

PLASHET SCHOOL



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Use of Word Processor in Examination Policy Statement

Revised and applicable from 5th March 2024

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Irene Papadopolou".

Chair of Governors

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Introduction

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

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2023/24* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2023/24*

Principles for using a word processor

Plasht School complies with AA section 4 regulations 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 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 agreed/processed 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.

(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 use of a word processor

Plasht School complies with AA section 5 as follows:

(AA 5.8.1)

- Provides a word processor with access only to Notepad (no other other programmes are available including access to AI tools)
- 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).

(AA 5.8.2)

- Provides access to word processors to candidates in controlled assessments or coursework components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

(AA 5.8.3)

- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and hand write 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)

- Ensure that a word processor cover sheet is completed and attached to each candidate's typed script to awarding bodies that require a word processor cover sheet.
- 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

Plashtet School complies with ICE 14.25 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 attached to 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 scribe cover sheet attached), 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

Word Processors (this could include notebooks and laptops which only run Notepad)

Plashtet School further complies with ICE 14.25 instructions by ensuring:

- word processors 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 word processors is checked before the candidate's examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination
- candidates with fully charged word processors 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 (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
- each page is appropriately numbered.
- candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals
- where possible to set up 'autosave' onto each word processor
- candidates granted the use of a word processor are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed off is their own

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Candidates who have the use of word processors are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- Candidates requiring word processors will normally be accommodated in the mains sports hall and seated in such a way that other candidates can not see their work.

Plashtet School Statement for the Use of Word Processors in Exams:

We will provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/ predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is the normal way of working within Plashtet School. That is, the student uses the word processor in almost all lessons and the SENCO can show a history of support and provision. The student is assessed to have problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand and this issue is alleviated. It can be seen that the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor.

A student should not be given the word processor because she:

- Prefers to type
- She can work faster on a word processor.

The types of candidates for whom we would provide a word processor include students who have slow handwriting or have slow processing and reading. In addition, we may provide a word processor for the following:

- 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

The above list is not exhaustive.

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 student avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and the screen. The above information is in line with regulations from the JCQ booklet, JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment, which is in effect from September 2023 to 31 August 2024.