Royal Wootton Bassett Academy

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

Written by:	Mrs S McMullin & Mrs S Loveday
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Committee Reviewed:	LGB

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Role	Name(s)		
Written By	Mrs Susan McMullin	RWBA Responsibility	Mrs Susan McMullin
Date ratified		Version Number	2
Committee Reviewed	LGB	Relevant Legislation	

Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Mrs Anita Ellis
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	Mrs Angela Bell
Assistant Headteacher & SENCO	Mrs Susan McMullin
Lead TA – Access Arrangements	Mrs Alison Sturla
Examinations Officer	Mrs Sharon Loveday
Admin / Data Manager	Mrs Shelly Davies
Exams / Data Assistant	Mrs Fran Williams
IT manager	Mr Zach Ishani

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Word Processor Policy (Exams) 2021/22

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated Joint Council for Qualifications (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 2022-2023 and Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2022-2023 publications.

Introduction

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

The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment 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 4.2.1)

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 4.2.2)

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 SENCO must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis. (AA 4.2.3)

The SENCO must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not disadvantage or advantage a candidate. (AA 4.2.1)

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access

arrangement(s) /reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination. (AA 4.2.7)

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Royal Wootton Bassett Academy complies with AA, chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 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 Royal Wootton Bassett Academy 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

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy will:

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (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 (AA 5.8.4)
- For example, a candidate with:

  o a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
  o a medical condition
  o a physical disability
  o a sensory impairment
  o planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
  o poor handwriting

- 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)

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy will not:

- simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she/they now want to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she/they use a laptop at home. (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 either in a smaller room, or if only a small number of candidates, then they may be accommodated in the main venue.

In compliance with the regulations, Royal Wootton Bassett Academy:

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) 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 his/her/their typed script, he/she/they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that he/she/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 (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/table 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 in order to make marking easier for examiners (ICE 14.24)

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy will ensure the word processor (ICE 14.25):

- 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 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 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 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

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used:
(ICE 14.25)

- is provided by the centre
- is cleared of any previously stored data

Printing the script after the exam is over

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy will ensure:
(ICE 14.25)

- 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 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, he/she/they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that he/she/they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14:22)

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy 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 14.22)

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy 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 file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body. (ICE 14.27)

The use of word processors as normal way of working

Any student granted a word processor for examinations must have had approval from the SENCO to use a word processor in lessons where appropriate.

This approval is at the discretion of the SENCO in consultation with subject teachers, the student and parents.

It is expected that the student will have the necessary word processing skills to enable them to make effective use of the technology. It will be the student's responsibility to organise their work and ensure it is received by the teacher, either in electronic or paper form.

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy will provide a laptop to students in a small number of special cases. It is generally expected that for all other students a laptop will be provided by home.

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

Allocating word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT Support Office in liaison with the SENCO and the Examinations 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.

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