



Word Processor Policy (Exams) 2025/2026

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Lisa Richards, Head of Centre Jane Martin, Inclusive Learning Manager	
Date of next review	February 2027

Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

Role	Name(s)
Inclusive Learning Manager	Jane Martin
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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 current Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#) publications.

Introduction

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement.

- The purpose of an access arrangement is 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, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- 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.
- 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. The Inclusive Learning Department must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Ashton Sixth Form College complies with AA (chapter 4) Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties and (chapter 5.8) word processor when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of a word processor in his/her exams.

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 where it is their normal way of working within the centre
- award the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs

Needs may include:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting
- only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AA
- not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
- consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification
- consider the needs of the candidate at the start of the candidate's course leading to a qualification based on evidence gathered that firmly establishes the candidate's needs and 'normal way of working' in the

classroom, internal tests/exams, mock exams etc. and confirm arrangements in place before the candidate takes an exam or assessment

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

The centre will 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

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
- where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

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

Most candidates using a word processor are accommodated in a smaller venue fitted with PCs where there is power supply and access to a printing facility. Other candidates who have readers are accommodated in smaller rooms designated by the Inclusive Learning Department.

In compliance with the regulations, the centre:

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise
- ensures the candidate is assigned a bespoke exam account and password, and is reminded to ensure that his/her centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer on the word document
- ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered
- instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking and remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals unless there is automatic save option set up

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 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 or is using speech recognition technology (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 or relevant software

- is not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

Portable storage medium

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

Printing the script after the exam is over

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 her own
- a word-processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)

Appendix 1

The criteria [Ashton Sixth Form College] uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

Ashton Sixth Form College's statement to meet the requirement.

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the Head of Centre/Principal, 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 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 to other candidates.

Needs 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

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 because 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 which have been allocated, approved and inspected by the college's IT Department prior to the Examination season, in liaison with the Exams Department, will be assigned to candidates by bespoke exam accounts. The security of the exam will be always maintained and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7 of ICE.

Statement date: October2025