

Guidance for use of Word Processor in Examinations

It should be noted that these are:

Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties

All quotes in this document are taken from the '*Adjustments for candidate with disabilities and Learning Difficulties*' from the JCQ document

Rationale behind the policy:

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has , in recognition of the dramatic increase in requests for the use of Word processing in centres across England, stated that they,

'...strongly recommend that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which it can articulate to parent/carers. Principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted 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.'

1. The JCQ state that, *'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.'* 5.8.4 page 54
2. In addition, the candidate should be proficient in the use of the machine.
3. In the absence of a definition from the JCQ for a 'substantial improvement', Harlington Upper School has defined as an improvement in the quality of the writing that would move a student from a grade, below that expected for their ability, up at least a full grade, to a grade more in line with that expected for their ability, without providing them with an unfair advantage over other students taking the same examination.

With this in mind and the advice from the JCQ we are proposing the following-

A candidate for whom this access arrangement may be deemed appropriate would be:

Types of candidate for whom this would apply	i.e.	evidence
A candidate with a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to write legibly.	<p>A dyslexic whose spelling leads the text to be illegible and there is evidence that this is alleviated through the use of a word processor.</p> <p>Those whose handwriting deteriorates over an exam to a point where it cannot be read by a member of the staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from an education or clinical psychologist or specialist teacher outlining the nature of the learning difficulty • Results of a standardised handwriting assessment (such as DASH/DASH 17+) combined with evidence from school staff
A medical condition **	<p>An injury to their writing hand or hyper mobility etc causing fatigue when writing for a substantial period of time. A condition such as chronic fatigue syndrome or dyspraxia that results in the need for a word processor to reduce fatigue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of this from external medical professions would be expected in support of this application detailing the impact of handwriting on the student and recommending the use of word processor • A substantial improvement in the quality of the writing when word processed as opposed to handwritten, as judge by SENCo
A physical disability	<p>Any physical disability that results in the need for word processing due to an inability to handwrite cerebral palsy, malformation of the hand etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will have been the student's normal way of working for a substantial period of time. • Evidence form medical experts recommending the use of word processor
A Sensory impairment	<p>Visual impairment, Hearing Impairment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will have been the student's normal way of working for a substantial period of time. • Evidence form medical experts recommending the use of word processor
Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand	<p>Students with a diagnosed working memory deficit or those not covered by the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from psychologists or a specialist teacher of a

	<p>medical condition definition <u>but who demonstrate a learning difficulty</u> which affects their ability to organise their writing.</p>	<p>standardised test demonstrating working memory deficit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A substantial improvement in the quality of the writing when word processed as opposed to handwritten, as judged by school staff (SENCO?)
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FAQs

‘Does a diagnosis of dyspraxia , or another medical condition automatically give entitlement to the use of a word processor?’ No, this does not give automatic entitlement, this requires further supporting evidence from the school to demonstrate normal way of working and evidence of need from within the centre.

‘Will the student be able to use the word processor in all exams?’ This may not be appropriate and a transcription can be provided for those students with word processing in exams where use of WP is not appropriate such as Science papers requiring short responses and example might be Physics or Chemistry papers where the use of notation is a key part of the assessment. This may also apply to Maths.

‘Does a student who routinely uses a laptop in class have automatic right to its use in examinations at GCSE or GCE?’ This is not the case, as they may not meet the criteria outlined above and – the JCQ state that *‘examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demands on the need to organise thought and planned answers are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to write within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between question paper and screen’*

5.8.3 Pg 54 JCQ Adjustments for candidate with disabilities and Learning Difficulties

‘Who makes the final decisions on access arrangements?’ Final decisions on Access arrangements are the responsibility of SENCo – Becky Dawson, Assistant Headteacher

‘Who is responsible for these arrangements being put into place?’ Implementation of these access arrangements for external exams are the responsibility of the Exams Officer.