

Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams:

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Frankie Myers
Exams Officers	Kathy Ollis-Brown
SLT Member(s)	Sam Channon, Doug Thomas, Jemma Lyons
ICT Manager	Rebecca Newey

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how West Sussex Alternative Provision College complies with AA section 4.2 (Principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE sections 14.20-27 (Word processors (computers, laptops and tablets)) 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.

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 relate to/are directly taken from JCQ publications [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-2026](#) (AA) and [Instructions for conducting examinations 2025-2026](#) (ICE).

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

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage a 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 4.2.1)

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before his/her first examination. (AA 4.2.7)

The use of a word processor

The centre will:

- *Provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text switched off where it is the candidate's 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)*
- *Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processes at the start of the course, or as soon as practical 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 in non-examination assessment components will be considered 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 now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.* (AA 5.8.4)

Exceptions

The only exceptions 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 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 whenever possible accommodated in a separate room from the main cohort.

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 examination.* (ICE 14.21)
- *Candidates must be 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 typed script, he/she must handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate must be supervised throughout this process to ensure that he/she are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.* (ICE 14.22)

- Ensures the candidate understands that *each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6.* (ICE 14.23)
- *Invigilators must remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals. Alternatively, an IT technician can 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)

The centre will ensure the word processor:

- *Is used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable.*
- *Is cleared of any previously stored data.*
- *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 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.*
- *Does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets, etc.*
- *Is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.*
- *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) technology 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.* (ICE 14.25)

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.* (ICE 14.25)

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. (ICE 14.25)*

Where an awarding body requires a cover sheet to be completed this is to be included with the candidate's typed script. Please refer to the relevant awarding body's instructions. (ICE 14.26)

Electronic Copies of Word-Processed Scripts

The electronic copy of a word-processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost. WSAPC will be able to demonstrate the secure storage of the retained electronic copies. (ICE 14.27)

Centre specific processes

WSAPC does not promote the use of memory sticks; generally they will not be used. Our candidates have laptops that are set up by ICT Manager especially for Exams. Our candidates use an 'exam log-in' which ensures the computer meets all JCQ regulations and no prohibited software can be accessed. When candidates print their work – they log on to the printer with their exam log-in and then 'release' the work for printing.

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APPENDIX 1:

WSAPC Criteria for the allocations of Word Processors.

At WSAPC 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. There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded/allocated the use of a word processor in exams where 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.

Evidence will be collected by staff that shows the established need.

The candidate must be proficient in word processing so it's an appropriate arrangement.

The spelling and grammar check facility / predictive text will be disabled unless the candidate qualifies for a scribe.

Candidates who are likely to benefit from the use of a word processor include candidates with:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write clearly and coherently.
- A medical condition.
- A physical disability.
- A sensory impairment.
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand, including the need to proof-read and edit work.
- Poor handwriting, including physical strain.

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 IT department in liaison with the SENDCo and the exams officer.