

Slough and Eton Church of England Business and Enterprise College



Access Arrangements Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Owner:	Steve Thatcher
Ratified by Governing Body:	<i>James M. Scragg</i>
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Appendices

- Appendix 1 The criteria used to award and allocate word processors for examinations
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2 Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Navjot Sandhu
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Steve Thatcher
Head of centre	Peter Collins
Assessor(s)	Tina Sevic
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Navjot Sandhu
IT manager	Ian Trevena

3 What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

“Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010* to make ‘reasonable adjustments’.” [[AA Definitions](#), page 7]

Reasonable adjustments

“The Equality Act 2010* requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors which will include, but are not limited to: the needs of the disabled candidate; the effectiveness of the adjustment; the cost of the adjustment; and the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates. An adjustment will not be approved if it: involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body; involves unreasonable timeframes; or affects the security and integrity of the assessment. This is because the adjustment is not ‘reasonable’. The centre must ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates. In most cases it will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate. There is no duty to make adjustments which the qualifications regulators

have specified should not be made.” [[AA Definitions](#), page 7]

4 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Slough and Eton “...will determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities...” [JCQ *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, 5.4] This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#).

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that arrangements are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*. This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

5 Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements policy is covered in the Disability policy (exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

6 The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) 7.3.

The qualification of the current assessor

OCR Level 7 Diploma in Teaching and Assessing Learners with Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties.
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Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)

The Headteacher will check that the centre’s specialist assessor’s qualifications meet the required levels and will also monitor that the assessment process is correctly applied.
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The Headteacher will follow the guidelines on specialist assessors (JCQ Statement, “ <i>Appointment of specialist assessors for candidates with learning difficulties</i> ”) and ensure that they are either a:-
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- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC); or• Specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate; or• Specialist assessor with a post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7. |
|---|

Note:

The school’s specialist assessor for 2023/24 is Tina Sevic. The original certificate was seen by the Assistant Headteacher and copies are available from HR and the Exams Officer.
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How the assessment process is administered

Class teachers email SENCo with outline of pupils needs and how these have been met in the classroom, e.g. extra time. Our administrator delivers the assessments and all results are passed on to the SENCo.

Recording evidence of need

SENCo holds files with evidence passed on from class teachers.

Gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working*

Teachers are regularly sent the list of pupils who receive AA and pass on all evidence of class work and exams where AA have been given to the SENCo.

7 Processing access arrangements

Arrangements requiring awarding body approval

Slough and Eton applies for Access Arrangements through JCQ AAO/ Pearson online portal, SENCo applies for the Access Arrangements and the Exams Officer orders the modified papers.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

If the SENCo feels that certain candidates may benefit from access arrangements such as using reading pens or using a word-processor where there is no requirement to apply for them the centre may offer access arrangements to them in line with the JCQ guidelines. If the JCQ guidelines require evidence to be kept on file, the SENCo will keep records.

8 Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

Word processor policy (exams)

Introduction

This policy, on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments, is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) and [Instructions for conducting examinations](#).

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2023-2024* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2023-2024*.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments.

Principles for using a word processor

Slough and Eton comply with AA chapter 4 *Managing the needs of candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

(AA 4.2.1)

- ▶ Candidates with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties
- ▶ The use of a word processor is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate

(AA 4.2.2)

- ▶ The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question

(AA 4.2.3)

- ▶ Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis

(AA 4.2.4)

- ▶ The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate
- ▶ Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments

(AA 4.2.5)

- ▶ The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:
 - ▶ in the classroom (where appropriate); or
 - ▶ working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
 - ▶ literacy support lessons; or
 - ▶ literacy intervention strategies; and/or
 - ▶ in internal school tests/examinations
 - ▶ in mock examinations

The only exceptions to the above would be 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.

Centre specific processes

The use of a word processor

Slough and Eton comply with AA chapter 5 *Access arrangements available* as follows:

(AA 5.8.1)

- ▶ Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)
- ▶ Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working (see 4.2.5 above) within the centre
- ▶ Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs (for example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand)
(The above also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets)

(AA 5.8.2)

- ▶ Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification

(AA 5.8.3)

- ▶ Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwritten shorter answers
- ▶ Are also aware that 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

(AA 5.8.4)

- ▶ Ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script, according to the instructions issued by the individual awarding body
- ▶ Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home

Centre specific processes

Word processors and their programmes

Slough and Eton comply with ICE 14.25 *Word processors* instructions by ensuring:

- ▶ Word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- ▶ Word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used
- ▶ An unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate

- ▶ Where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff
- ▶ Word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination
- ▶ Word processors are 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 separately, a separate invigilator is used
- ▶ Word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- ▶ Documents are printed after the examination is over
- ▶ Candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own
- ▶ Word processed scripts are inserted in/attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers (and according to instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
- ▶ Word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body
- ▶ Word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- ▶ Word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- ▶ Candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc. when using a word processor
- ▶ Graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these

- ▶ Predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet included), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- ▶ Voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
- ▶ Word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

Centre specific processes

Laptops and tablets

Slough and Eton further comply with ICE 14.25 instructions by ensuring:

- ▶ Tablets used during examinations/assessments are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged and are 'free-standing'
- ▶ The battery capacity of all laptops and/or tablets is checked before the candidate's examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination
- ▶ Candidates with fully charged laptops or tablets are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points
- ▶ Candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer
- ▶ Candidates using Notepad or Wordpad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script; candidates are also supervised to

ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way

- ▶ Candidates are instructed to appropriately number each page
- ▶ Candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- ▶ Invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals
- ▶ Where it is possible 'autosave' is set up on each laptop/tablet
- ▶ Candidates are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own

Centre specific processes

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Candidates using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- ▶ Seating plan according to where switches are
- ▶ Away from other candidates where laptop screen not visible to other candidates

Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include the following:

- ▶ Invigilators trained in using the laptop
- ▶ Password and user name provided to the invigilator
- ▶ USB provided to invigilators to transfer the work in order to print
- ▶ Training provided to fill JCQ Word Processor Cover Sheet

Separate invigilation within the centre

Role of the SENCo

The SENCo in conjunction with relevant teaching staff will decide whether or not to offer separate invigilation.

This will be based on:-

- An established understanding of the difficulties;
- Difficulties being known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities;
- Separate invigilation reflecting the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and pre-public examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs;
- It being their 'normal way of working' which includes separate invigilation during pre-public examinations, internal school tests and/or high level GCSE controlled assessments.
- Recommended advice from specialists

The following are two examples where candidates would be eligible for separate invigilation:

- A candidate with depression who has been under Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- A candidate with an established medical condition or formally recognised social, emotional and behavioural difficulties where they may cause a disturbance to other students.

The SENCo will ensure that, like all other access arrangements, documented evidence will be in place regarding the arrangements made.

Role of the Exams Officer

The SENCo will put forward a recommendation for separate invigilation, and the Exams Officer will look at the feasibility of this with room availability and the need for additional invigilators. If at all possible the SENCo recommendation will be realised. The Exams Officer will arrange for a roving invigilator to check up on the separate invigilator and students.

The criteria Slough and Eton Business and Enterprise Church of England 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. A word processor is not granted to a student because they want to type rather than write, or can work faster on a keyboard. 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.

Awarding word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in exams:

- where he/she 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.

Exceptions 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

Before a word processor is awarded to a student they will undergo a short assessment with the SENDCO to assess their needs.

Allocating word processors

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 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 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.

Word Processor cover sheet

Please read the attached notes before completing this form.

Examination series	
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Centre No	
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Candidate No		Candidate name	
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Examination for which a word processor was used

Awarding body	Specification title	Specification entry code	Unit/ component

Comments (if appropriate):

Some questions were answered in the answer booklet.

(Please select the appropriate response)

Yes

No

Notes on the completion of the Word Processor cover sheet

Centre:

- **Examination scripts:** Please refer to the relevant awarding body's instructions when completing this form.
- The script **must** be produced in accordance with the regulations in **Chapter 8, section 8.8, of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*. Failure to comply may constitute malpractice which could lead to the disqualification of the candidate.**
- The information required in the boxes on the form **must** be correct and complete.
- In the box marked **Comments** please indicate whether any problems were experienced with the production of the script which should be drawn to the attention of the examiner.