

Presdales School



'Achievement for All'

Title	Exams Word processor policy
Version	March 2024
Author/Title	Rachel Stewart, SENCO
Committee Responsible	Students
Trustee Link	Howard Freed
Date approved by Committee	20 th March 2024
Date approved by Full Trust Board	NA
Review Date	March 2025

Enquiries & comments

Any enquiries and comments about this publication may be made to:

Telephone: 01920 462210 / Email: admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk

Address: Hoe Lane, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 9NX

Introduction

This policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for conducting examinations.

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations*.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments.

Principles for using a word processor

Presdales 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 SENCO should ensure 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 considered and agreed by the SENCO where appropriate at the start of the course. Candidates are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework
- Candidates are made aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments/coursework)

(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; or
 - working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
 - literacy support lessons; or
 - literacy intervention strategies; and/or
 - in internal school tests and mock examinations

The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment.

The use of a word processor

Presdales 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
- Only grants 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)

(The above also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets)

(AA 5.8.2)

- Provides access to word processors to **eligible** candidates in non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments or coursework) components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification

(AA 5.8.3)

- Allows **eligible** 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)

- Where required by an Awarding Body, a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script
- 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

Presdales School complies with ICE 14.20 to 14.25 *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 any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- 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

Laptops and tablets

Presdales School further complies with ICE 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
- 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. A candidate signature is required on the first or last page of the printed script to confirm this.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

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

- **BTR/Room 27/Room 6 for large groups**
- **Occasionally small rooms for individuals**
- **Word processors use "silent" keyboards whenever possible**

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

- **Additional training is given to invigilators who will be allocated to students using a word processor**
- **Invigilators need to be available up to one hour before published start time to arrange secure log ins, download papers for those using read software etc.**
- **Printing out students' work and ensuring it is signed by the candidate**
- **Ensuring the Word Processor cover sheet is completed if required by the Awarding Body.**

The criteria on which decisions are made about who can use a word processor for internal and external assessments/exams is based on:

- The results of exam access arrangement assessments (e.g. if a student has slow hand writing speed: 84 or below), and/or
- If the student has diagnosis of a condition such as dyslexia or dyspraxia, or another medical condition (such as visual impairment, arthritis, temporary loss of mobility due to an injury etc.), and/or
- If the student has organisational difficulties which significantly impact on their ability to work on paper, and/or
- If the student's handwriting is illegible

This decision is made by the SENCO who completes a Word Processor Centre Note for each student who has 'word processor' as an access arrangement. The centre note indicates the reason for a student using a word processor in exams and confirms that it is the student's normal way of working.