

Word Processor Policy (Exams) 2020 – 2021

TYPE: Policy

PURPOSE: To inform staff and students of how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments

SCOPE: This policy applies to all further education students

RESPONSIBILITY: The Vice Principal HR & Student Services is responsible for this policy. The Director Student Services is responsible for the monitoring of the policy.

LEGAL CONTEXT: Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice (2014)

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Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Julie Barson
Exams officer	Manjit Kaur
SLT member(s)	Adam Thomas

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 JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020/2021* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2020/2021*.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments. The production of this Policy is a requirement of JCQ Regulations.

Principles for using a word processor

Solihull College and University Centre and Stratford Upon Avon College complies with AA chapter 4 *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

(AA 4.2.1)

- ▶ *Candidates with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties*
- ▶ *The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate*

(AA 4.2.2)

- ▶ *The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question*

(AA 4.2.3)

- ▶ *Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis*

(AA 4.2.4)

- ▶ *The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate – Currently an ISP and AA pack application.*
- ▶ *Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments*

(AA 4.2.5)

- ▶ *The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:*
- ▶ *in the classroom (where appropriate); or*
- ▶ *working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or*
- ▶ *literacy support lessons; or*
- ▶ *literacy intervention strategies; and/or*
- ▶ *in internal school tests/examinations*
- ▶ *mock examinations*

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

Regardless of the above points in AA4.2.5, the use of a Word processor will only be allocated if:

- ▶ an ISP/EHCP or DSA Report clearly defines that the use of a Word Processor is part of the support offer for the candidate; evidence of NWOW
- ▶ a completed AA pack is received and the SENCo can confirm that this resource is appropriate for the specific subject for exams and assessments.

The use of a word processor

- ▶ Solihull College and University Centre and Stratford Upon Avon College complies with AA chapter 5 *Access arrangements available* as follows:

(AA 5.8.1)

- ▶ *Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)*
- ▶ *Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working (see 4.2.5 above) within the centre*
- ▶ *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 as a result 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 braille machines and tablets)*

(AA 5.8.2)

- ▶ *Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification*

(AA 5.8.3)

- ▶ *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*

(AA 5.8.4)

- ▶ *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.*
- ▶ *In all cases, ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed*

Centre specific processes

- ▶ The ISP must clearly detail that normal way of working (NWoW) is established and that the candidate is proficient in using a Word Processor.
- ▶ a Word Processor cannot be granted just because a candidate prefers to use one (see AA publication page 54).

Word Processors and their programmes

Solihull College and University Centre and Stratford Upon Avon College complies with *ICE 8.8 Word processors instructions* by ensuring:

- ▶ 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 used
- ▶ 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, 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
- ▶ where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used

- ▶ 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

- ▶ The Additional Needs Support Tutor and Specialised Assessors clearly define the parameters for the use of a Word Processor in the application for Access Arrangements (AA Pack) for the candidate and the SENCo confirms in Part 3 of the Form 8 the specific arrangements required.

Laptops and tablets

Solihull College and University Centre and Stratford Upon Avon College further complies with *ICE 8.8 instructions* by ensuring:

- ▶ tablets used during examinations/assessments are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged and are 'free-standing'
- ▶ the battery capacity of all laptops and/or tablets is checked before the candidate's examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination
- ▶ candidates with fully charged laptops or tablets are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points
- ▶ 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 Notepad or 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 appropriately number each page
- ▶ candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- ▶ invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals
- ▶ where it is possible 'autosave' is set up on each laptop/tablet
- ▶ 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

Accommodating word processors in examinations

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

- ▶ Appropriate seating and lighting for using a Word Processor is planned for and matches the NWOW for the candidate, with regards to Laptop or PC allocation
- ▶ Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include those highlighted in the [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) and [Instructions for conducting examinations](#).

Appendices

Centre Specific Arrangements and Statement from Senior Management member – Adam Thomas – Director of Student Services.

Use of a Word Processor for Exams and Assessments – Senior Management Statement:

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates is defined by an ISP and the SENCo confirms that the use of a Word Processor is requested and planned for.

Applying for Word Processors

All applications must be made to the SENCo, who will liaise with the Exams Officer, using the relevant documentation, i.e. Form 8 Application or a Concise File Note for Exams processes, providing clear evidence of need and NWOW. The deadline for requests are as per JCQ deadlines – 2020/2021.

Awarding word processors

The SENCo will determine if a candidate may be **awarded** the use of a word processor in exams where he/she has a firmly established need, that the use of a Word Processor reflects the candidate's normal way of working and that by not being awarded a word processor the candidate in question would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates.

For example:

- ▶ a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- ▶ a medical condition restricting upper body movement associated with handwriting tasks
- ▶ a physical disability restricting handwriting tasks
- ▶ a sensory impairment restricting access to handwriting tasks
- ▶ planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- ▶ poor handwriting resulting in a diagnosed impairment NOT a deficit of writing skills

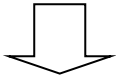
Allocating word processors

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be **allocated** by the Exams Team for 'on demand' and formal examinations only in liaison with the SENCo and the exams officer. Mock Exams in class tests and assessments are not provided for, although guidance and advice can be sought from the SENCo.

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. OR, the SENCo, Additional Needs Manager and the Exams Officer will determine those candidates who are to be prioritised.

Access Arrangements for Exams Application and Approval Process

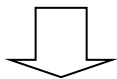
AA Initially Identified at
interview
(Pre-entry)



Approval for AA
Requested
(on Programme)

**(Transferring AA between
exam subjects is not
permitted - approval for
each subject has to be
applied for)**

AA Approved



AA Implemented

AAs for Exams are discussed and reported at Interview

Checks are made to ensure AAs are appropriate for the identified SEND/AN as set by exam board/validating body and JCQ Regulation

Documentary evidence is sent to Disability Officer/SENCo:

Signed Data Protection Statement

- Concise Centre Note/Detailed Centre Note or Form 8
- Access Arrangements Code List
- relevant documentary evidence of need

Additional evidence will be sought from the Specialised Assessors (processing scores) or referred back to the AN Support Tutor if non compliant.

A Centre Note will be attached to requests where appropriate i.e. to support EHCPs or medical evidence.

Disability Officer/SENCo processes documentary evidence with request for approval to exam board/validating body via the Exams Officer and team

AA for Exams requests cannot be completed unless the request is received within time guidelines stated by the relevant exam board/validating body. The College/University Centre must adhere to these time guidelines

Exams Officer reports approval on ProSolutions and this informs SENCO, Support Tutors and teaching staff

All approvals are recorded on the ProSolutions individual Student Profiles.

Readers/Scribes and other support is assigned by Disability Officer/SENCo for planned exams.

The Exams team confirm arrangements of rooming, equipment etc. to individual candidates.

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