

Newbridge Learning Community

WORD PROCESSOR POLICY 2025/2026 (EXAMS)

Approved/reviewed by Paul Appleton (Head Teacher) and Leanne McQuade (Examinations Officer)

Date of next review September 2026

Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

SENCo and Deputy Head Clare Byrne Exams Officer Leanne McQuade IT Manager Paul Abbott

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 2025-2026 and Instructions for conducting examinations 2025-2026 publications.

Introduction

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

(AA 4.2.1) The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment 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.

(AA 4.2.2) Although access arrangements/adjustments 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/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCOs must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis.

(AA 4.2.1) The SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not disadvantage or advantage a candidate.

(AA 4.2.7) The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Newbridge Learning Community complies with AA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 14.20-25) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations.

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 with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled (switched off) where it is their normal way of working within the centre

(AA 5.8.1) Newbridge Learning Community will award the use of a word processor to a candidate where appropriate to their needs For example, a candidate with: 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

(AA 5.8.4) The centre will only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained

(AA 4.2.1) The centre will not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question

(AA 4.2.2) The centre will consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification

(AA 4.2.3) The centre will process access arrangements/reasonable adjustments at the start of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working, ensuring arrangements are always approved before an examination or assessment

(AA 4.2.4) The centre will provide the use of 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 they now want to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home.

(AA 5.8.4) 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) or where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

(AA 5.8.4) A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in a room separate to the main exam venue- this may be as a single student or within a room where other students with the same access arrangements are seated. In compliance with the regulations the centre will 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, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise

(ICE 14.20) Where a candidate is to be seated with the main cohort without the use of a power the battery capacity of the word processor will be checked before the candidate's exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam

(ICE 14.21) The invigilator will ensure the candidate is reminded that their 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) If a candidate is using the software application Notepad or Wordpad these do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer. In such circumstances once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed script, they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way. The invigilator will ensure the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6

(ICE 14.23) The invigilator will ensure the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet to ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost)

(ICE 14.24) The invigilator will instruct the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to make marking easier for examiners

(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 not used to perform skills which are being assessed, is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication, 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 typewriter, 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

(ICE 14.25) The centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used is provided by the centre and is cleared of any previously stored data

(ICE 14.25) 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 their own, a word processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers, where an awarding body requires a cover sheet to be completed this is included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)

IT Technicians will be available in case of technical issues.

Statement produced by: Leanne McQuade (Examinations Officer) September 2024