

Word Processor Policy (Exams) 2021/22

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 Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2018-2019.

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations

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1. Introduction

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

(AA 4.2.1)

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 as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

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

(AA 4.2.2)

Although access arrangements 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 in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCos should consider the need for access arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis.

2. Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Arnold Hill Spencer Academy complies with AA as detailed in JCQ Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties when allowing a candidate to use 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.

3. 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 (AA 5.8.1)
- 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 4
- 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)
 - 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 candidates'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 (AA 4.2.4)

- provide access to 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 he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

4. 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)

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

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in a different room or in the main room when it will not cause disruption to other candidates.

To comply with ICE 14, the centre

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) (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) 5
- Ensures the candidate 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 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 such circumstances once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off his/her typed script, he/she must handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate must be supervised to ensure that he/she is 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 his/her work at regular intervals. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet)
- Instruct the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking (ICE 14.24)

The centre will ensure the word processor (ICE 14.25)

- 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 type-writer, 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 be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

6. 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

7. 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)

8. The criteria Arnold Hill Spencer Academy uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

Arnold Hill Spencer Academy only awards the use of word processors for examinations where it reflects the candidate's *normal way of working*.

A word processor may be awarded to 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

This list is not exhaustive.

The awarding of a word processor for examinations can only be granted with the permission of the SENCo.

When awarding the use of a word processor in examinations, the word processor will have the spelling and grammar check facility and predictive text disabled (switched off). The only exceptions to this are where a candidate also has approval for the use of a scribe. In these cases, as appropriate to his/her needs, the candidate may alternatively use:

- A word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility enabled (N.B. This arrangement will not be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE Modern Foreign Language specifications)
- A word processor with predictive text/spelling and grammar check facility enabled (N.B. This arrangement will not be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE Modern Foreign Language specifications)
- Speech recognition technology with predictive text when the candidate dictates into a word processor. Software (a screen reader) may be used to read back and correct the candidate's dictated answers (N.B. This arrangement will not be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE Modern Foreign Language specifications)
- Computer software, producing speech, which is used to dictate to a scribe.

However, the candidate will not have access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and/or grammar unless he/she has independently dictated spelling, punctuation and/or grammar, and this has been recorded on the scribe cover sheet.

Example:

A candidate cannot write legibly because she has significant learning difficulties asks to use a word processor in her examinations. It is her normal means of producing written work within the school because her teachers cannot read her writing. She is very proficient in using a word processor. The SENCo allows her to use a word processor for exams.