



Statement on the use of Word Processors in examinations Stretford Grammar School 2019

Information from the JCQ document Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Managing the needs of candidates with disabilities and learning needs

- Word Processors may be required by candidates with the following needs:
 - Cognition and Learning (4.1.1)
 - Communication and Interaction (4.1.2)
 - Sensory and Physical (4.1.3)
 - Social, Mental and Emotional (4.1.4)

- The use of a word processor as an access arrangement is to ensure the removal of barriers to an assessment for a disabled candidate preventing him/her being placed at a substantial disadvantage because of persistent and significant difficulties.
- The use of the word processor must allow the integrity of the assessment to be maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to the assessments for a disabled candidate. (4.2.1)
- The use of a word processor cannot be granted where it will compromise the assessment objective of the specification in question (4.2.2)
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The need for use of a word processor should be considered on a subject-by-subject basis. (4.2.3)
- The use of a word processor should normally be agreed at the start of the course, having a firmly established picture of need and normal way of working
- The only exception to the above would be as a result 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
- (4.2.4)
- The arrangement to use a word processor must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, for example:
 - In the classroom (where appropriate);
 - Working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
 - Literacy support lessons;
 - Literacy intervention strategies;
 - In internal tests/examinations;
 - Mock examinations. (4.2.5)

- This is referred to as the 'normal way of working' for the candidate.
- In relation to the choice between the use of a scribe or a word processor the JCQ guidelines state the following:
 - If a word processor (with the spelling and grammar check disabled) is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, then it should be used



- in examinations in order to encourage independent working and access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar
- A scribe must only be used where a candidate is not sufficiently competent or confident in using a word processor with the spelling and grammar check or predictive text facility disabled (switched off). (5.7.1)
 - At Stretford Grammar the use of a word processor is always considered prior to the application for the use of a scribe
 - Additional information regarding the use of a scribe
 - Where the candidate has been awarded the use of a scribe through Access Arrangements Online and where it reflects their normal way of working the candidate may alternatively use: a word processor with the spelling and grammar facility enabled (with some subject restrictions); a word processor with predictive text/spelling and grammar check facility enabled; speech recognition technology with predictive text when the candidate dictates into a word processor; computer software producing speech which is used to dictate to a scribe. In these cases a scribe cover sheet rather than a word processor cover sheet must be completed (5.7.4)
 - Key information relating specifically to the use of word processors (Section 5.8 JCQ regulations)
 - There is not an arrangement to process an application using Access Arrangements Online or to record the use of the arrangement. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement. (This also applies where a candidate is using a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury.)
 - A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations. In addition the JCQ regulations require that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which can be articulated to parents.

Stretford Grammar School complies with the JCQ regulations regarding the use of word processors 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 where it is appropriate to their needs (5.8.1)
- Allows the use of word processors in non-examination assessment components and considers this as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification. (5.8.2)
- Allows a candidate to use a word processor to type certain questions e.g. those requiring longer answers, and handwritten shorter answers. For example candidates may need to type those examinations that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers.



Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. (5.8.3)

- Regulations for using word processors in examinations see JCQ 'ICE' booklet. (5.8.4)
- The use of a word processor is considered on a subject by subject basis. (4.2.3)
- In all cases a word processor, cover sheet (Form 4) is completed
- The following procedures are in place at Stretford Grammar to ensure compliance with the regulations
- Word processing is offered to a student who has a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to write legibly
- This could be a medical condition, a physical disability, a sensory impairment, planning and organisational problems when writing by hand or poor handwriting.
- A decision regarding any illegibility is made using the following evidence: evaluating work in their books; discussions with the student; discussions with teaching staff, SENCo and Assistant SENCo.
- If a candidate has below average free writing speed, we would consider if word processing would reduce this barrier. If the candidate is able to answer the questions at a speed equivalent to an average handwriting rate, then a word processor would remove the barrier presented by the candidate's slow handwriting. The use of a word processor would therefore be appropriate and 25% extra time applied for in exams where the candidate handwrites the answers e.g. shorter answer papers. (Example p. 55 JCQ regulations)
- We use Lucid Exact to provide a standardised measure of a candidates writing and typing speeds. In addition, the access arrangements assessor will use the DASH handwriting assessment to provide additional information. We will record the w.p.m. scores of these candidates for handwriting speed and typing speed to ensure equality of access. We decide when we would apply for 25% extra time and when use a word processor using the above criteria, preference and skills of candidates. Normal way of working is a key factor again here
- Where a candidate moves from GCSE to GCE examinations within our school then they can continue the arrangement to use a word processor providing that it remains their normal way of working and they continue to have an identified need. If a candidate moves to Stretford Grammar from another school then we would contact their exams officer to ascertain the need for any access arrangement
- In most cases, students are asked to demonstrate that they are competent in the use of a word processor
- This might include having to attend Touch Typing classes after school until a level of competence has been reached
- The use of a word processor must reflect the normal way of working within the centre. Where students are offered the use of a laptop but do not use the laptop regularly, this adjustment may not be offered in internal and external examinations.