



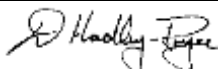
THE BEWDLEY SCHOOL

Learning for Life - Achievement for All

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
	
Date of next review	September 2021

Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Mr P Willis
Exams officer	Mrs D Bridges
Senior leader(s)	Mrs C McDougall
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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

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.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how The Bewdley School complies with AA (chapter 4) Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, (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 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

Needs 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 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 a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

Centre specific processes

For those learners where a laptop is routinely used both in school and at home, typing and writing speeds have been checked. Where handwriting is illegible and/or a writing speed below a standardised score of 85 is identified, alternative methods of recording including the use of a laptop will be considered and an application made. The use of a laptop is not granted across the board in all exams and the need for a laptop may change over time.

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

A candidate using a word processor is usually accommodated in a separate room, which may include several candidates using a laptop/computer.

In compliance with the regulations the centre

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) 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 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)

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)
- 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 his or 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)

The criteria The Bewdley School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

Students at the school who have :

- 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.

May be permitted to use a laptop for assessment purposes, where this means of recording information is their recognised normal way of working.

Prior to allocate a word processor to a student, the Curriculum Support department undertake an audit of student need. This usually takes place during the last 2 terms of a student's year 9. AS part of this process, teaching staff are asked to identify students for whom current practice is to use a laptop for one of the reasons identified above.

When it has been agreed that a student meets the needs as identified above, a series of tests is undertaken to ensure that a word processor represents the most appropriate means of recording information for that student. For this a student undertakes 2 10 minute writing activities. A student is asked to write for 10 minutes on a topic of their choice. On a different day, they are asked to use a word processor for 10 minutes to write on a topic of their choice. The tests are conducted on 2 separate days to ensure that a student does not suffer fatigue from handwriting which impacts on their word processing or vice-versa.

The results of both tests are reviewed to consider:

- volume of material produced
- accuracy of spelling
- legibility of writing
- student dexterity with both writing and word processing

The student is awarded a WPM (words per minute) score for both tests. Where a student's WPM typing is higher than handwritten and the handwriting is illegible or incomprehensible, use of a word processor would be appropriate.

Where a student's hand-written WPM is higher than the WPM for typing and the handwriting is illegible or incomprehensible, it may be more appropriate to trial the use of a scribe. If use of a scribe was deemed normal practice, completion of a Form 8 and assessment by a suitably qualified exams assessor (see Access Arrangements policy) may be appropriate.

Where a student's WPM for both typing and handwriting is low, it may be appropriate to consider use of a scribe rather than a word processor

Where a word processor is deemed the most appropriate means of recording information and where the student fulfils the criterion identified above, consideration would be made as to whether a word processor was appropriate for each subject on a case by case basis.

Where a student has an injury at the time of an exam which impedes the student's ability to handwrite information, it may be appropriate to approve temporary use of a word processor for that candidate.

A laptop **would not be appropriate** for a student under the following circumstances:

- a student types faster than they handwrite, and the student's handwriting is legible and comprehensible
- a student prefers to type and uses a laptop in lessons as their preferred method of recording information, although their writing is legible and comprehensible
- a student writes faster than they type and their written work is legible and comprehensible, irrespective of personal preference.
- Use of a word processor is not standard practice for a student (unless there has been a physical injury prior to the exam season which impedes a student's ability to handwrite responses).

All students who use a word processor will be provided with an appropriate exam compliant machine.

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations. (AA 5.8)

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 technology.

The use of word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded/allocated the use of a word processor in exams where the candidate 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.

Needs 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

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 ALS lead/SENCO 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 section 7 of ICE.

Statement produced by: **Peter Willis (Assistant Headteacher/SENCO)**

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