Greenhead College Corporation

WORD PROCESSOR POLICY (EXAMS)

Updated September 2021

Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

Role	Name(s)
ALS Manager	Claire Berry
Exams Manager	Matthew Darlington
SLT member(s)	Maureen Bunter (Deputy Principal)
IT manager	Richard Lyons

Contents

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 to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2021-2022 and Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2021-2022 publications.

Introduction

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

(AA 4.2.1)
The purpose of an access arrangement 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.

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

(AA 4.2.2)
Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

(AA 4.2.3)
Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCos/ALS Manager must consider the need for access arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Greenhead College complies with AA (chapter 4) Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties and (chapter 5.8) Word processor when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in his/her exams.

The term 'word processor' is used to describe for example, the use of a computer, laptop or tablet.

The use of a word processor

The centre will
- ▶ allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate 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 if it is appropriate to their needs
  Needs may include
    - a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her 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)
- must consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AA 4.2.3)
- consider the needs of the candidate at the start of the candidate's course leading to a qualification based on evidence gathered that firmly establishes the candidate's needs and 'normal way of working' in the classroom, internal tests/exams, mock exams etc. and confirm arrangements in place before the candidate takes an exam or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
- provide access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as 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 prefers to type rather than write 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 a subject within 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 accommodated in a different room from the main cohort, usually with a small number of other candidates using a word processor.

In compliance with the regulations the centre
- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure that his/her 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)
- 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 his/her work at regular intervals
- instruct the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking (ICE 14.24)

(ICE 14.25)
The centre will ensure the word processor
- is only used in a way that ensures a candidate's script is produced under secure conditions
- 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 type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable and is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
- is cleared of any previously stored data
- does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc.
- 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 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

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

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
- ▶ a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with the candidate's typed script (if required by an awarding body)

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College Statement: Criteria used to award and allocate word processors for examinations

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write **or** can work faster at a keyboard, **or** because he/she uses a laptop at home.

We will provide a word processor for exams (the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal method of working in the classroom and during tests. Although the list is not exhaustive, in principle the candidate must have:

- 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
- slow handwriting speed (evidenced by a below average standardised score)

In addition, we would expect:

- evidence of history of provision at secondary school **or**
- a full assessment completed at Greenhead College
- completion of a screening test to ascertain speed of handwriting/typing
- an example of recent handwriting
- a note from teaching staff to confirm 'normal method of working'

Additional Notes

- The spelling and grammar check **will be enabled** if the candidate meets the criteria for a scribe and chooses WP as an alternative.
- In the case of a MFL, the candidate must be proficient in the use of accents via keyboard shortcuts – it is possible to add these by hand, although this must be completed within the timing of the exam.
- It is permissible for a candidate using a WP in an exam to type certain questions (e.g., those requiring extended prose) and handwrite shorter answers.
- An awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet to be completed.

In the vast majority of cases students provide their own equipment to use within lessons unless they are on bursary payments when we may be able to supply a loan laptop from stock. College will provide word processors in external examinations.

Any private laptop should be assessed by the IT department prior to use on our system.

Simon Lett
Principal
Date: September 2021