



# The Fernwood School

*High Achievement with Care & Discipline for All"*

## Examination Word Processor Policy

This policy will be monitored regularly and evaluated so that it remains responsive to current issues. This will be co-ordinated by the Senior Leader i/c Examinations.

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Status: Statutory



Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for examinations

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## 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* and ICE to JCQ *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 Fernwood School complies with AA chapter 4 *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance.

## Principles for using a word processor

(AA 4.2.1)

- ✿ To ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as 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 it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question

(AA 4.2.3)

- ✿ Candidates may not require the same access arrangement/adjustments 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 access arrangements/adjustments should be processed and agreed at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate

(AA 4.2.5)

- ✿ The arrangement put in place must reflect 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

The Fernwood School 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 brailers 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)

- ✿ For the regulations on the use of 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 programmes

The Fernwood School complies with ICE 14.20 *Word processors (computers, laptops and tablets)* where a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet), with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled, to a candidate where it is their normal way of working.

(ICE 14.21)

- ✿ Tablets are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged. Their purpose is to be 'free standing'. The battery capacity of a laptop or tablet must be checked before the candidate starts their examination.

ICE 14.22)

- ✿ Candidates must be reminded to ensure that their centre number, candidate number and unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer. Laptops are labelled with these instructions when opened. Candidate should use a minimum Font 12 and double line spacing.

ICE 14.23)

- ✿ Each page must be numbered

ICE 14.24)

- ✿ Invigilators to remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals

(ICE 14.25)

- ✿ 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 and 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



## Accommodating word processors in examinations

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

- ✿ Student is allocated one of our Exam Word Processors, these are specifically used for examinations only. These students are always allocated in the AA room

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

- ✿ The Invigilators in the AA room are fully up to date with the process. Once the exam is complete, their work is printed out and brought to them in the examination room to check it is their work before they leave the examination room



## Appendix 1

### The criteria The Fernwood School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

The 'normal way of working' for examination candidates, as directed by the Head of Centre, is that candidates handwrite their examinations. 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.

#### Awarding word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be **awarded** the use of a word processor in examinations where he/she 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 compared 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 or exceptionally slow speed of handwriting

#### Allocating word processors

Appropriate examination-compliant word processors will be **allocated** by the IT department in liaison with the SENCO and the Examinations 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 examination session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the examination earlier than or later than the published start time. The security of the examination will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 2.1 of ICE.

Statement produced by: **SENCO**