

Dixons Sixth Form Academy

Policy Documentation

Policy: Access Arrangements: Word Processing 2025-2026

Responsibility for Review: SENDCO
Date of Last Review: October 2025

Statement of Intent

The Word Processing policy exists to ensure candidates are provided for in terms of access arrangements for the completion of set work. The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement. The use of word processors will be granted where there is no risk to the integrity of the assessment undertaken.

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' relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025/26 and ICE to JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2025/26.

This policy details how Dixons Sixth Form Academy complies with AA Section B regulations, Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties and (chapter 4.1) Word processor and ICE (section 5.8) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in his/her examinations.

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

Senior Leadership Team – Statement of Need

Students requiring the use of a word processor are typically identified by the SENDCO through staff referrals and/or parental discussions. Word processors are allocated in exams with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled (switched off) where it reflects the student's normal way of working within Dixons Sixth Form Academy. Students identified as being suitable for use of a word processor would typically have – but not limited to – one or more of the below:

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



Principles for using a word processor

Dixons Sixth Form Academy complies with AA Section B Chapter 4 & 5 regulations as follows:

(AA 4.2.1)

- 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 as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- The SENDCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage a candidate.

(AA 4.2.2)

- The use of a word processor is not granted where it 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 each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates. SENCos must consider 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 agreed/processed at the start of the course. Candidates are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework.
- Candidates are aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework.

(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; or
 - working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
 - literacy support lessons; or
 - in internal school tests and mock examinations

(AA 4.2.7)

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination.



The use of a word processor

Dixons Sixth Form Academy complies with AA section 5 as follows:

(AA 5.8.1)

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise.
- 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).
- A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in the main exam room with the main cohort; close to a power socket. Additionally, the battery capacity of the word processor is checked before the start of the exam and a power cord is provided in case of emergency

(AA 5.8.2)

- Provides access to word processors to candidates in controlled assessments or coursework 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)

- Ensures in Functional Skills English (Reading and Writing components) the use of a word processor with the spell check facility switched on is permitted for all candidates.
- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor 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.

Exceptions

The only exceptions to the above where the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate would be

- 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 a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates **(AA 5.8.4)**



Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in a different room

In compliance with the regulations the centre

- Centres can provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet), with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled, to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically, and the centre provides word processors to all candidates. This also includes an electronic braille or a tablet. **(ICE 14.20)**
- Tablets are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged. Their purpose is to be 'free-standing'. The battery capacity of a laptop or a tablet must be checked before the candidate's examination(s) and the centre must ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination. The use of a fully-charged laptop or tablet will allow centres to seat a candidate within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points. **(ICE 14.21)**
- Candidates must be reminded to ensure that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer: e.g. 12345/8001 – 6391/01. If a candidate is using the software application Notepad or Wordpad these do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer. In these instances, once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off his/her typed script, he/she must handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate must be supervised to ensure that he/she is solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way. **(ICE 14.22)**
- ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6 **(ICE 14.23)**
- Invigilators must remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals. Alternatively, an IT technician can set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet. This will ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost. **(ICE 14.24)**

The centre will ensure the word processor:

- must be used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting
- must have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick must not be used by a candidate. When needed, the centre must provide a memory stick, which is cleared of any previously stored data, to 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;
- 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. 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;
- must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused;
- must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- must not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), email, the Internet, social media sites, spreadsheets;



- must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- 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;
- must not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader;
- must not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software;
- must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

(ICE 14.25)

