D. Griffiths (SENDSCO) who will consider if the use meets one of the following criteria.**

**The de Ferrers Academy distinguishes the following particular types of candidates, which it considers would benefit from the use of a word processor. A candidate with:**

- **a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;** <sup>[SEP]</sup>
- **a medical condition;** <sup>[SEP]</sup>
- **a physical disability;** <sup>[SEP]</sup>
- **a sensory impairment;** <sup>[SEP]</sup>
- **planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;** <sup>[SEP]</sup>
- **poor handwriting that is deemed illegible.**

These awards will only be made with appropriate medical evidence in place or after centre handwriting tests results confirm the candidates need.

## Examples of Candidates who would be granted the use of a word processor

A candidate who cannot write legibly because he / she has significant learning difficulties asks to use a word processor in her examinations. **It is his / her normal means of producing written work within the centre** because her teachers cannot read her writing. She is very proficient in using a word processor. [L] [SEP]

A candidate does not have a learning difficulty but is a 'messy' writer. His / her handwriting is hard to decipher. **it reflects his / her normal way of working within the centre.** [L] [SEP]

A candidate who has significant learning difficulties has quite legible writing. However, he / she makes many omissions and cannot order his / her ideas correctly. His / her written scripts are legible but covered in crossings-out and omission marks. The use of a word processor allows him / her to correct text, sequence his / her answers and **reflects his / her normal way of working within the centre.** [L] [L] [L] [L] [SEP] [SEP]

A candidate has a below average free writing speed when handwriting and qualifies for 25% extra time. However, using a word processor is his / her **normal way of working within the centre.** When typing he / she can produce his / her written work effectively and at a speed equivalent to an average handwriting rate. He / She has no further learning difficulties. The use of a word processor can be granted as it removes the barrier presented by his / her slow handwriting, but only award 25% extra time when he / she writes by hand such as in GCSE Mathematics examinations. [L] [SEP]

A candidate with significant learning difficulties has a below average speed of handwriting and below average scores in areas of cognitive processing and reading speed. As using a word processor is his / her **normal way of working within the centre** he / she has been able to improve his / her typing speed to match the equivalent average handwriting rate. However, he / she has **persistent and significant difficulties** in interpreting questions and formulating his / her typed answers. He / she can be given 25% extra time, as well as the use of a word processor, as both arrangements are appropriate to his / her needs. [L] [SEP]

The criteria The de Ferrers Academy uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition or where the SENDCO has deemed that the use of a word processor is a suitable access arrangement.

### **Awarding word processors**

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in exams where he/she has a firmly established need; it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates. Exceptions might include where a candidate has, for example:

- 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

### **Allocating word processors**

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be allocated by the IT department in liaison with the SENDCO and the exams officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the published start time. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 2.11 of ICE.

**Statement Produced by:** Chris Allen – Vice Principal Data Analysis / Progress & Timetable

**Statement Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018