

Testwood School Word Processor Policy		
Key Responsibility	Carol Sim	
Last Review:	January 2022	
Next Review:	January 2023	

Revision History

Version	Date	Amendments	Initials
V1.0	12.01.22		CSI

The policy is divided into sections:

1. Introduction/Purpose of the policy
2. Principles of the policy
3. The use of a word processor (WP)
4. Word processors and their programmes
5. Accommodating word processors in exams
6. Appendix 1 – Criteria for awarding and allocating word processors for examinations

Introduction/Purpose

This policy sets out our approach on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments, according to the updated Joint Council for Qualifications regulations and guidance contained in the publication of Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AA & RA).

Principles in using a word processor

Testwood School complies with the chapter 4 of the AA & RA – **Managing the needs of candidates with disabilities and principles for the centre.**

(4.2.1) The purpose of using a word processor is to ensure where possible, that barriers to an assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The use of a WP is only permitted whilst ensuring the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

(4.2.2) The use of a WP is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

(4.2.3) Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments 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 by the SENCo.

(AA 4.2.4) The use of a word processor should be processed at the start of the course, having firmly established a picture of need and normal ways of working during years 7-9.

However, 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, the use of a word processor should be applied for as soon as is practicable.

(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
- literacy support lessons;
- literacy intervention strategies;
- in internal trial school examinations
- mock examinations

The only exceptions to the above would be a temporary injury or impairment.

(4.2.6) As subjects vary, leading to different demands of the candidate, support may be needed in just one or two subjects or all. Evidence is needed for every subject to show a history of WP usage. It cannot suddenly be used at the time of the exam.

(4.2.7) The SENCo and assessor must work with teaching and support staff and the exams officer to ensure that a WP is used for internal school tests, mock examinations and formal examinations. The candidate must have appropriate opportunities to practise using a WP before their first exam.

(4.2.8) If the candidate has never made use of the WP that is provided then this is not their 'normal way of working'. Taking this into account the SENCo may consider withdrawing the use of a WP, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

The use of a word processor

Testwood School complies with AA chapter 5 *Access arrangements and adjustments* as follows:

(5.8.1) Centres are allowed to provide a WP with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working. 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).

(5.8.2) The use of WP in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

(5.8.3)

- It is permissible to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers
- The centre is 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.

(5.8.4)

- In all cases, ensure that a word processor cover sheet is completed and included in each candidate's typed script (according to the instructions issues by the individual awarding body).
- It 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

Testwood School Complies with ICE instructions by ensuring:

- Word processors are used as a type-writer, not a database, although standard formatting software is permitted
- 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 another's screen
- Where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used
- 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/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 that are being assessed
- Candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the exam)
- Predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or they are 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

Accommodating Word processors in examinations

- Candidates using word processors (including laptops) are internally accommodated in a separate venue away from the Sports Hall
- Invigilation cover will be suitable and sufficient for the number of candidates in the room

This policy was approved by the Trustees and will be reviewed annually.

Date policy agreed: January 2022

Date of review: January 2023

Signature of Chair of Trustees:

Appendix 1

Criteria for awarding and allocating word processors and 25% extra time for examinations

- A candidate who cannot write legibly because he/she has significant learning difficulties. It is their normal way of working within the centre because their teachers cannot read their writing. The candidate is very proficient at using a word processor
- A candidate does not have a learning difficulty, but they are a messy hand writer, which is extremely difficult to decipher. As a result, a word processor becomes their normal way of working
- A candidate who has significant learning difficulties has quite legible writing, but they make many omissions and they cannot order their ideas correctly. As a result, the answer sheets become difficult to understand. A word processor is then granted
- A candidate has a below average free writing speed and they therefore qualify for extra time. However, using a word processor is also their normal way of working within the centre. When typing, they can produce written work effectively and therefore, by the SENCo granting the use of a word processor, it has removed the barrier presented by the slow handwriting. If there are still some examinations where the candidate is still writing by hand (maths and science) then the candidates cognitive processing will need to be assessed to see if they will qualify for 25 % extra time (they will require 2 below average standardised scores or one below average standardised score or one below average standardised score and one low average standardised score)
- A candidate with significant learning difficulties has a below average speed of writing and below average scores in areas of cognitive processing and reading speed. They have, as a result, used a word processor which has in turn matched the equivalent average writing speed. Yet the candidate has significant and persistent difficulties in interpreting questions and formulating their typed answers, in this case they are then granted 25% extra time by the SENCo