



**Rye St Antony School**  
O X F O R D

<b>Word Processor (Exams) Policy</b>	
<b>Owner:</b>	<b>RAT</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Head</b>
<b>Policy is available from:</b>	<b>Academic Team and School Website</b>
<b>Review cycle:</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>Current version adopted</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Review date:</b>	<b>New policy for Headington Rye School Oxford 2024</b>
<b>Linked documents:</b>	Examinations Policy, the Special Educational Needs Policy and the Information Technology Policy

## **WORD PROCESSOR (EXAMS) POLICY**

### **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 Access Arrangements (AA) relate to *JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2019-20* and *JCQ's Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2019-20 (ICE)*.

### **Purpose of the policy**

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (laptops) in internal and public examinations.

### **Principles for using a word processor**

Rye St Antony complies with AA chapter 4, 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties' regulations and guidance as follows:

(AA 4.2.1) In order to remove barriers for candidates, some are allowed access to word processors. This is to prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage because of persistent and significant difficulties. The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained.

(AA 4.2.2) Although word processors are intended to allow access to assessment, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

(AA 4.2.3) Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in every exam. Subjects and their methods of assessment 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.

(AA 4.2.4) The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate. Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments.

(AA 4.2.5) 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. In this exception special considerations/access arrangements would be applied for in the normal way.

### **Process of establishing a candidate's 'normal way of working'**

A candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in exams where he/she has a firmly established need. Typing is the candidate's normal way of working and, by not being awarded a word processor, the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage. For example, a candidate may have:

- 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 organisational problems when writing by hand
- very poor handwriting as a result of a fine motor control difficulty

The SENCo, together with form tutors and teaching staff identify students who use a word processor as their normal way of working. A pupil may begin working on a laptop in Year 7, or from any point more than six months ahead of their first examination series. Arrangements are made in conjunction with parents and guardians, as pupils are responsible for providing their own laptop to work on in their lessons, and for internal assessments. Pupils may not use a laptop in every subject, but they must demonstrate that they predominantly use a laptop in those subjects for which they intend to type in examinations. The SENCo establishes a body of evidence to confirm the pupil's normal way of working, compiled from classwork, internal assessments and practice examinations. In some cases, the file will contain examples of the candidate's handwriting, to establish their 'need' to type. The SENCo will communicate with the parents about whether their child can use a laptop in exams and tests.

### **The use of a word processor**

For public examinations, Rye St Antony complies with AA chapter 5 Access arrangements available as follows:

#### (AA 5.8.1)

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working (see 4.2.5 above) 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 organisation when writing by hand.
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#### (AA 5.8.2)

- Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification

#### (AA 5.8.3)

- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers
- Are also aware that 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 screen

#### (AA 5.8.4)

- In all cases, ensure the candidate completes and signs the answer booklet that declares the work is their own and the centre number, candidate number, paper reference and subject are correct.
- 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**

Rye St Antony complies with ICE 8.8 'Word processors: Instructions' by ensuring:

- word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable. All word processors/laptops will use Microsoft Word which all candidates are familiar with in their normal way of working.
- word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. All word processors will have blank exam accounts meaning that there is no prior data accessible.
- where required and only when there is an extreme emergency, 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 and all computers are checked 24 hours prior to 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 booklet 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 technology (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

### **Examination Office laptops**

The Examinations Office at Rye St Antony, with the assistance of the Network Manager, will provide and check word processors made available for examinations, ensuring that all barred software/programmes are disabled as required by the examination and exam board. Additionally:

- Word processors/laptops provided will have sole use and will have blank memories prior to the examination
- Laptops will be plugged in for the duration of the examination, so that no battery failure can occur
- Candidates with fully charged laptops are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation
- 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 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
- 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 are accommodated in the following manner:

- Whether there is one or more than one laptop/word processor in use, candidates will be seated in a single row at the back or side of the exam hall to minimise disruption
- Where more than one laptop/word processor is in use and the examination requires the use of sound, candidates will be provided with headphones so that examination rules are followed and the School is in full compliance.

Other arrangements relating to the use of word processors include:

- The Examinations Officer will be made aware prior to the exam of the exam requirements and a timetable and list of requirements provided.
- On the day of the examination, the Network Manager will be made available to be “on call” in the event of any emergency or problem

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 ICE.