Regents Park Community College

Word Processor Procedure

Policy updated: April 2023

Policy to be reviewed: April 2024

Non-Statutory

Introduction

This policy which provides the centre process in regards to the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated every year, in the early autumn term as per the regulations and guidance contained in the JCQ published "*Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*" (AA) and *"Instructions for conducting Examinations"* (ICE). The term word processor refers to a laptop or computer.

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance regarding the use of word processors:
- Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. 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."
- "… a word processor cannot simply be granted 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. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre."
- Candidates are given access to word processors in order to remove barriers for candidates so that they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties. The school will consider allowing a student to use a word processor as part of their normal way of working in a number of situations, including the following:
1. a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;
2. a medical condition; or a physical disability; or a sensory impairment;
3. planning and organisational problems when writing by hand; or poor handwriting. This list is not exhaustive.

At RPCC students are monitored from Year 7 on their handwriting ability and identified as early on as possible. This year, Year 7s are completing CAT4 written assessments and so this will give us a good understanding of which students have difficulties.

Students will have undertaken handwriting intervention programmes before a decision is made to allow the use of a word processor which is coordinated by SENDCo.

The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment which restricts the student's ability to perform as expected in written examinations.

- "The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification."
- Access arrangements will be processed at the start of the course.

- 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, access arrangements should be applied for as soon as is practicable. It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers. N.B. 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 computer screen.
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements 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 in discussion with the SENDCo and Examinations Officer, with the final decision taken by the SENDCo.

Word processors and their programmes at RPCC

RPCC complies with JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (section 14.25), by ensuring:

A word processor:
- must be used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- must have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick must not be used by a candidate. Where required, the centre must provide a memory stick to the candidate, which is cleared of any previously stored data;
- must be in good working order at the time of the examination;
- must be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen.
- must either be connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. This must be done after the examination is over. The candidate must be present to verify that the work printed is his or her own. Word processed scripts must be attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers;
- must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused;
- must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- must not be connected to an intranet or any other means of communication;
- must not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc;
- must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- must 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;
- must not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software;
- must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

Accommodating word processors in examinations at RPCC

Candidates using word processors are internally accommodated in the following manner:
- in the main examination hall, towards the rear and usually on the stage unless additional access arrangements preclude it.
- Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include the following:
- regular verbal reminders to save work;
- on completion of the examination an invigilator will remind the student to save all work onto the memory stick provided by RPCC;
- the invigilator will accompany the student, the laptop and the memory stick to the printer for the work to be printed off and verified.
- on completion of the exam
- when all work is printed and verified, it will be enclosed inside the student's examination script for submission to the awarding body with a completed word processor cover sheet;
- the memory stick and word processor will be cleared of all work.