

	Policy Name: Word Processor Policy
	Owner: Deputy Head Academic
	Review Date: October 2023 Next Review: October 2024
	Policy revised annually or as regulations or review demands.

Introduction

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment. The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The following principles are applied to access arrangements at Mayfield School:

- The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them 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 4.2.1)
- Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they are not granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question. (AA 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. ALS leads/SENCOs must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis. (AA 4.2.3)
- The Additional Learning Support lead/SENCO must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage a candidate. (AA 4.2.1)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s) /reasonable adjustments before their first examination. (AA 4.2.7)

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Mayfield School complies with AA, chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE, sections 14.20-27 (Word processors (computers, laptops and tablets) 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 criteria Mayfield School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments

Mayfield values good handwriting and imposes high standards of presentation of work. Although in recent years some teachers are delivering the curriculum electronically, the expectation is that most students will continue to handwrite for their examinations.

Exceptions

A candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in examinations where:

- the candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology

- 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 processors will only be granted to those students who would be placed at a significant disadvantage as a consequence of their persistent and significant difficulties if they had to handwrite and who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The candidate has a specific learning difficulty/disability (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD etc.) which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate's speed of handwriting is below average and the use of word processor is appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate has a physical difficulty/ medical condition (such as hypermobility / juvenile arthritis etc.) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate has a sensory impairment (such as a vision or hearing impairment) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate has very poor handwriting and would lose marks due to the examiner finding their answers illegible and the use of word processor reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate has a specific learning difficulty/disability and significant planning and organisational problems when writing by hand, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor and the use of a word processor reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate has a history of learning difficulties which necessitate learning support lessons and who has discussed the use of a word processor with the Head of Learning support prior to the Year 10 or Year 12 mock exams, and where the use of a word processor is appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- Subject teachers have reported to the Head of Learning Support that the candidate is not able to reflect their knowledge when handwriting and sufficient evidence is presented to the Head of Learning Support to demonstrate the discrepancy between handwritten and typed work either prior to or immediately after the Year 10 or Year 12 mock exams.

Mayfield School will:

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/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 candidates where appropriate to their needs (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)
- 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)
- 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)

Mayfield School will not:

- simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because she uses a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

Additionally the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate:

- 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 the curriculum for a specific qualification is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

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

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated as follows:

- In the main examination room, or a smaller room where the logistical requirements of the word processor can be met, depending on the number of candidates.

In compliance with the regulations, Mayfield School:

- 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 the 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 a software application that does not allow for the insertion of a header or footer, once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed script, he/she is instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that he/she is solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)
- 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 his/her 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)
- instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing to make marking easier for examiners (ICE 14.24)

Mayfield School 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 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
- 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), e-mail, the Internet, social media sites, spreadsheets
- 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 computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader

- 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

Mayfield School will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used:

- is provided by the centre
- is cleared of any previously stored data

Printing the script after the exam has ended

Mayfield School will ensure:

- the word processor has saved the final copy of the candidate's script to the network to allow the script to be printed off by the designated member of the exams office team, or that there is 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 may require a word processor cover sheet, this is included with the candidate's typed script (and according to the relevant awarding body's instructions) (ICE 14.26)
- if a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the 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 (ICE 14.22)

Mayfield School:

- may retain electronic copies of word processed scripts as the electronic copy of a word processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost. However, the centre would need to demonstrate to the awarding body that the file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body (ICE 14.27)

Other centre specific information relating to arrangements at the time of the assessment:

The centre will usually provide word processors with ExamWritePad software installed to allow for JCQ requirements to be met and secure back up and saving options.

Allocating word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be allocated by:

- the IT department in liaison with the SENCo and the exams officer

In exceptional circumstances where the number of compliant 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 7.2 of ICE.