

Word Processor Policy

on the use of word processors in
examinations and assessments



Saffron Valley Collegiate

Last reviewed: 24.01.18

To be reviewed: Spring 2019

Mission Statement

The Saffron Valley Collegiate seeks to provide a personalised educational experience that identifies and responds to the circumstances and needs of each individual child or young person. In doing so it enables them to progress academically and become successful learners through the re-engagement of the young person with education.

EQUALITIES STATEMENT:

All who work at the Saffron Valley Collegiate are committed to the celebration of diversity, and the challenging of disadvantage and discrimination, in all of its forms.

These values are explicit to the ethos of the Saffron Valley Collegiate and implicit in all policies and practices.

Introduction

The policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments should be reviewed and updated annually in the autumn term, on the publication of updated Joint Council for Qualifications regulations and guidance contained in the publications *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2017-2018 - JCQ* and *Instructions for conducting examinations - JCQ*.

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

Teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team must support the SENCo in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements. The SENCo must work with teaching staff, support staff (such as Learning Support Assistants and Teaching Assistants) and exams office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations (Statement JCQ).

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 centres using a word processor.

The Saffron Valley Collegiate complies with AA section 4 regulations as follows:

(AA 4.2.1)

- The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him or her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.
- The use of a word processor 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.

(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.** 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 therefore considered on a subject-by subject basis.

(AA. 4.2.4)

- The use of a word processor should be processed at the start of the course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working. Where appropriate 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 is only granted if it reflects the support given to candidates as their normal way of working 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 school tests/examinations;
 - mock examinations.

The use of a word processor

The Saffron Valley Collegiate complies with AA section 5 regulations as follows:

(AA 5.8.1)

- Provides access to a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) 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 organisation when writing by hand.

(The above also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets)

(AA 5.8.2)

- Provides access a word processors (where appropriate) 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 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 that in all cases a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and attached to each script.
- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

(The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working).

The Saffron Valley Collegiate is aware that particular types of candidates may benefit from the use of a word processor.

For example, a candidate with:

- 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;
- poor handwriting.

This list is not exhaustive.

Word Processors and their programmes

The Saffron Valley Collegiate complies with ICE 8.8 instructions by ensuring:

- 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 unauthorised 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 attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers;
- 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 scribe cover sheet attached), 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, Tablets and Word Processors

The Saffron Valley Collegiate further complies with ICE 8.8 instructions by ensuring:

- 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. Tablets should be 'free-standing';
- candidates with fully charged laptops or tablets are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points;
- 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;
- each page is appropriately numbered;
- 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 to set up 'autosave' onto each laptop/tablet to ensure that the candidate's work is not lost;
- candidates granted the use of a word processor are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed off is their own.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

- Word processors must only be used in rooms set aside for examinations with an invigilator present to monitor their use.

The criteria The Saffron Valley 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 organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting

Allocating word processors

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be **allocated** by the IT department in liaison with the SENCo and the exams officer where appropriate. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 2.11 of ICE.

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