Word Processor Policy (Exams)
Smith's Wood Academy
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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo (or equivalent role)	**Emma Douglas/Christopher Hanks-Sedman**
Exams officer	**Sharon Thomas**
Senior leader(s)	**Scott Friswell**
IT manager	**RM IT**

JCQ ICE guidance has been used to support this policy. See section 14, specifically 14.20.
JCQ-Instructions-for-conducting-examinations-2024_FINAL-1.pdf

JCQ AA guidance has been used to support this policy.
Regulations and Guidance - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications

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Word Processor Policy (Exams) Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

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 2024-2025 and Instructions for conducting examinations 2024-2025 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 them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage 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.

A centre **must** make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they **cannot** make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.

(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.SENCos (or equivalent role)**must** consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis.

(AA 4.2.1)
The SENCo,or equivalent role must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

(AA 4.2.7)

The SENCo and/or the assessor must work with teaching staff, support staff and exams office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations. The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before his/her first examination. This is particularly so where a computer reader, modified enlarged papers, a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor will be used in examinations

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Smith's Wood Academy complies with AA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.7.5 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 14.20-27) 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.

AA 5.7.5

Use of a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on 5.7.5 Where the centre has approval for the use of a scribe and where it reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, as appropriate to his/her needs, the candidate may alternatively use:

• a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on; or

• a word processor with predictive text/spelling and grammar check switched on. Where a candidate with learning difficulties is not subject to a current Education, Health and Care Plan (England), a current Statement of Special Educational Needs (Northern Ireland), or a current Individual Development Plan (Wales), Form 8 must show a below average spelling accuracy standardised score (a standardised score of 84 or less) with unrecognisable spellings.

The centre will
- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text (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 examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. (AA 5.8.4)

The use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate:
- 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.
- where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)
- This is the normal way of working for students as assessed by the Sendco.
- Who has significant learning difficulties has quite legible writing. Students make many omissions and cannot order ideas correctly. Written scripts are legible but covered in crossings-out and omission marks. Sendco would assess need.
- Does not have a learning difficulty but is a 'messy' writer. Their handwriting is hard to decipher. They request the use of a word processor. This is granted by the SENCo because it reflects his normal way of working within the centre.

Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor.

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in a smaller room with possibly other candidates who are entitled to a smaller venue along with the appropriate number of invigilators.

In compliance with the regulations the centre:

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check predictive text disabled 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) (AA 5.8)

- Tablets are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged. Their purpose is to be 'free-standing'. The battery capacity of a laptop or a tablet must be checked before the candidate's examination(s) and the centre must ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination. The use of a fully-charged laptop or tablet will allow centres to seat a candidate within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points. (ICE 14.21)
- Candidates must be 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 these instances, once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed script, they must handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate must be supervised 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 (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) (ICE 14.24)
- instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing 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 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
- 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), e-mail, the Internet, social media sites, spreadsheets
- 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 cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- does not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader

- does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)
- is not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)
- To make marking easier for examiners, candidates should use a minimum font size of 12pt and double spacing.
- Does not include AI tools

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 has ended
(ICE 14.25e)
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
- if a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that he/she is solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)
- Candidates will send their work to print. The invigilator or myself will print the work in the General office in front of the student.

The centre will also ensure that where an awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet, this is included with the candidate's typed script (and according to the relevant awarding body's instructions). (ICE 14)

The centre may retain electronic copies of word processed scripts as the electronic copy of a word processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost. However, the centre would need to demonstrate to the awarding body that the electronic file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body. (ICE 14.27)

Centre specific processes

- the candidate is present to verify that the work printed is his or her own
- a word processed script is attached to an answer booklet which may contain some of the answers
- a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)

Mock Exams

Following the same process as external exams, when the candidate completes their exam on a laptop the candidate will select print. The Exams Officer or invigilator will print the work in front of the candidate in the General Office.

The candidate will confirm the work is theirs before leaving. Candidate will be asked to write their name on a blank or partly completed exam paper and the exams officer will attach the printed copy to the exam paper.

The exams officer/invigilator will complete an attendance register, when the department head/teacher collects the mock papers from the general office they will be require to sign to confirm they have collected all the papers. The attendance register will match the papers been collected by each subject.

All Departments/teachers will need to sign to confirm they have collected printed papers from the exams office following each exam.

Allocating word processors at the time of the assessment

An example, by way of illustration, is provided below. However, this is an example only which if used must be adapted to record your centre-specific processes
Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the SENCo (or equivalent role) 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 awarding body's published start time.
The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with ICE 7.