

Queen Elizabeth High School



Exams Word Processor Policy #EX25

Last updated: 28 January 2026

Review Date: 28 January 2027

Key staff involved in examinations procedures

Role	Name
Head of Centre:	Mr. M Farmer
Central Team Support:	Mrs D Wiles
SLT Members:	Mr. S Seneque, Mrs M Watkiss
SENCO:	Mrs E Davies
Exams Officer:	Ms G Mitchell
Lead Invigilator:	Mr P Staddon / Mrs N Flanders

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams.

References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2024-2025](#) and [Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2024-2025](#) publications.

Introduction

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment. (AA 4.2.1)

The purpose of an access arrangement / reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties.

A centre **must** make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they **cannot** make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.

The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. (AA 4.2.2)

Although access arrangements / adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question. (AA 4.2.3)

Candidates may not require the same access arrangements / reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCos or equivalent role must consider the need for access arrangements / reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis. (AA 4.2.1)

The SENCo or equivalent role must ensure that the proposed access arrangement / reasonable adjustment does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate. (AA 4.2.7)

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) / reasonable adjustments before their first examination.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Queen Elizabeth High School complies with AA (chapter 4) Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres, section chapter 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 14. 20—25) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations.

The term 'word processor' is used to describe for example, the use of a computer, laptop, or tablet.

The use of a word processor

The centre will

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check / predictive text (switched off) where it is their normal way of working within the centre (AA 5.8.1)
- award the use of a word processor to a candidate where appropriate to their needs
For example, a candidate with:
 - 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 (AA 5.8.4)
- only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AA 4.2.1)
- not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2.2)
- consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AA 4.2.3)
- process access arrangements/reasonable adjustments at the start of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working, ensuring arrangements are always approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
- provide the use of word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AA 5.8.2)

The centre will not

- simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

Exceptions

The only exceptions to the above where the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate would be

- in the event of 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 (AA 4.2.4)
- where the curriculum is delivered electronically, and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

Centre specific processes

Queen Elizabeth High School complies with ICE *Word processors* instructions (page 30) by ensuring:

- word processors are used as a typewriter, 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, 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 any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- 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
- Where applicable a word processor cover sheet is included with the candidates typed script

Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor

A candidate using a word processor (including laptops or tablets) are accommodated in the following manner:

- Students are seated at the back of the school gym

In compliance with the regulations the centre:

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20)
- (where a candidate is to be seated with the main cohort without the use of a power point) checks the battery capacity of the word processor before the candidate's exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam (ICE 14.21)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer e.g., 12345/8001 – 6391/01 (ICE 14.22)

If a candidate is using the software application Notepad or WordPad these do 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 are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

- ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g., page 1 of 6 (ICE 14.23)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet) to ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost) (ICE 14.24)
- instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to make marking easier examiners when marking (ICE 14.24)

(ICE 14.25)

The centre will ensure the word processor

- is only used in a way that ensures a candidate's script is produced under secure conditions
- is not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
- is in good working order at the time of the exam
- is accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- is used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable and is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
- is cleared of any previously stored data
- does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc.
- does not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these

- does not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)
- is not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe
- **must not include AI tools;**

Portable storage medium

(ICE 14.25)

The centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g., a memory stick) used

- is provided by the centre
- is cleared of any previously stored data
- a secure file is allocated to each student

Printing the script after the exam is over

(ICE 14.25)

The centre will ensure

- the word processor is either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- the candidate is present to verify that the work printed is his or their own
- a word-processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- if a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)
- where an awarding body requires a cover sheet to be completed this is included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)

Laptops and tablets

Queen Elizabeth High School further complies with ICE (page 30) 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 and asked to sign each page so they can verify that the work printed is their own

The criteria Queen Elizabeth High 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, 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 technology.

The use of word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded/allocated the use of a word processor in exams where the candidate has a firmly established need, 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.

This may 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

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor may be considered for a candidate would be

- on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of the assessment
- where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

Arrangements for the use of word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the ALS lead/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 awarding body's published start time. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7 of ICE.

Statement produced by: **Emma Davies SENCO** Statement date: 1st September 2023

This document will be reviewed annually to take account of legal and/or other developments or sooner if it contravenes in any way legal compliance.