Oak Academy

Exams Word Processor Policy

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Contents

1. Introduction 3
1.1. Statement of Intent 3
1.2. Audience 3
1.3. Revision History 3
1.4. Definitions 4
2. The use of a word processor 4
3. Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor 5
4. Portable storage medium 6
5. Printing the script after the exam is over 6
6. The criteria Oak Academy uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations 6
7. Advice to candidates who use word processors in examinations 7

1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of Intent

1.1.1 This policy details how Oak Academy complies with AA (chapter 4) adjustments for candidates with learning disabilities and learning difficulties (section 5.8)

1.1.2 Word processor and ICE (sections 14.2025) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations.

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

1.1.4 The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement. (AA 4.2.1)

1.1.5 The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidates preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

1.1.6 The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. (AA 4.2.2)

1.1.7 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)

1.1.8 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. ALS leads/SENCos must consider the need for access arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis. (AA 4.2.1)

1.1.9 The Additional Learning Support lead/SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage a candidate. (AA 4.2.7)

1.1.10 The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination.

1.2. Audience

This policy is intended for use by all support, teaching staff and management of Authentic Education.

1.3. Revision History

Issue	Date	Author	Changes
V0.00	November 2026	Danielle Fisher	

1.4. Definitions

1.4.1 Detail any definitions here to aid in the understanding of the policy that the reader may not be familiar with. This may include technical or statutory definitions.

2. The use of a word processor

2.1 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)
- 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)
- 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)

2.2 The centre will not:

- simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they prefer to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

2.3 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)

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

3.1 A candidate using a word processor is accommodated with the main exam hall unless other access arrangements are applicable.

3.2 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)
- 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)
- Ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure 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.
- 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 'auto save' on each laptop/tablet)
- 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)

3.3 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.

4. Portable storage medium

4.1 The centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used (ICE 14.25)

- Is provided by the centre.
- Is cleared of any previously stored data.

5. Printing the script after the exam is over

5.1 The centre will ensure (ICE 14.25)

- 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 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)

6. The criteria Oak Academy uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

6.3 Needs might include where a candidate has, for example:

- 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

6.4 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

6.5 Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the 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 7 of ICE.

7. Advice to candidates who use word processors in examinations

7.1 Candidates must be reminded to ensure 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.

7.2 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 his/her typed script, he/she should be advised to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate **must** be supervised to ensure that

he/she is solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way. Each page **must** be appropriately numbered.

7.3 Candidates should use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking.

7.4 Invigilators **must** remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals. Alternatively, an IT technician can set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet. This way, if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost.