OAKLANDS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

AND

SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

With delegated responsibility from the

Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust

<div style="border:1px solid black">

USE OF WORD PROCESSORS
IN EXAMINATIONS
POLICY

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APPROVED BY SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM	**MARCH 2025**
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DATE LAST REVIEWED	**FEBRUARY 2025**
MEMBER OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE	**Deputy Head**
STATUTORY / NON-STATUTORY	**JCQ Requirement**

Community   Unity   Opportunity

Policy Amendments

Version Date	Section / Page	Amendments
February 2025	Throughout	Updates to reflect current JCQ guidelines.
September 2021		No amendments required

1.0   Introduction

1.1   References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the JCQ [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2024-2025](#) and [Instructions for conducting examinations 2024-2025](#) publications.

1.2   The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

1.3   (AA 4.2.1)
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.

1.4   (AA 4.2.2)
Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

1.5   (AA 4.2.3)
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.

1.6   (AA 4.2.1)
The SENCo, or equivalent role **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

1.7   (AA 4.2.7)
The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination.

2.0   Purpose of the policy

2.1   This policy details how Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College complies with AA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (14.20-27) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations.

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

3.0   Criteria

3.1   A word processor cannot be granted to a candidate because they prefer to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4).

3.2   The use of a word processor MUST reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs and by not being awarded a word processor the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates.

3.3   Referrals for laptop use must be made to the SENCO by subject teachers on the form available in the learning support directory – referral forms. This form must be accompanied by evidence of need.

3.4   The centre will consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AA 4.2.3). It will 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). The centre will 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)

3.5   This list helps to identify candidates who would benefit from the use of a word processor, although it is not exhaustive;

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to write legibly
- A medical condition
- A physical disability
- A sensory impairment
- Planning and organisation problems when writing by hand
- Poor handwriting

3.6   The centre will only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (aa 4.2.1).

3.7   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)

4.0   Examination Specifications

4.1   A word processor or desktop computer will be provided with the spelling and grammar checkers and predictive text facility switched off where it is their normal way of working within the centre (AA 5.8.1), unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20). ExamWritePad is the software installed on word processors used for examination purposes. In the event of this not being available, Word or WordPad will be used.

4.2   The device must have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used.

4.3   The device must be in good working order at the time of the examination;

4.4   The candidate must be 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 in another room, a separate invigilator will be required;

4.5   The device must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused;

4.6   The device must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed (AA 4.2.2);

4.7   The device must not be connected to an intranet or any other means of communication;

4.8   The device must not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc;

4.9   The device must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;

4.10   The device 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;

4.11   The device must not include computer reading (text to speech) or speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed).

4.12   The device must not be 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).

4.13   Candidates may use their answer booklet in addition to the word processor if they wish to do so.

4.14   A candidate does not need to use word processing for all exams, e.g. they may opt use for high literacy subjects only. However, the provision must be agreed with the SENCO during practice exams and no changes can be made once we enter the formal GCSE and GCE exam period.

4.15   Candidates must not use their school log-in on a school computer for exams. The invigilator and IT team will have specific exams log-in details and are responsible for setting up each unit.

4.16   Candidates are responsible for ensuring that the pages are **numbered**, that each page has the **centre number, candidate number and unit/component code** as either a header or a footer (ICE 14.23). Candidates using ExamWritePad will need to enter this information before they save their file and it will be printed on each sheet. WordPad will not be able to insert headers and footers and so, if necessary, may handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate **must** be supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

4.17   All text must be written with a 12-point font and there is double spacing.

4.18   **All answers must be clearly numbered to match the question paper**.

4.19   Candidates must save their work at regular intervals. The invigilator is not responsible for loss of work if a student fails to save their work regularly.

4.20   It is the candidates' responsibility to report any faulty equipment e.g. sticking space bar, to the invigilator. Issues cannot be dealt with after the exam if this has not been reported and logged by the invigilator.

4.21   Every effort is made to ensure that candidates cannot access spell check, their own drive and the internet during exams. However, if any student is found trying to get around the settings this will be interpreted by the school as malpractice and will be reported to the Awarding Body.

4.22   The device 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 (memory stick). 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.

4.23   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)

4.24   The centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used is provided by the centre and is cleared of any previously stored data.

4.25   The centre will also ensure that 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)

4.26   The centre 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)