

Word Processors Policy

Policy for using a computer for non-disabled candidates in public examinations.

Some students may benefit from the use of a word processor/netbook during some or all of their examinations. For example, candidates with:

- A learning difficulty which has substantial and long term adverse effects on their ability to write legibly;
- A medical condition;
- A physical disability;
- A sensory impairment;
- Poor handwriting;
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;

The use of a word processor/netbook will not be granted to a candidate because he/she prefers to type, works faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop/PC at home.

In all cases the use of a word processor/netbook must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

All Access Arrangements in examinations will:

- Comply with awarding body regulations; and
- Reflect the 'normal way of working' to which the pupils concerned have been accustomed within the classroom, internal assessments and mock examinations.

Procedure

Teaching staff or parents who are aware that a pupil's 'normal way of working' is with a computer should contact the SENCO and the Examinations Officer who will arrange, where necessary, for the pupil to be assessed to ensure the student is not disadvantaged.

Arrangement

Subject staff will:

- Assemble and hold a copy of practical evidence required (including initial evidence base);
- Arrange for the SENCO and Examinations Officer to receive all relevant documentation; and
- Advise and support the SENCO and Examinations Officer in the practical implementation of Access Arrangements.

As soon as possible after the deadline for applications the SENCO will inform parents as to whether access to a computer has been approved, bearing in mind the school's need to support a student with an identified disability.

Further Guidance from JCQ

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor/netbook with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled to the candidate where it is their 'normal way of working' within the centre. (This also extends to the use of electronic brailers, iPads and pc tablets).

Controlled Assessment or coursework components can normally be completed on word processors/netbooks unless prohibited by the specification. This does not however reflect a 'normal way of working' and therefore cannot be used as evidence of need.

In all cases a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) must be completed and attached to the completed script.

A Word Processor/Netbook:

- Must be used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- Must have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick must not be used by a candidate. Where required, the centre must provide a memory stick to the candidate, which is cleared of any previously stored data;
- Must be in good working order at the time of the examination;
- Must be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. Where a candidate using a word processor/netbook is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator will be required;
- Must either be connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. This may be done after the examination is over, not in the extra time. The candidate should be present to verify that the work printed is their own work. Word processed scripts must be attached to the answer booklets which contain some of the answers
- Must be connected to the mains electricity;
- Must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise may be refused;
- Must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- Must not be connected to an intranet or any other means of communication;
- Must not give the candidate access to other applications such as calculators, spreadsheets etc;
- Must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- Must 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 voice activated software (the script must have a scribe cover sheet attached), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking;
- Must not include voice-activated software unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software;
- Must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party.

Pupils using computers/word processors/netbooks for internal and external examinations must be given full training to ensure that the information that is required by the exam boards appears on the work that is sent to the examiner.

Candidates must be reminded to ensure that their name, centre number, candidate number and paper details appear on each page as a header or footer:

e.g. Matthew Green – 12345/8001: 4545/01

If a candidate is using the software application Notepad this does 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 should be advised to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate must be supervised to ensure that they solely perform this task and do not re-read their answers or amend their work in any way.

Each page must be appropriately numbered and candidates must be reminded to save their work at regular intervals.

Candidates should use a minimum of 12pt font and double line spacing in order to assist the examiners when marking.