



Word Processor Use in Assessments and Examinations at The Beaconsfield School 2018-2019

The Beaconsfield School fully supports the use of word processors in assessments and examinations in line with JCQ regulations and recommendations. These can be found here: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/acce>

JCQ Recommendations

5.8.1 Centres are allowed to 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 and is appropriate to their needs.

(This also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.)

5.8.2 The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

5.8.3 It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, ie those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers.

NB 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.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

The Beaconsfield School Word Processor Statement

Use of a word processor in examinations is a centre-delegated arrangement. This statement about the use of word processors has been prepared to be shared with stakeholders.

Principally, a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he / she now **wants to** type rather than write in examinations, or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he / she uses a laptop at home.

It is not a reasonable adjustment for a candidate to request the use of a word processor because he / she can type faster than he / she can handwrite.

The use of a word processor will be as a result of a **well-established SEN need that has been identified and evidenced over time.**

The candidate should regularly use a word processor to complete written tasks, including both classwork, homework and notes in relevant subjects such as History, Geography, English and Religious Studies.

Permission to use a laptop in class should not be taken to imply permission to allow this arrangement in assessments / exams. These decisions are taken at the start of the GCSE / A Level courses following testing and consultation with staff.

Permission to use a word processor in an exam may be granted for a candidate with:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly or at an age-appropriate speed
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- well below average writing speed (measured consistently by recognised appropriate and standardised writing assessments.)
- illegible handwriting (more than 20% of their extended writing cannot be read).

This list is not exhaustive. Each case will be considered on its merits and a decision will be made by the SENCO in consultation with Senior Leadership.

Examples - Word processor:

- A candidate who cannot write legibly asks to use a word processor in her examinations. She has been formally diagnosed with a SpLD and there is current evidence that her writing is difficult to decipher and can become illegible. It is her normal means of producing written work within the centre because her teachers cannot read her writing. She is very proficient in using a word processor. The SENCO allows her to use a word processor in her examinations.
- A candidate wishes to use a word processor since this is her normal way of working within the centre and her handwriting is consistently difficult to decipher and can become illegible (and there is current evidence of this). However, the candidate additionally wishes to use the spelling and grammar check facility. Given that she does not meet the criteria for a scribe, the candidate cannot use the spelling and grammar check facility. The SENCO allows her to use a word processor in line with the regulations as set out in the JCQ 'ICE' booklet.
- A candidate has been formally diagnosed with a SpLD but has quite legible writing. However, she makes many omissions and cannot order her ideas correctly. Her written scripts are legible but covered in crossings-out and omission marks. She requests a word processor and this is granted by the SENCO. The use of a word processor is appropriate to her needs since it allows her to correct text, sequence her answers and reflects her normal way of working within the centre.
- A blind candidate asks to use a word processor in her examinations. She also requests the use of a screen reader to allow her to 'read' back and check the answers she has typed. These arrangements are permitted when using a word processor in her examinations. However, if the candidate also wants to use predictive text and / or the spelling and grammar check facility, the centre must apply for the use of a scribe.

Examples - Word processor and 25% extra time:

- A candidate has a below average free writing speed when handwriting and qualifies for 25% extra time. However, using a word processor is her normal way of working within the centre and when typing she can produce her written work effectively, and at a speed equivalent to an average handwriting rate. She has no further learning difficulties and so she is awarded the use of a word processor as it removes the barrier presented by her slow handwriting, and only given 25% extra time when she writes by hand such as in GCSE Mathematics examinations.
- A candidate with a formally diagnosed SpLD has a below average speed of handwriting and below average scores in areas of cognitive processing and reading speed. As using a word processor is her normal way of working within the centre, she has been able to improve her typing speed to match the equivalent average handwriting rate. However, she has persistent and significant difficulties in interpreting questions and formulating her typed answers because of the below average cognitive processing difficulties. She is given 25% extra time, as well as the use of a word processor, as both arrangements are appropriate to her needs.