



GUISELEY SCHOOL

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

Approved on:	November 2024
Last Reviewed:	January 2025
Review Date:	January 2026
Governors' Committee:	Curriculum, Standards and Effectiveness
Responsible Officer:	Deputy Headteacher – Curriculum

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Kim Ratcliffe Lead SENCO
Deputy Head	Steve Vasey Director Exams & Assessments
Exams Officer	Ray Allen Exams Officer
Senior leader(s)	Richard Wood Deputy Head Teacher (SENCO Line Manager)
IT manager	Andrew Mathieson Network Manager

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

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.

(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 unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

(AA 4.2.7)

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

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Guiseley School complies with AA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (14.20-27) 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 criteria Guiseley School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams unless there are exceptions.

Exceptions

A candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in examinations where:

- the candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology
- 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

The centre will:

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/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 now 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)

Additionally the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate:

- 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)

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

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in a separate IT room with computer provision.

In compliance with the regulations the centre:

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled 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 these instances 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 to make marking easier for examiners (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 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
- 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), e-mail, the Internet, social media sites, spreadsheets
- 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 computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader
- 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 (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)

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

Printing the script after the exam has ended

(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 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)

The centre will also ensure that where an awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet, this is included with the candidate's typed script (and according to the relevant awarding body's instructions).

(ICE 14.26)

The centre may retain electronic copies of word processed scripts as the electronic copy of a word processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost. However, the centre would need to demonstrate to the awarding body that the electronic file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body. (ICE 14.27)

Centre specific processes

Allocating word processors at the time of the assessment

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

- All laptops/fixed computers are for exam use only and secured by the Exams Office for the duration of the examination. Laptops may be sourced from the Exams Data Office/ Student Support Centre these are secured by the Exams Office in advance of the examination.
- All laptops/fixed computers are logged on to the Exams Secure area of the School Network this secure area meets the necessary examinations security requirements set out in AA Section 5.8.1
- 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.

Other arrangements relating to the use of word processors include:

- Exams Officer deletes the work from the laptop once the candidate's work has been printed and they have signed to authenticate the work.
- At the end of the examination all laptops are secured with the Exams Office and/or Student Support as applicable.

The criteria Guiseley 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: Kim Ratcliffe, Lead SENCO

Statement date:

Step 1- Further information

Policy title	Word Processor Policy (Exams)
Person responsible for carrying out the assessment	Raymond J Allen
New or previously approved policy?	Previously approved policy
Date of approval / last review (if known)	

Step 2 – Further information

1. Who is responsible for the policy that is being assessed?	Mr Steve Vasey Director Exams & Assessments Mr R J Allen Exams Officer Mrs Kim Ratcliffe Lead SENCO Mr Stephen Kelly AMBDA
2. Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy	To detail how centre manages and administers the use of Word Processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations & assessments.
3. Are there associated objectives of the policy? If so, please explain.	
4. Who is expected to benefit from this policy?	Exam candidates, parents/carers.
5. Who was consulted on this policy?	The Joint Council for Qualifications Relevant Examination Boards: AQA; Pearson Edexcel; OCR and WJEC. The Exams Office www.theexamsoffice.org Guseley School Senior Leaders
6. How has the policy been explained to those who would be directly or indirectly affected by it?	The criteria Guseley School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations & assessments is agreed by Mrs Kim Ratcliffe Lead SENCO and communicated to candidates, parents/carers as part of assessment need. Supported by evidence of “the normal way of working” and/or medical needs assessments by Teaching staff and/or Professionally qualified medical opinion. The Word Processor policy is available on the Guseley School website. A hard copy is available from the Exams Office.
7. What outcome(s) are meant to be achieved from this policy?	Centre staff and candidates/parents/carers understand the process for the awarding of a Word Processor for use in examinations & assessments.
8. What factors could contribute to the outcome(s)?	A clear understanding by Teaching Staff; candidates/parents/carers of the Word Processor Policy specific to examinations and assessments and the criteria

9. What factors could detract from the outcome(s)?	Failure to read, understand; observe and implement good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010.
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Step 3 – Assess the impact on different groups of people

Equality Target Group	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral impact	Reasons / comments
Men	Yes			
Women	Yes			
People from black and minority ethnic communities	Yes			
Disabled people	Yes			Policy significantly relevant.
Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual People	Yes			
Transgender people	Yes			
Disadvantaged / Pupil Premium Students	Yes			
Older people (50+)	Yes			
Younger people (17 – 25)	Yes			
Faith or belief groups	Yes			

Step 4 – Promoting equality

10. Please give a brief description of how this policy promotes equality.	The promotion of SMSC includes equality of rights, equality of opportunity and valuing race equality.
11. If there is no evidence that the policy promotes equality, what changes, if any, could be made to achieve this?	n/a
12. If there is a negative impact on any equality target groups, can this impact be legally and objectively justified? (If no, then a full Equality Impact Assessment should be completed).	n/a

Step 5 – Recommendation

13. Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required?	No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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