WOODLANDS SCHOOL
PURSUE EXCELLENCE & SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES

Word Processing Policy 2018/2019

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Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

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Introduction

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement.
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 2018-2019 and Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2018-2019 publications.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Woodlands School 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 word processor in his/her exams.

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

Principles for using a word processor

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

(AA 4.2.1)

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

(AA 4.2.2)

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

(AA 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 for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis

(AA 4.2.4)

- The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course 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.

(AA 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.

Centre specific processes

- Pupils are identified for use of a word processor through a referral process. Teachers and Progress Mentors complete an 'Exam Access Assessment Request' form and attach appropriate evidence to demonstrate the pupil's normal way of working in their class. These forms can be completed at any time and staff are encouraged to complete them for all year groups, so a history of need can be seen. Forms are passed to the SENCo as and when they are completed.

The use of a word processor

Woodlands 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.
- 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 (AA 5.8.4)

(The above also extends to the use of electronic braillers 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)

- In all cases, ensures that 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.

Exceptions

The only exception 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 a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

Centre specific processes

- The use of laptops is awarded to those pupils who have persistent difficulties with handwriting or presentation and who therefore use a laptop as their normal way of working in class. All pupils who are allowed to use laptops in their exams will have been supported previously through handwriting and touch typing interventions, but little progress will have been seen. The use of a word processor is not granted just because a candidate prefers to use one.

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 room to the main cohort.

Word processors and their programmes

Woodlands School complies with ICE 8.8 *Word processors* instructions by ensuring:

- word processors are used as a type-writer, 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/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

Centre specific processes

- Word processors are not provided for use in exams.

Laptops and tablets

Woodlands School further complies with ICE 8.8 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 so they can verify that the work printed is their own.

Centre specific processes

- Tablets are not provided for exams.
- All laptops used in exams have been set to ‘exam ready’ accounts, which have all unnecessary programmes and internet/intranet access disabled. Work is saved at the end of the exam onto the exam accounts, which are unique to the exam and candidate. The work is also saved onto a clean USB memory stick which is taken directly to a printer, where the answers are printed off. This is done by the candidate and invigilator together. The print outs are then stapled into the examination paper.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

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

- Pupils are seated into one of the school's 'access rooms' depending on any other access arrangements, which is done to enable to candidate to sit near a power source.

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

- Invigilation remains the same, except that the invigilator follows the script until it has been submitted, as detailed above.

Other arrangements relating to the use of word processors include:

- An ICT technician is available at the start of the exam to ensure that all candidates are able to log on.

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 Woodlands School 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 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 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.

The SENCo oversees the awarding process and makes the final decision on the suitability of this arrangement for the candidate.

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

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the ICT department in liaison with the 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 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: **Sarah Fowler, Assistant Head Teacher and SENCo**
Statement date: 27th February 2018

Signed:_____ Dated: December 2018
Head Teacher

Signed:_____ Dated: December 2018
Chair of Governors

Updated: October 2018

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