



Isaac Newton Academy

Word processor policy (exams)

2017/2018

A.Rothnie
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Key Staff

Role	Names
Head of Centre	Jo Spencer
Exams Officer line manager (Assistant Principal (data and assessment)	Mark Crowther-Green
Exams Officer	Aidan Rothnie
SENCo	David Wilson
SLT Members	Sugra Alibhai; Helen Chamberlain; Tam Broadway; Eva McEvoy; Leanne Abbott-Jones; Gareth Marshall-Jones; Nichola West; Alex Clift-Matthews

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' related to JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2017-2018* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2017-2018*.

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

Isaac Newton Academy complies with AA chapter 4 *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

- 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 word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
- 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
- Candidates are made aware of when they will have the use of a word processor for a timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments
- 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
 - 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

- Responsibility for allocating word processors for the purposes of examinations and assessments falls to the SENCo, using the criteria described above
- Once the candidate has been assessed and it deemed appropriate for a word processor to be allocated, the SENCo will liaise with the exams officer and with IT to establish the parameters for the use of the word processor

- A record of word processor use and a timetable will be maintained by the SENCo and the exams officer and kept on file until the deadline for EARs has passed
- The use of a word processor will likely coincide with other access arrangements and/or separate invigilation, under which the appropriate policies will continue to apply
- Invigilators will be trained on the requirements of word processor use in exams, and a record of that training kept on file.

The use of a word processor

Isaac Newton Academy complies with AA chapter 5 *Access arrangements available* as follows:

- 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 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 organization when writing by hand). This above also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets
- Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification
- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers
- Is also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organize 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
- In all cases, 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.

Word processors and their programmes

Isaac Newton Academy complies with ICE 8.8 *Word processors* instructions by ensuring that:

- 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 unauthorized 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 book 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 software (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.

Laptops and tablets

Isaac Newton Academy further complies with *ICE 8.8* 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 laptops and tablets will be moved to access arrangements exam venue and seated next to a power point, thus eliminating the need to ensure that the battery is fully charged and security around potential issues with loss of power
- 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.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

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

- Laptops will be prepared in accordance with the above specifications by the centre's IT department. A log will be maintained, detailing which laptop was assigned to which candidate for which exam, with the times of allocation and return to the IT department noted
- Word processors may be used in the main exam venue or in the secondary venues for access arrangements, depending on the needs of the candidate as determined by the SENCo. In either case, all necessary regulations still apply
- The exams officer will ensure that there are a sufficient number of USB storage devices for each candidate and for each exam
- A member of the IT department will be present at the start of each examination to ensure that the word processor is functioning correctly
- If there is a technical issue with the word processor, the invigilator will contact the exams officer, who will liaise with the IT department to either fix the issue or assign a new device, depending on which causes the least amount of disturbance to the candidate's work
- Technical issues that may impact the candidate's work will be noted in the exams log book. It may be necessary for the exams officer to apply for special consideration.

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

- Where a candidate sitting an exam will use a word processor, the invigilators will be briefed on the relevant regulations, and a record of their training entered into the training log
- In particular, invigilators will be reminded that the word processor should be used as a 'typewriter', and that if they suspect that the candidate is misusing the word processor to gain an advantage over other candidates to treat that as they would any instance of suspected malpractice
- At the start of the exam, the lead invigilator will remind the candidate of the expectations of the use of the word processor, including the necessity of saving regularly, headers and footers with their details, and numbered pages
- At the end of the exam, either the exams officer or, if the candidate is sitting the exam in the access arrangements venue, the supervising member of the SEND team, will collect the USB sticks and print them from a network-connected computer. The candidate must be present to verify that the work is theirs.

Appendix 1

The criteria Isaac Newton Academy 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. 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 organization problems when writing by hand
- Poor handwriting

The decision to allocate word processors lies solely with the SENCo and SLT. Candidates may request the use of a word processor, but such requests will be subject to approval by the SENCo and SLT in accordance with the guidance above. Appeals against a decision not to allocate a word processor can be made by the candidate or his/her parents, which will be reviewed by the SENCo and SLT.

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 2.11 of the *ICE*.