<u>SEND DEPT POLICY ON USING WORD PROCESSORS IN EXAMS (Internal and External)</u>

The policy on the use of word processors in examinations is reviewed and updated annually on publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance in the publications *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustmen*ts and *Instructions for Conducting Exams*

References to "AA" relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2019/20 and ICE to JCQ Instructions for Completing examinations 2019/20

This policy details how Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School (QEGS) manages and administers the use of word processors in examinations and assessments and on what basis a student may be considered for this access arrangement.

QEGS values good handwriting and imposes high standards on presentation of work. We expect that by far the majority of students will handwrite in examinations. However there are exceptional circumstances, as identified by the School, where students may benefit from using a word processor and in these cases the school will allow the use of a word processor for internal and public examinations.

In determining whether or not to approve the use of a word processor by a student the SENCO will take the following criteria into consideration and will liaise with the examinations officer and teaching staff:

- The student has a specific learning difficulty/ disability (eg dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD) Students with a specific learning difficulty will not all necessarily need or benefit from the use of a word processor however and each student will be considered on an individual basis.
- The student has a physical difficulty/ medical condition
- The student has a sensory impairment
- The student has handwriting which is so poor it would be illegible to an examiner and would lead to a loss of marks
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand such that " the quality of the language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor" (JCQ Reasonable Adjustments 5.8.4)

Temporary use of a word processor in examinations is permissible as a consequence of a temporary injury.

Staff or students who believe a student may be eligible to use a word processor should contact Mrs Freeman (SENCO) or Mrs J Bargh (Deputy Head – exams officer) in the first instance. This should be done at the start of a GCSE or GCE course or as soon as the difficulties become apparent.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored at the end of the summer examination season by the examinations officer and SENCO. The policy will be made known to all staff, parents/carers and governors and published on the website.

<u>Principles for using a word processor</u>

<u>QEGS complies with AA chapter 4 Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties regulations and guidance as follows:</u>

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AA 4.2.1

- Access to word processors will be granted in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates and prevent them being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.
- Thus use of word processors is on permitted where the integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time 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. As 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 (it is unusual for a word processor to be used in maths for example) and reflects the candidates' normal way of working.

AA 4.2.4

- The use of a word processor is considered and agreed by the SENCO where appropriate at the start of the course. Where the manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arises after the start of the course, access arrangements should be applied for as soon as practicable.
- Candidates are made aware that they will have the use of a word processor for 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 a 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
- Literacy intervention strategies; or
- Internal school tests and mock examinations.

For candidates with learning difficulties this is typically the background information recorded in part 1 of Form 8 by the SENCo or assessor working in the centre.

The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment.

The use of a word processor

QEGS 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 their 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 would extend to the use of electronic braillers and tablets should we have any students using these in the future.

AA 5.8.2

- Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessments / 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 responses to certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers.
- Takes heed of the fact 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 write 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 ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script
- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can write faster using a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the normal way of working within the centre.
- The following details some of the most common considerations when assessing whether a candidate may benefit from the use of a word processor:
- 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.

Word processors and their programmes

Each student has a dedicated exam account. It is a network account to ensure:

A student can easily swap to a spare exam laptop in case of misadventure

Work is automatically backed up off-device in the event of hardware failure/inadvertent deletion

There is an electronic trail for printing. Exam work stored in the dedicated exam account home directories is inaccessible to teaching staff. The use of networked word processors with the protocols outlined below re restrictions has been checked with JCQ for compliance and approved.
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QEGS complies with ICE 8.8 Word Processors instructions by ensuring:

- Word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a data base, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- Word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data.
- Memory sticks are not authorised for use by candidates at this centre. See previous comments re network computers.
- 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
- Students print to a virtual print queue for release by chief invigilators or the exams officer in order to: remove reliance on memory sticks, provide an audit trail of what was printed, who by and when. Each page has a unique time and document based hash value printed at the bottom of the page. If a document is printed twice the hashes will be different and we can link a document back to who printed it using the hash value.
- Documents are printed after the examination is over. The virtual print queue ensures that the invigilator can choose which printer to release the print job on. Submission of the print job and release by the invigilator is logged. Every-one with access has their own account
- Candidates are present to verify that the work is their own.
- Word processed scripts are inserted in 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 networked however the candidates are restricted to running Wordpad, Windows Explorer (creates the desktop user interface) and printing to a specific print queue. All other functionality, including internet or local network access – beyond saving to a dedicated home directory – is disabled.
- 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 where installed is inaccessible to candidates 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 check
- 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.
- A word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is printed from the JCQ website and included with the candidate's typed script. The centre is aware that an awarding body cannot guarantee a word processed script will be processed unless a cover sheet has been included.

Laptops and tablets

QEGS further complies with ICE 2019-20 p.29 by ensuring:

- 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 at QEGS use Wordpad and must 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 performing *only* this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.
- Candidates are instructed to appropriately number each page
- Invigilators remind candidates to save work at regular intervals
- Where possible "autosave" is set up on each laptop/tablet
- The battery capacity is checked – the centre must ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination
- Candidates are present at the end of the examination so that when their script is printed off they can verify that the work is their own.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Candidates using word processors (including laptops / tablets) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- Candidates will be seated in the main examination hall in such as position as to not be overlooked by other candidates
- If in the unlikely event that this is not possible candidates using word processors will be located together in a smaller room within the school

Invigilation regulations relating to the use of word processors include the following:

- When accommodated in the main examination hall invigilators will be made aware of students using word processors and will be informed of the relevant procedures. The exams officer will be available to assist at the end of the examination to ensure scripts are printed off correctly with students still present before being added to the rest of the cohorts' completed papers.
- JCQ Form 4 will be handed to the invigilator at the beginning of each examination session to complete for each candidate using a word processor.

HLF Feb 2020