

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

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Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

| Role | Name(s) |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
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Introduction

This policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for conducting examinations.

References to 'AA' relate to the current JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations*

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments.

Allocation of the use of a word processor

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.

Candidates may be able to use a word processor if agreed by the SENDCO if they have

- 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;
- Illegible and incomprehensible handwriting

The only exceptions to the above would be 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.

Centre specific processes for allocating a word processor access arrangement

- If a student has a physical disability or a visual disability requiring use of a word processor, these students are provided with chrome books / laptops/ iPads for use in lessons.
- Students are assessed by a fully qualified tester who assesses the students handwriting and need for a word processor. These students will have been previously identified by staff as possibly needing this access arrangement with evidence collected.
- 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 SENCO has deemed that the use of a word processor is a suitable access arrangement.

Principles for using a word processor

Cottenham Village College complies with JCQ *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) where it is a candidate's normal way of working.
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs. For example, the quality of language significantly improves because of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand. The above also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.
- Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.
- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers.
- Are also aware that 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.
- In all cases, ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script (according to the instructions issued by the individual awarding body).
- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

Word processors and their programmes

Cottenham Village College complies with current ICE regulations in that

- Word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable.
- Word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium.
- An unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate.

- Where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, and are encrypted, by a nominated member of centre staff.
- Word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination.
- Word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen.
- Word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium.
- Documents are printed after the examination is over.
- Candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own.
- Word processed scripts are inserted in/attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers (and according to instructions issued by the individual awarding body).
- Word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body.
- Word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed.
- Word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- Candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc when using a word processor.
- Graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these.
- Predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet included), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking.
- Voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software.
Word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

Centre specific processes for using word processors

Students have an exam specific log on, this limits the use of a word processor to word pad only. The student cannot access these at any other time.

Laptops and tablets

Cottenham Village College further complies with ICE instructions by ensuring:

- All laptops, if used are checked before the candidate's examination(s).
- Word processor candidates use exam only laptops, without internet connection with a mains connection.
- Candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer.
- Candidates using WordPad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script; candidates are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.
- Candidates are instructed to manually number each page.
- Candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing as per Exam board recommendations.
- Invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals.
- Candidates are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off, so they can verify that the work printed is their own.

Centre specific processes regarding laptops

Laptops only have LAN internet connection and are held in the exams office for exam use only.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Candidates using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- Exams on word processors are held in appropriate ICT rooms.
- Laptops are used in a small group setting only.

Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include the following:

- In an ICT room there are always 2 invigilators available.
- The invigilators have been trained on procedures relating to word processor use in exams and the printing requirements.