



Word Processor Policy (Exams)

Process Area	Examinations
Reference Number	ICT 006
Directorate	Finance and Planning

Issue No	Date	Details	Author	Approved	Next Planned Review
001	Apr 2019	Word Processor Policy	TMG	Governing Body	2021-22
002	Apr 2022	Minor changes	ST, LC	Governing Body	2024-25
003	May 2025	Minor changes to bring into line with current practice.	ST, JMG	Governing Body	2027-28

If requested, the College will make the policy available in alternative formats to accommodate visual impairments. The policy can also be downloaded from the College website and made available in alternative languages upon request.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

This Policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated, following the issue of updated JCQ regulations and guidance. Candidates who require a word processor for their examination are provided with PCs or laptops which comply with JCQ regulations:

“Centres are allowed to provide 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 and is appropriate to their needs”

2. SCOPE

This policy details how the College manages and facilitates the use of word processors in examinations and assessments for all awarding organisations.

3. DEFINITIONS

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)	<p>The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) is a membership organisation comprising the seven largest providers of qualifications in the UK.</p> <p>The JCQ guides members on issues of examination administration and, when appropriate, qualification and wider education policy.</p>
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4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Principal and Chief Executive / Head of Centre

The Principal and Chief Executive or designated nominee from the Senior Management Team must ensure that a reasonable adjustment implemented by the centre on behalf of the learner is based on firm evidence of a barrier to examination and is in line with JCQ guidance. Failure to do so may result in advice or action for the centre through to the implementation of steps to manage centre malpractice. This could ultimately lead to the recall of certificates, removal of qualification approval or removal of centre approval.

4.2 Learning Support Co-Ordinator (LSC):

- Be familiar with, and comply with College policies and procedures relating to the Word Processor Policy.
- Co-operate with requirements introduced to provide students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities access to a word processor for examinations.

4.3 Curriculum Staff

Curriculum staff must:

- Be familiar with, and comply with College policies and procedures relating to the Word Processor Policy.
- Be responsible for identifying students needing exam access to a word processor through continuous classroom observations and liaise with the relevant Learning Support.
- Ensure that students approved to use a word processor in examinations will have these arrangements in class tests, mock exams and examinations.

4.4 Examinations Staff

Examinations staff must:

- Be familiar with, and comply with College policies and procedures relating to the Word Processor Policy.
- Be responsible for processing the application and information provided by the LSC and forward the approval outcome to the student and relevant staff.
- Co-ordinate the provision and staffing of the Word Processor on the day of examination.
- Implement a system of testing and logging of accounts used for Exams including checks that accounts are operating as expected. This includes any restrictions that may apply.
- Staff involved in invigilation will be required to follow the guidance for invigilating exams relating to the relevant awarding body.

4.5 IT Services Staff

- IT Services staff must notify exams staff when significant infrastructure changes are implemented to allow exams staff to check there has been no negative impact on exam accounts.

4.6 Students

All students are required to inform College staff at the beginning of their course of study if they have been previously awarded access arrangements to ensure these arrangements are considered in Southern Regional College. Students are required to obtain documentary evidence of their access arrangements from their previous educational setting. An important principle is that just because a student received exam access arrangements in the past it does not necessarily follow that they will continue to receive exam access arrangements as their needs may have changed.

5. PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Principles for using a Word Processor

- The use of word processors is allowed in order to remove barriers for candidates who would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage because of persistent and significant difficulties.

- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question. It is only permitted where the integrity of the exam will not be compromised.
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each subject specification. The request for a word processor is considered on a student subject-by-subject basis.
- **Where possible the request for the use of a word processor should be submitted at the start of the course.**
- Candidates will be informed of the outcome of their request.
- 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
 - 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.

Particular types of candidates may benefit from using a word processor, for example a candidate with a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly which can include:

- a medical condition;
- a physical disability;
- a sensory impairment;
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand; or
- poor handwriting.

This list is not exhaustive.

It is our policy that candidates must be proficient in the use of a word processor if requesting to use it in examinations.

A word processor will not be granted to a candidate simply because he prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he uses a laptop at home.

5.2 The Use of a Word Processor:

The College will:

- Provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled unless permitted by awarding body.
- Only grant the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and approved by Learning Support.

- Only grant 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 candidates' electronic Braille and tablets which must be provided by the student and presented to Examinations staff to ensure compliance with above).

- Provide access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments or coursework) as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.
- Allow candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and hand write shorter answers.
- In all cases, ensure that a word processor cover sheet (E.g. JCQ Form 4 for AQA, CCEA, Edexcel etc.) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script.

5.3 Principles of the use of Word Processors:

- Word processors are used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable.
- Word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as should any portable storage medium used.
- Unauthorised memory sticks are not used by candidates.
- 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, usually the Exams Officer.
- Word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen (normal procedure is for exam candidates using PC's / laptops are seated at the back of the exam venue to ensure that their screens cannot be overlooked or in a separate room).
- 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.
- The Exams team will manage the accounts used for Word processor users to ensure that they are restricted to limit internet access .

- Access to other applications when using a word processor will be restricted and monitored by the invigilator.
- 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.
- PCs and laptops have Microsoft Office software installed. Headers and footers should be used by candidates to:
 - Insert their details on each page – i.e. Name, Candidate Number, Centre Number e.g. (71749) and the examination unit/component code;
 - appropriately number each page;
 - use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing.

The following software is also available, as appropriate, subject to approval, when it is a student's normal way of working:

Dragon / Microsoft Dictate

Voice recognition program – allows students to dictate their answers.

Read/Write / Immersive Reader/Reading Pen

Read aloud software that can be used instead of a reader.

5.4 At the End of the Examination:

- The Exams Officer/Invigilator will provide the PC/laptop user with a memory stick to save their work.
- On completion the memory sticks are provided to the invigilator who returns to the Examination Office.
- Documents are printed by the Exams Officer/ Invigilator with the candidate present.
- Word processor cover sheets are signed as appropriate.

5.5 Accommodating Word Processors in Examinations

Candidates using laptops are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- Candidates are seated at the back of exam venues.
- Power connectors are set up by the Exams Officer / Invigilator for each laptop before the start of an exam.

- Where necessary additional space/extra desk will be provided if required (e.g. candidate with broken arm or wrist; candidate with enlarged examination paper).

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

- Invigilators will assist or summon help from the Exams Officer in the case of a technical fault.
- Invigilators are instructed to record stop times for a PC/laptop candidate in the case of a technical fault and to adjust the candidate's finish time in such instances; candidates will be clearly informed of the new finish time.

6. DISTRIBUTION

Policy Centre on SharePoint
College Website.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

JCQ Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties: Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

JCQ General and Vocational Qualifications: Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures.

JCQ Access Arrangements Online Notice to Centres: Access Arrangements Online.

Examinations Support Policy.