



Kimbolton School
Cambridgeshire

WORD PROCESSOR POLICY (EXAMS)

Policy owner:

SENCo, Exams Officer and Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning)

Governor Committee: Education

Policy Summary Statement:

To ensure compliance with current regulations in awarding and allocating word processors for exams.

Release Date: Spring 2026

Review Date: Spring 2027



Word Processor Policy (Exams)

Contents	
Introduction	3
Purpose of the Policy	3
The use of a word processor	4
Exceptions	4
Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor	5
Portable storage medium.....	6
Printing the script after the exam is over	6
Appendix I	6
The criteria Kimbolton School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations	6
The use of word processors	6
Arrangements for the use of word processors at the time of the assessment.....	7



Word Processor Policy (Exams)

Introduction

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 (AARA) [JCQ-AARA-2025-March-26.pdf](#) and [Instructions for Conducting Examinations \(ICE\) – Joint Council for Qualifications 2025-2026](#) (ICE) publications.

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement (AARA 5.8.1). 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 SENCo will ensure that the proposed arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to timed assessments for a disabled candidate.
(AARA 4.2.1)

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.
(AARA 4.2.2)

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.
(AARA 4.2.3)

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not disadvantage or advantage a candidate.
(AA 4.2.1)

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

Purpose of the Policy

This policy details how Kimbolton School complies with AARA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 14.20-27) 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.

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

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 (AARA 5.8.1)
- award the use of a word processor to a candidate where appropriate to their needs

For example (AARA 5.8), a candidate with:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
 - a medical condition which prevents writing in a legible way or at an acceptable speed (this may be short term due to a recent injury)
 - a physical disability which prevents writing in a legible way or at an acceptable speed
 - a sensory impairment
 - planning and organisational problems when writing by hand meaning the essay is frequently rewritten and edited making it hard to navigate around the essay in the right order
 - poor handwriting (slow or illegible)
 - in some circumstances if a pupil is not eligible for extra time but is assessed as having at least one speed of working at a standardised score below 84, it may be agreed the pupil use a word processor
- only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AARA 4.2.1)
 - not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AARA 4.2.2)
 - consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AARA 4.2.3)
 - process access arrangements 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 (AARA 4.2.4)
 - provide the use of word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AARA 5.8.1)
 - The centre recognises that, as an iPad friendly school, pupils have opportunities to type more regularly and thus typing could be argued to be the pupils' normal way of working. However the centre ensures a balance of opportunities to handwrite rather than type in class, homework and for timed tests and 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/iPad in school. (AARA 5.8.4)



Word Processor Policy (Exams)

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 (AARA 4.2.4)
- where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated as laid out in the respective room's seating plan. The student will be allocated a seat at the back of the main hall unless s/he has other access arrangements, in which case they will be allocated a separate room.

In compliance with the regulations the centre:

- provides 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 point) checks the battery capacity of the word processor before the candidate's exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam (ICE 14.21.2)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to check 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.

- 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 their work at regular intervals. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet (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)
- instructs 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:

- must be used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- must be in good working order at the time of the examination;
- must be 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 in another room, a separate invigilator will be required;



Word Processor Policy (Exams)

- must be used to produce work under secure conditions, otherwise the candidate's script may not be accepted;
- must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- must not give the candidate access to other applications, such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), email, the Internet, social media sites or spreadsheets;
- must not include graphics packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- must not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed) or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spellchecking;
- must not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader;
- must not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed);
- must not include AI tools;
- must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed).

Portable storage medium

(ICE 14.25)

must have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick must not be used by a candidate. When needed, the centre must provide a memory stick, which is cleared of any previously stored data, to the candidate;

Printing the script after the exam is over

(ICE 14.25)

must either be connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. This must be done after the examination is over. The candidate must be present to verify that the work printed is their own. Word-processed scripts must be attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers;

Appendix I

The criteria Kimbolton School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology.

The use of word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded/allocated the use of a word processor in exams where the candidate has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates.

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

This will include where a candidate has:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly or at an acceptable speed
- a medical condition which prevents writing in a legible way or at an acceptable speed (this may be short term due to a recent injury)
- a physical disability which prevents writing in a legible way or at an acceptable speed
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand meaning the writing is frequently rewritten and edited, making it hard for the exam marker to easily navigate around the essay in the right / desired order
- handwriting that has been formally assessed as being either slow or illegible during an extended writing task
- in some circumstances if a pupil is not eligible for extra time but is assessed as having at least one speed of working at a standardised score below 84, it may be agreed the pupil use a word processor

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor may be considered for a candidate would be

- on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of the assessment
- where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

Arrangements for the use of word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the ALS lead/SENCo and the Exams Officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the awarding body's published start time. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 2.7.2 of ICE.