



400 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

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Governor or SLT approval	SLT
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This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations. References in this policy to AARA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the JCQ publications **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments** and **Instructions for conducting examinations**.

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 assessments are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The following principles are applied to access arrangements at Richard Hale 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 assessments 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 SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations. (AARA 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. (AARA 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. SENCos (or equivalent role) must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis. (AARA 4.2.3)
- The SENCo (or equivalent role) must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage a candidate. (AARA 4.2.1)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before their first examination. (AARA 4.2.7)

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Richard Hale School complies with AARA, 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 use of a word processor

Richard Hale School complies with *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* Chapter 4 regulations and guidance as follows:

- 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.
- Students with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers to assessment for a disabled candidate 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 while able to ensure the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. (AARA 4.2.1)
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question. (AARA 4.2.2)
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The SENCo must consider the need for a word processor on a subject-by-subject basis. (AARA 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. (AARA 4.2.1)
- The use of a word processor is agreed at the start of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working. (AARA 4.2.4)
- The use of a word processor is only put in place if it reflects the candidate's normal way of working, for example:
 - In the classroom (where appropriate);
 - Working in small groups for reading/writing;
 - Support lessons;
 - Intervention strategies;
 - In internal or mock tests/examinations.

The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place due to a temporary injury or impairment. (AARA 4.2.5)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the word processor before their first examination. (AA AARA RA 4.2.7)
- Provide 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 (AARA 5.8.1)
- Provide the use of a word processor to the candidate who may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology
- Provide the use of word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AARA 5.8.2)
- Complete a word processor cover sheet should one be required by the awarding body. (AARA 5.8.4)

Richard Hale School will **not**:

- simply grant the use of a word processor 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 (AARA 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 (AARA 4.2.4)
- where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AARA 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:

- Candidates requiring a word processor will be in a dedicated computer room or a smaller room or if they are a 1:1 student.
- Candidates will access the word processor using their examination number login, the password being entered by the senior invigilator.
- Candidates will access the examination questions either using a reading programme, or the original hard copy as per their specific access arrangements.

In compliance with the regulations, Richard Hale 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)
- Candidates will use the ExamWritePad programme. On the first window candidates type in their exam number, exam name and code and centre number. These are automatically copied through to each page when the candidates work is printed out which ensures 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)
- 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 ('autosave' is set up on each laptop/table to ensure that if there is a 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 (Automatically set up on Exam Write Pad) (ICE 14.24)

Richard Hale 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 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
- 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 (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)
- does not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader
- does not include AI tools
- 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)

Portable storage medium

Where required, Richard Hale 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 (ICE 14.25)

Printing the script after the exam has ended

Richard Hale School will ensure that:

(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 their own and they sign the printout as being their own
- a word-processed script is enclosed within 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 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 (ICE 14.22)

Richard Hale 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)

The criteria used to award and allocate word processors for examinations

The criteria used to allocate the use of word processors is based on:

- The results of exam access arrangement assessments (e.g. if a student has a below average hand writing speed of 84 or below), and/or
- If the student has a diagnosis of a medical condition (e.g. visual impairment, arthritis, loss of mobility, etc), and/or
- If the student has a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly, and/or
- If the student's handwriting is illegible
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand

(This list is not exhaustive)

This decision to award a word processor to a candidate is made by the SENDCo, in collaboration with the Exams Officer.

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 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 ICE 7