

## WORD PROCESSING IN EXAMS POLICY

Last reviewed:	August 2021
Next review due:	August 2022
Reviewed by:	Director of Academic Studies Examinations Officer Head of Learning Development

### 1. 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 2021-22* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2021-22*.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

### 2. 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.

### 3. Principles for using a word processor

d'Overbroeck's complies with AA chapter 4 (*Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties*) and regulations and guidance as follows:

(AA 4.2.1)

- Candidates with access to word processors are allowed this access in order to remove barriers which place them 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 considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course.
- 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 at a **substantial disadvantage** 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.

#### 4. Centre specific processes

A word processor will be granted to a candidate for examinations when:

- a candidate has a report from an educational psychologist that recommends they use a word processor in examinations;
- a candidate has been identified as being eligible for a word processor during school-led screening processes for access arrangements, and this has been approved by the Head of Learning Development (SENCo);
- a candidate joins the Sixth Form with the Concise File Note from their previous school's SENCo stating that they were entitled to the use of a word processor for examinations;
- a candidate holds medical evidence of a physical disability or medical condition supporting the use of a word processor.

It is not enough that a student can type faster than they can write. The student must be at a **substantial disadvantage**. Their writing has to be particularly slow or very difficult to read.

When no recommendation from an educational psychologist exists, and where a student has not been identified by our school-led screening processes but where a teacher has a concern, it is required that:

- the relevant Director of Studies or Form Tutor makes a request to the Learning Development Lead for their site;
- the request is accompanied by evidence and testimony from the relevant teacher(s) detailing how the student is **significantly disadvantaged** through slow or illegible handwriting;
- where the student finds it very difficult to plan and organise written work when writing by hand, this is clearly evidenced and that is the student's normal way of working.

The Learning Development Lead will evaluate the candidate's case with the Head of Learning Development (SENCo), using this policy to assess eligibility and conducting necessary assessments to evidence difficulty. If approved, the Learning Development Lead will immediately inform the Examinations Officer. Ideally this will be done at least six weeks before the first mock examinations and/or by Christmas of the examination year.

The Learning Development Lead will inform the student of the exam-related procedures surrounding the use of word processors in exams before the first examination is taken.

## **5. The use of a word processor**

d'Overbroeck's 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 with substantial difficulties 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 with substantial difficulties 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 non-examination assessments (including 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

## **6. Word processors and their programmes**

d'Overbroeck's complies with ICE 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.

## **7. Laptops**

d'Overbroeck's further complies with ICE 14.20 -14.25 instructions by ensuring:

- the IT staff will ensure sufficient word processors are available for the examinations;
- laptops 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 is checked before the candidate's examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination;
- 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;
- candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing;
- 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.

### **8. Accommodating word processors in examinations**

Candidates using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated in the library or smaller room.

Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors meet JCQ regulations and recommendations.

### **9. Invigilators**

Invigilators will be instructed prior to the exams as to the relevant JCQ regulations and the school requirements for supervising examinations for students using a word processor, including:

- seating arrangements;
- layout of candidate information on each typed page;
- use of answer booklets/question papers with word processors;
- printing procedures;
- word processor cover sheets;
- collation of printed sheets and question/answer papers.

### **10. After examinations**

The Examinations Officer will check that:

- each word processor cover sheet is present to make sure the correct typed pages are attached to the correct candidate's question/answer paper;
- the correct number of typed pages have been included with the question paper/answer booklet before securely sending the work to the exam board as required.

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