



THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

Learning Together for the Future

WORD PROCESSING POLICY

September 2025

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Student and Curriculum Sub-committee

This is a non-statutory policy

1 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 The Ecclesbourne 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 due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessment for a disabled candidate.
- A centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENDCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations (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 assessment may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The SENDCo and Access Arrangements Coordinator must consider the need for access arrangement/reasonable adjustment on a subject-by-subject basis (AA 4.2.3).
- The SENDCo and Access Arrangements Coordinator 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 practise using the access arrangement/reasonable adjustment before their first examination (AA 4.2.7)

2 Purpose of the policy

This policy details how The Ecclesbourne School complies with AA, chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE 14.20-27 Word processors (computers, laptops and tablets) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of a word processor in examinations.

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

3 The criteria for using a word processor for examinations and assessments

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams unless there are exceptions.

3.1 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.

The Ecclesbourne School will:

- Allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check/predictive disabled, 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). For example, a candidate with 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 (not an exhaustive list).
- 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 practical, 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 for candidates in NEA components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AA 5.8.2)

The Ecclesbourne School will not:

- Simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use 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 is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

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

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in the main exam venue unless their access arrangements specify that they require a smaller venue.

In compliance with the regulations, The Ecclesbourne School:

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20)
- Will check 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 appears on each page as a header or footer (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 their typed script, they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised through 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).
- 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 and, where possible, the IT technician sets 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 12 font and double spacing to make marking easier for the examiners (ICE 14.24)

The Ecclesbourne School will ensure the word processor (ICE 14.25):

- 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), email, the Internet, social media sites, spreadsheets
- Does not include graphic packages or CAD software unless permission has been given to use these
- Does not have any predictive text software or 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 spelling.
- 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 (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)
- Is not 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)

5 Portable storage medium

The Ecclesbourne School 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.

6 Printing the script after the exam has ended

The Ecclesbourne School will ensure (ICE 14.25):

- All candidates using a word processor are accompanied to the Exams Office by an invigilator with the candidate responsible for carrying the word processor that they have used during the exam
- The word processor can be 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 their own
- All candidates are told to check their work to ensure that all of the pages have been printed out. They are then told to sign the work to verify that all of their script has been printed out and is in the correct order. There is signage in the Exams Office as further reminder to candidates about this process.
- A word processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- Where an awarding body requires a word processor cover sheet, that this is included with the candidate's typed script (ICE 14.26)
- If a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header/footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)

The Ecclesbourne 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 electronic file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body (ICE 14.27).

7 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 SENDCo and the Head of Exams.

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 ICE 7.