



Word Processing Access Arrangements Policy

2018/19

Approved/reviewed by

Peter Sweeney

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This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Sally-Ann Hewitt-Coleman
Exams officer	Jane Byng
SLT member(s)	Trish Devlin, Bernadette O'Hanlon
IT manager	Mark Thorpe

Contents

Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams.....	2
Introduction.....	4
Purpose of the policy.....	4
Principles for using a word processor.....	4
The use of a word processor.....	5
Word processors and their programs.....	6
Laptops and tablets.....	7
Accommodating word processors in examinations.....	7
The criteria St Joan of Arc Catholic School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations.....	8

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 2017-2018* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2017-2018*.

Purpose of the policy

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

Principles for using a word processor

St Joan of Arc Catholic School 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
- ▶ 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.

The use of a word processor

St Joan of Arc Catholic School complies with AA chapter 5 *Access arrangements available* as follows:

(AA 5.8.1)

- ▶ As default provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off).
- ▶ Will provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility enabled for candidates with a scribe access arrangement if requested by the candidate. NOTE: Many candidates will not want to use this for GCSE English Language.
- ▶ 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.
 - ▶ Where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates then this **does** constitute normal way of working.
 - ▶ For individual students who choose to word process in lessons and /or for homework this does **not** constitute normal way of working in the context of exams.
- ▶ 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).
 - ▶ This request must be initiated by teachers or the SENCO, not the candidate. Teacher evidence of need must be provided and kept on file.

(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)

- ▶ 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 programs

St Joan of Arc Catholic School 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 medium 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. Laptops must have the facility to print from a portable storage medium (USB Pen Drive).
- ▶ 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

Laptops and tablets

St Joan of Arc Catholic School 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, or
- ▶ candidates with laptops are seated within the main examination hall with access to a power point
- ▶ candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- ▶ invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals
- ▶ candidates print on centre specific paper with a pre-printed centre number and clearly marked boxes to write their candidate number
- ▶ candidates are instructed to handwrite their candidate number and initial each page 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 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) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- ▶ Where more than 3 candidates require word processors they will be accommodated in a computer room.
- ▶ Where there are 3 or less candidates they will be given laptops.

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

In the hall or 6th form examination room

- ▶ Standard invigilation procedures are followed.
- ▶ The examinations officer will ask the candidate to save their work on a USB stick provided by the Exams Office.
- ▶ The examinations officer will take the candidate to print and authenticate their work after the exam has finished.

In room D2.3

- ▶ For 1 to 8 candidates 1 invigilator is able to clearly cover the room.
- ▶ For 9 to 17 candidates, 2 invigilators are required.
- ▶ When more than 17 candidates are seated in D23 candidates sitting next to each other must be taking different subjects. It is not sufficient for candidates to be sitting the same subject at a different tier.

In room D2.8

- ▶ For 1 to 9 candidates 1 invigilator is able to clearly cover the room.
- ▶ For 10 to 15 invigilators 2 invigilators are required.
- ▶ When more than 15 candidates are seated in D28 candidates sitting next to each other must be taking different subjects. It is not sufficient for candidates to be sitting the same subject at a different tier.
- ▶ For more than 20 3 invigilators are required.

Other arrangements relating to the use of word processors include:

- ▶ If using D2.8 the printer is located outside of the room, candidates must be accompanied to the printer by an invigilator.
- ▶ Candidates in D23 can print their work directly, but will remain seated and the invigilator will bring their printout to them for authentication.

The criteria St Joan of Arc Catholic School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

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 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 in which case they are entitled to use a word processor in lieu of a scribe.

Awarding word processors

The centre will award the use of a word processor only where the following conditions have been met.

- ▶ The candidate has a firmly established need, which has documented teacher evidence to support it.
- ▶ It reflects the candidate's normal way of working in tests, assessments and mock examinations.

It is expected that the firmly established need will include one or more of;

- ▶ 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 handwriting

In all cases, it is expected that the candidate would be disadvantaged if access to a word processor were not granted. Word processors will not be granted if it will result in the candidate having an advantage over a non-word processing candidate.

Allocating word processors

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be allocated by the IT department in liaison with the 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 published start time. All candidates affected by this will be kept in supervised isolation to ensure the security of the exam will be maintained at all times.