Word Processor Policy 2022 - 2023

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<u>Introduction</u>

The use of word processors in examinations and assessments is an available access arrangement.

This policy is on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments. The policy is reviewed and updated annually using the most recent publications of the JCQ's regulations and guidance which is contained in the [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA)](#) for conducting examinations. References from this policy are taken directly from the AARA 2022-23 and [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. The academy will allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre (AARA 5.8.1) and award the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs.

Word Processing in Examinations

Armfield Academy complies with AA chapter 4 *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

(AARA 4.2.1)

- Candidates with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers or 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.

(AARA 4.2.2)

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

(AARA 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 of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis.

- Needs may include: (AARA 5.8.4)
  - 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

(AARA 4.2.4)

- The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate 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.

(AARA 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.

<u>Arrangements at the time of the Assessment</u>

A candidate using a word processor is normally accommodated at the back of the exam hall with other processor candidates when it will not cause disruption to other candidates.

<u>The Use of a Word Processor</u>

Armfield Academy complies with AA chapter 5 *Access arrangements available* as follows:

(AARA 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

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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 writers and tablets in order to remove barriers which place a disabled candidate at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant diffuclties.

(AARA 5.8.2)

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

(AARA 5.8.3)

- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and hand-write 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.

(AARA 5.8.4)

- An awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet to be completed and included with each candidate's typed script.
- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they prefer to type rather than write or can word faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. (AA publication page 57).

ICE (14.24)

Candidates will use a minimum font size of 12pt and double spacing to make marking easier for examiners.

Word Processors and their Programmes

Armfield Academy complies with *ICE Word Processors* instructions by ensuring that:

- the battery capacity of a laptop or tablet is checked before the candidate's examination(s) and the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam if it is not connected to power throughout the examination;
- candidates are reminded to ensure that their centre number, candidate number and unit/component code appear on each page a header or footer;

- candidates using applications that do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer (Notepad or Wordpad) handwrite their details as a header or footer when their completed exam has been printed off. This will be supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way;
- each page of typed script is numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6;
- invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals. Alternatively, an 'autosave' feature is set up by an IT technician if possible;
- unauthorised memory sticks are not used by candidates. Where required, the centre provides a memory stick, which is cleared of any previously stored data;
- where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated in another room, a separate invigilator is used;
- candidates are present to verify that the work is printed at the end of the examination is their own;
- word processed scripts are attached to any answer booklet which contains some of their answers.

Armfield Academy further complies with ICE instructions by ensuring that word processors:

- have spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using speech recognition technology, or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell check;
- are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- are clear of any previously stored data;
- are in good working order at the time of the examination(s);
- 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;
- are used to produce scripts under secure conditions;
- are not used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication;
- do not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculation (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc.;
- are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

The centre will retain electronic copies of word-processed scripts. The centre will demonstrate that the file has been kept securely. This will be confirmed in writing to the awarding body by the head of centre, should this be required.

The criteria Armfield Academy uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An expectation to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology.

Awarding Word Processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be **awarded** the use of a word processor in exams where they have firmly established needs, 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.

Exceptions 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.

Allocating Word Processors

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be allocated by the IT department in liaison with the SENDCO, Assistant SENDCO's and the Exams Officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to sure 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 JCQ regulations.